



## Jo Ann Smith and Donald P. Stone Appointed to Board

**J**o Ann Smith of Selma and Donald P. Stone of Snow Hill (Wilcox County) were recently appointed Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, by President B.J. Smothers to fill vacancies created by the resignations of Mary Jones-Fitts and Joyce Nicoll. Mary Jones-Fitts also resigned from the Board; Joyce Nicoll continues to serve as a Director.

Jo Ann Smith was born and raised in Selma and returned in 2006 after retirement from the US Postal Service in New York City. She is a Life Member of the National Council of Negro Women and serves as co-chair of NCNW—Wilcox Section's Black and Pink Gala to be held October 6, 2007 in Camden. She is also active with the Black Belt Educational Coalition headquartered in Selma.

Donald Stone grew up in and was educated at Snow Hill Institute in Wilcox County which was founded by his grandfather William J. Edwards. He is a writer, health advocate and community activist. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Snow Hill Institute of Cultural Arts and Heritage and is spearheading the Snow Hill Restoration Project. Donald is the author of *Fallen Prince*, a biography of William J. Edwards, and is currently at work on a book of essays.

—B.J. Smothers

## African Ancestry's Dr. Rick Kittles Speaks at Tuskegee

**D**r. Rick Kittles was the featured speaker at the post-symposium program at Tuskegee University's Biomedical Symposium on September 21. Dr. Kittles delivered a riveting talk on DNA and its use in tracing ancestry. Dr. Kittles managed to be both informative and entertaining.

The program—coordinated by Muhjah Shakir, Assistant Professor and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at Tuskegee—was well-attended by a broad cross-section of the community including scientists, academics, genealogists, historians, college students and high schoolers and senior citizens from Tuskegee and surrounding areas.

Afriye Wecandodis, Acting Director of the Slavery and Voting Rights Museums in Selma, delivered the Libations. The Golden Voices choir of Tuskegee University sang musical selections.

B.J. Smothers of BBAAGHS, Audrey Anderson of the African Atlantic Genealogical Society in Montgomery, Elizabeth Sims of the Shiloh Restoration Foundation in Notasulga and Rev. James Ephraim of the Birmingham African American Genealogical Study Group participated in a discussion panel following Dr. Kittles' talk.



**Dr. Rick Kittles in the laboratory at the University of Chicago**

Dr. Kittles received his Ph.D. in Biological Sciences from George Washington University. Dr. Kittles went to Howard University in 1998 and helped to establish a national cooperative network to study the genetics of hereditary prostate cancer in the African American community. As co-director of Molecular Genetics at the National Human Genome Center at Howard University he established large-scale, high throughput genotyping and DNA sequencing. Dr. Kittles' research exploits gene genealogy in studies of population history and disease associations. He has had a strong research focus on using DNA to trace ancestry of African Americans and has published on prostate cancer genetics of African Americans. He is currently Scientific Director of African Ancestry, Inc. and Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Chicago.

See the BBAAGHS website ([bbaaghs.org](http://bbaaghs.org)) for more photos of the event.

—Jabrina Howard

## Preservation Forum Planning Meeting Held

**O**n September 15, the Black Heritage Council (BHC) of the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) held the first in a series of planning meetings for a preservation forum that will be held in Selma in Spring 2008. The forum will focus on finding solutions to problems faced by African American communities in the Black Belt as they try to preserve their history and culture.

Representatives from BBAAGHS, BHC, National Park Service, Safe House Museum, Lincolnite Club, Shiloh Community Restoration Foundation, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Alabama Chapter #1-9th and 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association for the Buffalo Soldiers, Camden Academy Alumni and the Snow Hill Restoration Project attended the meeting. Dorothy Walker, Public Outreach Coordinator, AHC, and Frazine Taylor, Chair of the BHC, presided at the meeting. Program, marketing, speakers, food and logistics, tours and sponsors committees were formed.

The next planning meeting will be held at First Baptist Church in Selma on Saturday, November 17 at 2:00 p.m. Contact Dorothy Walker—[dorothy.walker@preserveala.org](mailto:dorothy.walker@preserveala.org) or (334) 230-2665—for further information.

—Donald P. Stone

## StoryCorps Griot Coming to the Black Belt

**S**toryCorps Griot will be in Selma from January 10 to January 26, 2008 to record stories from residents of the Black Belt. StoryCorps Griot—partly funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—is a national oral history initiative dedicated to preserving African American stories in sound..

The griot (pronounced gree-oh) is a part of West African tradition. It is a role of honor, designating someone who maintains community tradition and memory through storytelling, music, and dance.. A StoryCorps interview is a conversation between two people who know each other. One person acts as the interviewer, and the other is the storyteller, or both people interview each other.

A StoryCorps facilitator is present throughout the interview process to create a comfortable and meaningful experience, and to handle all technical aspects of the recording. Participants receive a CD copy of their interview as soon as they are done. With their permission, a copy of their interview is also sent to the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in



Washington D.C., and the National Museum of African American History and Culture at the Smithsonian. Excerpts of selected interviews have been airing on NPR's *Morning Edition* and *News and Notes* as the Griot project makes its way around the county.

BBAAGHS has been selected as a StoryCorps Griot Community Partner. Community Partners host a minimum of one day of interviews (6 interviews, each lasting one hour). BBAAGHS will host 6 days of interviews at several locations throughout the Black Belt.

If you are interested in being interviewed by or have someone you would like to interview, please contact BBAAGHS at (334) 877-4846 or [bbaaghs@bbaaghs.org](mailto:bbaaghs@bbaaghs.org). Watch the BBAAGHS website for locations and further information.

—B.J. Smothers

## SPOTLIGHT ON :: Macon County Shiloh Rosenwald School Restoration Gets Assist from Tuskegee



The Shiloh-Rosenwald School in Notasulga was built between 1914-1922 by the Julius Rosenwald Foundation

**T**he Tuskegee University Department of Architecture will collaborate with the Shiloh Community Restoration Foundation (SCRF) in the restoration of the Shiloh-Rosenwald School in Notasulga. SCRF will work with Terry Hayes of Terry Hayes Restoration to restore the character of the beautiful structure. The restoration will help SCRF in their quest to have the school listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The project is open to anyone interested in hands on experience in historic restoration. The students of Tuskegee University will be on site every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Every Saturday is Community Service from 7:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Those needing transportation in the Tuskegee area

can meet and leave from the Wilcox Building C courtyard (the Wilcox building is across from Moton Hall) at Tuskegee University.

If you are interested in doing work during the week or participating in community service, please contact Kawesi Daniels at 732-207-1659. For further information about the Shiloh Community Restoration Project contact SCRF at 7 Shiloh Road, Post Office Box 311, Notasulga, AL 36866 or visit the website: [www.shilohcommfound.com](http://www.shilohcommfound.com).

—*Shiloh Community Restoration Foundation*



## 389 RURAL SCHOOLS IN 65 COUNTIES

The Alabama Historical Commission has received information on two dozen schools and would like to receive information on all of Alabama's remaining old rural schools.

Depending on their present condition, these schools could be eligible for listing in the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage, or the National Register for Historic Places. If you have information, call Dorothy Walker at (334) 242-3184, or send an email to [dorothy.walker@preserveala.org](mailto:dorothy.walker@preserveala.org).

## Millie Lee Dulaney Receives Idella Childs Award

The Alabama Historical Commission's Black Heritage Council presented the Idella Childs Distinguished Service Award to Millie Lee Dulaney on September 21st during the Alabama Preservation Conference held in Huntsville. Millie received the award for her efforts to preserve the history of the Dulaney family in Wilcox County. Research of her GGGF's role in fighting for the Confederacy during the Civil War resulted in her induction in the Daughters of the Confederacy.

Millie's research of a church begun by her family and two family cemeteries has led to those properties being listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage and to the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register.

—*Wilcox Progressive Era, Sep 26, 2007*

## A.J. Wright to Speak on Early Black Physicians

Amos J. Wright, MLS, will speak on the early Black Physicians of Alabama's Black Belt on Saturday, October 20th in Selma. Mr. Wright is an Associate Professor and Director, Section on the History of Anesthesia, Department of Anesthesiology Library, at the University of Alabama Birmingham. He is also the moderator of the "alabamahistory" list on Yahoo! Groups. Mr. Wright is a frequent speaker and author of books and articles on medical history and anesthesiology in Alabama and elsewhere.



Historian A.J. Wright

The program will be held in the Vaughan-Smitherman Room of the Selma-Dallas County Library at 12:00 noon. The event is FREE and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

—*B.J. Smothers*

*"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."*

—*Marcus Garvey*

### ARE YOU A MEMBER YET?

Join the efforts of the Black Belt African American Genealogical and Historical Society to preserve the heritage of African Americans in Alabama's Black Belt Region

INDIVIDUALS, STUDENTS, HOUSEHOLDS, ORGANIZATIONS \$35

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO BBAAGHS, INC. (DO NOT SEND CASH)

For membership benefits please visit our website:  
[www.bbaaghs.org](http://www.bbaaghs.org)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (DAY) : \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE (EVE) : \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAIL THIS APPLICATION TO: BBAAGHS, INC.  
C/O B.J. SMOTHERS, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR, PO BOX 971, SELMA, AL 36702



**Black Belt  
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Genealogical &  
Historical Society**

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The BBAAGHS Newsletter is published monthly. The deadline for each issue is the 15th day of the prior month.

Nov issue — Oct 15th

Dec issue — Nov 15th

Jan issue — Dec 15th

Submissions are welcome. Please send articles, shorts, announcements, book reviews, photos, letters and queries to: [editor@bbaaghs.org](mailto:editor@bbaaghs.org).

*The Adinkra symbol **Sankofa** literally means, "return and get it". **Sankofa** teaches us that we must go back to our roots in order to move forward. Whatever we have lost, forgotten, forgone or been stripped of, can be reclaimed, revived, preserved and perpetuated.*

**BLACK BELT AFRICAN AMERICAN  
GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**MISSION**

BBAAGHS is a non-profit organization currently seeking 501(c)(3) status.

BBAAGHS' mission is to discover, collect, organize and preserve the genealogy and history of African Americans in Alabama's Black Belt Region. The group meets regularly on the 3rd Saturday of the month at Selma-Dallas County Public Library, 1103 Selma Ave., Selma, AL.

Anyone interested in researching their African ancestry or preserving African American historic buildings and sites is invited to attend.

**EVENTS AND MEETINGS CALENDAR**

October 20, 2007	10:00 AM— 12:00 Noon	<b>Regular Monthly Board Meeting</b> Selma-Dallas County Public Library 1103 Selma Ave., Selma, AL 36702 Info: <a href="http://www.bbaaghs.org">www.bbaaghs.org</a>
October 20, 2007	12:00 Noon— 3:00 PM	<b>Speaker: A. J. Wright, M.L.S., Associate Professor and Director, Section on the History of Anesthesia, Department of Anesthesiology Library, UAB.</b> Topic: Early Black Physicians of the Alabama Black Belt Info: <a href="http://www.bbaaghs.org">www.bbaaghs.org</a>
November 3, 2007	9:00 AM— 3:30 PM	<b>6th Annual Alabama Cemetery Preservation Workshop</b> Sponsors: Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance, Montgomery Genealogical Society, Alabama Historical Commission State Capitol Building Auditorium Montgomery, AL Info: Joyce Nicoll, 334-272-0481, <a href="mailto:ljnicoll81@charter.net">ljnicoll81@charter.net</a>
November 17, 2007	10:00 AM— 12:00 Noon	<b>Regular Monthly Board Meeting</b> Selma-Dallas County Public Library 1103 Selma Ave., Selma, AL 36702 Info: <a href="http://www.bbaaghs.org">www.bbaaghs.org</a>
November 17, 2007	2:00 PM— 4:00 PM	<b>Preservation Forum Planning Meeting</b> First Baptist Church 709 Martin Luther King St., Selma, AL Info: Dorothy Walker, (334) 230-2665 <a href="mailto:dorothy.walker@preserveala.org">dorothy.walker@preserveala.org</a>