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800 Vine Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202-2071  
[www.CincinnatiLibrary.org](http://www.CincinnatiLibrary.org)

**Phyllis Hegner**  
*Assistant PR Manager*  
Phone (513) 369-4571  
[Phyllis.Hegner@CincinnatiLibrary.org](mailto:Phyllis.Hegner@CincinnatiLibrary.org)

**Emily Mueller**  
*Media Communications Specialist*  
Phone (513) 369-6959  
[Emily.Mueller@CincinnatiLibrary.org](mailto:Emily.Mueller@CincinnatiLibrary.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
**Press Release**

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January 16, 2008

## **Lecture Series Features Well-Known Experts on History & Genealogy African American History Series “Brings It All Together” Saturdays in February at the Main Library**

This February, the Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County will celebrate Black History Month as well as the opening of its newly renovated and reorganized Main Library. One of the busiest and most popular departments at the Main Library, Genealogy & Local History Department, has brought together the best for both events—great resources and great programs.

As part of the Main Library’s new service model, the department, which gathers research level African American history and culture materials, has pulled together resources (previously spread throughout the building) into one central location. Here researchers (from the novice to the advanced) can browse plantation records, classic African American history works, Civil Rights Commission reports, or compile their family history.

To celebrate “bringing together” the African American past, the Genealogy & Local History Department will host a three-part lecture series to take place on Saturdays at the Main Library (800 Vine Street) in the Huenefeld Tower Room, south building, third floor. Internationally known speaker Tony Burroughs will kick off the series on February 2 with two programs during the Main Library’s Opening Celebration.

### **Saturday, February 2**

#### **Adding DNA to Genealogy – 10:00 a.m.**

**Featuring Tony Burroughs** (nationally renowned genealogy expert/author/research consultant)

Using DNA with genealogy is so popular in the newspapers and television, that many think DNA is genealogy. Hear Tony Burroughs discuss DNA so you can understand it. Learn what a genealogist (versus a scientist) needs to understand about the basics of using DNA with genealogy research; what the different ways are to use DNA; when to consider adding DNA to your genealogical research; and what works with DNA and what doesn’t.



#### **Identifying the Slave Owner – 2:00 p.m.**

Everyone is not fortunate enough to have had the name of the last slave owner passed down through oral history from generation to generation. Therefore, if this name is unknown, it is learned through genealogical and historical research. Many genealogical texts and researchers overlook this crucial question. There are many records that indicate the name of the former slave owner vital to researching slave genealogy. This presentation, also given by Mr. Burroughs, will cover some of the unique problems associated with African American surnames and is intended for intermediate to advanced genealogists.

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**ABOUT THE SPEAKER:** Tony Burroughs served as guest expert in the television documentaries *Ancestors*, *African American Lives*; *Oprah's Roots*; *Remembering Roots*; and *The Real Family of Jesus*. His book, *Black Roots*, is considered a necessary tool for African American genealogy and was number one on *Essence Magazine's* Best Seller List. He is featured in *The Experts' Guide to 100 Things Everyone Should Know How to Do* and the recipient of the prestigious Distinguished Service Award from the National Genealogical Society. Mr. Burroughs will present two programs.

**Tour the “new” Genealogy & Local History Department** in between the programs on February 2 (at noon). As part of Main Library's Opening Celebration, receive a stamp for taking the tour. Add the stamp to the Main Library: 21 Passport to become eligible to win prizes. For details log onto <http://www.cincinnati.library.org/news/2007/ml21wrapup.html>

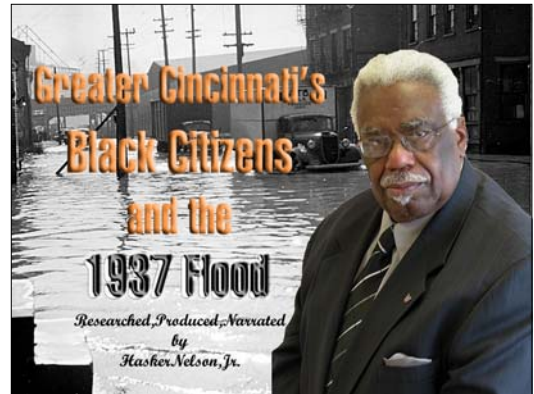
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Saturday, February 16 – 2:00 p.m.

## **Greater Cincinnati's Black Citizens and the 1937 Flood**

**Featuring Hasker Nelson** (award-winning journalist/author)

The “1937 Flood” was the area's largest natural disaster. At its height, the Ohio River crested at 79.9 feet, more than 27 feet over flood level. Local press published scores of photographs of that catastrophe. However, the coverage and subsequent historical accounts seldom depicted the impact of the flood on African Americans or their role in rescue and relief efforts. Hasker Nelson will present a video documentary on the flood using African American newspaper publisher Wendell P. Dabney's 1937 account as a backdrop. The film features seven African Americans who lived in the West End, Delhi, the East End, Avondale and Covington, Kentucky during the flood. Their memories include: rescue by canoes, sandbagging the riverbanks, and railroad boxcars as temporary homes.



**ABOUT THE SPEAKER:** Hasker Nelson is the founder/president of Heritage Research Creations, award-winning journalist, and author of *Listening For Our Past: A Lay Guide to African Oral History Interviewing*.

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Saturday, February 23 – 2:00 p.m.

## **The Highest Standards of Democracy: Integration of the Armed Forces**

**Featuring Veterans Harold Johnson & Maurice Adams**

Since the birth of the United States Armed Forces in the American Revolution, African Americans have served, fought, and died in its ranks. Famous units like the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts, the Buffalo Soldiers, The Tuskegee Airman, and many others made brave sacrifices in the fighting of America's wars. Yet for much of the history of the United States, Black Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen had to fight for the right to serve and even then were forced to serve in a military that discriminated by skin color.



After long years of valiant service by African Americans, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981 integrating the United States Armed Forces on July 26, 1948. World War II veteran and community activist Harold Johnson will lead a discussion of this momentous event and its effects on the U.S military and on American society in general. Also contributing to the discussion of this watershed moment will be Maurice Adams, who served in both the segregated and integrated Army. Mr. Adams will share reflections of his experiences in both environments. In addition to this program, both Mr. Adams and Mr. Johnson have participated in the Library's Veterans History Project (log on at [www2.cincinnati.library.org/vets/](http://www2.cincinnati.library.org/vets/)), which in partnership with the Library of Congress, seeks to preserve stories of American military service.

**For more information or to make a reservation, contact the Genealogy & Local History Department at (513) 369-6905.**