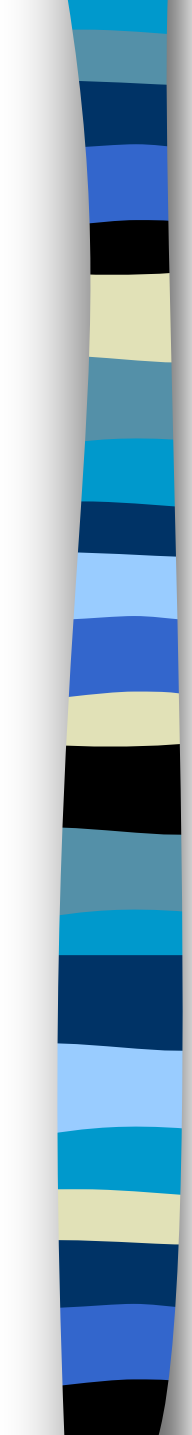


African American Genealogy 101 & 102



Charlottesville LDS Family History Center,
Shelley Murphy, ECG
March 29, 2008

- 
- It does not matter who or where in the U. S. you are researching, you need to know the basics about genealogy research, records & resources. Most importantly asking questions, managing your files and documenting your resources.
 - This presentation provides the basics to start researching your family tree highlighting African American research.



Let's get started-An Overview

- What are you looking for?
- Basic Tips & Tools to Have and Use
- Tips to Stay Organized
- File & Research Management
- Know your Records & Resources
- Challenges of African-American Research
- Bringing it all together

What are you looking for?

- Who, What, When, Where, and Why
- Has someone in your family already completed some research
- Do you have the time? Have you considered the costs?
- \$\$\$\$-Costs



Genealogy Pox?

- Once the genealogy bug bites you, it will become an all-encompassing monster. You will become obsessed! You can't stop. You will suffer from the disease called the “**genealogy pox**”!



Ref: Black Roots Tony Burroughs, pg.44

Basic tips...

For the
New & Experienced Genealogist!
No one said it will be easy!



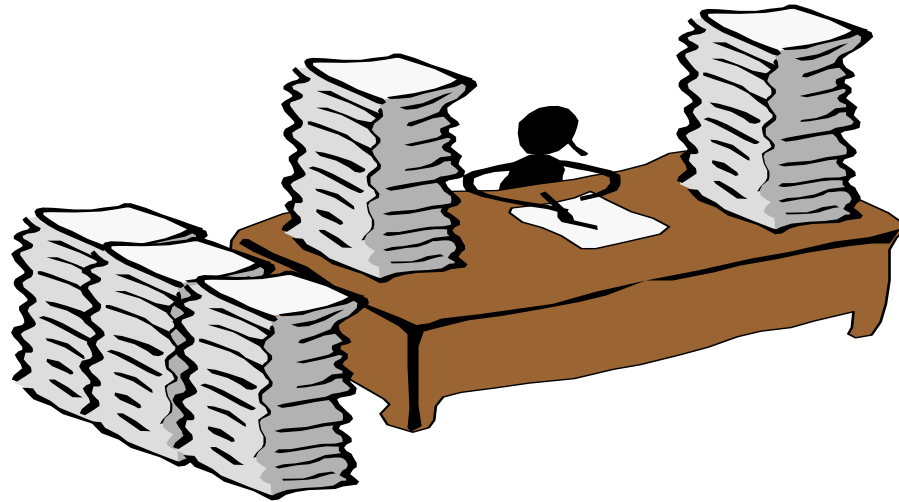
If you are not Organized...

- you'll become frustrated and quit, or duplicate research you've already done



Ref:Black Roots, Tony Burroughs pg.44

You will become successful in collecting pieces of paper..



If you do not have a system for filing, saving, or retrieving.



Tools to have...and Use

- Notepaper-acid free
- Pencils
- Pencil lead and erasers, Pens
- Genealogy charts and forms
- File folders-acid free boxes, paper, folders
- *Internet*, Telephone book, or list of genealogy telephone numbers
- Stationery, envelopes, and stamps

Black Roots, Tony Burroughs, pg. 45-46

Tips to become & stay organized

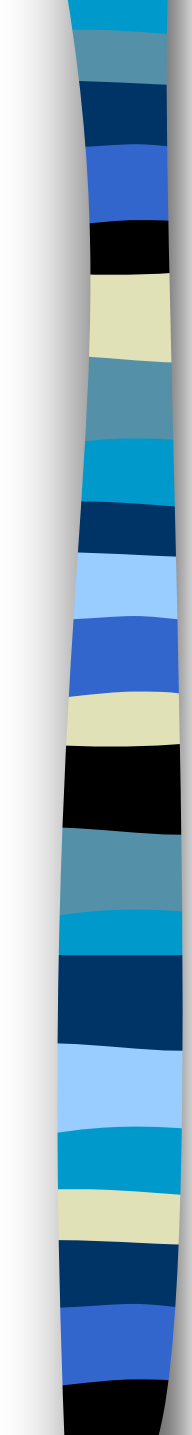
Get everything in one place

A designated place; whether that's a binder or a whole file cabinet.

Start by grouping what information you have by **surname** — it's the most basic piece of information you can have about a family member, and it provides a natural way to organize.

If you've already done a bit of research, you may want to start a separate folder or binder for each surname, but sectioning out what will be in the file (birth, death, marriage, deeds, military, etc..



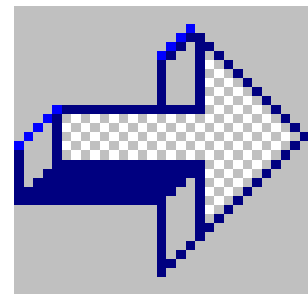
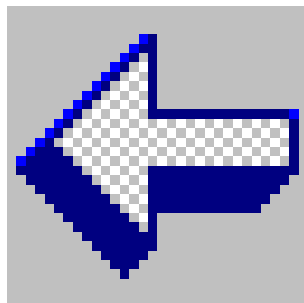
- 
- ❑ All of the new information should be with the family it's about, and can be looked at in smaller chunks as your interest in different branches changes.
 - ❑ Remember to cite your references and sources include the date and where you obtained the information.

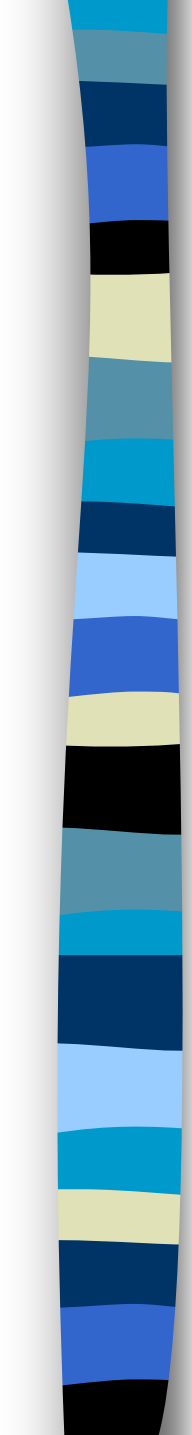
http://www.genealogy.com/85_fs-org.html

What goes Out Must come IN

Whether you're writing to a cousin or to a county clerk three states away, tracking all of your pending information requests is crucial.

Keep copies of all the letters you send — they act as records of what you requested when, and how much.



- 
- You may want to keep a log as you send out letters. This can help you see at a glance which requests are still outstanding. You can set up a simple table, checklist by hand or on the computer.
 - Organize by date, for better tracking
 - Tell the family of your successes or failures...it will become a recording and you might get some help or new information.

http://www.genealogy.com/85_fs-org.html

File Management



- Use a file cabinet, drawers, labeled boxes
- Use dividers
- Alphabetize your surnames
- Keep filing up to date
- Keep file folders in the cabinet, not on a desk/table
- When you pull out a file, **RETURN** it back to the cabinet at the end of the day

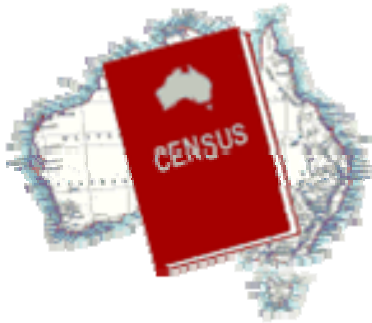
Black roots, Tony Burroughs, pg. 53



Managing Your Research

- Genealogical charts and forms are essential in organizing names, dates, places, and events
- Use the standard special charts and forms for genealogical research (see Croom's book)
- Set up a "to do list" and stick with it..

Common terms and resources..



Look Ups



Queries





File folders...

- Arrange all folders the same, **MAKE A INDEX** sheet for each file folder, helps to keep you organized and consistent with your materials-it will serve as a **CHECKLIST**



Suggested file folder contents:

- Contact list
- Document list
- To do list, calendar
- Correspondence: letters, notes & requests
- Family tree charts, group sheets, census
- Oral history interviews, notes, letters, documents: birth, death & marriage
- Photos, drawings, maps
- Discrepancies, notes



Tips!

- When you are researching, **Only** search one name/person/surname, if you see other names that you need to research further, make a note on a post-it, or add to the to do list- date it.
- REMEMBER to cite all the information so you can return to the right document.
- Stick to your to do list, have only one to do list-per person/file
- Do not try to analyze your information -take it home to read, sort, & make notes

More Tips...



- Join and participate in a genealogical society, group...
- Attend genealogy training and conferences (keep a record of your attendance)
- Share your experiences
- Ask for help & Set up sharing time



African American Genealogy Group/AAGG

Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS)

Central Virginia Genealogical Society/CVGS

Albemarle/Charlottesville Historical Society

Virginia Genealogical Society/VGS



More good stuff...

- Don't assume anything
- Write down the different spellings of the surnames
(Goens/Goins/Goings/Gowins/Gowens/Gowings)
- Ask questions, document, document...
- Research the entire family*
- Don't assume all African-Americans have Native American roots
- Prove your research, learn about the area you are researching
- Chat with those who have done it

(There are more tips in Tony Burroughs book)



Abbreviations and notes...

- Col'd=colored
- Cold=colored
- M=Mulatto
- B=Black
- A=Africa
- Free persons of color (FPC)
- Free Mixtures
- Free Negroes
- Non-white
- Free Negroes chargeable with tax
- Free Blacks chargeable with tax
- Person(s) of Color

African American Genealogy 102



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Who do you start with? YOU!

- Write down your information-Document!
- Who is your oldest living family member?-Call them-Today
- Oral History, Photos, and Sharing of Information





What you need to know about a person...

- Full name and nicknames (why nicknames)
- Where were they born, what county, city, state date, where they born in a hospital?
- What was going on in the area during the years you are researching?
- What were the parents, names, grandparents, etc, where they born, type of work they did, siblings...
- Type of work, who are the neighbors, church affiliations



Know your Records & Resources

- Vital Stats records: birth, death, marriage, divorce
- Federal Census & State Census*
- Public records-probate, wills, deeds, tax lists, personal property list, mortgages, bill of sales
- Media Records-newspaper, Obits, Funeral notices
- Military Records
- Headstones, cemetery records

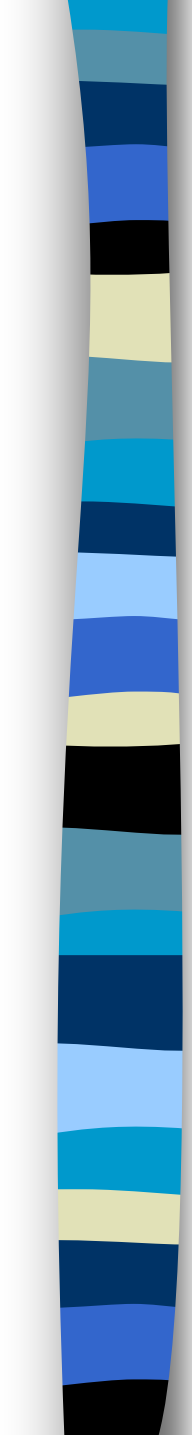
Let's look at some Vital Statistics Records and see what information we will find...



VITAL RECORDS & Resource Locations

- Birth Records : These documents generally include the individual's name, date and place of birth; parents' names and residence.
- Marriage Records: This type of record usually includes the date and place of marriage, names of the bride and bridegroom and their ages, places of residence, witnesses' names, and occasionally parents' names.
- Death Records: This source of information may include some or all of the following: name, age, occupation, residence, and names of parents of the deceased; date, place, and cause of death; date and place of burial; occasionally date and place of birth.

2/16/08 Taken from BYU online course: <http://ce.byu.edu/courses/pe/999016073004/public/start.htm>

- 
- State Archives: generally located in the state capital.
 - County Records: usually located in the county seat. There is always more information in the county courthouses than has been microfilmed by your local genealogical society.
 - If the vital records you seek have not been filmed, write to the following to find out if the material may be obtained elsewhere. (or check an online resource)
 - City-Town Records: Some cities and towns began keeping vital records before counties assumed the responsibility. A letter of inquiry to the town or city clerk may prove beneficial (or check the county genweb or rootsweb internet sites)

2/16/08 Taken from <http://ce.byu.edu/courses/pe/999016073004/public/start.htm>



Primary vs. Secondary Resources

Primary, a person witnessed the event

Secondary, did not witness the event

Why is it important to you?



Typical African-American Research Records

- Census Records, 1860 Slave Census & 1850 Slave Census
- Bibles, Letters, Property Records-Owners, Oral history
- Wills, Bill of Sale, Obits, Headstones
- References, books, dissertations

What are the challenges you will face?



Slave records and where to find them...

- Recorded property records-Courthouse
- Look for the plantation owner-who were the neighbors
- Plantation owner-find out if there is any information regarding the plantation in local city or county records, historical society
- Look for plantation owner descendants-maybe they are looking
- Goggle “surnames”



Continued...

- Locate others searching the same surname and areas
- Wills, estate records, manumission (freeing of a slave) documents, insurance records
- Church and religious affiliation, check library records, special collections
- National archives-records that pertain to American Slavery and the International Slave Trade:
(<http://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/slavery-records.html>)



More...

- National & State Archives
- Library of Congress (two booklets)
- State Libraries, College Libraries
- Freedman Bureau Records (marriage, savings and trust company, branch offices)
- Newspapers and Historical Societies
- Join listserv's (rootsweb, afrigeneas)
- Plantation Records-family holdings



More records to check...

- Emancipation papers (freeing a person from someone else)
- Slave narratives, families genealogy records
- Plantation records (check out Edward Ball's book)
- City and County directories
- Public notices or records, local courthouse and city hall's
- Find resources where Slave research has been successful...



Online Resources...

- <http://www.afrigeneas.com/>
- <http://www.afrigeneas.com/guide/>
- <http://ccharity.com/>
- <http://www.familysearch.org>
- <http://freedmensbureau.com/>
- <http://www.cyndislist.com/african.htm>
- <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/african/>
- <http://www.ancestry.com>
- <http://www.familytree.com>
- <http://geneasearch.com/more.htm>
- <http://www.footnote.com/>
- <http://www.rootsweb.com/>



Virginia Slave Records-google

- <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/african/virginia/>
- Limited Slave records in VA collected by P. A. Miller (by county):
<http://home.comcast.net/~p.a.miller/genealogy/docs/laverecords/va.htm>
- Runaway records-
<http://people.uvawise.edu/runaways/>
- <http://etext.virginia.edu/subjects/runaways/1740s.html>



Guidebooks listed by Afrigeneas.com

- Byers, Paula K. African American Genealogical Sourcebook. Detroit: Gale Research, 1995.
- Redford, Dorothy Spruill. Somerset Homecoming: Recovering A Lost Heritage. New York: Doubleday, 1988. (Not a guidebook, but provides step by step what the research is like.)
- Woodtor, Dee Parmer. Finding A Place Called Home: A Guide to African-American Genealogy and Historical Identity. New York: Random House, 1999.
- Young, Tommie M. Afro-American Genealogy Sourcebook. New York: Garland, 1987.

2/15/08 List taken from <http://www.afrigeneas.com/guide/guide9.html>



Talking Stories, Oral history, Interviews...

- ✓ How do you do it?
- ✓ Use the tools available (Tony's book, Ancestry.com, etc)
- ✓ Document, document, document
- ✓ Listen, Listen, Listen
- ✓ Record if you have permission
- ✓ Know how & and what questions to ask (think about what you are looking for)

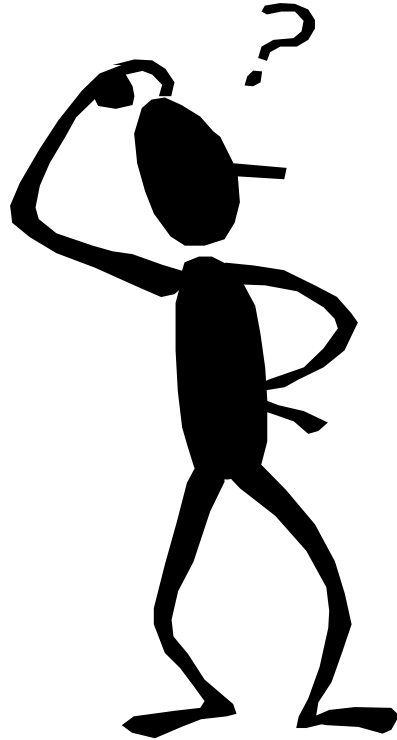
Interview--Oral History Activity..

Bringing it all together

- Tell the story, Tell your story
- Write a timeline and biography
- Share your findings



Do you have any...



Thank you and good luck!





References

1. Black Roots, Beginners Guide to Tracing the African American Family Tree by Tony Burroughs
2. How to Trace your African American Roots by Barbara Thompson Howell
3. The Unpuzzling Your Past Workbook by Emily Anne Croom
4. BYU Online Genealogy Course
5. Ancestry.com