



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Delegate Magazine 1977

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HISTORY OF CLUB DEJOUR, INCORPORATED

Club Dejour, Incorporated is a national organization composed of chapters in Washington, D.C., Richmond, Norfolk, and Petersburg, Virginia, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The Washington Chapter is our "Mother Chapter" having its beginning in 1946 with eight girls of high school age. Two charter members of that group are still active — Barbara Dickinson and Gloria Ingram.

In November, 1954, Florence Cooper brought the idea of incorporating a newly formed club which she belonged to in Richmond, Virginia, with clubs in other cities. Her first thought was to contact her friend, Lillie Matthews in Washington, D.C. who was, at that time, president of the Washington Club. The idea initiated by these girls caught the immediate interest of the young ladies in the clubs to which they belonged. In March, 1955 each member of the Washington Club traveled with enthusiasm and great expectations to Richmond, where they were warmly received and the foundations for this present organization were made. After various meetings to form the outline for organization, in June, 1955, with a weekend of pleasure and business, the First Official Conclave was held in Washington.

The purposes of our organization are characterized by our symbols: The Friendly Hand and the Magic Key. We are women who extend a hand by actively participating in civic and charitable activities both locally and nationally. The national projects have been a life membership in the NAACP; granting a scholarship to a high school graduate to the college of her choice; and annual contributions to the Sickle Cell Anemia Program.

Club Dejour was one of the first black social clubs to initiate the Sickle Cell Anemia project and bring awareness of this program to the community through visual presentations to groups, surveys, questionnaires and monetary contributions.

The key to our incorporation is to promote a social atmosphere amongst women of like ideals and develop lasting friendships.

To further keep our communications open, the Dejour Newsletter was formulated and is published each year with chapter pictures of projects and activities, and activities of the members.

Since one of our purposes is to promote social activities, once a year, Dejours, husbands, beaux and friends meet for a weekend of business and pleasure called our Conclave Weekend.

In June, 1976, the incorporation met at the Valley Forge Hilton for the twenty-first year and a Rededication Service highlighted our meeting. During this time, the annual contribution of \$500 was donated to the national project, Sickle Cell Anemia.

[[image - black & white photograph of Frances T. Haye]]

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As I prepared this message, a feeling of nostalgia illuminated my thoughts and I journeyed back to June, 1955, the first official Conclave of Dejour, Incorporated. The Richmond and Washington Conclaves began to formulate local and national projects. My thoughts then drifted to April, 1956 and traveling to Norfolk for the installation of our third chapter and then to June, 1957 when our second Conclave was held in Richmond, Virginia. It was during these years my seeds of genuine interest and dedication to Club Dejour were planted.

Being a member involves enthusiasm for and knowledge of purposes of our organization. Let us take inventory. I challenge you to move out into the mainstream of community activities and into the forefront of social groups. The time is now, the opportunity is ours. Today's contribution and growth will ensure a proud legacy for tomorrow.

FRANCES T. HAYES
National President
Richmond, Virginia

[[image - black & white photograph of three women in white lab coats, in the background is a poster with a drawing of a nurse and a small child, labeled "Help Fight Sickle Cell Anemia" and "Virginia Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Program"; in the foreground is a table with lab equipment.]]

[[caption]] The national project of Club Dejour, Incorporated is the Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Program. Three Richmond Dejouis work as Laboratory Specialists at the Medical College of Virginia where the Virginia Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Program is located.

Left to right: Dejouis Marietta Teele, LaVerne Cooper and Ethel Lovings. Dejour Cooper is also a member of the Advisory Board of VASCAP. [[/caption]]

155

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