

Genealogy experts discuss Black history research

On May 14, all sat in rapt attention for approximately eight hours as aficionados of Black history and culture listened to and engaged with celebrated authorities on their subject. Conroe's Lone Star Conventions Center served as host within the framework of the primary sponsors, The Montgomery County Genealogical and Historical Society, Inc. and the City of Conroe Arts and Cultural Program.

Four experts in their field, Sharon Gillins, Shamele Jordan, Timothy Pinnick and Cindy Cheney constituted the central focus of the event. Gillin's two scintillating presentations were "Your Roots are Waiting! Black Family Basics" and "Navigating Freedmen's Bureau Records: Strategies for Research Success." Jordan, in turn, featured "Genealogy Era by Era: 100 years of Records" and "Telling



Robin Montgomery

GUEST COLUMNIST

your Family Story: Unearthing, Organizing, and Sharing." Finally, Pinnick walked us through a dynamic personal experience featuring "Building the Genealogy of a Community: Processes, Actions Taken, and Recommendations" while Cheney addressed new Family Search website pages on the Conroe Community Cemetery Restoration Project.

As the program developed, enthusiasm flooded the hall as the speakers paused periodically to address questions and comments from the audience. A full lesson on the matrices of the field of genealogy

stirred the imagination of the multi-racial assemblage.

Not only were these offerings a distinct treat for ticket holders but they also received a magnificent booklet. Within its some 87 pages are priceless columns germane to the field of Black genealogy. Among these are articles on getting started in genealogy, what questions to proffer as one begins one's study and lists of resources on general and Montgomery County history including former and present black-owned businesses.

Acknowledgments in the booklet read as a veritable "Who's Who" of our city and county. For example, the City of Conroe provided an Arts and Cultural Grant for the project while there are features on the "Conroe Community Cemetery" in an article by Jon Edens and John Meredith. Also among features



Photo courtesy Ann Meador

Margarette Stewart, buried in the Conroe Community Cemetery on 10th Street was a member of the Daughters of Tabor. More is sought on the early Black fraternal organization.

is data on the "Tamina Corporation" plus Black Community Development churches in our area while

a multi-racial aspect lies in a list of oral histories at the Heritage Museum of Montgomery County.

Also featured is the Montgomery County History Task Force including a fascinating article by the Task Force Director, Ann Meador, on the International Order of "The Knights and Daughters of Tabor."

In addition to the City Arts and Cultural Program, hats off to the team of the Montgomery County Genealogical and Historical Society continuing the great tradition of that group dating to a pioneering Black history program with the support of Lone Star College in 2006 featuring personalities of national acclaim.

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