



SAN FRANCISCO

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETY

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SAN FRANCISCO  
AFRICAN AMERICAN  
HISTORICAL &  
CULTURAL SOCIETY

CONGRATULATIONS! REVEREND AMOS BROWN, PASTOR EMERITUS  
THIRD BAPTIST CHURCH

762 Fulton St., 2<sup>nd</sup> fl., San  
Francisco, CA 94102  
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Eldoris Cameron &  
Ginger Smyly, Co-editors  
Al Williams, President  
William Hoskins, Executive  
Director

Photos: Eldoris Cameron, G.  
Smyly, Max Millard, others



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**SERVICE OF CELEBRATION  
DESIGNATING THE REVEREND  
DR. AMOS C. BROWN AS  
PASTOR EMERITUS**



Pierce at McAllister, renamed  
Dr. Amos Brown C. Way



Willie L. Brown, Jr., gives tribute

The San Francisco African American Historical & Cultural Society, Inc. joins the San Francisco community in honoring Reverend Dr. Amos C. Brown, Emeritus, for 50 years of spiritual, civic and civil rights leadership. Rev. Brown's knowledge, love and appreciation of African American history and his willingness to share his knowledge with others made him a valuable contributor to the Society. Rev. Brown was a warrior for justice. From June 1976 to June 2025, Rev. Amos C. Brown faithfully served as senior pastor of historic Third Baptist Church. His activism connected him to broader local and national issues as witnessed by the many tributes given him.

Third Baptist Church of San Francisco honored their Pastor Amos C. Brown with a Retirement Celebration Weekend:

- STREET RENAMING CEREMONY on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 11:30 am, corner of McAllister & Pierce Streets
- THIRD BAPTIST SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICE on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10:00 am, "GET OUT OF BABYLON," sermon preached by Rev. Dr. Cassandra Jones, Professor of Religion, Clinton College. Stirring music by the magnificent Third Baptist Church Choir and soloists filled the sanctuary, a long tradition of spirit-filled music and biblical sermons.

Tributes were made by: Mr. Rafael Mandelman, President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors; Michael Pappas, San Francisco Interfaith Council; Dr. Jonathan Butler, President, San Francisco NAACP; Elder Matthew Holland, General Authority, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. A Reception followed the service.

- SERVICE OF CELEBRATION, DESIGNATING THE REVEREND DR. AMOS C. BROWN AS PASTOR EMERITUS on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 3:00 pm, Third Baptist Church

Rev. Devon Jerome Crawford, Pastor of Third Baptist Church, officiated with warmth and love. Tributes were made by: Governor Gavin Newsom; former San Francisco Mayor, Willie L. Brown, Jr.; Oakland Mayor, Barbara Lee; Leon W. Russell, Chair of the Board of the NAACP; Derrick Johnson, President & CEO of the NAACP; Rev. Dr. Cassandra Jones; Rick Callendar, NAACP California-Hawaii State Conference President; Rev. Rodney Leggett, President of the California State Baptist Convention, Inc.; Rev. Aaron Crutison, Sr., Former Acting General President of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.; Rev. Lawrence Edward Carter, Sr., PhD, Founding Dean, Martin Luther King, Jr., International Chapel, Morehouse College.

"THE LION STILL ROARS," sermon preached by Rev. Anthony Trufant

Senior Pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Brooklyn, NY (Rev. Brown's nephew.)

Acts of Conferral were: Charge to Live Life - Deacon Dianne Campbell; Charge to Leave By - Deacon Anthony Wagner, Sr.; Prayer - Rev. Aimme Rogers Jones; Statement of Conferral – Deacon Reginald Chatman. With the benediction by Rev. Dr. Michael S. Williams, Senior Pastor, St. James Baptist Church (Bayview.) Rev. James Parrish Smith, organist, performed the Postlude, "Toccata in F Major from Symphony V," by Charles Marie Widor.

- PASTOR EMERITUS RECEPTION, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5:30 pm, a celebration at The Green Room (tickets sold out!)

- *Eldoris Cupp Cameron*

**The Society congratulates Rev. Dr. Amos C. Brown, Emeritus, on his retirement and wish him well!!**

See and learn more in the *Praisesinger* special edition dedicated to the Celebration Weekend for Rev. Dr. Amos C. Brown, attached.

#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings, Society Members and Friends

Say welcome to the newest addition to the Society's administrative team, Kyle Fobbs, Administrative / Social Media Assistant. Learn more about Kyle in the "Gallery Corner" article, page 5.

The Society has been housed in the African American Art and Culture Complex (AAACC) since the 1990s. The City-owned building was meant to be a cultural center to provide a permanent home for the Society and several other African American cultural groups. However, the Society is now just a sub-licensee. The Society's rent is \$200 per month. However, in a new Agreement, the Society has the option to give up control over all but 200 square feet of the current space OR pay a monthly rent of \$1,375. Without control of the entire space the Society won't be able to host exhibits like the current Sargent Johnson exhibit and educational programs.

As well, plans call for the closure of the AAACC in Winter 2025 or Spring 2026 for earthquake retrofitting. That project is estimated to be completed in the Summer 2028. The Society has to find adequate and affordable space to relocate to during this period.

- *Al Williams*

Never-the-less, the Society has continued to do the critically important work of documenting, preserving and sharing information about the

history of African Americans in San Francisco. Our work with the City's Planning Department on the "African American Historic Context Statement" is but one example.

Founded in 1955, the Society is the oldest institution of its type in the western United States. As we approach our 71<sup>st</sup> year we are committed to continue the important work we do. Why? Because it is essential to the wellbeing of San Francisco's African American community and all San Franciscans.

2025 - 2026 are going to be a productive years for the Society. Thanks to the commitment and hard work of Society members we will:

- Publish the *Praisesinger* newsletter
- Host the 2026 Black History Month Kickoff at City Hall
- Assist students, authors and researchers
- Lend from our archives to other museums
- Conduct genealogy workshops
- Host lectures and conversations
- Organize the Book Club with our SFPL partner
- Create and host art and history exhibits

None of what the Society does would be possible without the commitment and interest of Society members and friends. If you are not already a member, please join us.

If you are already a member or interested in the

Society's work, please join an active work group, committee, or consider serving as a Board Member. Together we can face our many challenges and continue to strive for excellence.

Here are some immediate project areas:

- Plan the 2026 Black History Month kickoff and programs; theme: **A Century of Black History Commemorations**
- Write an article, submit a poem or essay and photos for the newsletter or website
- Develop and implement educational and cultural programs, including the Book Club
- Identify new Society members and supporters
- Fund-raise to support an adequate, appropriate Society location and expand staff
- Identify resources useful to the Society in the areas of technology, fund development, real estate, etc.

70 years ago, Society founders and pioneers gave of their time and talents to lay a firm foundation that upon which the Society continues to operate.

Please join us in this exciting and timely work – Black History and Black life should be studied and celebrated more than ever in these uncertain times.

Your time and talents especially at this critical moment can make the difference and ensure another 70 years of Society excellence.

## IMAGINING JUSTICE: AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

[Download and Read](#) the  
"Context Statement."

- *Leslie Lombre*

On April 7, 2025, Al Williams and Carl Williams, Society President and former Board member, spoke to a primarily student audience at USF's McCarthy Center series, "Imagining Justice." Co-sponsored by the Society, the subject of the presentation was the "African American Historic Context Statement." Prepared to identify historical landmarks, it highlights locations of cultural or historical significance. In 2016, Al Williams organized the Society's review of the first draft; Carl Williams prepared the "Foreword" while serving on the Board of Directors. The "Context Statement" was revised and finally approved in 2024. For more of the event, see the photo album, page 12

**GALLERY CORNER**



The San Francisco African American Historical & Cultural Society is excited and happy to welcome our newest member, Kyle Fobbs. As Administrative and Social Media Assistant, Kyle will be overseeing the Society's office, gallery and related activities from Tuesday through Saturday.

Kyle is a native San Franciscan, graduating from Abraham Lincoln High School, attending Merritt College, and transferring to California State University, Sacramento, earning a bachelor's degree in Business Administration (Marketing). In addition to Kyle's formal education, he has professional experience as an operations and events coordinator and social media/marketing director for several non-profits.

We're also excited about the special skills he brings with him in digital marketing, advertising, brand management, graphic design, content creation, videography, and copywriting.

Kyle is invested in supporting his local community in hopes of creating a more equitable and viable environment for African Americans and all residents of the Bay Area. He has volunteered as a youth mentor for United Way Bay Area, serving underprivileged minority youth and the broader community.

Besides wearing cowboy boots, Kyle is an enthusiastic 49'ers and Giants fan. He enjoys movies, reading and fitness. Kyle is also passionate about filmmaking and screenwriting. Most important to him is his beautiful wife and eight-month-old daughter.

We cordially invite you to stop by the Society and give our newest member, Kyle, a big San Francisco welcome. His presence will add an important dimension to the Society's efforts to serve the community and the general public in a meaningful way.

- *William Hoskins,  
Executive  
Director/Curator*

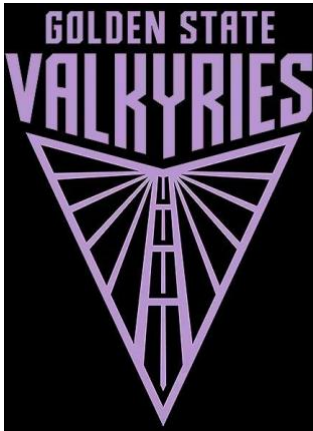
**AFRICAN AMERICAN LEGACY  
BOOK CLUB**

- *Shawna Sherman*

The African American Legacy Book Club is a joint program of the African American Center, San Francisco Public Library and the Society. Join! Even if you haven't read the book, the discussion is enlightening. The next selection is Oreo by Fran Ross. Meeting on Tuesday, September 9, 6 pm, via ZOOM. [REGISTER](#) Also mark your calendar for the following Book Club, Tuesday, November 11, 6 pm.

For more, see page 9

## VALKRIES CONQUER SAN FRANCISCO



In Norse mythology of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Valkyries were fierce warrior women who rode into battle wearing armor and wielding weapons. They decided which male warriors would die heroically in battle, then carried their souls to Valhalla, the Hall of the Slain, where they were welcomed by Odin, the god of war and wisdom.

The owners of the newest team to join the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) wanted a distinctive name for the team, and "Valkyries" was the bomb. The Golden State Valkyries opened their season on May 16<sup>th</sup> at Chase Center and became an instant smash success. They will play 44 regular season games this year, ending on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Then come the playoffs for the top 8 teams.

During game days, Chase Center is redubbed "Ballhalla." I attended my first Valkyrie's game there on June 29<sup>th</sup>, and they earned their name that night, demolishing the Seattle Storm, 84 to 57. The 12 players on their roster come from five continents and seven were of African heritage. Their coach, Natalie Nakase, is Japanese American. But rosters can change during the season, partly due to the pay scale. The minimum annual salary of WNBA players is \$64,000, and the highest paid player in the league earns less than \$250,000. The advantage for fans is that the tickets are only about 25% of the price of NBA tickets.

I bought a ticket to one of the uppermost seats for \$25 - too far from the action to distinguish the players' faces, but aided by big screens showing replays and highlights. The sellout crowd of 18,000, including Steph Curry, yelled their approval every time the team in black controlled the ball and booed whenever the team in white stood at the free-throw line. The surface of the court has been repainted for the season. The blue and gold Warriors' insignia has been replaced by a giant V shaped logo for the Valkyries. The 13 lines within the logo signify the 13th WNBA team, while the middle represents the Bay Bridge.

Statistics comparing the men and women players are remarkably similar. Their percentage of successful free throws, field goals, and three pointers are almost identical. But dunks and allie-oops are rare, mainly because of height. The men average 6 foot 7 and the women 6 foot 1.

The Valkyries sold out their first 10 home games this season. While the Warriors faltered in the NBA playoffs due to injuries, the Valkyries began this season winning more than half their games, and have a solid chance to make the WNBA playoffs - an unexpected achievement for an expansion team.

- Max Millard

- Co-Editors

Max, thanks for your article on San Francisco's newest professional sports franchise. The WNBA has been called a leader in racial and gender hiring practices in professional sports – African American, African and other women of color represent a large percentage of employees and players. While entry to the Valkries' games is low-cost in comparison to the Warriors', the Valkries' and the WNBA have a long way to go to reach gender pay equity – which will likely make the game even more exciting, if a bit more costly.

Finally, the Old Norse were not the only folk with women warriors' mythology. These myths and historic women warriors occurred through the world, including Africa, most popularly imagined in the Black Panther sequel, *Wakanda Forever*.

## REMEMBRANCES AND RECOLLECTIONS

Former Society member, Audrey de Loache, passed away on June 25, 2025 at the age of 92. Audrey was a social worker whose career as an advocate for children and families spanned 50 years. Audrey migrated to the west coast from New York in the late 1960s. She brought with her a rich knowledge and passion for Black culture, having grown up in the historic African American neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. Audrey became a member of the Society in the 1970s during a heyday of Black professional strides.

Through the work of Audrey and other members of the Publicity Committee at that time, the Society's logo was established. Audrey developed lasting friendships with several of the Society members and the occasion of her passing has prompted remembrances and a reunion of recollections.

Member Mary Forte notes:

"I heard about the Society about 1974 when I started working in downtown San Francisco for Standard Oil. I used to go to the Society after work and on weekends for events and to do committee work. I met Audrey [de Loache], Audrey Johnson, Bill Coleman, Dave Johnson, Ray Daniels, Claudia Simmons, and Eldoris Cameron, to name a few. I was on the Publicity Committee and the *Praisesinger* Committee. We were young professionals, making our way in our respective jobs and having fun too. There are so many good memories, for sure."

- Amy Holloway

Audrey de Loache was a cousin of my Mother's best friend, Sandra. Though my Mother and Audrey met as adults, they always knew about each other. Audrey was a vital support for me growing up. Several of Audrey's Society friends were also friends of my Mother or mentored me when I worked at the Society during the 1990s. When I applied to

work as Society Librarian in 1992, Mary Forte recommended me to Society Board President, Donner Lane. Audrey Johnson and my Mother were high school friends; Bill Coleman a long-time friend of my cousin Dianne Doss. Audrey de Loache's friend, Marilyn Hayward, of the California Librarians Black Caucus, helped me with library job opportunities and generously served on the Society's Librarians Advisory Board.

The loss of a loved one who has become beloved through their connections in various settings--whether family home, workplace, church, school, cultural center or other activity center--creates an opportunity to revisit our personal and institutional histories. We may fill gaps with new information or create more questions with differing versions of what happened. If nothing else, the loss prompts those left behind to contact others to say "Did you hear..." and "Do you remember..." and to perhaps even visit one another or the center where you had all those good times so long ago.

Learn more about [Audrey De Loache](#) and [SFAAHCS.org](#)

#### **"BLACK GOLD – STORIES UNTOLD"**

At historic Ft. Point, located underneath the Golden Gate Bridge, a "much anticipated" exhibit entitled, "Black Gold – Stories Untold," is being shown from June 6 through November 2, 2025.

Organized by "FOR SITE" it includes the work of 17 artists and collectives, including Mildred Howard, Isaac Julien and the artists of Creativity Explored. The works interpret stories of African Americans living in California during the Gold Rush through Reconstruction period, roughly 1849 – 1877. This exhibit was largely inspired by "Golden Chains: The Hidden History of Slavery in California," a project of the ACLU.

- *Ginger Smyly*

The Society applauds the project's inclusion as advisors and ambassadors: Ralph Remington, Director of Cultural Affairs, Susan Anderson of the California African American Museum and Dr. Jacqueline Francis, Dean, California College of the Arts, all Society friends.

To learn more:

[Black Gold – Stories Untold Exhibit](#)

[FOR SITE](#)

[Golden Chains: The Hidden History of Slavery in California](#)

**FRANKLIN R. PARKER  
RECOGNIZED BY PORT  
CHICAGO ALLIANCE**



- Eldoris Cupp Cameron

*Above: Franklin R. Parker speaking to the crowd at AAMLO. and with the Port Chicago Alliance group and program participants*

*Right: The Port Chicago Alliance and friends with Parker*

Franklin R. Parker, former Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower & Reserve Affairs) was awarded recognition of his service by the **Port Chicago Alliance** on Thursday, July 17, 2025, 3 – 4:30 PM. Co-host of the event was the African American Museum and Library Oakland where the event was held.

The annual weekend event, July 17-20, recognized the 320 sailors including 220 Blacks killed in the massive explosion while loading ammunitions at the Port Chicago Naval Magazine in Concord on July 17, 1944 during WWII. 50 Black sailors were court martialed and accused of mutiny for refusing to load munitions following the explosion. Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial was dedicated in 1994.

On July 17, 2024, the 50 sailors were officially **exonerated** by the Secretary of the Navy.

**Franklin R. Parker had served as general counsel to the U.S. Navy in various positions since 2009.**



**TARGET BOYCOTT  
ADDRESSES ROLLBACK OF  
DEI**

Several months ago, many of us received text messages from our African American women friends regarding the call for a national boycott of Target and other large companies to protest the rollback of diversity, equity and inclusion policies put into place during the 2020 “awakening” following the murder of George Floyd by a police officer. The press covered the boycott initially, however as per usual, this coverage diminished and now has vanished. However, the boycott continues and has some success – according to a July 4<sup>th</sup> article by Stacy M. Brown in the [Afro News](#), Target sales have eroded.

Read about the boycott, players (NAACP and other legitimate African American organizations) and the current status of this tried and true mode of protest in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Then you can determine whether to boycott or not.

## COLORED CONVENTIONS PROJECT

The Society holds a trove of information on the African American presence, history and culture in its targeted library and archives. Members of the archive, library and “Blacks in the West” monograph committees were diligent in their research (without the internet!) making copious visits to libraries and academic institutions – and producing exhibits, well-documented and well-written essays and monographs.

In the archive among the many secondary resources (reproductions, copies, or recounts,) are copies of the proceedings of the California Colored Conventions of the mid-Nineteenth Century. These conventions focused on key issues of freedom, equality and other rights for Blacks in California before, during and after the Civil War. Many leaders of those conventions resided in San Francisco; the Society has brought to you some of their stories in the newsletter, in website essays and in monographs. Currently, the 1974 monograph, “Blacks in the West,” which describes participants in the Colored Conventions and beyond, is being transcribed from print to digital format.\*

While researching an entirely different subject, a website called, “the Colored Conventions Project,” surfaced. Started in a graduate studies classroom at Delaware State University, the project has as its goal to make digitally available the records of the 19<sup>th</sup> century National and State conventions through a collective transcribing process. Click [here](#) to see and read proceedings of California conventions already transcribed. National conventions and other state conventions have also been transcribed. In addition to the digital records, the site includes digital exhibits about a number of subjects: where did they sleep, where did they eat, key figures in the convention movement, etc.

- Ginger Smyly

In a companion website, there are brief biographies of key figures in the California convention movement: Mary Ellen Pleasant, William H. Hall, Peter Lester, James Starkey and others, residents of San Franciscans. On this site, there is discussion of “[Nineteenth Century Black California Life and Politics](#).” Within it are various essays including, “Education for People of Color,” “Black Hair Power,” “Black Testimony Exclusion Law,” “Advocate Our Own Cause: Black Newspapers,” “Black Migration in Relation to Gold Rush,” etc. These essays were researched and written by students with oversight by faculty at various institutions. Each essay includes a rigorous bibliography. Many of these essays echo the work of the Society’s early researcher-writers who created the “Blacks in the West” series of essays and monographs.

*\*If you can help to transcribe,  
please email Ginger at  
[info@sfaahcs.org](mailto:info@sfaahcs.org)*

Learn more about the early civil rights movement to inform the work we must do now to sustain our civil rights and our democracy.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit us at [www.sfaahcs.org](http://www.sfaahcs.org) or Call 415-292-6172

- ✓ Society Book Club: Tuesday, September 9, 6 pm, via ZOOM. Oreo by Fran Ross, [REGISTER](#)
- ✓ Exhibit: "Black Gold – Stories Untold," Ft. Point, June 6 – November 2, 2025
- ✓ Exhibit: "Routed West: Twentieth Century African American Quilts in California," BAMFA, June 8 – November 30, 2025, features work by San Francisco artist, William Rhodes
- ✓ Society Book Club: Tuesday, November 11, 6 pm, via ZOOM. More coming.

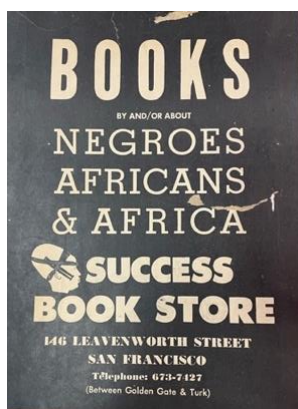
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**THANKS:** Al Williams, Amy Holloway, Leslie Lombre, Max Millard, Shawna Sherman, for contributing to this edition of the *Praisesinger*.  
- Co-editors

## THE SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!

Volunteers are essential to the Society; serve on the Board, join a committee, volunteer at the gallery or in relocation activities.  
[info@sfaahcs.org](mailto:info@sfaahcs.org) or call 415-292-6172

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From the archives: A flyer/poster for Success Book Store, later known as Marcus Books, SFAAHCS Archive # 8875

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

(Your annual membership term is January 1 through December 31.)  
LIFE members, your donation is appreciated

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ CELL \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign me up as a:

_____ Student	\$15	_____ Organizations	\$250
_____ Senior	\$25	_____ Small Business	\$350
_____ Adult	\$50	_____ Large Business	\$700
_____ Family	\$100	_____ Donor	

\*\*If you do not plan to be an active member, please make a donation

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Membership fees and contributions are tax deductible

## Make Your Check Payable/Mail To:

San Francisco African American Historical & Cultural Society

762 Fulton Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
415.292.6172

I am interested in serving on the ✓committee(s):

_____ Development	_____ Library/archives
_____ Membership	_____ Programs
_____ Black History Month	_____ Communications
_____ Volunteer/Reception	_____ Other

PHOTO ALBUM – PHOTO ALBUM -- PHOTO ALBUM – PHOTO ALBUM -- PHOTO ALBUM – PHOTO ALBUM -- PHOTO ALBUM



ll. to r.:  
Al Williams, Carl Williams, students and other attendees, McCarthy Center

below: Officials, honorees and attendees at Pastor Emeritus Installation and Reception (see Special Edition for names of participants)

