

A Quarterly Publication of The Multicultural Genealogical Center

African American Presence in the Ohio River Valley

A symposium on the African American Presence in the Ohio River Valley will be held at Ohio University's Baker Center on March 11 and 12, 2005.

The symposium will kick off with the inaugural Alvin Adams Memorial Lecture that is to be presented by Professor Joe William Trotter, Jr., Mellon Professor of History and Head of the Department of History at Carnegie Mellon University. This event convenes on Friday March 11, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at the Baker Center Ballroom.

The title for this lecture is "African American Life in the Urban Ohio Valley: Lessons and Perspectives for Research on the Rural Experience". A reception will follow in Room 1804 of Baker Center.

Professor Trotter has written about the African American presence in the Ohio River Valley and his presentation will set the tone for the weekend symposium, which will continue on Saturday, March 12, 2005. The event seeks to bring together researchers throughout Ohio University and the community to develop research and creative projects that are related to the African American experience in the Ohio River Valley.

Among the objectives of the weekend symposium are:

1. To identify what research and creative projects are

currently taking place on the African American Presence in the Ohio River Valley at Ohio University and in the wider community.

2. To identify strategies to facilitate and encourage collaboration for future research and creative projects on the African American presence in the rural Ohio River Valley. Special attention will be given to the engagement of graduate and undergraduate students.

3. Develop a semi-structured instrument to use in oral history multimedia documentary projects scheduled to start in Spring 2005.

Three panels are scheduled for Saturday, March 12:

Panel #1: Current research on the African American Presence in the Ohio River Valley. (10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon) Baker Center Ballroom.

Panel #2: Educational and Service Learning Opportunities on the African American Presence on the Ohio River Valley. Baker Center Ballroom (1:00 p.m.—2:30 p.m.). This session will explore experiences and develop strategies for collaboration, especially opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students.

Panel #3: Designing an Oral History Research Project on the African American Presence in the Ohio River Valley. Baker Center Ballroom (3:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.). The purpose of this panel is to develop a semi-structured instrument for use in an oral history documentary project on the African American presence in the rural Ohio River Valley. Participants are expected to be active in generating questions for the instrument.

The symposium is sponsored by the Department of African American Studies and Social Work department, along with the Multicultural Genealogical Center, and the United States Department of Agriculture-Forests Division-Wayne National Forest.

Ada Woodson Adams
Mildren Vore

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Triracial Groups at Cutler, Chesterhill and Zanesville, Ohio (continued)

Excerpts from (Gale) Richard Walker, Ph.D. address in McConelsville, Ohio on March 13, 2000

Marietta vs. Zanesville

Citizens of the Muskingum Valley are overwhelming White and of northern European descent—German, English, Irish, Scottish, and French, more or less in that order. Their cultural roots in North America, however, sharply split between New England and Old Virginia. Many citizens of Marietta, proudly trace their ancestry to New England settlers with Puritan forebears. For example, Revolutionary War brigadier-general Rufus Putnam, founder of Marietta in 1788, was born at Sutton, Massachusetts, in 1738, the son of a deacon. I do not know of a single Marietta in pioneer days that married an African-American or an Indian.

Many Zanesvillians, on the other hand, proudly trace their ancestry to rough cut backwoodsmen from the western portions of Virginia, many of whom, in every sense of the term, had intercourse with the Indians. For example, Ebenezer Zane and his kin were one of the first families to permanently locate along the upper Ohio River, arriving in 1769 near what would become Wheeling, (West) Virginia. Zane was born in Berkeley County, Virginia, in 1747. His grave marker at Martins Ferry, Ohio, notes, "the first permanent inhabitant of this part of the western world".

Between 1800 and 1850, as these two different towns—Marietta and Zanesville—and the valley between them brimmed with set-

tlers, the two cultures clashed—always bitterly and sometimes violently. To this day, Marietta in appearance and culture is a facsimile of a genteel New England town. Its prominent and oldest church is Congregationalist. Zanesville in appearance and culture is a facsimile of a tough mining town of southern Appalachia. Its prominent and oldest congregations are Methodist and Presbyterian.

Whereas Marietta and its New Englanders were staunch Abolitionist, Zanesville and its Virginians were radical pro-slavery. In one of the great ironies of the Muskingum Valley, in 1801 Rufus Putnam of Marietta purchased land on the west side of the Muskingum directly across from Zanesville. It grew to become the town of Putnam—every bit as big as Zanesville—populated with Putnam's relatives and other New Englanders. "Putnam," wrote Zanesville historian Norris Schneider, "was an aristocratic and wealthy neighborhood, with quiet streets and beautiful homes..." This was quite unlike Zanesville, a large portion of which was a swamp.

Thus the two little towns, face to face across a ribbon of river, were irreconcilably and violently split over slavery. Between 1830 and 1840, Pro-slavery Virginians in Zanesville sent a mob of 200 over the bridge to Putnam to stone and club Abolitionist speakers. They threw filth, bricks, and mud at attendees at Abolition conventions; insulted their wives; burned some of their barns; and threatened to burn Putnam to the ground.

The Abolitionists of Putnam, in turn, kidnapped pro-slavery ringleader Mike Casey; allegedly burned a pro-slavery man's building; fought with stones in the street; and formed a citizen militia (called Putnam Greys) that marched through the streets carrying flint-lock muskets.

It is a further irony that Zanesville—not Marietta—would eventually attract Blacks and Coloreds and become home to one of the larger triracial populations in Ohio. In the early 1800s white citizens in Zanesville burned their own school house to the ground to prevent Black children from attending. Zanesville, not Marietta, would eventually (1878) build a Negro High School.

African-American newspaper columnist Henry Burke of Marietta, scholar of the Underground Railroad in southeastern Ohio, jokingly refers to Zanesville as "the Melungeon capital of the world."



Excerpts to be continued in the next newsletter

In Memoriam

Ann Long

Cornelia Ann Woodson Long passed away quietly in her sleep on January 1, 2005 at her home in Broadwell.

Born September 14, 1936, in Nelsonville, she was the daughter of Hope A. and Grace V. Whitfield Woodson. She was preceded in death by a brother-in-law, Alvin C. Adams.

Fulfilling a lifelong dream, at the age of 60 Ann earned a registered nursing degree from Columbus State. She was a life member of the Multicultural Genealogical Center of Chesterhill, Ohio and served on the board of the Federal Valley Resources Senior Center of Stewart, Ohio. Ann liked to travel, sew and read, and found joy in life.

She was married for 41 years to John Anderson Long, Jr., who preceded her in death in 1997. To this union was born four children, John (Janet) Anderson Long III of Zanesville, Cynthia Ann Long-Wainwright and

Christopher Alvin Long of California, and Judith Annette (Michael) Reed of Columbus. She also is survived by grandchildren, Todd and Joy Smith, and Zachary Long of Columbus, Nathan Long of Phoenix, Arizona, Lekesha Long of Oakland, California, Granger and Anderson Long of Zanesville; brothers, Jack Woodson and David (Maureen) Woodson of Columbus; sisters, Ada Woodson Adams of Broadwell, Alicia Woodson and good friend Lori Saxe of Michigan; aunts, Haidee Smith of Columbus and Georgiana Woodson of Nelsonville; and Mr. Sandy, her toy poodle and longtime companion.

Ann gave much and asked for little. She was loved and will be dearly missed by her many relatives, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Ann made specific arrangements for cremation and no service. She was interred beside her husband in Northlawn Memory Gardens in Westerville, Ohio

Publication News

Ada Woodson Adams and Nancy E. Aiken will be signing copies of their book, *A Significant Presence: A Pictorial Glimpse of the Black Experience in Athens, County, Ohio* on April 12th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Little Professor book store in Athens, Ohio.

A special window display will highlight the event. Little Professor is located on Court Street across from the Ohio University College Green.

The book store has been selling *A Significant Presence* since it was used fall quarter for the introductory class in African American Studies at Ohio University.

If you have not purchased your copy yet, join Ada and Nancy in Athens in April. All proceeds go to MGC.



Good News from MGC Youth Members

Caleb Butcher is a tall, thin, soft-spoken, compassionate, and loving 18-year-old high school senior and a member of MGC. He lives in Appalachian Ohio where many people struggle to provide for their families. Caleb understands this struggle, and he is reaching out to help African people in Tanzania whose struggle is more difficult than that of Appalachian families.

Caleb had an opportunity to meet Harold and Jonas from Tanzania. They are mountain tourist guides, who guided a friend of Caleb's father, David Butcher, to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro. David's friend, Brent, became good friends during the climb with Harold and Jonas. Brent invited Harold and Jonas to come to the United States. When they came, David invited them to his home. Harold and Jonas spent many hours with the

Butcher family, and each learned about the other's culture.

As part of his high school graduation requirements, Caleb must do a community service project. In his junior year Caleb wrote his proposal for his community service project to raise money to help fulfill some of the needs of his new African friends and the school in their community.

Caleb raised this money through private donations, giving power point presentations at libraries and churches, and writing businesses. Caleb has raised awareness of the needs of the Tanzanian people and has raised over \$3000. Besides money, one local company has agreed to donate T-shirts and another has donated paper supplies.

Nkoanrua Secondary School in Duluti-Arusha has about 376 children. There

is no water supplied to the school. Getting a water line to the school will cost about \$300. Caleb sent the money and work has begun on the water line. He also sent money to purchase a bicycle for a local man who helps the village by walking buckets of milk to a market several miles away. Some money was used to hire a photographer to document what is being done. Pictures have come back and so have letters of thanks from the school children and the Head Mistress of the school.

Good news about good works needs to be recognized and praised. Caleb's comment, "I wanted to do something that was meaningful. I wanted to improve the lives of people," sums up the character of an ordinary young man who does and will continue to do extraordinary things.

Ada Woodson Adams

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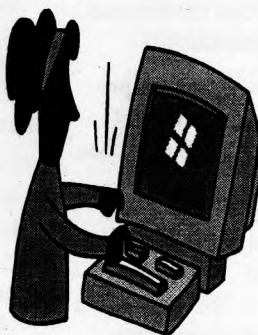
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**MGC
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www.mgcenter.org



Membership Information

- Annual Membership runs from January 1 through December 31
- To become a member of MGC, simply fill out an application form (applications can be obtained by contacting the address below) and send it along with your dues to:

The Multicultural Genealogical Center
P. O. Box 125
Chesterhill, Ohio 43728-0125

Or bring it to the monthly meeting at The Friends Meeting House on St. Rt. 555 next to the fire station in Chesterhill. Monthly meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month.

If you would like to take advantage of the installment plan for a lifetime membership, please contact **Mildred Vore, Treasurer**, at the monthly meeting.