

Sunny Nash Wins Ottis Lock Endowment Award



Sunny Nash

Sunny Nash received the Ottis Lock Endowment Award and Research Grant to complete her photographic and oral history study, *The Peterson Legacy*, at the Carnegie History Center in 2015.

“As a writer-photographer, my goal with the Lock grant is to use Peterson research, photographs and archival materials to develop approaches that excite audiences about Texas history,” Nash said. To attract audiences to history, Nash said she plans to employ principles of an emerging discipline—visual literacy—a teachable set of skills that enables a person to understand a subject by viewing images, such as photographs, documents, illustrations, charts and graphs. Nash will combine visual literacy with literary literacy, derived from reading or listening to text.

Nash, the first African American to earn a journalism degree at Texas A&M University, studied mass communications and broadcast. Currently, she is studying museum and library information technology at the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science in Boston. A resident of Southern California and Texas native, Nash, is the author of the nonfiction book, *Bigmama Didn't Shop At Woolworth's*, about life with her part-Comanche grandmother during the Civil Rights Movement. The Association of American University Presses selected the book for value to understanding U.S. race relations; and the Miami-Dade Public Library System recommended the book for Native American collections. Nash, former syndicated newspaper columnist, award-winning producer and photographer, is recognized by *Women in Photography International* for photographs collected by and toured internationally with Smithsonian exhibition, *Reflections in Black*.

The Peterson Legacy, created by Nash for the Carnegie History Center in Bryan, Texas, was displayed at the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum in College Station, Texas, October 24, 2013–January 4, 2014. The exhibit—a collaborative venture between the Carnegie historical research committee, *Brazos Valley Speaks*, and the College Station Historical Preservation Committee—*The Peterson Legacy* was part of a celebration honoring the 75th Anniversary of the incorporation of College Station.



The Peterson Legacy by Sunny Nash
George H.W. Bush Presidential Library & Museum
Photo: Anne Preston

“Peterson historic photographic restorations, ancestral document reproductions and oral history interviews depict an excellent example of a micro-comic examination of early African American life in Brazos County,” Nash said. “A perfect enticement to bring academic researchers, and university and local school students into the Carnegie and others from around the globe onto the online Peterson research guide I will develop using the Lock grant.”

The Ottis Lock Endowment Award and Research Grant was established in 1984 by East Texas Historical Association (ETHA) in Nacogdoches, Texas, to commemorate educator, thirty-year Texas Legislator and Stephen F. Austin State University alum for his lifelong interest in the history, heritage and folklore of East Texas.

Scott Sosebee, ETHA Executive Director said, “This Lock Award is bestowed during our annual fall meeting on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches.” Nash’s grant will fund visual and literary learning tools, discussion aids, handouts, an online research guide and collection of additional documents.



Ottis Lock
Photo: East Texas Historical Association

“The Peterson family is one of the first African American landowning families in an area that became College Station in southern Brazos County,” said Nan Ross, Carnegie History Center Director. “In addition to preserving and archiving Peterson photographs and ancestral documents, Sunny will produce materials to satisfy the Lock grant that will support academic research, educational programs, presentations and lectures for groups viewing the Peterson exhibition.”

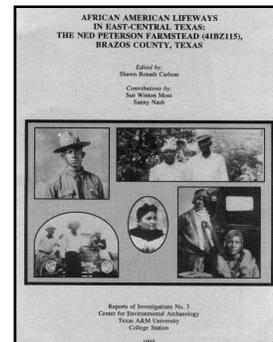


Nan Ross
Photo: theeagle.com



The Peterson Legacy was the result of Nash’s participation in a 1993 State of Texas-commissioned study, conducted by the Texas A&M Center for Environmental Archaeology. As part of the team, Nash conducted oral history interviews, restored and reproduced historic family pictures and papers, and collected genealogical data and ancestral memorabilia, such as obituaries, military records, deeds, marriage licenses and letters, some of which are part of *The Peterson Legacy*, housed at the Carnegie History Center.

Nash’s brush arbor church illustration, farmhouse floor plan computer graphic, historic photographic restorations and genealogical document reproductions were published in the final 1994 State of Texas report, *African-American Lifeways in East-Central Texas: The Ned Peterson Farmstead*, in which Nash’s work helped to facilitate the nomination of the 19th Century Peterson farmstead in southern Brazos County to the National Register of Historic Places in Washington D.C. The Briscoe Center at the University of Texas is the repository for much of the original historic material published in the report, edited by Shawn Bonath Carlson with contributions from Sunny Nash and Sue Winton Moss, Austin-based historian and winner of the 2008 Abner Cook Award for Interpretive Planning, bestowed by the Neil-Cochran House Museum in Austin.



African-American Lifeways
in East-Central Texas:
The Ned Peterson Farmstead



Left to Right: Star of the Republic Director Dr. Houston McCaughy, Texas Historical Commission History Programs Division Director Bratten Thomason, **Shawn Bonath Carlson** and Blinn College President Harold Nolte

Carlson, collections and exhibits curator at Star of the Republic Museum at Washington on the Brazos, is the 2012 winner of the John L. Nau III Award of Excellence recognizing her efforts to identify the descendants of the signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence.

“At the Carnegie, we want to continue to broaden our range of research tools and to provide a rigorous research environment for academic scholars as well as genealogy hobbyists,” said Larry Koeninger, director of

the Bryan-College Station Library System, which includes the Carnegie History Center, Clara B. Mounce Public Library in Bryan and Larry J. Ringer Public Library in College Station. The Carnegie collects local, state and national history, including family papers, municipal and organizational histories, photographs and documents.



Carnegie History Center
Original Carnegie Public Library
Built: 1902
Photo: City of Bryan, Texas

“The Peterson historic photographic restorations, oral history interviews and antique document reproductions have intrinsic qualities that penetrate deeper than the surface of standard data collection, allowing a more critical examination, extraction and interpretation of meaning,” said Sunny Nash, winner of this year’s Lock Award. “A combination of visuals, written text and oral history gives the viewer a glimpse of cultural history and may pique curiosity in a shared past, present and future.”

LINKS

Exploring History Lunch Lecture, “From Excavation to Oral History”

<http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=3083&recordid=9274>

Briscoe Center and Carnegie History Center Archive Brazos Study

<http://www.bcslibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/Briscoe-Center-and-Carnegie-History-Center-Archive-Brazos-Study.pdf>

Sunny Nash Biographical Sketch & Publications List

<http://breakingthroughlightingtheway.blogspot.com/p/sunny-nash.html>

Sunny Nash Long Beach · Artist Registry

<http://www.artslb.org/aclb-registry/2/page-artist.php?slug=682>

Sunny nash Texas A&M University Focus Block

<https://focus.tamu.edu/blocks/nash.aspx>