

PAMPHLET FILE



# BROKEN CHAINS

VOL. I, NO. 8

MARCH 1993

## "LIFTING AS WE CLIMB"

*The Motto of the National Association of Colored Women*

By Michelle Carr

*T*onight  
*E*verything  
*A*ppeared  
*R*ough.

*I cried tonight,  
The pressure I could not sustain.  
I felt the stress and frustrations  
Along with heartache and pain.*

*The Children,  
School,  
Work,  
And not enough rest,  
Constant reminders, "Wake up, don't you remember,  
You're expected to be the best."*

*Sometimes I want to throw up my hands,  
"That's it!" "I'm tired of pulling my hair."  
Then God looks down and says,  
"Don't Quit, my child.  
"I'll never give you more than  
You can bear."*

—Michelle Carr

Women, particularly African-American women, demonstrate the strength in the broken chain. Throughout the years, African-American women have had to struggle to keep their families together, fight for equality and rights, and battled to seek their independence.

Often described as "Superwoman," the women automatically step into the role of mother, father, doctor, counselor, clergy, accountant, and



Artist Charles White's tribute to Black women in the Johnson Publishing Company collection.

nutritionist without a bat of an eye, yet, she continues to "lift as she climbs."

Although African-American women have been cast as a double minority in society, Black and a woman, they also have been doubly invisible—their history denied.

The African-American woman must remember to keep the faith, strength, and pride in herself because no one is stronger than the Black woman.

Through this issue, we would like to educate and make you aware of the struggles, contributions, and success of the African-American woman. It is important to recognize the woman and give her the respect she is due.

This issue is dedicated to the African-American Woman.



## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Robert C. Watson



### A HISTORICAL NOTE

Gerda Lerner notes, "Black women are mentioned, usually briefly and peripherally, in most black history sources." It has not been a favorite subject of historians, although, in recent years a great deal more attention is being focused on the special plight of black women in the diaspora. The research

reveals that Black women from Nefertiti to Oprah Winfrey have made outstanding accomplishments. Black women throughout history have been leaders, scientists, civil rights activists, world-champion athletes, educators, performers, scholars, crusaders for justice, and the list goes on and on.

In this issue, I would like to bring your attention to one very well-known Black woman and to one lesser-known and they are:

### MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE

She was an educator and founder of Bethune-Cookman College. Born in Mayesville, South Carolina, she attended Scotia Seminary for black girls, Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, and then taught at Presbyterian schools in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. In 1904, with five pupils and no funds, she founded a normal industrial school for black girls in Daytona Beach, Florida. By 1923 there were 600 students at the school, and it became affiliated with the Board of Education of the Methodist Church

absorbing Cookman Institution for Boys at Jacksonville. It was then known as the Bethune-Cookman Institution (later Bethune-Cookman College.)

Mrs. Bethune was its president until 1947, and president emeritus and Trustee thereafter. From 1936 to 1944, Mrs. Bethune was director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration—the first black woman to head a federal office.

### MARY FIELDS

Miss Fields has the distinction of having been one of the first female mail-carriers, and the first black female carrier. In 1985, at the age of sixty or more, Mary Fields became the mail-carrier in Cascade, Montana. She was called "Stagecoach Mary," and earned a reputation for delivering the mail in any weather. "Stagecoach Mary" was six-feet tall, tough, quick-tempered, well-armed, and a match for most men on the frontier.

For additional reading see bibliography below:

Marian Anderson. *My Lord, What A Morning*  
Maya Angelou. *I Know Why the Cage Bird Sings*  
Wendell P. Dabney. *Maggie L. Walker I. O. of St. Luke*  
Althea Gibson. *I Always Wanted to Be Somebody*  
Calvin Hernton. *Sex and Racism in America*

Zora Neale Hurston. *Of Mules and Men*  
Gerda Lerner. *Black Women in White America*  
Ann Moody. *Coming of Age in Mississippi*  
Jessie Carney Smith. *Epic Lives: One Hundred Black Women Who Made a Difference*  
Ethel Waters. *His Eyes on the Sparrow*

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Suggestions, comments, questions, articles are welcomed.

Send to Franklin Street Annex, Room 106.

Editor . . . . . Michelle Carr

Department Director . . . . . Robert C. Watson

## ECHOES FROM THE PAST . . .

### Important Dates in Black History



- |                |   |                |  |
|----------------|---|----------------|--|
| March 1, 1875  | Civil Rights Bill enacted by Congress. Bill gave African-Americans the right to equal treatment in inns, public conveyances, theaters, and other places of public amusement.  | March 14, 1794 | Eli Whitney patented cotton gin which made cotton king and increased demand for slave labor.   |
| March 2, 1807  | Congress banned the slave trade.  | March 16, 1827 | First African-American newspaper, <i>Freedom's Journal</i> , published in New York City.   |
| March 5, 1770  | Death of Crispus Attucks, an African-American man, was the first of five people killed in the Boston Massacre. Some historians have called him the first martyr of the American Revolution.   | March 20, 1852 | <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> , a novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe, published in Boston.  |
| March 6, 1857  | The Supreme Court ruled in the Dred Scott case. The Court determined that Scott could not claim any rights as a citizen because of his race.  | March 23, 1985 | Death of Patricia Roberts Harris (60), the first African-American woman ambassador, and the first African-American woman cabinet member, in Washington, D.C.   |
| March 10, 1913 | Harriet Tubman, Underground Railroad "conductor," died.   | March 24, 1837 | Canada gave blacks the right to vote.  |
| March 10, 1969 | James Earl Ray pleaded guilty in a Memphis court to charges of killing Martin Luther King, Jr. He was sentenced to ninety-nine years in prison. The House Select Committee on Assassinations said later that Ray fired the shot that killed King but that he was probably one element in a larger conspiracy. | March 25, 1965 | Selma-to-Montgomery march ended with rally of some fifty thousand at Alabama capitol. One of the marchers, a white civil rights worker named Viola Liuzzo, was shot to death on U.S. Highway 80 after the rally by white terrorists. Three Klansmen were convicted of violating her civil rights and sentenced to ten years in prison. |

## QUESTION OF THE DAY . . .

Do you think women can raise boys into men?  
Do you think women raise their daughters and love their sons?

Your comments will be published in the upcoming April issue of *Broken Chains*. Thank you for taking the time to respond!

Please send your comments by April 6th, to:  
Michelle Carr, Franklin Street Annex.

For our out-of-town guest, please send to:  
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation  
Attention: Michelle Carr  
African-American Programs  
P. O. Box 1776  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-1776. ■■■■■



## WE'VE GOT A VISITOR

Guest Writer

Patricia Gibbs  
Research Historian  
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

### DAILY SCHEDULE FOR AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY COOK

*Pat Gibbs acknowledges that this daily schedule for a cook is biased toward the gentry household. Lacking writings by the cooks themselves and with few references to their owners, she readily admits that most of the details are conjectural. Times are approximate, varied from one household to the next, and changed slightly in the winter to take better advantage of natural light.*

How essential was a good cook to the smooth running of a household? The words of two Williamsburg residents suggest they considered a good cook second only to a good wife. Thomas Jones reported "much disorder with our Servants" in his 1728 letter to his wife who was then visiting in England. Venus, in particular, had become "so incorrigible in her bad Habits" that she would not "send in a dish of Meat fit to Set before any body" and Jones had resolved "to send her up to some of the Quarters."

At the death of his wife Elizabeth in mid August 1787, George Wythe found that "necessary domestic duties occupied so much of his time . . . He was irritated and vexed by a thousand little occurrences he had never foreseen." During this period he became even more dependent on Lydia Broadnax, the Wythes' cook. In recognition of her faithful service, Wythe freed Lydia on August 20, 1787, two days after his wife's death, and testified she was more than forty-five years old. Although free, Lydia continued as Wythe's cook until his death.

We can assume that most black cooks, the vast majority of whom were female slaves, fell somewhere between incorrigible Venus and faithful Lydia. Generally the cook was the most skillful female slave and the one on whom the household was most dependent. She ranked at the top of the domestic hierarchy in well-to-do eighteenth-century Virginia urban households, which were usually staffed by several other black women who cleaned, gardened, laundered, helped care for the children, and did other chores their mistresses ordered them to do.



Preparing food over a hot fire was a hazardous occupation, and alertness was an essential characteristic of a good cook. The register that lists York County free blacks from the late eighteenth through the first quarter of the nineteenth century describes many women with burn scars on their faces, arms, hands, breasts, and legs. Sarah Williams was described as "a dark mulatto about 17 years of age 5 feet 5 inches high a large scar on the left arm from a burn or scald & one over the right eye." "Comfort (alias Comfort James)," was described as "a very black woman about 34 years of age 5 feet 1 ½ inches high has lost several teeth, very grey, she has a large scar on the breast occasioned (as she says) by her being frequently employed over the fire."

Cooks worked long hours beginning before sunrise and extending into early evening, and the work was physically demanding. Lifting heavy iron pots and huge brass kettles was tiring, as were carrying wood into the kitchen (30 large pieces a day by conservative estimate), hauling countless buckets of water (wooden buckets full of water weigh about 20 pounds), and bending over fires year-round (recent cooking experiments recorded temperatures over 170 degrees Fahrenheit on the hearth). Although the drudgery continued through the day, there were slack periods, such as after dinner, when cooks could slow their pace. However, watchful mistresses made certain their slaves, unless they were sick, were never idle.

The cook's work, although often mundane and repetitive, had certain advantages. Cooks tasted foods being prepared and had first call on leftovers returned to the kitchen from the mistress's table. They often slept in a room adjoining or above the kitchen. Because of their close relationship with their mistresses, the cooks frequently received hand-me-down clothing and household effects. They usually accompanied their mistresses to market, which gave them several opportunities each week to leave the property. The mistresses' desire to try out new recipes occasionally gave cooks a break in their routine. An elderly Monticello slave named Isaac, interviewed in the 1840s, recalled this scene from his boyhood: "Mrs. Jefferson would come out there with a cookery book in her hand & read out of it to Isaac's mother how to make cakes, tarts & so on."

A skilled cook knew more than how to prepare a variety of foods using an assortment of



equipment that became more varied as the century progressed. A sense of timing was essential. All parts of a meal had to be ready to send to the table when they were called for. She also needed the ability to make-do and master the art of disguise when the gravy burned, the cake fell, or the carefully garnished platter overturned.

When the master of the household or his dinner guests praised the meal, the mistress took

credit but we can only hope, if she was truly a "Lady," that she complimented the cook at the earliest opportunity.

As you read through the schedule, assume that part of the time the cook was assisted by another slave woman and slave children who—although requiring varying attention depending on their ages—could stir a pot, watch a fire, turn the spit, or haul wood:

## *DAILY SCHEDULE FOR AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY COOK*

*About 5:30 A.M.* over an hour before most members of the household rise, the cook rekindles the fire, draws water, and puts it on to heat for family and general kitchen use. She feeds any chickens kept in the fattening pen and milks the cow if the family lives on the outskirts of town and has one.

*About 6:30—7:30 A.M.* she kneads dough for the hot bread eaten by the family for breakfast and mixes cornbread for the other house slaves and their children. She preheats the Dutch oven.

During cold weather the family and slaves often breakfast on milk hominy, prepared the previous evening and cooked slowly through the night.

*About 7:30 A.M.* she bakes the family's bread in the Dutch oven, makes coffee or tea, sets out milk and butter, and slices ham to be taken into the house for the family's breakfast.

*About 8:00 A.M.* she sends breakfast in to the family who generally have the first meal of the day in the dining room. The slaves eat in the kitchen.

*About 8:30 A.M.* she cleans up the kitchen, puts away breakfast food, and washes pots and pans and dishes used by the slaves.

*About 9:00 A.M.* the mistress of the house comes to the kitchen, gives orders for dinner, measures out ingredients, recites recipes if the cook is uncertain how to cook something, and instructs the cook on special orders for the day.

On Wednesdays and Saturdays the mistress of the house and the cook go to the market for fresh produce and meat.

*About 9:30 A.M.—2 P.M.* the cook begins dinner preparations, attends to or supervises dairying chores, and possibly does some gardening.

During slack periods she may spin or knit, draw more water, and split kindling. Older slave children on the property assist with some of the chores.

Occasionally duties include preserving food, making soap and starch (unless purchased), roasting coffee beans, making small beer, and helping with the laundering, sewing, and mending.

*About 2 P.M.* she has dinner prepared and ready to be taken into the dining room. The slaves eat in the kitchen.

*About 2:30—7:30 P.M.* she cleans up the kitchen, prepares dough or pastry, spends time working in the garden, spins, cards, knits, splits kindling, and completes activities begun in the morning.

*About 7:30 P.M.* she prepares supper.

*About 8:00 P.M.* she sends supper into the dining room for the family.

*About 8:30 P.M.* she cleans up the kitchen and mixes yeast dough for the next day's breakfast bread for the family. Later she banks the kitchen fire.

Only when her work is completed, does the cook have free time to spend with her family and friends. As a much needed member of the household staff, she rarely gets a regular day off each week. When she does, she often prepares some food ahead of time for others to serve.

(Source: *The Colonial Williamsburg Interpreter*, May 1986)

**AFRICAN PROVERB:** (Ethiopia) "Woman without a man is like a field without seed." ■■■■■



## IF WALLS COULD TALK

On-Site Report by Michelle Carr

"Hush now!"

Gosh, all these bad children running around here, people talking and laughing, the machines bumping and spinning . . . this is definitely not the place to take nap. Humph, if you ask me, this place put the sound in noise.

I guess you are wondering, "Where in the world is this child now?" Well, if you know me, I can find a good place for juicy gossip. I'm at the Laundromat! Go on, you know while you are folding those towels you are really listening.

While at the folding table I overheard somebody talking about ROBERT C. WATSON and ROSEMARIE BYRD having a birthday. So I kept quite, making sure I did not miss a letter about this! HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

### THE BOOKSHELF

*Double Stitch:*

*Black Women Write About Mothers and Daughters*

Edited by Patricia Bell-Scott et al.

For generations, write the editors of *Double Stitch*, quilting has provided African-American women with a source of artistic self-esteem, a channel for the passing down of family history and pride, and a potent means of bonding between mothers and daughters. In *Double Stitch: Black Women Write About Mothers and Daughters*, forty-seven Black women have stitched their diverse stories together into a beautiful, patch-quilt whole that reflects the richness and intricacy of Black mother-daughter relationships.

In poetry, fiction, personal narrative, and essay, the contributors consider such themes as mother-daughter conflicts, how mothers and daughters nurture each other, and how they face separation and death.

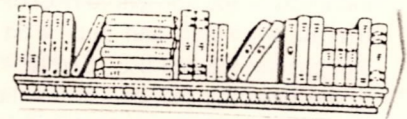
Maya Angelou's haunting, delicate foreword tells the story of leaving her mother's home at seventeen: "From the moment you leave this house, don't let anybody raise you," Angelou's mother says. "You've been raised." Renita Weems comes to terms with an alcoholic mother in her essay "Hush. Mama's Gotta Go Bye-Bye": "I cannot forget my mother. Though not as sturdy as others, she is my bridge. When I needed to get across, she steadied herself long enough for me to run across safely. For that I am grateful." In the prose poem "Dear Mama," Sonia Sanchez affirms the profound influence of a

Then I moved over to the dryers, and heard about a welcome back party for SYLVIA LEE, MARK RECZKIEWICZ, GORDON BULLOCK, AND TERRY HOUSTON. You can see them at Carter's Grove Slave Quarters since it has reopened.

While pretending to look at the news on the boob tube, I heard MARCEL RIDDICK was back in action after an emergency appendectomy. Woo, child, you sure were missed. Welcome back!

As I was loading up my car, everyone was talking about that smash hit—the ORAL HISTORY COMMUNITY NIGHT PROGRAM. If you missed it, you missed a treat!

Now I'm all finished airy out the dirty laundry. Oh, don't forget, you didn't hear it from me.



mother's support on a six-year-old: "I still hear your humming Mama. The color of your song calls me home. The color of your words saying, 'Let her be. She got a right to be different. She gonna stumble on herself one of these days. Just let the child be.' And I be, Mama."

Each element of this powerful collection is itself a strip or patch; pieced together, these distinct visions form a vivid and compelling montage of the Black mother-daughter tradition.

Maya Angelou quotes, "Each account in this book brings me closer to my own mother, and each mother makes me think of Frederick Douglass's mother, enslaved on a plantation eleven miles from her infant son. Yet, who after toiling full day, would walk the distance just to look at her child . . . Each poem makes me know again as if for the first time that the most moving song created during my people's turmoil of slavery was and remains, 'Sometimes I feel like a motherless child.' "As a mother and a daughter myself, I shall cherish *Double Stitch*. I will read it to myself, buy it for others, and have already begun to quote from it to friends."

The term double stitch describes a strengthening and decorative technique symbolic of the bonding between mothers and daughters. Just as the double stitch stabilizes and embellishes a fragile design, the mother-daughter tie lays the groundwork upon which subsequent relationships are built and elaborated.

This book is definitely one-of-a-kind!



## THE HOMEGIRLS

A FEW AFRICAN-AMERICAN VIRGINIAN WOMEN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

### PEARL BAILEY, *Entertainer*

It's no wonder that the City of Newport News chose to name their Wickham Avenue Library for its native daughter, Pearl Bailey. The entertainer always expressed the need for more reading and further education. Bailey, who has written five books, said once that she had started reading books at the tender age of 3. She also encouraged people, no matter what age, to further their education as she did. Ms. Bailey enrolled at Georgetown University at age 60 and earned a degree in Theology in 1985.

Ms. Bailey's humanitarian efforts were rewarded in 1988 when she was presented with the Medal of Freedom by then President, Ronald Reagan. This reward was a testament to the lady and her willingness to help others.

### MARGUERITE ROSS BARNETT, *University Pres.*

When Marguerite Ross Barnett was appointed president of the University of Houston in 1990, she became the first African-American and the first woman chief administrator of the flagship of the four-campus Houston system. She had already made her mark at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, where she was chancellor and tenured professor of political science. This distinguished political scientist boosted the prestige of both institutions with her scholarship, her leadership ability, and her fund-raising efforts.

Born in Charlottesville, Barnett was the daughter of Dewey Ross and Mary (Douglass) Barnett. She attended Bennett High School in Buffalo, New York, and in 1964 graduated from Antioch College with a bachelor's degree in political science. She continued her studies at the University of Chicago, where in 1966 she received her master's and in 1972 earned a Ph.D.

As a child, she had wanted to become a scientist, but a course on Indian politics changed her career plans. As a part of her doctoral studies, she conducted research in India for two years. This project resulted in a book on ethnic and cultural pluralism, *The Politics of Cultural Nationalism in South India*, for which the American Political Science Association awarded her its top book prize in 1981.

Barnett was described as "an animated woman" who outpaced even her most energetic colleagues, an effective school booster, and a woman with strong views as well as a willingness to hear the views of others before making a decision. Self-confident, though not conceited, Barnett was as comfortable in the corporate boardroom as she was in her staff meetings and has been praised equally by business people and academics.

### ELLA FITZGERALD, "*First Lady of Song*"

Born into a poor family in Newport News, Ella Fitzgerald became an orphan at a young age. By her teens, everything seemed stacked against her: she was an orphan, poor, black, female, and to top it off, homely, gangly, and shy. But she was soon to gain the spotlight, emerging as the "most perfect pop-jazz voice on record."

Her big break came at the age of 15 when Ella's friends dared her to try out for Amateur Night at the Apollo. Planning to dance, Ella got so scared at the last moment, she sang instead. She won first prize, and joined a band led by Chick Webb who became her legal guardian and friend. Ella's first hit record was "A-Tisket, A-Tasket," a 1938 tune she wrote herself.

After a brief marriage, Fitzgerald raised her only child, Raymond, and two nieces while living a simple life. Even now, almost 40 years later, she remains one of the shyest people in show business.

Through the years, she has recorded over 100 albums and sold over 25 million records, has appeared in several movies and has won numerous awards. She has sung with the jazz greats: Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Oscar Peterson, Louis Armstrong, and the list goes on.

Keeping busy with nightclubs, concerts, TV, benefits for orphaned children, and always accepting awards, Ella says, "God gave me a voice. He gave me something with which to make people happy. There must have been a reason." The reason is clear: Ella Fitzgerald is an institution in the world of American music, part of the musical heritage of our country.

### ANNE L. ELLIS,

#### *One of First Two Black Female Marines*

She was Ann E. Lamb when she made history on September 8, 1949. One of the first two African-American females to join the Marine Corps, Ellis was a native of Claremont. According to her, even though there was resentment off base because of Black and White Marines being together, she never experienced prejudice on any of the Marine Bases.

In January 1992, Ellis was the Black History Month feature for the Marine's (Parris Island) publication — *The Boot*. The mother of 3, Ellis died last year. Her very special accomplishment however, continues to give hope and encouragement to others.



## THE HOMEGIRLS

A FEW AFRICAN-AMERICAN VIRGINIAN WOMEN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

### MARY HATWOOD FUTRELL, *Educator*

As Mary Hatwood Futrell finished her sixth year as president of the National Education Association, she made a number of observations. "We know that our responsibility is not just to the children of America, but to the children of the world. We know now that the destiny of the American family is intertwined with the destiny of the human family. And we know we can observe that misery or help halt that misery. Let us not be observers." She challenged NEA members to bring about "a massive reduction of worldwide illiteracy by the year 2000." Futrell is a woman of her convictions—not just a talker, but a woman of action who was brought up to achieve.

On August 31, 1989, Futrell stepped down from an unprecedented third term, or six years, as president of the NEA, the national organization that she has served in various capacities over the past twenty years, including three as its secretary-treasurer.

Born in Alta Vista, Virginia, Mary Hatwood Futrell is the second daughter of Josephine Hatwood (Austin). She lost her father John Ed Calloway, at age four.

Discipline and perfection were demanded of Mary by her tenth grade teacher at Dunbar Public School in Lynchburg. As a punishment for too much talking, she had to write a thousand-word essay on education and its impact on the economy. She was forced to rewrite it with each paragraph beginning with a topic sentence. The second time she had to rewrite it to correct the grammar. The third time, the spelling. The fourth time, it was punctuation. The fifth time, it wasn't neat enough. The sixth time, it was accepted. Her teacher entered the final paper in an essay contest where the student won third prize.

Futrell's education continued at Virginia State University, where she received a B.A. in business education. She earned her M.A. at George Washington University, did additional graduate work at the University of Maryland, the University of Virginia, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and has received a number of honorary doctorates. She is married to Donald Futrell.

### DOROTHY I. HEIGHT, *Organization Leader*

Dorothy Height is the fourth President of the National Council of Negro Women. Miss Height has served as a member of the Board of Directors and later became Executive Director. She was born in Richmond, and received her B.S. and M.S. degrees from New York University. She has held a number of administrative positions with various organizations. Miss Height has been the recipient of many awards and honors.

### ELIZABETH KECKLEY, *White House Modiste*

Keckley was born in Dinwiddie, Virginia. The exact date of her birth is unknown. Born into slavery, Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley bought her freedom, established a sewing business, and eventually became seamstress and friend to first lady Mary Todd Lincoln. One biographer, John E. Washington, said that "Madam Keckley was the most celebrated colored person ever connected with the White House."

As with many slave families, Keckley's home was divided. Keckley and her mother, Agnes, belonged to the Burwell family. Her father George Pleasant, belonged to "a man named Hobbs," and was allowed to visit his family only at Christmas and Easter. Just when Colonel Burwell was making plans for the family to be together, her father's master moved west. For some time Keckley's parents corresponded with each other, but they never were reunited. The letters from her father became special keepsakes for Elizabeth Keckley.

In 1860 Keckley attempted to earn a living by teaching young ladies to sew, first in Baltimore, then in Washington, D.C. In Washington, she quickly developed a clientele that included many of the most prominent ladies of the city, such as Mrs. Jefferson Davis, Mrs. Stephen A. Douglas. She patiently built the sewing business, which she operated from rooms she rented. Eventually, she employed as many as twenty young ladies, teaching them not only dressmaking but also charm and elegance.

Keckley's opportunities to fulfill her goal of sewing for the ladies of the White House came less than a year after she started her business. The Lincolns moved to the capital, and "within two weeks after President Lincoln arrived in Washington on late February 1861, Mrs. Keckley had moved into the family orbit," wrote Benjamin Quarles. Keckley served not only as a dressmaker but also as fashion designer, personal maid, and traveling companion to Mary Lincoln.

### DOROTHY PORTER WESLEY, *Librarian*

Mrs. Wesley, librarian and curator, was born in Warrenton, Virginia. She was educated at Howard University and Columbia University, and has distinguished herself as the former curator of the Moorland-Spingarn Collection, dealing with Black history and culture, housed at Howard University. She has been the recipient of many honorary doctorate degrees.



# THE HOMEGIRLS

## A FEW AFRICAN-AMERICAN VIRGINIAN WOMEN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

### MAGGIE LENA WALKER, *Bank President*

During the time when many women were locked out of the business world, Maggie Lena Walker proved herself to be a business giant. She became the first female, Black or White, to become a bank president.

Maggie Lena was born in Richmond in 1867. Her mother, a former slave, worked as a cook's helper in the home of a rich White family—the Van Lews. The Van Lews had fought against slavery, and their home had once served as an Underground Railroad station.

Maggie completed high school when she was sixteen years old and then began teaching. She taught in the public schools in Richmond for three years. Because she was interested in business, Maggie took several courses in accounting and sales. She also became an insurance agent.

In 1886, Maggie married Armistead Walker, Jr., a respected businessman. They had three children. In 1899, she became Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Independent Order of St. Luke. This was a type of insurance company for African-Americans. The Order provided money to members in case of sickness or death. Maggie Lena Walker ran the company in an excellent way. It soon had over 3,000 members. She collected dues, paid claims, and kept the books. In 1902, this smart businesswoman also started a newspaper called the *St. Luke Herald*.

A year later, Maggie Lena Walker started the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank and served as its president. Soon all African-American banks in Richmond, Virginia, joined with Maggie Walker's bank. They were named the Consolidated Bank and Trust Company. By 1924, the Independent Order of St. Luke had a membership of 100,000 and a \$100,000 office building. This was quite an achievement for African-American people. And, it was all because of the business skills of Maggie Lena Walker.

In 1934, Maggie Lena Walker received one of the greatest honors in her life. African-Americans in Richmond asked all African-American organizations throughout the country to make the month of October "Maggie L. Walker Month." Maggie Walker died later that same year.

Maggie Lena Walker is one of the great names in the world of business. Not only did she help African-American businesses to grow, but she proved that women could be successful in a "man's world."

### HAZEL REID O'LEARY, *Secretary of Energy*

Our newest Secretary of Energy is the second woman and the third African-American appointee to President Clinton's Cabinet. Ms. O'Leary, a lawyer from Minneapolis and President of the Nation Gas Division of Northern States Power Co., a Minnesota utility, was born in Newport News. She is the daughter of the late prominent Peninsula physician Russell E. Reid. She grew up with her sister and parents, first in Hampton, then in Newport News' East End, a few blocks from the old Whittaker Memorial Hospital. After attending eighth grade at Huntington Middle School, she and her sister went to live with an aunt in New Jersey where they attended a special school for gifted children.

Ms. O'Leary received Bachelor's Degrees in History and Economics from the Fisk University in Tennessee. She also earned a Law Degree from Rutgers University School of Law. Ms. O'Leary was appointed to federal energy posts by both Presidents Ford and Carter and is considered an expert on nuclear waste disposal. From babysitter of Congressman "Bobby" Scott to Secretary of Energy!

### MISS FANNIE M. RICHARDS, *Educator*

Fannie M. Richards was born free in Fredericksburg on October 1, 1840. In 1850, following her father's death, her mother moved the family to her native Toronto. It was in Toronto that Fannie received her education. Around 1857, the family moved to Detroit. African-American children could only attend one public school in Detroit—one established by a white teacher. Fannie Richards decided to open her own private school in 1863.

In 1865, the Detroit Board of Education hired Richards, who was assisted by Delia Pelham, to teach African-American children. However, in 1869 the Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools were no longer to exist. Richards was offered a contract, an historic first for African-Americans. Richards became Detroit's first African-American professional public school teacher.

In 1871, Richards was transferred to Everett School. This school was Detroit's first African American kindergarten taught by the city's first African American teacher. This was yet another first for Fannie Richards, and it signaled an end to "educational taxation without representation." This was a direct result of the Detroit Board of Education's resolution of October 11, 1869.

An 1860 resolution by the Detroit Board of Education stated in its policy that if a female teacher married it was equivalent to her resignation. Richards never married and for over fifty years dedicated her life to the education of her race.



## A MAN'S POINT OF VIEW

### WOMAN!

By Jerrold Roy

Woman . . .  
Without whom man could not continue  
to exist.  
From Adam's ribs she came  
from her womb we come.  
Mother . . . sister . . . wife . . . daughter . . .  
she has many roles.  
The most beautiful  
of God's creations.  
Woman . . .  
Love her  
Respect her  
Cherish her.  
She's our future  
our past  
our present.  
Learn from her  
teach her.  
Woman . . .  
Treat her like the queen she is.  
Shower her with diamonds and pearls  
if you can . . .  
or simply show her  
that you love her  
by the things you do  
by the things you say.  
Woman . . .  
Protect her  
as the precious gem she is.  
Handle her with care.  
Tender  
Loving  
Care.  
Make love  
not war.  
Woman . . .  
Don't fight her  
don't beat her  
love her.  
Show your children  
how to love her.  
For if you show them  
they can show their children.  
Woman . . .  
Love the woman.  
It was the love of the woman  
that brought you into this world  
don't leave this world  
without returning  
some of that love  
to Woman.



### TREATING MY LADY RIGHT

BY DENISE RAHIM WATSON

SUBMITTED BY DMITRI CLAWSON

Every other morning . . .  
I wake up early and serve my lady  
Breakfast in bed.

And if she's running late for work  
I iron her blouse or dress.  
Throughout the week  
I do her feet and nails,  
On Fridays it's dinner and Broadway.

Because she's such a wonderful  
And special friend,  
Hang out partner,  
Advisor and supporter,  
I surprise her with bouquet of flowers,  
Gifts and plenty of loving.

I enjoy shopping for her clothes  
I help her with the housework,  
Homework and career.  
On Saturdays, I do our laundry  
If she's out jogging  
I run her bubble bath . . .  
And massage her tired body  
With my finest oils.

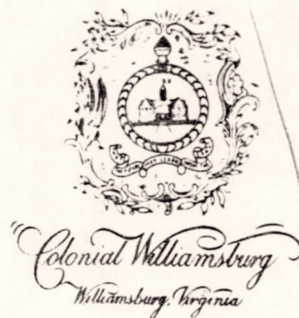
Because I don't like to fuss or fight,  
I make it my business  
To treat my lady right . . .  
So she won't replace me overnight!!!



## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

SITES AND BUILDINGS that interpret or exhibit the black experience.

**Brush-Everard Site** — Tours of this property and original house feature the lives of Thomas Everard, immigrant and public official, and his family. Learn more about the African-Americans who lived and worked on the property. Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays 10, 11 A.M., 1, 3, and 4 P.M.



**Carter's Grove Slave Quarter** — Interpreters will welcome you to the slave quarter, rebuilt on its original location, and direct you through buildings and outdoor spaces that reveal much about the lives of the Africans and African-Virginians whose labors supported the eighteenth-century plantation. Open Tuesdays through Sundays.

### SPECIAL TOURS

**The Other Half** — Half of the population in Williamsburg during the eighteenth century was black. This ninety-minute walking tour gives an in-depth look at the black experience from the arrival of the first blacks in Virginia in 1619 through the abolition of the slave trade by the English in 1807. Check *Visitor's Companion* for a current listing of times.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### MARKET DAYS APRIL 2 THROUGH 20, 1993

Meet . . . (Portrayal of people of the eighteenth century.)

**Hattie, Kingsmill Plantation Slave**, Wednesday, April 7th and 14th, at 1 P.M. to 3 P.M. on Market Square, weather permitting.

**Matthew Ashby, A Carter**, attends to business about town. Friday, April 9th and 16th, at 10 A.M. to 12 NOON on Market Square, weather permitting.

#### THOMAS JEFFERSON'S VIEWS ON RACE

APRIL 14TH and 16TH, 11 A.M., HENNAGE AUDITORIUM

There will be a panel discussion of Jefferson's views on race. For further information, please call (804) 220-7041.

### EVENTS AROUND TOWN

#### AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION — APRIL 23, 1993

**Philip D. Morgan, Associate Professor, Department of History, Florida State University**

The Revolution affected the lives of many of the half-million, mostly enslaved, African Americans living in colonial America in 1775. Whether they joined the patriot cause of British forces, freedom was their ultimate objective. Lecture will be held at the Yorktown Victory Center at 7 P.M. followed by a reception. For more information, please call (804) 887-1776.



## EACH ONE, TEACH ONE

### THE THINK TANK



1. Q: In 1972, she was the first African-American and the first woman to seek a major party nomination for President of the United States. She was also the former congresswoman from New York who was the first African-American woman to sit in the United States House of Representatives in 1969. Can you name her?
2. Q: Pamela Johnson is the African-American woman who, in 1981, was named to a position on the *Ithaca Journal*, becoming the first African-American woman to hold such a position with a major newspaper in the United States. What position does she hold?
3. Q: Queen Ann Nzinga was the female Angolan leader who, in the mid 1600s successfully resisted, for 40 years, colonization by what European country?  
A. England                      B. Portugal  
C. France                         D. Spain
4. Q: In 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, this brave African-American woman refused to surrender her seat on a bus to a white man and was arrested. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., called for a Black bus boycott which sparked the Civil Rights Movement. Name this important African-American heroine.
5. Q: Who was the woman called "Black Moses," a major conductor on the Underground Railroad, who returned to the South 19 times leading over 300 slaves to freedom in the North and Canada?
6. Q: Name the woman who, in 1905, invented a hair softener, grower, and straightening comb, that revolutionized the cosmetics industry in the Black community. Her ingenuity and ability helped her to become the first African-American, self-made millionaire in America.
7. Q: Hattie McDaniel played a role in this classic film that earned her the first African-American Academy Award. What was the name of that film?
8. Q: This African-American woman led the crusade against lynching and was a co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Can you name her?

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN IN SPORTS

(Unscramble)

1. HALLMIRDWOPU
2. NOSAEHBIGALT
3. EEEEEJJKKIOAYRSRCN
4. BASEHOMEDBIT
5. IIAARRZNNNGSO
6. DNVEELYAHSFOR
7. TTOODDEELYWVAR
8. LYLLEERCHEMI

**AFRICAN PROVERB:** (Sierra Leone) "Proverbs are the daughters of experience." ████████████████████



## FROM WITHIN

Poems contributed by readers of *Broken Chains*

### WHAT IF I AM A WOMAN?

By Claudette Elaine Sims

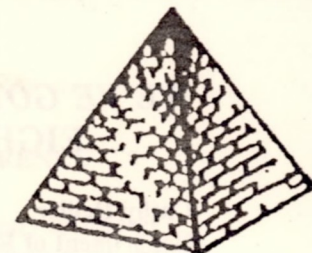
What if I am a woman?  
Is it some kind of disease?  
If it is, I sure hope its catching.  
'Cause we ought to pour it in a bottle, label it,  
And sprinkle it on all the people,  
                  men and women who have  
Never loved or cried, worked or died for any of us.

What if I am a woman?  
Is it a crime?  
Arrest me!  
'Cause I'm strong but I'm gentle,  
I'm smart but I'm learning,  
I'm loving but I'm hateful  
And I like to work 'cause I like to eat,  
And feed and clothe and house  
Me, mine, yours and everybody's  
Like I been doing for 300 years.

What if I am a woman?  
Is it insane?  
Commit me!  
'Cause I want happiness and not tears  
Truths and not lies,  
Pleasures and not pain,  
Sunshine and not rain,  
A man and not a child.

What if I am a woman?  
Is it a sin?  
Pray for me!  
And pray for you if you don't  
Like women of color.  
'Cause we are midnight black,  
Chestnut brown,  
Honey-bronzed,  
Chocolate-covered,  
Cocoa-dipped,  
Big lipped,  
Big hiped,  
Big breasted,  
And beautiful all at the same time.

What if I am a woman?  
Does it bother you that much?  
Why?  
'Cause I want a man who wants me  
And loves me,  
And respects me  
And trusts me,



And gives me everything  
'Cause I give him everything back . . . PLUS!

What if I am a woman?  
I got rights, same as you.  
I have fought for them,  
Lied for them,  
Died for them,  
Laid for them,  
On every plantation  
From here to Alabama and Boston and  
Back!

What if I am a woman?  
I love me,  
And I want you to love me, too.  
But as I am  
And as I've been,  
Beside you,  
Near you,  
Close to you,  
For over 300 years.  
Beautiful  
Black Strong  
Giving  
Loving you.  
A woman.  
Your woman  
Love me . . .

### MELANIN SISTERS

By Marva Cooper

Boisterous laughter cussing out loud  
spitting swearing like a man  
broad melanin hands clapping synchronized pain

gathering sharing a drink and lies  
'go head chile' who ain't got no man  
'hope ne die' men jobs blues attitudes  
ancient news muse

sounds of protracted laughter could  
be a street market in Ghana some  
Caribbean isle street in Norfolk  
'girl friend your dress is jes tooo tight

eyes twinkle with merriment or do  
they glisten with tears due to the  
pricking thought of some never to  
distant pain, strain of survival

at least we are alive dear Sisters  
to struggle another day.



**WE'VE GOT A VISITOR**  
**EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN**  
**OF WILLIAMSBURG**

Cathy Hellier  
Department of Research  
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

**ANN ASHBY**

Ann Ashby was the wife of Matthew Ashby, a free mulatto. She had formerly been the slave of Samuel Spurr, bricklayer, of Williamsburg, but sometime prior to 1765 (when her daughter Mary's birth was recorded in Bruton Parish), she had been purchased by her husband. Matthew Ashby had bought Ann and his two children from Spurr for 150 pounds. On 29 November 1769, Matthew Ashby petitioned the Council for permission to emancipate his wife and children, John and Mary. He described her as "a faithful and diligent wife." Permission was granted.

Matthew Ashby was the son of James Shield's white servant, Mary Ashby. How he earned a living is unknown. He was probably a general laborer, hired by others. For example, he was paid by the estate of Peter Hay for "bringing 2 mares and colts" from Mr. Page's. His inventory, taken after his death in 1771, gives a clue to Ann's occupation, however. The small estate contains a disproportionate amount of laundry equipment (irons, ironing tables, tubs, iron pots, kettles, etc.) It seems likely that Ann helped to support the family by taking in laundry. Perhaps she had been a laundress for Samuel Spurr. The family also owned two cows. Perhaps they augmented their income by bringing dairy goods to market.

Less than a year after Matthew's death, Ann had remarried George Jones, another free black man. They did not get along well together, however. She might have been accustomed to participating more fully in the family financial decisions than her second husband allowed her. Her husband placed the following ad in Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette* on January 30, 1772:

WILLIAMSBURG, January 10, 1772.

WHEREAS my Wife Anne and myself cannot agree in the Management of our Affairs, these are therefore to forewarn all Persons from giving her Credit on my Account, as I will not pay any of her Contractions after the Date hereof . . .

GEORGE JONES

That is the last record we have of Ann Ashby Jones.

**LYDIA BROADNAX**

Exactly when Lydia Broadnax joined George Wythe's household as a slave is unknown. She first appears in the official records in 1783, on the Williamsburg Personal Property Tax List, as a member of his household. During her years in Williamsburg, records refer to her only as "Lydia," with no surname. Perhaps she appended her surname after her manumission.

Lydia appeared on the 1783, 1784, and 1786 personal property tax lists. Galt and Barraud's day book indicates that she received medical treatment in 1782, 1783, 1784, 1785, and 1788. She was manumitted by Wythe on 20 August 1787, two days after the death of Mrs. Wythe. Lydia remained in Wythe's household is indicated by the medical treatment she received under his account in 1788. Ben also received medical treatment in that year, making it probable that he and Lydia were the two adult slaves that remained in Wythe's household, as indicated by the tax lists for 1789 through 1791. Since Wythe's will and the testimony surrounding his death give clear evidence that Lydia and Ben remained with him in Richmond, it is highly probable that they were husband and wife.

Accounts of circumstances surrounding Wythe's death make it clear that Lydia was Wythe's cook at the time. She probably had been his cook from at least 1787, when it appears that he had either emancipated (as in Lydia's case) or had conveyed by gift the remainder of his adult female slaves to members of the Talliaferro family after the death of his wife. (Wythe was taxed for three adult slaves in 1788, which the above medical records for that year show to have been Lydia, Ben, and Charles. Charles was manumitted in 1788, and apparently did not remain in the household, as Wythe was taxed for only two adults in 1789.)

Enough visitors have read the allegations by Fawn Brodie, *Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate Biography*, that Lydia was Wythe's mistress and the mother of Michael Brown, the mulatto boy that was poisoned with Wythe, that we should address those allegations. First of all, Michael Brown would have been born in 1791 or 1792. Lydia's emancipation in 1787 states that she was at least 45 years old when she was freed. That would have made her at least 49 at Michael's birth, were she his mother, which is highly unlikely. In fact, we have no clear evidence that Lydia had any children.



## SUKEY HAMILTON

**Sukey Hamilton** was a cook in the household of Governor Francis Fauquier. She first appears in the records in July 1762, when her daughter Salley was baptized in Bruton Parish.

Governor Fauquier died 3 March 1768. In his will, he made several provisions for the disposal of his slaves. He stipulated that mothers and children should not be separated. He allowed his slaves six months to choose their new masters, who were to purchase these slaves at twenty-five per cent below market price. During the six months, the slaves were to be maintained by the estate. Executors were to have any slaves they wished for the same discount.

Evidently, Sukey did not choose a new master, or perhaps the master she chosen declined to purchase. On 24 November 1768, she was advertised for sale in Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette*:

**SUKEY HAMILTON, cook to the late Governour, with her youngest daughter, 7 years old, will be sold before Mr. Hay's door on Thursday the 18th of December next. Credit will be allowed for six months, bond and proper security begin given.**

## JUDITH

**Judith** was a Williamsburg slave woman who belonged to merchant William Prentis, then to his daughter Elizabeth Prentis, and finally to his son John Prentis. She worked in a domestic capacity for the Prentis family. Our first reference to Judith is in July 1763, when her son James was baptized in Bruton Parish. At this time she belonged to William Prentis, who died in 1765. By his will, William Prentis bequeathed Judith and her children Effy, Molly, and Jemmy [James] to his daughter Elizabeth Prentis. Because Elizabeth was only thirteen when her father died, it is likely that Judith and her children continued to live in the Prentis House. Elizabeth Prentis died in October 1770, aged eighteen and unmarried. At this time ownership of Judith and her children reverted to Elizabeth's brother John Prentis, also a merchant in Williamsburg, who appears also to have lived at the Prentis House.

John Prentis's obituary was published in the several editions of the *Virginia Gazette* during the first week in November 1775. He bequeathed several slaves in his will, but Judith was not among them. Nor was she among the slaves assigned to John's widow, Elizabeth, as a dower. She was listed in John Prentis's inventory, however. Because John Prentis's wife Elizabeth was declared insane after his death, the household was broken up, resulting in the sale of several slaves. Because she cannot be otherwise

Her youngest child was likely the Salley baptized above. The account of the settlement of Fauquier's estate, however, shows that she had another daughter, Mary, as well. Fauquier's provision that mothers and children be kept together saved her family from separation. Sukey, Salley, and Mary were all sold to the Reverend Mr. James Horrocks, Commissary and President of the College.

Whether Sukey's family continued together is uncertain, however, Horrocks and his wife left for England in 1771. It is not likely that their cook accompanied them. If Sukey were still living, was she hired out, or perhaps sold? What happened to her children? Horrocks died while abroad, and his wife returned home to Williamsburg, but died in December 1773. Surviving records do not reveal how their estates were settled, or what happened to Sukey and her family.



accounted for in the will or dower assignment, it can be assumed that she was among the slaves included in the following advertisement in Dixon and Hunter's edition of the *Virginia Gazette* on 23 December 1775:

**TO BE SOLD, on WEDNESDAY the 3rd of JANUARY next, at the Dwelling-House of the late Mr. JOHN PRENTIS, ALL HOUSEHOLD and KITCHEN FURNITURE, also several valuable SLAVES, chiefly House Servants, among which is a very good Cook. —And the Saturday following, at his plantation in James City County, the STOCK of CATTLE, CORN, FODDER, &c. Six Months Credit will be allowed for all sums above five Pounds, on giving Bond, with approved Security, to The EXECUTORS WILLIAMSBURG, December 22, 1775.**

Judith probably felt some concern at each death in the Prentis family and wondered what would become of her own family. As it turned out after the death of John Prentis, she had cause for concern. Most of her children remained in the Prentis family, but she and her child Tom appear to have been sold. There is no evidence that she was purchased by another member of the Prentis family, so it is reasonable to assume that she was sold out of the family. Whether or not she remained in Williamsburg is unknown.



## AIN'T I A WOMAN?

Speech delivered by Sojourner Truth

Well, chillun, war dar is so much racket, dar must be something out o' kilter. I t'ink dat twixt de niggers of de Souf an' de women at de Norf' all a talkin' bout rights, de white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all dis here talkin' 'bout? Dat man ober dar say dat women needs to be helped into carriages, and lifted ober ditches, and to have de best place everywhere . . . Nobody eber helped me into carriages, or ober mud puddles, or give me any best place! And Ain't I A woman? Look at me. Look at my arm. I have plowed and planted and gathered into barns and no man could head me—and Ain't I A woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man, and bear the lash as well I have born'd five childrun and seen'em mos' all sold off into slavery, and when I cried out with mother's grief, none but Jesus heard . . . and Ain't I A woman?

Den day talks 'bout dis t'ing in de head—what dis dey call? "Intellect," Dat's it honey, intellec...Now what's dat got to do wit women's rights or nigger's rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yourn, holds a quart, wouldn't ye be mean not tolet me have my little half-measure full? Den dat little man in black dar, he says women can't have as much rights as a man, cause Christ warn't a woman . . . Whar did your Christ come from? Whar did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothin' to do with him! If de fust woman God eber made was strong enough to turn de world upside down all alone—dese togedder ought to be able to turn it back and get it rightside up again; an' now dey is asking to do it, de men better let 'em. Bleeed to ye for hearin' on me, and now ole Sojourner hain't got nothin' more to say.

Women's Rights Convention  
Akron, Ohio 1852

## MY LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

By Mary McLeod Bethune

*Realizing death was near, Mary McLeod Bethune wrote this testament exclusively for Ebony. A woman of heroic stature, Mrs. Bethune felt strongly about many things and she wanted to put them down on paper before her death.*

Sometimes I ask myself if I have any legacy to leave. Truly, my worldly possessions are few. Yet my experiences have been rich. From them, I have distilled principles and policies in which I believe firmly, for they represent the meaning of my life's work. They are the product of much sweat and sorrow. Perhaps in them there is something of value. So, as my life draws to a close, I will pass them on to Negroes everywhere in the hope that an old woman's philosophy may give them inspiration. Here, then, is my legacy.

*I leave you love.* Love builds. It is positive and helpful. It is more beneficial than hate. Injuries quickly forgotten quickly pass away. Personally and racially, our enemies must be forgiven.

*I leave you hope.* The Negro's growth will be great in the years to come. Yesterday, our ancestors endured the degradation of slavery, yet they retained their dignity. Today, we direct our economic and political strength toward winning a more abundant and secure life. Tomorrow, a new Negro, unhindered by race taboos and shackles, will benefit from more than 330 years of ceaseless striving and struggle. Theirs will be a better world.

*I leave you the challenge of developing confidence in one another.* As long as Negroes are hemmed into racial blocs by prejudice and pressure, it will be necessary for them to band together for economic betterment.

*I leave you a thirst for education.* Knowledge is the prime need of the hour.

*I leave you a respect for the uses of power.* We live in a world which respects power above all things. Power, intelligently directed, can lead to more freedom. Unwisely directed, it can be a dreadful, destructive force.

*I leave you faith.* Faith is the first factor in a life devoted to service. Without faith, nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible.

*I leave you racial dignity.* I want Negroes to maintain their human dignity at all costs. We, as Negroes, must recognize that we are the custodians as well as the heirs of a great civilization.

*I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow men.* The problem of color is world-wide. I appeal to American Negroes to recognize their common problems and unite to solve them.

*I leave you finally a responsibility to our young people.* The world around us really belongs to youth for youth will take over its future management. Our children must never lose their zeal for building a better world.

If I have a legacy to leave my people, it is my philosophy of living and serving.  
(Source: Ebony, November 1985)



## AFRICAN-AMERICAN FIRSTS: WOMEN

- ▶ **The first black woman** to graduate from an American college was Mary Jane Patterson, who graduated from Oberlin College in 1862.
- ▶ **The first black woman** awarded a Ph.D. degree was Sadie M. Alexander, who received a degree in economics in 1921 from the University of Pennsylvania.
- ▶ **The first black woman** lawyer was Charlotte E. Ray, who graduated from Howard University Law School on February 27, 1872. She was admitted to practice in April, 1872. In 1910 there were 777 black male lawyers and 2 black women lawyers.
- ▶ **The first black woman** physicians were Rebecca Cole, who practiced in New York from 1872 to 1881; Susan McKinney, who graduated from the New York Medical College in 1870; and Rebecca Lee, who graduated from the New England Female Medical College on March 1, 1864.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to receive a dental degree in the United States was Ida Gray Nelson Rollins, who graduated from the University of Michigan Dental School in 1887.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to receive a major appointment from the U.S. government was Mary McLeod Bethune, who was named Director of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration on June 24, 1936.
- ▶ **The first black woman** general was Hazel Johnson, who was appointed on September 1, 1979.
- ▶ **The first black woman** judge was Jane Matilda Bolin, who was appointed judge of the court of domestic relations of New York City by Mayor Fiorella LaGuardia on July 22, 1939.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to write a Broadway play was Lorraine Hansberry, who created *Raisin In The Sun*, which opened at the Barrymore Theater on March 11, 1959, with Sidney Poitier and Claudia McNeil in starring roles. *Raisin* was also the first Broadway drama in more than a half century with a black director, Lloyd Richards.
- ▶ **The first black woman** millionaire and one of the first major black entrepreneurs was Madame C.J. Walker, who made a fortune with a line of beauty products in the first decades of the twentieth century. She died on May 25, 1919.
- ▶ **The first black woman** sports commentator on a national program was Jayne Kennedy.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to head a bank was Maggie Lena Walker who was named president of Richmond's St. Luke Bank and Trust Company in 1903.
- ▶ **The first black woman** nominated for president of the United States was Representative Shirley Chisholm, who received 151.95 votes on the first ballot at the 1972 Democratic convention.
- ▶ **The first black** voted female athlete of the year was Althea Gibson, who was cited on January 23, 1958.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to win a gold medal in the Olympics was Alice Coachman of Albany State Teachers College, who won the running high jump in the 1948 games in London.
- ▶ **The first woman and first black woman** to be elected president of the National Bar Association was Arnette Hubbard.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to become the Tournament of Roses parade queen was Kristina Smith.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to be crowned Miss Black America in 1969 was Gloria Smith.
- ▶ **The first black** keynote speaker at the 1976 national Democratic party convention was Barbara Jordan.
- ▶ **The first black woman** pilot in the U.S. Navy was Brenda Robinson.
- ▶ **The first woman** to be elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters was Gwendolyn Brooks.
- ▶ **The first black woman** named to the cabinet of a U.S. president was Patricia R. Harris, who was named secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development by President Jimmy Carter on December 21, 1976.
- ▶ **The first black woman** to win the Miss America title was Vanessa Williams on September 17, 1983.
- ▶ **The first black nurse** was Mary Eliza Mahoney in 1879.
- ▶ **The first black woman** ambassador was Patricia Harris, who was named ambassador to Luxembourg on May 19, 1965, by President Johnson. (Sources: *Before the Mayflower* by Lerone Bennett, Jr.; various other sources)



## CHILDREN'S CORNER

### Junior Think Tank

Can you match these African-American women who made a difference with their accomplishments?

(Solution found on page 20.)



\_\_\_ MARIAN ANDERSON  
 \_\_\_ MAYA ANGELOU  
 \_\_\_ DAISY BATES  
 \_\_\_ MARY FRANCES BERRY  
 \_\_\_ GWENDOLYN BROOKS  
 \_\_\_ ELIZABETH CATLETT  
 \_\_\_ BESSIE COLEMAN  
 \_\_\_ MARVA COLLINS  
 \_\_\_ ELIZABETH "Libba" COTTEN  
 \_\_\_ ANGELA DAVIS  
 \_\_\_ KATHERINE DUNHAM  
 \_\_\_ MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN  
 \_\_\_ ELLA FITZGERALD  
 \_\_\_ ARETHA FRANKLIN  
 \_\_\_ ALTHEA GIBSON  
 \_\_\_ NIKKI GIOVANNI  
 \_\_\_ WHOOPI GOLDBERG  
 \_\_\_ CLARA HALE  
 \_\_\_ FANNIE LOU HAMER  
 \_\_\_ LORRAINE HANSBERRY  
 \_\_\_ BARBARA HARRIS  
 \_\_\_ DOROTHY HEIGHT  
 \_\_\_ ZORA NEALE HURSTON  
 \_\_\_ MAE C. JEMISON  
 \_\_\_ BARBARA JORDAN

\_\_\_ ELIZABETH KECKLEY  
 \_\_\_ LEONTINE KELLY  
 \_\_\_ SHARON PRATT KELLY  
 \_\_\_ YOLANDA KING  
 \_\_\_ ANNIE TURNBO MALONE  
 \_\_\_ TERRY MCMILLAN  
 \_\_\_ TONI MORRISON  
 \_\_\_ LEONTYNE PRICE  
 \_\_\_ BERNICE J. REAGON  
 \_\_\_ ATTALLAH SHABAZZ  
 \_\_\_ NTOZAKE SHANGE  
 \_\_\_ CAROLE SIMPSON  
 \_\_\_ BESSIE SMITH  
 \_\_\_ JUANITA KIDD STOUT  
 \_\_\_ SUSAN L. TAYLOR  
 \_\_\_ JACKIE TORRENCE  
 \_\_\_ SOJOURNER TRUTH  
 \_\_\_ HARRIET TUBMAN  
 \_\_\_ SARAH VAUGHAN  
 \_\_\_ MADAME C. J. WALKER  
 \_\_\_ MAGGIE L. WALKER  
 \_\_\_ FAYE WATTLETON  
 \_\_\_ IDA B. WELLS BARNETT  
 \_\_\_ PHILLIS WHEATLEY  
 \_\_\_ OPRAH WINFREY

A. WRITER, POET  
 B. TALK SHOW HOST  
 C. POET  
 D. OPERA SINGER  
 E. JUDGE  
 F. STORYTELLER  
 G. FIRST LADY OF SONG  
 H. BANK PRESIDENT  
 I. RELIGIOUS LEADER  
 J. SCULPTOR  
 K. ASTRONAUT, PHYSICIAN  
 L. BLUES SINGER  
 M. MAYOR,  
    WASHINGTON, DC  
 N. SINGER  
 O. HUMANITARIAN  
 P. PLAYWRIGHT, ACTIVIST  
 Q. WRITER

R. EDITOR  
 S. JAZZ SINGER  
 T. ANTILYNCHING  
    CRUSADER  
 U. MUSICIAN, HISTORIAN  
 V. BROADCAST  
    JOURNALIST  
 W. COMEDIENNE  
 X. TENNIS CHAMPION  
 Y. ORGANIZATION LEADER  
 Z. ENTREPRENEUR  
 AA. REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS  
    ACTIVIST  
 BB. ANGLICAN BISHOP  
 CC. POLITICIAN, LAWYER  
 DD. QUEEN OF SOUL  
 EE. FOLKLORIST, WRITER  
 FF. DANCER  
 GG. SCHOOL FOUNDER

HH. AVIATOR  
 II. SINGER  
 JJ. SOCIAL ACTIVIST  
 KK. POET, WRITER  
 LL. WHITE HOUSE  
    MODISTE  
 MM. BEAUTY SPECIALIST  
 NN. ABOLITIONIST, FEMINIST  
 OO. POET, PLAYWRIGHT  
 PP. FOLK MUSICIAN  
 QQ. POET  
 RR. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS  
    CRUSADER  
 SS. HISTORIAN, LAWYER  
 TT. CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST  
 UU. WRITER, EDUCATOR  
 VV. CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST  
 WW. POET  
 XX. WRITER



## EMPLOYEE'S CORNER

### Behind The Scenes

#### Spotlight

**Michelle Carr**, mother of Kendra, 9, and Tiffany, 2, has been employed at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation for ten years in various departments. She is currently enrolled part-time as a student at Hampton University.

Longing to be a professional writer, journalist, and poet, her pen is her best friend. Growing up as an only child, the world was often lonely. She learned early to write her thoughts and feelings when there was no one to listen. She could express herself. She could be free. She could be.

This was just the beginning. She has used this talent for writing to create, research, produce, edit, and publish a newsletter called *Broken Chains*, which increases the awareness of the importance of black history and mend the broken links in the chain between Africa and America.

It is her desire to create an innermost relationship with the reader. She yearns to educate and entertain through her writings, as well as, learn photography, so the reader can see through her eyes. She hopes someday to be "discovered" and make her dream, as writer and photographer, a reality.

She is currently the office manager in the Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations.

(Spotlight is a brief profile of a member of the Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations.)

**AFRICAN PROVERB:** (Ethiopia-Galla) "What one hopes for is always better than what one has."

### FROM WITHIN

Poems contributed by staff members of African-American Interpretation and Presentations

#### CLEANING HOUSE

By Michelle Carr

Cleansed my  
Soul.  
Swept my  
Mind.  
Vacuumed my  
Heart.  
Renewed my  
Spirit.  
Dumped my  
Trash.

I've  
Cleaned  
My  
House.

Lord,  
I  
Want to be  
Ready  
When my  
Soul-mate  
Comes  
Home.

#### TAR BABY

By Christy Coleman

She was a beautiful girl,  
but she didn't know it.  
She gazed coyetously at the  
women in the fashion magazines  
searching for any semblance  
of herself that might be called,  
pretty,  
beautiful,  
cute or even  
acceptable.  
There were none.

So,  
she draped her budding body  
in less revealing clothes.  
Covered over her full, mello-like  
breasts,  
and she hid her big, strong legs.  
She was a beautiful girl,  
but she didn't know it.

The boys whispered when she  
walked by.  
Her hips swaying with the  
precision of a pendulum.  
They knew what they saw was  
pleasing,  
but they turned from her,

and whistled at the white girls  
driving by who yelled names  
that denied them their manhood.

The women marvelled at how  
she'd grown.  
Remembering that they too, once  
possessed  
the glow of youth. They smiled  
at her  
beauty, but dared not speak,  
don't want  
her to think she's cute.

The men prided in her beauty,  
because they knew that she was  
an example  
of their greatest offering  
to a world gone wild. But  
instead they  
made obscene suggestions to her.

No one told her how beautiful  
she truly was.  
Instead, she watched the TV,  
and looked through the  
magazines  
searching for any semblance of  
herself.  
She was a beautiful black girl,  
but she never knew it. ■■■■■





## THE ANSWER IS . . .

### SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES:

#### EACH ONE, TEACH ONE

1. Shirley Chisholm
2. Publisher
3. B) Portugal
4. Rosa Parks
5. Harriett Tubman
6. Madame C. J. Walker
7. *Gone With The Wind*
8. Ida Barnett Wells

#### AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN IN SPORTS

1. Wilma Rudolph
2. Althea Gibson
3. Jackie Joyner Kersee
4. Debbie Thomas
5. Zina Garrison
6. Evelyn Ashford
7. Lynette Woodard
8. Cheryl Miller

### CHILDREN'S CORNER

MARIAN ANDERSON, *Singer*  
MAYA ANGELOU, *Writer, Poet*  
DAISY BATES, *Civil Rights Activist*  
MARY FRANCES BERRY, *Historian, Lawyer*  
GWENDOLYN BROOKS, *Poet*  
ELIZABETH CATLETT, *Sculptor*  
BESSIE COLEMAN, *Aviator*  
MARVA COLLINS, *School Founder*  
ELIZABETH "Libba" COTTEN, *Folk Musician*  
ANGELA DAVIS, *Social Activist, Educator*  
KATHERINE DUNHAM, *Dancer, Anthropologist*  
MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN,  
*Children's Rights Crusader*  
ELLA FITZGERALD, *First Lady of Song*  
ARETHA FRANKLIN, *Queen of Soul*  
ALTHEA GIBSON, *Tennis Champion*  
NIKKI GIOVANNI, *Poet, Writer*  
WHOOPI GOLDBERG, *Actress, Comedienne*  
CLARA HALE, *Humanitarian*  
FANNIE LOU HAMER, *Civil Rights Activist*  
LORRAINE HANSBERRY, *Playwright, Activist*  
BARBARA HARRIS, *Anglican Bishop*  
DOROTHY HEIGHT, *Organization Leader*  
ZORA NEALE HURSTON, *Folklorist, Writer*  
MAE C. JEMISON, *Astronaut, Physician*  
BARBARA JORDAN, *Politician, Lawyer*  
ELIZABETH KECKLEY, *White House Modiste*

LEONTINE KELLY, *Religious Leader*  
SHARON PRATT KELLY, *Mayor of Washington, DC*  
YOLANDA KING, *Civil Rights Activist*  
ANNIE TURNBO MALONE, *Beauty Culture Specialist*  
TERRY MCMILLAN, *Writer*  
TONI MORRISON, *Writer, Educator*  
LEONTYNE PRICE, *Opera Singer*  
BERNICE J. REAGON, *Musician, Historian*  
ATTALLAH SHABAZZ, *Civil Rights Activist*  
NTOZAKE SHANGE, *Poet, Playwright*  
CAROLE SIMPSON, *Broadcast Journalist*  
BESSIE SMITH, *Blues Singer*  
JUANITA KIDD STOUT, *Judge*  
SUSAN L. TAYLOR, *Editor*  
JACKIE TORRENCE, *Storyteller*  
SOJOURNER TRUTH, *Abolitionist, Feminist*  
HARRIET TUBMAN, *Underground Railroad Conductor*  
SARAH VAUGHAN, *Jazz Singer*  
MADAME C. J. WALKER, *Entrepreneur*  
MAGGIE L. WALKER, *Bank President*  
FAYE WATTLETON, *Reproductive Rights Activist*  
IDA B. WELLS BARNETT, *Journalist, Antilynching Crusader*  
PHILLIS WHEATLEY, *Poet*  
OPRAH WINFREY, *Talk Show Host, Actress*

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*SOUL SEARCHING*

i  
am  
a child of God.

i  
am  
a daughter.

i  
am  
a woman.

i  
am  
a mother.

i  
am  
me.

I  
AM.

By Michelle Carr



## ON MYNE OWN TYME

The Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations offers the following programs at various times. All programs are meant to provide unique glimpses into the lives of eighteenth-century African Americans.

### Carter's Grove Slave Quarter

— Interpreters will welcome you to the slave quarter, rebuilt on its original location, and direct you through buildings and outdoor spaces that reveal much about the lives of the Africans and African-Virginians whose labors supported the eighteenth-century plantation. Open Tuesdays through Sundays.



For further information about programs and cost, please telephone 1-800-HISTORY.

**AFRICAN PROVERB:** (Madagascar) "The end of an ox is beef, and the end of a lie is grief."

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Colonial Williamsburg  
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