

# Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 9, No. 1

March 1995

## **KATHRYN NEAL 1st Recipient of SAA Minority Student Award**

Kathryn M. Neal was selected as the first recipient of the Society of American Archivists' (SAA) Minority Student Award. Established in 1993, the award is given to encourage minority students to consider careers in the archival profession and to promote minority participation in SAA. The award is a complimentary registration to SAA's annual conference and Ms. Neal attended the September 1994 meeting in Indianapolis.

Ms. Neal received her Master of Library Science degree from the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor in August of 1994, where she specialized in archival administration. Although she describes herself as an archival generalist, manuscripts and visual materials hold special interest for her, as well as the areas of African-American studies, performing arts, literature, and popular culture. She credits her interest in the archival profession to a feature story assignment she wrote while a graduate student in journalism at the University of Minnesota. She interviewed Bob DeFlores, a film collector, who has an outstanding collection that dates back to the 1920s and documents African-Americans, especially entertainers. Mr. DeFlores enthusiasm in caring for his collection spurred Ms. Neal to begin research on the archival profession. She received her master's degree in journalism in June 1991 and began working as an

(See NEAL-page 2, col 1)

## **AATWAR Gets A New Name**

At its business meeting, September 9, 1994 during the SAA annual conference in Indianapolis, the African American and Third World Archivists Roundtable (AATWAR) voted to change its name to "Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable" (AAC). Upon the urging of Deborah Saito, AATWAR members were encouraged to revisit the issue of a name for the roundtable and select a name that would be more inviting, more inclusive, and more directly associated with the statement of purpose of the roundtable. (See the back page of this newsletter for the statement of purpose.) Because there did not seem to be a consensus among the membership about the name change, a decision was made to table the discussion until the 1995 meeting. However, Ms. Saito persuaded the members against further delay and several names were offered for a vote. Thanks to

(See AATWAR-page 2, col 1)

### **Table of Contents**

Jean Blackwell Hutson	2
Coming to a City Near You	4
People, Places & Projects	4
Dorothy Porter Wesley Day	5
SAA Student Award	5
AATWAR Business Meeting	6

(NEAL-from page 1)

editorial assistant for U.S. Art Magazine where she was promoted to assistant editor in July 1993. However, her interest in archives continued to grow and in August 1993 she enrolled in the library science program at the University of Michigan. While at Michigan Ms. Neal was employed as a manuscript assistant at the Bentley Historical Library.

After graduation Ms. Neal returned to her home town, St. Paul, Minnesota, where she now works as an archival consultant. Her present project is to arrange and describe the personal papers of Dr. Jane Hodgson, a retired obstetrician and gynecologist. Dr. Hodgson began practicing obstetrics and gynecology in 1947 when there were few women working in the field. Her research in the 1950s led to the development of a test that could determine pregnancy in a shorter period of time. In recent years, Dr. Hodgson has been a key figure in the reproductive rights movement.

Ms. Neal is also pursuing research on why there are so few people of color in the archival profession. As part of that research she recently mailed a survey to some of the archivists on the AAC mailing list. And she will combine her archival and journalism skills by serving as the editor for the August 1995 issue of the AAC newsletter.

AAC welcomes Ms. Kathryn Neal to the profession and applauds her enthusiasm and energy. We hope that AAC members will reach out to Ms. Neal and encourage and help her as she makes her mark in the archival profession.

(AATWAR-from page 1)

the efforts of Ms. Saito, it is hoped that we have finally resolved the dilemma of what we will be called and can go forward with what we want to accomplish.

## **JEAN BLACKWELL HUTSON HONORED**

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture hosted its 10th annual "Heritage Weekend" of spiritual renewal and celebration of black history on January 27-29, 1995. This year's theme, "Traditions and Transformations" was dedicated in honor of the 80th birthday of Ms. Jean Blackwell Hutson.

Ms. Hutson served as Curator of the Schomburg Center from 1949 to 1972 and Chief from 1972 to 1980.

She was also Assistant Director, Collection Management and Development, Black Studies Research Librarian for the New York Public Library from 1980 until her retirement in February 1984. In three decades of hard work and dedication, Ms. Hutson helped develop the Schomburg Center into one of the world's most comprehensive collections of materials documenting the history and culture of peoples of African descent. Jean Blackwell was born on September 14, 1914 in Summerfield, Florida, a small town south of Jacksonville; however she was raised in Baltimore, Maryland. Her father, Paul O. Blackwell, was a commission merchant who maintained a farm and

(See HUTSON-page 3)

*The African-American and Third World Archivists Roundtable Newsletter* is published twice a year. Questions? Contributions? Contact editor: Joellen EIBashir, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, D.C., 20059, (202) 806-7480/FAX (202) 806-6405.

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## ARCHIVISTS AND ARCHIVES OF COLOR ROUNDTABLE

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(HUTSON—from page 2)

bought and shipped produce. Her mother, Sarah (Myers) Blackwell was an elementary school teacher. As a child, Jean would become easily bored with school, so her teachers would assign her extra readings to hold her interest. She graduated valedictorian from Baltimore's Douglass High School, an all-black institution that was widely recognized for its outstanding faculty and the high scholastic achievement of its students.

Following her graduation from high school, she enrolled at the University of Michigan. After three years she transferred to Barnard College and graduated with a B.A. in English in 1935, whereupon she entered the Columbia School of Library Service, receiving a M.A. in 1936. In 1941 she was awarded a teacher's certificate from Columbia University.

She married twice - her first marriage to song lyricist, Andy Razaf, ended in divorce after eight years. She later married Mr. John Hutson, one of her co-workers at the Countee Cullen Regional Library. They had one daughter, Jean Frances.

Ms. Hutson began working in the New York Public Library system shortly after she graduated from Barnard College. She held a number of positions at branch libraries before she began working at the Schomburg Center. Her original assignment was to supervise the collection for six months, while the librarian was on maternity leave. This assignment evolved into 32 years of service. During her tenure the Schomburg Center's book collection grew from 15,000 to over 75,000 volumes and many significant manuscript collections and art and audio-visual resources were acquired. She headed the library during the period "when Harlem was in vogue" and the library was a meeting place for many of the Black intelligentsia of the day. Such notables as Langston Hughes (her friend since their matriculation at Douglass High School), Ralph Ellison, Richard Wright, John Henrik Clark,

Leopold Sedar Senghor, and Kwame Nkrumah were among those who frequented the library.

Through her work at the Schomburg Center and her writings, Ms. Hutson became internationally recognized for her extensive knowledge on the documentation of black history. In 1965 she was invited by Kwame Nkrumah, (then first president of Ghana) to assist in the development of the Africana collection at the University of Ghana. During her work there she was able to convince the head librarian to expand the scope of the Africana collection beyond the peoples from the continent of Africa to all people of African descent including African-Americans.

In addition to her work at the Schomburg Center, Ms. Hutson also lectured on black history at the City College of New York, where she was an associate adjunct professor in the History Department from 1962-1971. She is a member of numerous organizations and has received many awards and honors including Doctor of Humane Letters, in 1977, from King Memorial College, Columbia, South Carolina and is one of 75 women featured in the photographic exhibition and catalog I Dream a World.

Heritage Weekend 1995 at the Schomburg Center is one of the more recent tributes to Ms. Hutson. The weekend included a two-day symposium on "Africana Libraries in the Information Age". Among the presenters were Robert Wedgeworth, President, International Federation of Library Associations; Hiram L. Davis, Deputy Librarian of Congress; Larry Irving, Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, U. S. Department of Commerce; Beverly Gray, Chief, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress; Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Director of the W.E.B. DuBois Institute, Harvard University; Thomas C. Battle, Director, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center; Frederick Stielow, Director, Amistad Research Center; Jessie Carney Smith, Director,

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## ARCHIVISTS AND ARCHIVES OF COLOR ROUNDTABLE

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(HUTSON-from page 3)

Fisk University Library; and E. J. Josey, Professor, University of Pittsburgh School of Library and Information Studies. Following the symposium a reception, program, and dinner were held in honor of Ms. Hutson. The weekend concluded with a program to recognize donors to the Schomburg Center's collections and the opening of two new exhibitions - "Shona Sculpture of Zimbabwe: The Spirit Within, Eight Contemporary Artist"; and "Enduring Traditions: Visions in African Art".

[Article liberally excerpted from Notable Black American Women c. 1992 and I Dream A World c. 1989]

### COMING TO A CITY NEAR YOU!

Mark your calendars and make plans to meet with AAC at the upcoming SAA meetings.

1995 August 29-Sept 3 Washington, D.C.

1996 August 27-Sept 1 San Diego, CA

1997 September 3-7 Chicago, IL

1998 September 2-6 Orlando, FL

### PEOPLE, PLACES, PROJECTS, PUBLICATIONS & EVENTS

**Ms. Paula Williams**, formerly an archivist for the United Negro College Fund, is now an archivist with the Schomburg Center.

**Dr. W. Martin Dulaney** has been appointed the Director of the Avery Research Center for African-American History and Culture at the College of Charleston, Charleston, SC. Before coming to the Avery Research

Center in September 1994, Dr. Dulaney served as the Curator of History at the Dallas Museum of African-American Life and Culture.

**Wayne State University** and **North Carolina Central University** have received an NEH grant to survey the archival collections at 33 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). This is the first of three phases that will eventually survey 99 HBCUs. For more information contact: Mr. Bob Smith, Project Director, (313) 577-8165.

The **National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO)** received an NEH grant to continue its archival training program for staff at HBCUs. The 1993-94 grant provided training to 80 staff members at 40 HBCUs. This second grant for 1995-95 will provide training for an additional 60 staff members from 30 HBCUs. The 1995 archival training workshop was held in Washington, D.C., March 15-19, in conjunction with the NAFEO annual conference. Thirty staff members from 15 institutions attended. Each institution will receive a site visit by an archival consultant to review its archival program and collections, and make recommendations for improvements. In addition, each institution can apply for a \$1,000 award to implement a special project to assist in the preservation of and access to its collections. The next workshop will be held in March 1996. For more information contact: Dr. Julia Elam, Project Director (202) 543-9111.

Congratulations to **Deborah Dandridge**, Kansas Collection, University of Kansas; **Rosalyn Settles**, National Archives and Records Administration; and **Louis Jones**, Walter Reuther Labor Archives, Wayne State University, for recently passing the certification exam for archivists.

**Dorothy Jenkins Fields**, founder and archivist for **The Black Archives, History & Research Foundation of South Florida, Inc.**, was recently featured in The Miami Herald (1/29/95) as one who is

(PEOPLE-from page 4)

"committed." In the article, Ms. Fields, is praised for the work she is doing to collect and preserve documents important for the study of African American history.

**Sheree DuPree**, librarian at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Florida, is curating the Gospel Music Exhibit, which features the Golden Era of Gospel Music, 1940 to 1960. This photographic exhibit traces the history of African American gospel singing. It is a traveling exhibit and a video tape of the display is available upon request. Please contact Ms. DuPree at the library, 3000 NW 83rd Street, P-108, Gainesville, FL 32606.

**The African American Museums Association (AAMA)** will hold its 17th annual conference on August 24-26, 1995, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Tampa, Florida. The conference will be hosted by the Museum of African American Art in Tampa. A call for conference session proposals has been issued, with a deadline of March 31, 1995. Preference will be given to sessions clearly reflecting the conference theme, "Claiming Ownership: Our Art, Our History, Our Museums." However, proposals dealing with general museology topics are also encouraged. Acceptance notification will be given by May 1, 1995. AAMA also announces the upcoming publication of the 1994 Survey of the African American Museum Field. Funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation, the survey identifies the status and needs of African American museums and cultural centers in the U.S. Information on size and type, collections, staffing and training needs, as well as an institutional profile is provided. For more information concerning the conference, or to request a copy of the survey, contact Jocelyn Robinson-Hubbuch, executive director, at:

P. O. Box 548, Wilberforce, OH 45384/(513) 376-4611.

## **DOROTHY PORTER WESLEY DAY AT THE MOORLAND- SPINGARN RESEARCH CENTER**

The Moorland-Spingarn Research Center (MSRC) at Howard University will hold its annual **Dorothy Porter Wesley Forum and Lecture** on April 14, 1995. The guest speaker this year will be Dr. Porter Wesley herself, whose lecture title is, "Once a Librarian, Always a Librarian." The Forum, in conjunction with the Lecture, will focus on "The Legacy of Dorothy Porter Wesley." Dr. Dorothy Porter Wesley is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Howard University, whose career at the University spanned 43 years. She has published numerous books and articles on African American and African history and culture. Her honors include the Alumni Achievement Award from Howard, several honorary degrees and service awards, and a 1994 Charles Frankel Prize, a national award in the humanities which is presented by President Clinton. For further information contact Ms. Jean Church, Chief Librarian, MSRC, at (202)806-7497.

## **CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED FOR SAA MINORITY STUDENT AWARD**

The Society of American Archivists' sixth annual giving campaign rallied support for the new **Minority Student Award**. As of February 17, 1995 over 100 people had contributed \$5,200 to the campaign. If you have not yet contributed, send your donation, earmarked for the **Minority Student Award**, to SAA, 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605. Do it today!

The Award includes full conference registration and tickets to the opening banquet and closing luncheon. Applicants

**(AWARD-from page 5)**

must be of African, Asian, Hispanic, or Native American descent and currently enrolled full or part-time in a postsecondary educational institution. Preference will be given to full-time students possessing a minimum GPA of 3.0. All applications must be submitted to the SAA Awards Committee by June 1 of each year. For more information, contact SAA, 600 S. Federal, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60605, (312) 922-0140.

**AATWAR BUSINESS  
MEETING  
Indianapolis, 1994**

Over 30 persons attended the 7th annual AATWAR business meeting at the annual SAA meeting in Indianapolis. Co-chairs **Deborah Dandridge** and **Beverly Cook** presided. The new SAA Council liaison, **Sharon Thibodeau**, was introduced. **Brenda Banks**, SAA Vice President and 1995 President-elect, made a plea for increased AATWAR involvement in the governance and activities of SAA. The Roundtable presented Ms. Banks with a gift in recognition of her recent election to the SAA office of Vice-President.

The roundtable expressed its vigorous support of SAA's Minority Student Award. The first recipient of the Award, **Kathryn Neal**, was introduced. She is a recent graduate of the University of Michigan's M.A. Program in Library Science. Those in attendance contributed more than \$200 to the Minority Student Award.

The roundtable name change, which had been initiated by **Debora Saito** at the 1993 meeting in New Orleans, and debated in the March 1994 issue of our newsletter, was presented for a final vote by the membership. By an overwhelming majority, the roundtable agreed to change its name to Archivists and Archives of Color, in order to insure greater participation of diverse non-white ethnic archivists and archives.

**Lynda DeLoach**, member of the 1995

SAA Program Committee, led a discussion on SAA's process of evaluating proposals. It was suggested that AATWAR members join other roundtables and committees, particularly International Archival Affairs Committee, in developing joint proposals. At the roundtable's traditional "brainstorming session," more than 6 proposals were identified and discussed. These were later forwarded to **Donna Wells**, 1994-95 Program Committee member, who presented them to the Committee.

**Dr. Daniel Williams**, SAA Fellow and Tuskegee University Archivist, agreed to serve as the new co-chair of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable.

**GUIDE TO  
AFRICAN-  
AMERICAN  
MANUSCRIPTS  
in the Collections  
of the Virginia  
Historical Society**

Through generous funding provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, a copy of this Guide is being provided free of charge to your institution. In 1993 the Endowment funded the Virginia Historical Society's "African-American Manuscripts Access Project." In addition to the publication of the Guide, the grant enabled the Society's project staff to create US MARC/AMC records of manuscript collections with significant African-American components and to upload those records into the OCLC national bibliographic database. Any questions about this project or about the Guide itself may be forwarded to the project director, E. Lee Shepard, Senior Archivist, Virginia Historical Society, P. O. Box 7311, Richmond, Virginia 23221-0311 or e-mail, [eshepard@leo.vsla.edu](mailto:eshepard@leo.vsla.edu).

Additional copies of the Guide may be purchased from the Virginia Historical Society's Museum Shop for \$10.00, plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. (Virginia residents must add \$.45 state sales tax.)



The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc.

## 1995 ANNUAL MEETING

Philadelphia Marriott

Philadelphia, PA

October 4-8, 1995

# CALL FOR SESSIONS

**ASALH, Inc.** invites your participation in the 80th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA, October 4-8, 1995. Persons interested in presenting papers or organizing sessions should send proposals, including paper title and an abstract, to the program chairperson on or before March 31, 1995.

*Program Chair*

Dr. James E. Newton

Professor

Black American Studies

University of Delaware

420 Ewing Hall

Newark, DE 19716-2503

Phone: (302) 831-8683

Fax #: (302) 831-1538

***Theme: Reflections on 1895: Douglass, DuBois,  
Washington***