

## Staff of The Bahamas National Archives visit South Carolina for Training

*M. Elaine Toote, Director, National Archives, Bahamas*

Overseas Training is expensive and therefore is not always available to large groups of staff members all at the same time. A strategic initiative to effect self-funded staff training for the entire staff of the Department of Archives began in 2002. Funding is accomplished through personal savings, cookouts and contributions from the Friends of the Archives. Our

participated in specially designed training workshops at the National Archives and the Smithsonian Institute.

In 2005 from 8 to 12 July, **18** staff members travelled to Columbia, South Carolina on the second self-funded staff training trip.



parent ministry, the Ministry of Education,

Science and Technology, supports us by granting permission to close the office during the training period. We usually travel during our independence holiday which minimizes the amount of working days we use.

The first self funded training trip took us to Washington, D.C., U.S.A. where **16** members of staff visited and

*Staff of the Department of Archives, Nassau, Bahamas with Mr Henry Fulmer in the front of the Greek revival styled building which houses the South Caroliniana Library*

Our first stop was the South Caroliniana Library which is

dedicated to the collection of all things related to South Carolina. Mr Henry Fulmer, Curator of the Manuscript Division guided us on a tour of the Reference Room and its stacks and the Manuscript Division Stacks. The Library's collections include manuscripts, text and photographs. One of the most notable is the deposit of the Joseph DeLaine Papers which deals with an African-American

family's struggle for educational equality.



*Photo of Slave Mart, Charleston, South Carolina*

On day two we deviated from the institutional style training and journeyed by car to Charleston for a guided historic tour. The educational experience for this tour was enhanced by Tour Guide Ms A. Shimault-Small, Archivist at the Avery Research Centre. We visited the Old Exchange and the Provost Dungeon located in a 250 year old building which was restored to its former glory. We continued on a walking tour of a part of Charleston's historic district and viewed the Old Slave Mart, a Huguenot Church and buildings reminiscent of those located in our Family Islands. The proprietary

and loyalist connections between Charleston, once called Charles Town and Nassau, which was also once called Charles Town were evident.

Day three found us at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History where we met and were welcomed by Mr Roy Tryon, the State Archivist and members of his team.

The training session opened with Mr Tryon who presented an overview of the administration of the Department. His presentation was followed by discussions on the traditional aspect of Records Management by Mr Richard Harris, Manager of Records Services. Mr Bill Henry, Manager of the Electronics Division gave a brief presentation on managing and preserving electronic records.

The classroom setting instructions ended as we embarked on a tour of the facility led by Mr Chuck Lesser of Archival Accessions. We spent some time in the Stacks and in the Reference Room with Mr Steve Tuttle, Manager of the reference ar.



*Group in the Old Exchange, Charleston, South Carolina*



*Group in the Reference Room at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History*

After lunch we continued the instructional tour with Mr Patrick Austin, Director of Human Resources and Security, with a visit to the Micrographics Section where Mr James Barkley, Information Manager told us of a new venture upon which they had embarked. This self-funding initiative allows them to outsource their services in the face of budgetary cuts. As a

result of private microfilming, that area was able to accrue some \$400,000 which paid for salaries and new equipment.

The final session on digitization was conducted by Mr Brian Collars.

The **three** days of training achieved its objectives, which were to expose the staff to the modus operandi of an international archival institution, to observe the similarities and differences and to come away with proposals for new initiatives for implementation by the Bahamas Department of Archives. It is anticipated that these new projects and programmes will enhance the Department's performance in the area of preservation, conservation and access.

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