

December 16, 2005

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**From Enslavement, Emancipation and Education
Virginia's African American Experience
– Black History Month Events 2006 –**

RICHMOND, Va. – Virginia native Carter G. Woodson started “Negro History Week” nearly 80 years ago, in 1926 – the origin of February’s Black History Month. This commemoration continues to serve as the impetus for embracing black history on a national scale – and visitors find much of that significant heritage in Virginia. Discover churches whose walls, if they could speak, would offer tales of clandestine meetings that organized sit-ins, ceremonies that honored fallen soldiers and soulful stories told through gospel hymns that carried many to freedom along the Underground Railroad.

Virginia ranks fourth in the nation in number of African American visitors with nearly 3.6 million visitors as noted in the Travel Industry Association of America’s 2004 TravelScope. The black experience is unquestionably the American experience in Virginia.

Don’t wait until February to explore this shared history. Visit www.virginia.org for details on Black History Month activities throughout Virginia. See attached list of events.

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Attachment

NEWS

Event Listings

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Through March 26

Virginia

The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia. A traveling exhibit organized and toured by the Virginia Historical Society. Additional photos and documents from Portsmouth and the Hampton Roads region illuminate the significance of these times within our region. Courthouse Galleries, High and Court streets. Admission. (757) 393-8543. www.courthousegalleries.com.

Jan. 4

Danville

W. E. B. Du Bois: Exploring the Souls of Black Folk. This the first meeting of the Booker T. Washington Book Club. The focus of the meeting will be on Washington's most vocal critic and great scholar Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois. Please pick up a copy from the Booker T. Washington National Monument Bookstore or local store and join as we discuss the text that begins with the statement, "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line." 2:00 p.m. www.nps.gov/bowa

Jan. 12

Norfolk

Norfolk State University Presents Dr. Kenneth Goings. Dr. Kenneth Goings, Chairman of History at Ohio State University, will speak at Norfolk State's Dr. Martin Luther King (MLK) Commemoration. Specifically, Dr. Goings will address MLK's relationship with African American organizations in Memphis, Tennessee. 6:30 p.m. Douglas Wilder Performing Arts Center at Norfolk State University. www.nsu.edu

Feb. 2

Richmond

Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom. Enslaved people in the antebellum South placed great value in the practical power of literacy, whether to read the Bible for themselves or to keep informed about their world. In this talk based on her book, *Self-Taught*, Heather Williams examines the African American quest for learning during slavery, the Civil War, and in the first decades of freedom, when they transformed education in the South. Dr. Williams is an assistant professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Noon. Virginia Historical Society, 428 N. Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23220. (804) 358-4901. www.virginiahistorical.com

Feb. 4

Newport News

Freedom Won: African-Americans in the Civil War. Meet costumed interpreters who will portray civilians and members of the U.S. Colored Troops. Guided tours of Endview will focus on the role African-Americans played during the Civil War. Admission. Free to children under 7. Endview Plantation, 362 Yorktown Road, (757) 887-1862 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. www.endview.org

NEWS

Feb. 4 Newport News
Finding Military Ancestors with a Special Focus on the Civil War: Genealogy Seminar. Enjoy a full day of Civil War genealogy featuring national and local experts on Civil War records and special collections. Meet with the speakers, view local genealogical society and publisher displays, and participate in a raffle to win a bus trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by the Tidewater Genealogical Society, along with other prizes. View selected genealogical resources in the Museum's library and take a docent-guided tour. 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. The Mariners' Museum, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News. (757) 591-7784, www.mariner.org.

February 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, 25-26 Newport News
Follow the Drinking Gourd Planetarium Show. Celebrate Black History Month with this popular planetarium program about the Underground Railroad and learn how the stars of the northern sky led slaves to freedom. 3:30 p.m. \$3.00 admission. Virginia Living Museum, 524 J. Clyde Morris Boulevard, www.valivingmuseum.org.

February 4, 18, 25 Newport News
Film Fest Month. "Buffalo Soldiers," starring Danny Glover, tells the true story of the black cavalry corps who patrolled America's west after the Civil War. "Glory," starring Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Matthew Broderick, chronicles the all-black 54th Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Their final assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina, demonstrated their bravery and turned bitter defeat into a symbolic victory that brought recognition to black soldiers. "Men of Honor," starring Cuba Gooding, Jr. and Robert De Niro, tells the story of Carl Brashear, the first African-American diver in the U.S. Navy in a time where racism was rife. Included in regular admission. 1:00 p.m. Virginia War Museum, 9285 Warwick Boulevard, (757) 247-8523, www.warmuseum.org.

February 4, 11, 18, 25 Newport News
Black History Month Film Festival. In recognition of Black History Month, the museum will screen classic documentaries highlighting significant African-American achievements and figures. \$2.00 suggested donation. 2-5 p.m. The Newsome House Museum & Cultural Center, 2803 Oak Avenue, (757) 247-2360. www.newsomehouse.org

Feb. 10 Norfolk
Leon Bates in Concert. Experience elegance and excitement with "one of America's" concert pianists. Leon Bates is brilliant and shines with audiences all over the world. 8 p.m. Attucks Theater. Our guest artist for the February 26 concert will be noted African American pianist Leon Bates, one of America's best known pianists and a major international artist. Mr. Bates and the orchestra will perform at the historically black Virginia University of Lynchburg (formerly the Virginia Seminary), currently undergoing a dramatic rebirth as a four-year college. While visiting Lynchburg, Mr. Bates will additionally conduct a seminar focusing attention upon the works of African American composers and their influence on American music. The seminar, open to the public, will take place at Randolph-Macon Woman's College on Monday, February 27. Later that day, Mr. Bates will conduct a second discussion for young people at the Jubilee Family Center in Lynchburg noting his career as a concert pianist. www.lynchburgsymphony.com

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Feb. 11 Newport News
A Salute to the Tuskegee Airmen. Members of the famous Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American fighter and support squadrons, will be available to discuss artifacts on display from noon until 1:00 p.m. The movie, *The Tuskegee Airmen*, will be shown in the museum theatre from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. After the movie, guest speakers will relate their experiences while serving in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Included in regular admission. Noon to 5:00 p.m. Admission. Virginia War Museum, 9285 Warwick Boulevard. (757) 247-8523. www.warmuseum.org.

Feb. 11 Richmond
African Americans in the Civil War. The tentative theme is religion as it related to slaves and free blacks living in Richmond during the civil war. 1-3 p.m. Grounds of the Historic Tredegar Iron Works. 490 Tredegar Street, Richmond, VA 23219. (804) 788-6484. <http://www.tredegar.org/>

Feb. 11 Richmond
African Americans in the Arts and Sciences. Celebrate Black History month by discovering impressive art and inventions created by African Americans. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Children's Museum of Virginia, 221 High St. Admission. (757) 393-5258, Ext. 27. www.childrensmuseumva.com

Feb. 11 Hardy
Children's Story Time. Children 4 years old and up and their parents are invited to listen and learn about fascinating African American folk tales, stories about the Underground Railroad, and real life heroes such as Harriet Tubman, George Washington Carver, and Booker T. Washington. 11:00 a.m. Booker T. Washington National Monument, Hardy. Free.

Feb. 14 Portsmouth
Second Tuesday Forum Series. The Honorable Joe Green, former vice mayor, City of Norfolk, to discuss "The Attucks Theatre." Noon. Commodore Theatre, 421 High St. (757) 393-8973. Free.

Feb. 17 Norfolk
Imani Winds. "The music of Imani Winds ranges from the traditional woodwind quintet pieces to works by composers from around the globe." This African American/Latino woodwind quintet Imani Winds continues to push new cultural and musical bounds in the upcoming season with a highly anticipated second Koch International Classics release featuring a repertoire of classical and others inspired by South American and African rhythms. 10:30 a.m. www.imaniwinds.com

Feb. 17-19 Norfolk
Amazing Grace. Celebrate black history month as The Hurrah Players perform "Amazing Grace" the story of a clever little girl who realizes that she can do and be anything she sets her mind to regardless of gender or race. Tidewater Community College Roper Performing Arts Center (757) 627-5437.
Email:hurrahplayers@verizon.net

NEWS

Feb. 18

Portsmouth

Horseback Ride Honoring the Buffalo Soldiers and the Black Cowboy.

The Buffalo Riders of Hampton Roads, an equestrian team founded in 1997 to honor the memory of the Buffalo Soldiers, will celebrate Black History Month with a horseback ride through Portsmouth. 10 a.m. (757) 686-2313 or (757) 286-1493.

Feb. 18

Danville

Storytelling Festival: Keeping the Oral Tradition Alive.

Learn more about Danville's Black history through a family celebration of words and stories. Activities will include: storytelling sessions and a Spoken Word Concert led by the Cultural Arts Ensemble, as well as other local and professional storytellers. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History. (434) 793.5644.

www.danvillemuseum.org

Feb. 20

Norfolk

Sweet Honey in the Rock. Rooted in deeply held commitment to create music out of the rich textures of African American legacy and traditions, Sweet Honey in the Rock possesses a stunning vocal prowess that captures the complex sounds of blues, spirituals, traditional gospel hymns, rap, reggae, African chants, hip hop, ancient lullabies, and jazz improvisation. Sweet Honey's collective voice, occasionally accompanied by hand percussion instruments, produces a sound filled with soulful harmonies and intricate rhythms. 7:30 p.m. Attucks Theatre, 1010 Church Street, Norfolk, VA 23510.

Feb. 23

Norfolk

Daniel Beaty: Emergence-SEE! It's 2006 and a slave ship rises from the Hudson River in front of the Statue of Liberty. One man transforms into 40 characters and integrates history, song and slam poetry to answer the question, "How Free Are We?" 7:30 p.m. Attucks Theatre. 1010 Church Street, Norfolk, VA 23510. (757) 622-4763. Email: attuckstheatre@verizon.net. www.attuckstheatre.org

Feb. 26

Roanoke

Eighth Annual African American Celebration at the Virginia Museum of Transportation.

This event honors the African American workers on the N&W Railroad from 1930-1970. Guest speaker, Mr. Anthony Wade, Norfolk Southern Director of Marketing for Domestic Coal, Steel & Iron. Reservations required due to limited seating. Hors d' oeuvres and musical entertainment. 6:30-8 p.m. Free.

www.vmt.org.