

Maryland's Legacy of Slavery research project covers digs deep into black history 'Roots'

By Alex Champion, Maryland State Archives

The Legacy of Slavery in Maryland research project at the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis began with a volunteer effort to digitize runaway slave advertisements published in Maryland newspapers.

When volunteer Jerry Henson first showed then reference director Chris Haley a clipping that charged Aaron Salisbury with aiding and abetting a runaway, something clicked. He knew "such charges could have some relation to the existence of the Underground Railroad in Maryland." Although Haley shepherded the project from volunteers to a full time staff of researchers, summer interns, an extensive website, and outreach contacts throughout Maryland, he declined the first offer to lead the program because he believed it was

important to have a black presence at reference desk.

With *Roots* author Alex Haley as his uncle, it was no surprise that he possessed a deep personal interest in black history and genealogy. In addition to possessing substantial state records crucial to the study of black history in Maryland, the MSA was proximal to Washington, D.C., libraries and archives.

It was at the Maryland State Archives that Alex Haley read the advertisement for the ship *Lord Ligonier*—the vessel he claimed brought Kunta Kinte to America in chains. It was this personal and documentary connection that encouraged Haley to stay in reference. "A neophyte (researcher) ... will feel more comfortable given that connection," Haley claims. "When you talk about something as

sensitive as people who were enslaved according to the law of the land, it might be easier to share that lineage with someone of the same background." This sharing of the "inner pain, inner shame, inner pride ... the molecule" of a collective history, Haley believes, gently encourages the descendants of former slaves to research their family history.

In its nearly 10 years of existence, the project has recorded the names of thousands of slaves, slave owners, composed biographical case studies of compelling Marylanders linked to slavery, given lectures, and conducted workshops to extract the legacy of slavery from scattered state records and thus placed the legacy before the public.

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Photo at left from the Denver (Colo.) Public Library's Western History/ Genealogy Department. Early meeting of the NAACP's Denver branch in 1920 from the Clarence Holmes Papers (1892-1978). Holmes was a Denver dentist and civil rights leader who helped establish the NAACP branch.



Save the Date

February 28, 2013 SAA Scholarship, Award Nominations

Harold T. Pinkett Award and Mosaic Scholarships for students of color studying archives at the graduate level in an accredited program. For more information on the applications, see www2.archivists.org/recognition.

March 1, 2013 I Found it in the Archives! Submissions

SAA is gathering submissions from the annual American Archives Month for a contest during this year's annual convention in New Orleans (August 11-17, 2013). Send submissions to saahq@archivists.org.

March 16, 2013-January 5, 2014 Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair, Chicago (IL) History Museum

Exhibit with Johnson Publishing Co. at the Chicago History Museum featuring curated couture garments and other ephemera from former Fashion Fair Director Eunice Walker Johnson.

April 15, 2013 Call for book chapters for Ethnomusicological Repatriation: Open Dialogues about Sonic Heritage

Proposals should be 500 words max. For more information, contact book editor Frank Gunderson at fgunderson@fsu.edu.

June 27, 2013 National Archives Preservation Conference, St. Louis, MO

Hot Trends in Response and Recovery: 40 Years After the Fire will be held in St. Louis' new National Archives building. For more information on conference, contact Richard Schneider at 301-837-3617.



*AAC Roundtable
Co-Chair Steven
Booth, left, 2012
Pinkett Award
Winner Kapena
Shim, center, and
former Roundtable
Chair Courtney
Chartier at the
2012 SAA annual
conference.*

Co-Chair's Letter: SAA award, scholarship deadlines pending

By Steven Booth, National Archives and
Records Administration

Happy New Year! We're back in session and SAA Awards season is upon us. Since 1994, AAC has been the proud sponsor of the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award, the first diversity scholarship of SAA. This financial resource is awarded annually to deserving students of color that are enrolled in graduate archival science programs.

With the generous support of the SAA Foundation, recipients receive full complimentary registration and related expenses for hotel and travel to attend the annual meeting, where the students are exposed to professional development opportunities and recognized by the membership body during the awards ceremony. In addition,

awardees receive free one-year membership in SAA.

It is no coincidence that this award is named after Harold T. Pinkett, the first African American professional archivist at the National Archives and Records Administration, where he served for more than 35 years. Dr. Pinkett was also one of the first minority members of SAA along with Dwight H. Wilson, Jessie P. Guzman and Daniel T. Williams. A Fellow of SAA (1962), he served as editor of *The American Archivist* from 1968 to 1971, and was elected to Council in 1971.

During the annual business meeting the membership raised

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\$302.25 for the Pinkett Award.

Although the SAA Foundation supplements it, we must do our part as a Roundtable to ensure the legacy and sustainability of this prize.

Other than our guidelines, financial support from the membership affects our ability to increase the number of award recipients.

Last year, the Pinkett Award Subcommittee received nominations for 23 candidates, a major increase from the five application received in 2011. The Subcommittee expanded the target audience to include library science and history programs as well as affiliated professional organizations and groups.

You can support the Roundtable

by making a financial contribution to the Pinkett Award. As of right now there are 376 listed members. Just imagine: if everyone gave a \$25 donation, we would raise close to \$10,000! An effort such as this would not only increase the number of recipients in the future, but could also possibly help start an endowment. If you're willing and able, please visit www2.archivists.org/foundation, click on "Donate Now" and support the Pinkett Award.

Applications are due **February 28, 2013**. More information about the scholarship and application process can be found here www2.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section12-pinkett

Wishing you all the best in 2013! ■

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Maryland website utilizes in-house databases, original biographical research, newspaper transcriptions, and digitization of primary documents to bring together otherwise disparate records of an underrepresented caste.

Slave owners, especially politically prominent or wealthy ones, generate more records than slaves or free persons of color. The history of their slaves are scattered in probate records like wills and inventories, tax assessments, court records, muster rolls, the federal census, and even land records—reflecting the slaves' status as highly valued property, or perhaps a 19th century desire to keep government simple, Maryland's manumission processes were for a time undertaken by the land office. Bounty and muster rolls, for example, of former slaves in United States Colored Troops are a wealth of biographical information.

Haley's love of the project won out after the second offer when he accepted the directorship. He no longer sits at the reference desk, but, with regards to sensitivity, the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland "is always pushing to explore and present all sides of the story from legal, moral, and financial as well as genealogical points of view which often merges black and white." ■

In memoriam: Allison Boucher Krebs, 1951-2013

Archivist and former Native American Archives Roundtable chair **Allison Boucher Krebs**, also known as "Ally," died on January 26, 2013, after a battle with cancer. Krebs was pursuing a Ph.D. in indigenous information ecology at the University of Washington, and was an advocate for indigenous archives issues. A member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewas, she was also a founding member of the Indigenous Information Research Group at the UW, and was in the first class of women undergraduates admitted to Yale University. As a researcher, some of her photo collections from Central America are displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. Services were held on January 30, 2013. Gifts in her memory may be sent to the American Indian Graduate Center (aigcs.org) or to United National Indian Tribal Youth, (unityinc.org). ■

No Filter



Mexican mothers and fathers reading in a Mesa, Ariz., classroom. Photo courtesy of the Cora Wilson Stewart Photographic Collection, University of Kentucky Special Collections. Stewart, a Rowan County, Ky., native, was an advocate for adult education, and established "Moonlight Schools" to fight illiteracy in Southern states.

2012 Pinkett winner discusses awards, goals

By Kapena Shim, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

As a Native Hawaiian, I came into this field because archives represented my cultural lifeline... my connections to my culture, my history, language, and most importantly my kūpuna (ancestors) that I never knew, whose stories I never heard. Archives gave me the opportunity to meet them; to learn who they were, and to hear their stories.

My experiences at this past SAA annual meeting were filled with many inspirational and eye-opening moments. The two most important experiences for me were: the chance to meet, share, and dialogue with archivists, scholars and students of color across the country who are engaged in such amazing work; and the chance to make SAA a safe home for all of our voices to be heard.

Reflecting on what it exactly means to be a Pinkett awardee, and the responsibilities this honor and privilege brings, I am reminded of Dr. Pinkett's accomplishments as the first African-American archivist for the U.S. National Archives, and his unyielding commitment to create the space for communities of color to be a part of the archivist profession. His legacy reassures for me just how important it is for me, and all us, people of color to continue to push the cultural boundaries of our profession. ■

The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable actively seeks submissions for its quarterly newsletter. We welcome:

- Articles about current news and trends.
- Op-ed and perspective pieces on topical issues.
- Descriptions and examples of digitization initiatives.

Manuscripts are to be sent as a Word attachment or in plain text in the email body. Submit materials via email to smariwilliams1979@gmail.com. Items received after deadline will be considered for the following newsletter.