



News from: **Oakland Public Library**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 12, 2017

Commons Archive Launching at Golden Gate Branch Library

Oakland, CA – As North Oakland changes, neighbors old and new worry that its history is slipping through their fingers. The area is shifting away from its predominantly African American, historically working class roots – sparking questions among residents about local identity. These questions are at the heart of Commons Archive, a participatory neighborhood memory bank housed at the Golden Gate Library, at 5606 San Pablo Avenue.

The **Golden Gate Block Party** on Saturday, May 27, from 1 to 4 p.m., kicks off the Commons Archive with a neighborhood celebration. Held at the Golden Gate Branch Library, free BBQ, games and yoga will keep patrons entertained. Neighborhood organizations will be on hand with information and demonstrations, and highlight the area's diversity.

Commons Archive is initiated by the Oakland-based marksearch cultural research team (Sue Mark + Bruce Douglas). They design interactive opportunities for people to share personal histories for empowerment. To learn more about their work visit www.marksearch.org.

Throughout the spring, North Oaklanders will have opportunities to learn about and share neighborhood history. In early June, neighbors are invited to share their stories and scan photos at five drop-in sessions at the branch. Commons Archive organizers, marksearch, will scan materials and record stories so that histories are preserved and shared with the community. Bring photos, mementos, and memories to share. Let future generations know what it's like to live in the Golden Gate neighborhood!

On Saturday June 10, a walking tour with Oakland Urban Paths will explore **Golden Gate houses of worship**. The tour starts at 10 a.m. at St. Columba Catholic Church, 6401 San Pablo Avenue, and ends at the Golden Gate Branch. At noon, a discussion will be held with Martha C. Taylor, author of *From Labor to Reward: Black Church Beginnings in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, and Richmond, 1849-1972*.

Two **printmaking workshops** will give patrons the chance to explore memento making. Learn to make "sunprints" (cyanotypes) on Saturday May 20, at 3 p.m., and block printmaking on Saturday June 17, at 3 p.m., both with master printers from Kala Art Institute. Visit <http://www.oaklandlibrary.org/printmakingggg> for information and to register.

For event information, visit oaklandlibrary.org/events or call the Golden Gate Branch Library at 510-597-5023.

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Since its construction in 1918, the **Golden Gate Branch Library** serves an area of North Oakland wedged between Emeryville and Berkeley. From garden shows showcasing homegrown bouquets to the long-running Jazz on Sundays summer series, the branch has mirrored and embraced its surrounding community. In 1982, the East Bay Negro Historical Society was invited to move into the branch, making it the first Oakland city library with an African American history collection. (That collection is now housed at African American Museum and Library at Oakland.) Next year, the branch will celebrate its centennial.

Commons Archive is part of **Kala Art Institute's Print Public** program and is made possible in part by a grant from The Creative Work Fund, a program of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund that also is supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. This activity is funded in part by the California Arts Council, a stage agency.

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