After the New Year arrived, we

entered 2019 by once again telling stories as participants at the (1) Annual African American Cultural Festival, held at the NC Museum of History; (2) reading/sharing at the Zeta Phi Beta's "African American Read-in" in Rocky Mount, NC; (3) at a Wake Co. middle school and (4) at a Durham Co. alternative high school during Black History Month; (5) performing for Clayton, NC's Jabbawock participants; and (6) a return visit to perform at Genworth Mortgage Co. in Raleigh.

Also in February, we held our annual Charlotte NCABS meeting at Johnson C. Smith Univ. We met, enjoyed lunch, and then entertained the JCSU students and the general public with stories. We even signed up a few NEW NCABS members!

In the early Spring, our NCABS visual artist/'teller Pinkie Strother was invited to display at an International Art Show in Honolulu, Hawaii. Beverly Fields Burnette accompanied her on this trip. Pinkie's original art entry/display was a visual "family story." During the week-long trip, there were several opportunities to share NABS information with other artists from around the

country, and with the many viewers in attendance.

On March 22nd, several NCABS members attended and shared an NCABS display at a "Freedom-Seeking Seminar"

in Historic Halifax, NC, sponsored by the NC'S African American Heritage Commission; and on April 27th, participated in a day-long African-American Arts (and performance) Celebration/ Fest'l in Fuquay Varina, NC.

In May, we were invited to once again perform at the 45th Annual "Artsplosure" celebration in downtown Raleigh and Obakunle Akinlana represented NCABS with his lively drumming and interactive 'telling. On the same date, NCABS (EJ Stewart, Bev Burnette and Willa Brigham) met the group, and shared historical stories of 400 yrs of African Americans being in North America. Over 100 Jack 'n Jill students and their parents picnic-ed and enjoyed this city park outing.

A very unique opportunity was offered to NCABS in June (in collaboration with Wanda

Cox-Bailey and the Triangle AAHGS group) to participate in, and to share family and community stories, circa The Civil War and beyond. This event was entitled "Community Histories", and was sponsored/ developed/facilitated by UNC Chapel Hill professionals.

The summer brought us to the 1st Juneteenth Celebration in Cary, NC. Madafo Lloyd Wilson, Willa Brigham, Beverly Burnette, Carolyn Evans, and Tom Hancock participated in the Cary event,...while Evette Evans participated in a Juneteenth event in nearby Pittsboro, NC event. Additional members led or shared their stories and talents in other Juneteenth events throughout the State.

We were thrilled to have three August events:

(1) Winston Salem at the biennial Nat'l Black Theatre Festival in early August: Twelve storytellers performed for two consecutive days to audiences of children and adults, who were enthusiastic and welcoming.

(2) The Annual Umoja Festival in Fayetteville, NC, planned and facilitated by NCABS member Dorothy Fielder on August 24th; we were joined by Baba Jamal Koram at this event;

(3) and, then, on the 31st, the 10th Annual African American Cultural Festival was held in downtown Raleigh. Braima Moiwai, Thomasi McDonald, Tom Hancock, Evette Evans, Carolyn Currie, Willa Brigham and Beverly Burnette were the 'tellers.

At various times during the year, Sonny Kelly (while a UNC graduate student) has widely performed his original one-man show called "The Talk" at schools, churches and libraries. Sonny and Mitch Capel also perform their

two-man show, "The Color of Courage," as well.

After Labor Day, NCABS participated with Triangle

AAHGS, and our own Wanda Cox-Bailey in two days of sharing memories and stories related to traveling around the country, while using "The Green Book." Several NCABS members assisted by leading older local citizens in discussions, as they recalled and shared their own memories.

Even as we approach our early November travels to NABS in Montgomery, on Oct 28th, four NCABS (members Obakunle Akinlana, Elisha Minter, Pinkie Strother and Bev Burnette) will be traveling to share stories at the Jesse Norman School of the Arts in Augusta, Ga. ...in connection with Paine College's Annual Harlem Renaissance celebration.

On October 1st, our NCABS members were especially shocked and saddened at the sudden death of our own Priscilla Robinson Best, the "Heart to Heart Storyteller" of Goldsboro, NC. Priscilla, a retired School Media Specialist, will be sorely missed for her genuine and sincere warmth, her wisdom and her wit, as well as for her earnest advisements about taking care of one's own health. Rest in Peace, Priscilla!

Rest in Peace!

Respectfully submited by: Beverly Fields Burnette,

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