

Josephine H. Wood

Josephine Helen Wood, granddaughter of slaves and daughter of sharecroppers, was born and reared in Cherokee County. Despite limited educational opportunity, she excelled academically and earned admission to Spelman College and Allen University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in elementary education. Except for a brief period as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), she spent her professional career teaching first grade in the Cherokee County School District until her retirement in 1980.

Her life is characterized by her humanitarian efforts in her school, church and community. As a teacher, she used her own money to purchase shoes and clothing for children in her class, tutored children after school and worked in the adult education program. Before integration of the schools, she helped raise money to purchase a bus to transport African American children to school, an action that subsequently convinced school officials to provide transportation for all children. Because of her concern for the citizenry of the county, she joined the Literacy Association to help eliminate illiteracy and served as a poll worker during elections to ensure that all citizens understood voting procedures. Through her church, Shady Grove Baptist Church, and the Ladies Progressive Club of Gaffney she continued to serve the needy and various charitable organizations. Her energetic work resulted in an invitation to join the American Red Cross Board receiving recognition and numerous awards from church, education and community organizations.

At the ripe age of 91, she remains active in her church and the Ladies Progressive Club of Gaffney, and is recognized in the community as one of the matrons of black history. Before her health began to fail, she would dress in costumes to recite black poetry and share stories about slavery, sharecropping and little known community traditions with school children every year during Black History Month.

South Carolina

African
American

History Calendar 2008



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December



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus in 1955.	2 Historian Charles Wesley was born in 1891.	3 First issue of North Star newspaper published in 1847.	4 American Anti-Slavery Society organized in 1833.	5 Mary McLeod Bethune, educator, founded National Council of Negro Women, 1935.	6 In 1971 Lewis Franklin Powell was confirmed as U.S. Supreme Court justice.
7 Lester Granger was named executive director of the National Urban League in 1941.	8 Entertainer Sammy Davis Jr. was born in 1925.	9 Entertainer Redd Foxx was born in 1925.	10 Ralph J. Bunche becomes the first Black person awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1950.	11 P.B.S. Pinchback became the first African American governor of an American state, Louisiana, in 1872.	12 Joseph H. Rainey (S.C.) first African American elected to Congress in 1870.	13 First Black women complete officer training for the WAVES, 1944.
14 Congressman John Langston was born in 1829.	15 Maggie Lena Walker, banker, died in 1934.	16 Andrew Young of Georgia named ambassador and chief delegate to the United Nations in 1976.	17 Noble Sissie, lyricist and bandleader, died in 1975.	18 The 13th Amendment was ratified in 1865.	19 Carter G. Woodson, historian, was born in 1875.	20 South Carolina seceded from the Union in 1860.
21 <i>First Day of Winter</i> Motown Records established in 1959 by Berry Gordy Jr.	22 <i>Hanukkah begins</i> Historian, and author of Destruction of Black Civilization, Dr. Chancellor Williams was born in 1896.	23 Alice H. Parker patented the gas heating furnace in 1919.	24 Irwin C. Morrison first African American judge of the Customs Court was born in 1896.	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> In 1971 Rev. Jesse Jackson organized Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity).	26 <i>Kwanzaa Begins</i> In 1934, DeFord Bailey, Sr. became the first African American to perform on the Grand Ole Opry.	27 Pioneer of blood plasma research, Dr. Charles Richard Drew, established a blood bank in New York City in 1941.
28 Earl "Fatha" Hines, famed jazz musician and father of modern jazz piano, was born in 1905.	29 Thomas Bradley was born in 1917.	30 Blues composer and singer Bo Diddley was born in 1928.	31 <i>New Year's Eve</i> Odetta Felious Gordon, folk singer and activist, was born in 1930.			