

Connecticut Afro-American Historical Society



444 Orchard Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

NEWSLETTER

August 1992

Become a Part of History

AMISTAD MEMORIAL DEDICATION BE THERE!!



Friday, September 25, 1992

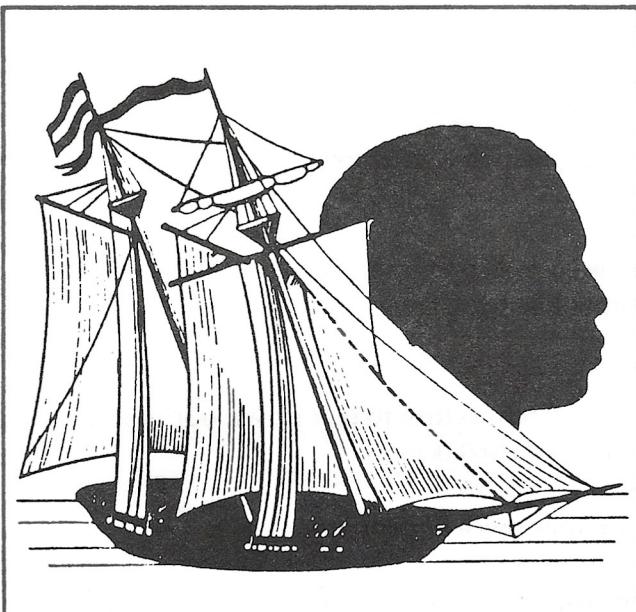
- Amistad Memorial Concert, "Sweet Honey in the Rock" 8:00 PM
Shubert Theatre, 247 College Street, New Haven, CT

Saturday, September 26, 1992

- Youth March for Peace & Justice 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
- Dedication, Amistad Memorial - New Haven City Hall 2:00 PM
- Community Cultural Festival - New Haven Green 3:15 PM - 5:30 PM

Sunday, September 27, 1992

- Convocation - Woolsey Hall, Yale University 3:00 PM
- Processional from Woolsey Hall to New Haven City Hall 4:00 PM
- Public Reception 4:30 PM



The Amistad Revolt began in June, 1839, when more than 50 Africans were kidnapped from Sierra Leone and taken to Havana, Cuba to be sold into slavery. Led by Cinque, one of the captives, the Africans seized La Amistad, the merchant ship, and ordered the Spanish kidnappers to sail them back to Africa. Attempting to foil the Africans, the slavers set a course for Africa by day but changed the course at night northward toward the United States. Eventually, the Amistad was taken into custody in Long Island Sound, setting the stage for a civil rights battle that centered on New Haven and involved Hartford and Farmington. The case reached the U.S. Supreme Court where former President John Quincy Adams came out of retirement to plead for the freedom of the Africans. In the end, the U. S. Supreme Court upheld the decision of the lower courts that they were free and in the fall of 1841 they returned to Africa. Nationally, the Amistad Revolt was a significant milestone in the long fight to end slavery in America.

For further information on the Amistad events
please contact the Amistad Committee
(203) 387-0370.

TO OUR MEMBERS

Your Board of Directors has been meeting to discuss the serious financial situation and restructuring needs of our Historical Society. Just this past winter our treasury was wiped out due to major repairs on our roof, replacement of the entire back wall, furnace repair and radiator replacement.

NOW MORE THAN EVER, our community needs information on the vast contribution of African-American people - it leads to continual growth and development of all humanity. **NOW MORE THAN EVER**, we are seeking your help during this transitional period. Reinstate your membership today if you are not on the 1992 list. If your membership is up to date and your are not listed, let us know. Any additional contributions will be greatly appreciated.

The Connecticut Afro-American Historical Society is the only one of its kind in our state, and is registered with the National Historical Society and Connecticut League of Historical Societies.

You, **THE MEMBERSHIP**, need to participate more in our activities. How? First, renew your membership **NOW** by paying your dues for 1992. Second, return the questionnaire as soon as possible and let us know what you think. Do not limit yourself to our questions. **ASK** and **ANSWER** your own if the spirit hits you. Just attach a separate sheet of paper.

BEFORE THE QUESTIONNAIRE, HERE'S SOME BACKGROUND ON WHERE WE BELIEVE WE ARE:

1. Our building is deteriorating very rapidly and it is estimated repairs could be as high as \$20,000 to keep it up.
2. The parking at the building is very limited as is the space in the building for doing the Archive work to keep the collection up to date.
3. We have had the luxury of board members weekly working on the collection as well as friends such as SWITH of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority keeping our doors open to the public on alternate Saturdays. We do not however have any full time staff.

THERE ARE SOME ALTERNATIVES

- A. Stay as we are, raise the money to continually repair our building, which is paid for, and rely on our volunteers to maintain and develop the Society.
- B. Move into the Ethnic Archives Center at Long Wharf where the costs of operations will be the same and we will have the use of exhibition space on a rotating basis with five other historical societies and one-sixth of a part-time Director.
- C. Accept an offer (*only in the talking stage*) from the Yale School of Architecture to tear down our building and rebuild a modern structure on the same property. Estimate is about \$60,000.
- D. Sell the 444 Orchard Street property and do "C" above on another piece of property.
- E. Sell the 444 Orchard Street property and do "B" above. Put the proceeds into the Endowment and use that interest to supplement our operation needs.

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am sure there are many other suggestions and we would like to hear them from you. But as you put pen to paper, please answer the following questionnaire.

1. Is the Society performing as you would like? Yes No
If NO please elaborate: _____

2. Which, if any, of the proposals do you like? A B C D E

3. Would you like more information on any ONE of the proposals? A B C D E

4. What is GOOD about the 444 Orchard Street location? _____

5. What is BAD about the 444 Orchard Street location? _____

6. How many times have you visited the Society?

Never (1) (2-5) (5-10) Too many to count

7. When is the last time you visited (Approximately)? _____

8. Did you have children with you when you visited? Yes No

9. Have your children or grand-children or any child close to you visited the Society?

Children Grandchildren Significant other children

10. If you were at a Board Meeting and had time to "Tell it like it is" what would you say?

Our next NEWSLETTER will give the results of this survey. But like the Lotto says, "You got to be in it" for us to get good results. Please use the attached envelope to mail in your responses.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire and for your time and interest in the Society.

• 1992 PAID MEMBERSHIP LIST •

Mr. Edward Baker
Mr. George M. Bellinger
Ms. Dora Brown
Mr. Allen Brosious
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Byrd
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Clark
Mr. & Mrs. Ulysses Davis
Ms. Eleanor Echols
Mr. & Mrs. Allen Elliott
Mrs. Adele Emery
Dr. Patricia B. Floyd
Mr. Richard Hegel
Ms. Elaine Henley

Mr. Gary Highsmith
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Ms. Carol Johnson
Ms. Shelly Joyner
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Ms. Mary Mitchell
Mr. Charles Moore
Ms. Joyce Moore
Ms. Patricia Nixon
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Ms. Valerie Powell
Ms. Jacqueline Randolph
Mr. Clinton Robinson
Ms. July Rose
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Mr. Henri Sumner
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Mr. Donald White
Ms. Gladys Whitney
Ms. Lisa Whitney
Ms. Patricia Whitney
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Wilson

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