“We, today, stand on the shoulders of our predecessors who have gone before us. We, as their successors, must catch the torch of freedom and liberty passed on to us by our ancestors. We cannot lose in this battle.”

INTRODUCTION

In the spirit of Benjamin E. Mays, the History Committee of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association introduced the practice of remembering, memorializing, and honoring our colleagues of the race who have recently passed. We compiled the first list of “Deceased Librarians, Library Workers, and Library Trustees,” covering 2002-2007, in time for the National Conference of African American Librarians, August 2-5, 2007 in Fort Worth, Texas.

Since that time, we have continuously documented the lives of our deceased colleagues, so we, as a professional organization, may safeguard our legacy and provide a publication that will be useful for future research. This compilation is a significant resource for all of us as we write and publish the detailed histories and chronologies of African American libraries, library services, and librarianship in various cities, states, regions... and even internationally (as many of us have served all over the world).
Compiled by

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Chair, History Committee, The Black Caucus
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and

Leroy Bell, Jr.
Member, History Committee, The Black Caucus
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With contributions from BCALA Members and Friends:

Darlita R. Ballard, Leroy Bell, Shauntée Burns,
Beverly Cook, Marcia Cross-Briscoe, Jerry Dear, Emily Guss,
Darren Jones, Sibyl E. Moses, Rachelle Nelson, Satia Orange, John S. Page,
Katherine Perry, Lorna Peterson, and Ray Pun.
Barbara Jean Mayweather Belisle (September 21, 1936 - February 6, 2021)  B.A. (English) Miles College, Birmingham, Alabama; M.A. (English) University of Montevallo, Montevallo, Alabama.  Librarian, New Orleans Public Library, New Orleans, Louisiana; Librarian, Calera High School, Montevallo, Alabama.  Night Manager of Circulation, Carmichael Library, University of Montevallo, Alabama.
Willie Mae Boulding-Dawkins (March 11, 1937 – August 2020) B.A. (English and Library Science) Grambling State University, Grambling, Louisiana; M.Ed., Prairie View University, Prairie View, Texas. Librarian, Booker T. Washington High School, Shreveport, Louisiana; Reference and Media Librarian, Woodlawn High School, Shreveport, Louisiana. Community activities: Order of the Eastern Star; Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
Brenda Joyce Rye Brock  (December 22, 1948-September 8, 2020)  
M.S. (Library Science) University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, 
1973. Librarian, St. Therese Catholic School, Seattle, Washington; 
Head Librarian, Lakeside Upper School, Seattle, Washington; Head 
Librarian, The Episcopal School of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Lillian J. Brule  (February 12, 1925-April 7, 2020)  B.A. Southern University A&M College, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; M.S. (Library Science) Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia. Librarian, New Orleans Public School System, New Orleans, Louisiana. Community activities: Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., New Orleans Alumnae Chapter and Baton Rouge Alumnae Chapter; The Girl Friends Inc.
Amos Goeffrey Clay, Jr. (July 4, 1955 - September 26, 2019) Past President for the Board of Trustees, Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Toledo, Ohio.
James Arthur Curle (September 19, 1952-August 25, 2020) Member, LaRue County Public Library Board, Hodgenville, Kentucky.
Doris Scipio Dees (1930-2021) Chairperson, Columbus County Public Library System Board, Whiteville, North Carolina.
Cheryle Lynette Franklin  (July 13, 1948 - April 29, 2020)
B.Ed. Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas; M.L.S.
Prairie View A&M, Prairie View, Texas. Librarian, Buchtel High
School, Akron Public Schools, Akron, Ohio; Librarian, Houston
Independent School District, Houston, Texas. Community
activities: Member, Delta Sigma Theta Inc., Beta Zeta Chapter;
Phi Delta Kappa Sorority; Beta Iota Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta,
Inc.; NAACP, Akron Chapter; National Council of Negro
Women.
Wally E. Hightower (April 24, 1938-June 17, 2020)
Willie Blanche Baker Hill  (November 30, 1920 - November 9, 2020)
Carl D. Hodges, Sr.  (August 20, 1921 - August 27, 2020)  B.S., North Carolina A and T University; Member, Durham County Library Trustee Board, Durham, North Carolina. Community activities:  Sertoma Club; Hayti Development Corporation, Durham, North Carolina; Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Tau Psi Chapter.
Rita Joyce Williams Jones (June 18, 1948 – January 12, 2020)  B.A. University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, California, 1970;  M.S. (Library Science) University of California-Berkeley,1972. Reference Librarian, to Co-Coordinator of Public Services, Head of Acquisitions and Collections Department, Instructional Dean, and retired in 2010 from District Services as Dean, Library and Learning Resources Services, City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, California. BCALA activities:  Member, BCALA NCAAL Awards and Honors Committee, 2007;  BCALA Executive Board;  BCALA Planning Committee for the 1st National Conference of African American Librarians in Columbus, Ohio.
Frances Arneize Knox (ca. 1928 - November 30, 2020) President, and Vice-President, Long Branch Free Public Library Board of Trustees, Long Branch, New Jersey.
Rita J. Long  (October 17, 1950- April 1, 2020)
Librarian, Lorain City School System, Lorain, Ohio.
Sylvia Yvonne Coakley Matthew (January 14, 1931- April 2020) Bahamas
Teacher's College, Nassau, Bahamas; B.A. (Humanities), Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee; M.S. (Library Science). School librarian, Junior High Schools 35 and 57, Brooklyn, New York; Senior librarian, John Dewey High School, Brooklyn, New York. Community activities: Founder, Friday Night Book Club; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Pellom McDaniels III, Ph.D.  (February 21, 1968 - April 19, 2020)
Sallye Cornelia Lovelace Morrow (November 15, 1926 – 2020)
Patricia Price Mosley (February 6, 1932 – March 23, 2020)
Dorothy Nelson (June 29, 1926-May 10, 2021) B.A. and M.A., Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Librarian (first) for the first Black public library in Pointe Coupee Parish, New Roads, Louisiana (next to the Rosenwald School); Librarian, St. Augustine Catholic School, New Roads, Louisiana; Reading Specialist, Pointe Coupee Parish School System, New Roads, Louisiana.
Josephus Nelson  (May 28, 1942-April 11, 2020)  B.A.  
(English) Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan;  M.S. 
Michigan; (Library Science) University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 
Librarian-Researcher, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 
(retired September 2016).  Author: Josephus Nelson and Judith 
Farley. Full Circle: Ninety Years of Service in the Main Reading 
Ida Rose Oliver (February 11, 1927 - January 7, 2021)  B.S. (Education), Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, Georgia; pursued Library Education, Atlanta University School of Library Service. Elementary school librarian, Cordele, Georgia, for 35 years. Trustee, Crisp County Carnegie Library Board, Cordele, Georgia; Community activities: Golden Life Member, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Macon Alumnae Chapter; NAACP, Crisp County Branch; Georgia Retired Educators Association; Crisp County Retired Teachers Association.
Maud Houston Pinkney (July 12, 1928-February 26, 2020)
B.A. (Education) Bowie State Teachers’ College, Bowie, Maryland; M.S. (Library Science), University of Maryland.
Librarian and teacher, various schools in Southern Maryland.
Lelia Gaston Rhodes, Ph.D.  (1925 - December 7, 2020) B.A. Jackson College, Jackson, Mississippi (name changed when placed under State control to Mississippi Negro Training School), May 1944.  MSLS Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia.  Ph.D. Florida State University (FSU), School of Library Science, Tallahassee, Florida.  Associate Head Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Dean of Libraries, Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi, (1944-1953; 1957-1988 - 40 years). Author: Jackson State University: First One Hundred Years (1877-1977). Centennial Edition. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1979. Hinds Community College Board of Trustees (25 years of service) (Dr. Clyde Muse, President); Mississippi Historical Preservation Board; Hinds County Election Commissioner, Elected Six Terms (1993-2016), Jackson, Mississippi.  Member, American Library Association (more than 30 years).  Community activities: President, Jackson State University National Alumni Association, Inc., 1988-1992; President, Mississippi Library Association (1980); Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; The Links, Inc.
Sara Eunice Johnson Scarbrough (January 8, 1933-April 6, 2020)
Librarian/Archivist. Head Librarian, Pershing Middle School, Houston Independent School District, Houston, Texas.
Abdul Karriem Shabazz (December 5, 1945 – March 31, 2019)
Elinor DesVerney Sinnette, Ph.D. (October 8, 1925 - January 3, 2020)
Jessie Cottman Smith (November 15, 1928 - December 10, 2020)
B.A. Maryland State College, Princess Anne, Maryland. M.S.
(Library Science), Columbia University, New York, New
York. Reference Librarian, later Director and Dean of the Library,
University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES). ACRL Mellon
Intern, Stanford University, Stanford, California. Member, Task
Force to Study the History and Legacy of Slavery in Maryland.
Loretta Inez Dates Smith (d. May 11, 2021)
B.A. Pembroke College, Providence, Rhode Island. M.A. Goucher College, Towson, Maryland. Librarian, Clifton Park Junior High School, Baltimore City Public Schools system, Baltimore, Maryland. Librarian, Mount Lebanon Library, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Community activities: Recording secretary, Black Association of South Hills; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Robert L. Todd  (August 30, 1941-June 27, 2020)  B.A. Talladega College, 1963; M.S. (Library Service), Atlanta University, School of Library Service; Head Librarian, Wiley College, Marshall, Texas. Librarian, United States Penitentiary, Atlanta, Georgia, 1971.
Ira B. Washington (d. December 31, 2019) B.S. Florida A & M University, Tallahassee, Florida; M.S. (Library Science) Florida State University. Librarian, Duval County Public Schools (for 35 years). Community activity: Member, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.
Montrose Adrian Waters (d. September 13, 2020)
Regina Hebert Williams (d. April 12, 2020) Librarian, St. John the Baptist Parish School Board, Reserve, Louisiana.
R.I.P.

Deceased African American Librarians, Library Workers, and Library Trustees, June 2019—June 2021