



Photos: The National Museum of Dentistry/Collage: Matt Mullin

## National Museum of Dentistry Exhibit Comes to California

**T**his summer, California residents won't have to travel far to get a glimpse of an extraordinary exhibit from the Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry in Baltimore.

Los Angeles is the first stop on a national tour of "The Future is Now! African Americans in Dentistry," a comprehensive

exhibit paying tribute to the movers and shakers who paved the way for African Americans' success as dental professionals.

The exhibit, which includes dramatic portraits, moving memoirs and inspirational stories of individual and collective achievement of African Americans in dentistry, will open July 30 at the California African American Museum in Los Angeles. Of particular interest is "Standing on the

## The Future is Now! African Americans in Dentistry



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CURATOR OF THE NATIONAL  
MUSEUM OF DENTISTRY

Shoulders of Giants” focusing on 10 prominent achievers in the dental field. This section includes an audio component sharing the stories of Clifton

O. Dummett, DDS, pre-eminent dental historian and educator, and Jeanne Craig Sinkford, DDS, PhD, the first female dean of a dental school.

Unique to each host city is the “Hometown Heroes” panel designed to highlight local individuals who have made a significant contribution or impact in organized dentistry, dental education, a dental specialty area or service to the dental profession. For the Los Angeles showing, four exceptional leaders will be highlighted: John Alexander Somerville, Vada Watson Somerville, Alva C. Garrott and H. Claude Hudson. (See historical accounts below.)

“Through this exhibit, we have been able to forge new relationships and create a learning tool that helps our young people understand the important roles African Americans have played and continue to play in the dental community,” said Rosemary Fetter, executive director of the National Museum of Dentistry.

“The Future is Now!” opened in September at the National Museum of Dentistry, which is affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution. During a high-spirited reception, guests enjoyed a book-signing opportunity with Dr. Dummett. His book *NDA II: The Story of America’s Second National Dental Association* was used as a source of information for the exhibit.

“Dr. Dummett is credited with the research and documentation of African Americans in dental history,” said Scott Swank, DDS, curator of the National Museum of Dentistry. “Until now, there has not been an exhibit that demonstrates such a comprehensive overview of the history of African Americans in dentistry, brought to life in a contemporary museum setting.”

The National Museum of Dentistry and the National Dental Association collaborated to bring “The Future is Now!” to regions across the U.S. The mission of the NDA is to continually enhance the skills of its members, recruit under-represented minorities into the profession, and create opportunities for research among its members and the communities they serve. After leaving Los Angeles, the exhibit will continue on to numerous other high-traffic museums and universities. The exhibit is made possible by the generous support of the NDA Foundation in partnership with Colgate-Palmolive and the American Dental Association Foundation.

## Local Historical Leaders Highlighted in Los Angeles Display

### John Alexander Somerville: Civic Leader



John Alexander Somerville, DDS, (1882-1973), was a native of Jamaica. He came to the United States in 1902 in order to obtain an education, which culminated in him becoming the first African American graduate of the University of Southern California College of Dentistry in 1907. By 1913, Dr. Somerville had become a U.S. citizen and assisted in organizing the Los Angeles Chapter of the NAACP. He built an apartment building and hotel so persons of color could more easily secure lodgings in those days of segregation. His civic leadership did not go unnoticed. In 1953, he was awarded the title of Officer of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II.

*Photograph, circa 1910, reproduced from: Dummett, C.O. & L.D. Dummett. NDA II: The Story of America’s Second National Dental Association. Washington, DC: National Dental Association Foundation, 2000.*

### **Vada Watson Somerville: Social Welfare Leader**



Vada Watson Somerville, DDS, (1885-1972), a native Californian, was the first African American woman graduate of the University of Southern California College of Dentistry in 1918. She retired after 12 years of practicing dentistry with her husband John in order to devote her time and energy to social welfare and civic work. Dr. Somerville helped found the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women and became a vice president of the national organization. She served on the executive board of the Los Angeles League of Women Voters and became the first president of the Los Angeles Chapter of Links, Inc.

*Photograph, circa 1920, reproduced from: Dummett, C.O. & L.D. Dummett. NDA II: The Story of America's Second National Dental Association. Washington, DC: National Dental Association Foundation, 2000.*

### **Alva C. Garrott: Los Angeles Dental Pioneer**

Alva C. Garrott, DDS, (1866-1952), graduated from the Howard University College of Dentistry in 1899. Two years later, he made a bold decision to move west and became the first African American to practice dentistry in Los Angeles. Dr. Garrott became a member of the Chamber of Commerce, served as first president of the Los Angeles Urban League and Director of the Unity Finance Company.



*Photograph, circa 1901, Dr. Garrott and family, reproduced from: On the Move for Seven Decades & Still Going Strong. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Urban League, 1991, Miriam Matthews photo.*

### **H. Claude Hudson: A Life of Community Service**



H. Claude Hudson, DDS, (1886-1989), graduated from the Howard University College of Dentistry in 1913. Born and raised in Louisiana, he returned there to open a dental practice and became the first president of the Shreveport branch of the NAACP. Dr. Hudson moved to Los Angeles in 1923 and established a dental practice. The next year he was elected president of the Los Angeles Branch of the NAACP and held that position for 10 years. Dr. Hudson was thrown into the civil rights struggle by being jailed for swimming at a segregated beach. Understanding the need for a law degree to enhance his fight, he enrolled at Loyola College of Law in Los Angeles and became their first African American graduate in 1931. He co-founded Broadway Federal Savings and Loan to provide loans for minorities, becoming the institution's president in 1949 and holding that position until 1972. Dr. Hudson was instrumental in the fight for fair housing in California through his position on the national board of the NAACP, a position he held until his death. Dr. Hudson received many accolades, awards and honors throughout his life.

*Photograph, circa 1960, courtesy of the H. Claude Hudson family.*

*For more information on the Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry, visit [www.dentalmuseum.org](http://www.dentalmuseum.org) or call (410) 706-0600.*

*For more information on the California African American Museum, call (213) 744-7432.*

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Matt Messina, DDS  
ADA consumer adviser

## Poll Results: Oral Hygiene Foremost on Patients' Minds

Maintaining good oral hygiene ranked first among patients, according to 32 percent of dentists polled recently in the American Dental Association/Colgate Oral Health Trend Survey.

Tooth decay followed at 28 percent as the next most pressing consideration. Dentists, however, cited lax oral hygiene habits and the most common modifiable risk factor contributing to caries. Third place, at 25 percent, went to periodontal disease. Left untreated, it can result in tooth loss.

“The best way to remove decay-causing plaque and help prevent gum disease is by brushing and cleaning between your teeth every day,” said Matt Messina, DDS, ADA consumer adviser. “Brushing your teeth twice a day with fluoride-containing toothpaste, cleaning between your teeth once a day with floss or interdental cleaners and seeing your dentist regularly are essential for good oral hygiene.”

### Tooth Whitening Tops List

The survey also revealed that tooth whitening was the No. 1 requested procedure (63.7 percent) by patients between the



ages of 40 and 60, according to dentists who were polled. Veneers, bonding or crowns were the second-most requested procedure (58 percent) by baby boomers. Also on the list, periodontal disease treatment ranked third at 55 percent; prevention advice, 35.4 percent; and dental implants, 34.7 percent.

### Fastest Growing Segment of Practice

An estimated 27 percent of dentists chose restoring teeth with natural-colored fillings as the fastest growing segment of their practices. Tooth whitening followed with 21 percent.

### “Spa” or Office Amenities

Nearly half of those dentists surveyed offer office or spa amenities to patients. Typical items of comfort range from headphones and neck rests to warm towels and free beverages and snacks. Only five percent offer massages, facials, pedicures and manicures.

### Additional Survey Results

Ninety-two percent of dentists responded they routinely screen their patients for oral cancer.

Fifty-six percent of dentists said their patients are not adequately concerned about gum disease, followed by oral cancer, 33.7 percent.

Approximately two-thirds of dental professionals have volunteered for community outreach events in the past five years, with the most popular being child-specific oral health programs.

The 12th annual survey, sponsored by Colgate Oral Pharmaceuticals, polled 427 U.S. dentists on general oral care trends at ADA's 144th Annual Session last October.

## Programs to Honor Dental Hygienists

Furthering its commitment to dental hygienists, Oral-B Laboratories, together with the American Dental Hygienists Association, has created three initiatives recognizing the importance of the profession. The programs include broad community outreach, continuing education course and a print ad campaign acknowledging and honoring the dental hygiene community.

The community outreach program, Smiles Within Reach, promotes oral health and encourages professional support, as well as access to oral care education within the community. A recent *Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health*, noted that proper preventative oral health care may reduce the risk of oral cancer, diabetes, heart disease and premature, low-birth weight babies.

A unique educational experience for dental hygienists and the communities in which they work, the outreach program fosters a link between hygienists' invaluable work and the oral health needs of their community.

For more information regarding the Oral-B programs or products, call (800) 44-ORALB or go to [www.oralb.com](http://www.oralb.com).

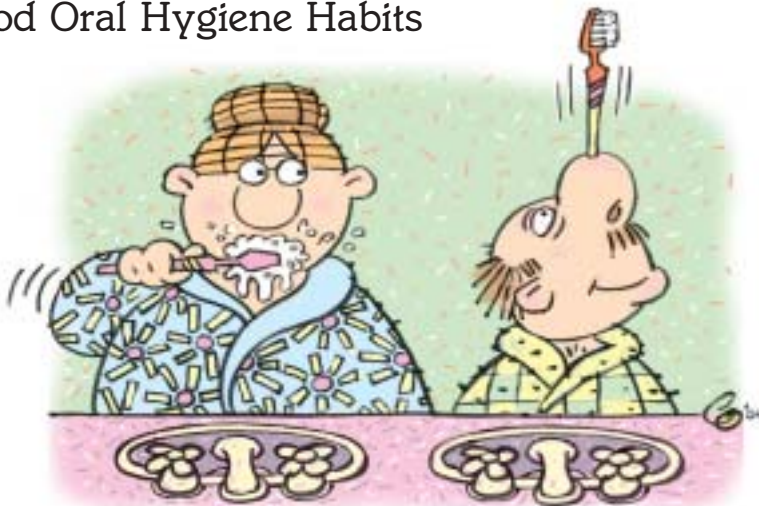
## Women Outpace Men in Good Oral Hygiene Habits

The results of the recent ADA's *Public Opinion Survey: Oral Health of the U.S. Population* are in: Women are better when it comes to oral health care.

Conducted by Zogby International last December, the survey consisted of telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,014 adults aged 18 years and older who identified themselves as the head of household.

In the poll, women were more likely than men to brush their teeth following each meal (28.7 percent of women to 20.5 percent of men); or twice a day (56.8 percent to 49 percent). Also revealed: Women are more likely to have a dentist than their counterparts (89.2 percent to 74.6 percent).

American adults recorded an increase among those brushing their teeth twice daily or after each meal, 78 percent in 2003 compared with 75.4 percent in 1997. The most notable jump in brushing frequency occurred in the number of respondents who replied they brushed following every meal, 24.8 percent in 2003, which more than doubled 1997's figure of 11.5 percent.



Using a dental floss or an interdental cleaner every day rose from 48.2 percent in 1997 to 50.5 percent in 2003.

"Being thorough in your daily oral hygiene lays the groundwork for a healthy smile," explains Dr. Kimberly Harms, DDS, ADA consumer adviser. "A daily routine of brushing and flossing, in addition to regular dental checkups, can be enough in most cases to help prevent tooth decay and gum disease."



### Save Face — Wear Protective Gear

The American Association of Orthodontics, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons strongly recommend that athletes don protective gear for their faces.

"Oral and facial injuries are a significant public health issue with significant impact, financially and emotionally, on American families," said Daniel M. Laskin, DDS, MS, D.Sc, editor of the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*.

The dental specialists, which sponsored the fifth annual National Facial Protection Month last April, recently compiled a list of safety tips. Among them:

Wear mouth guards for contact sports: soccer, yes; chess, likely no. Mouth guards may prevent injuries to one's teeth, jaw and mouth. The devices are less costly than recovering from an injury.

Wear protective eyewear. Remember the warning about getting your eye poked out.

Wear a face shield to guard against scratched or bruised skin. Racquetballs, basketballs and hockey pucks can inflict serious damage.

Don a helmet, which absorbs the energy of an impact from a rollerblading or bike accident.

Don't stray from common sense. Gear up if the activity has a remote possibility of injury. Pickup basketballs games have landed numerous players in the emergency room.

Watch out. Alert spectators can avoid injury by being aware of foul baseballs and incoming hockey pucks.

## Redesigned Web Site Introduces Animated Guides

Recently re-launching its Web site, 1-800-Dentist added virtual reality guides to assist Internet visitors.



“Lisa,” who anticipates and answers questions, guides visitors through the matching process of patient-to-dentist. Once matched, “Sam” takes over introducing the patient to the dentist and informing them of the unique features and benefits partic-

ular to that dental office.

“In redesigning the Web site, our objective was to engage the consumer long enough to show how important it is to be “matched” to a dentist rather than selecting a dentist from a list,” said Fred Joyal, chief

executive officer for 1-800-Dentist.

“It is our comprehensive matching process that differentiates our service from directory listings available on other Web sites.”

The Web site, 1800Dentist.com, matches visitors with a pre-screened dentist based on several criteria including geographics, who meets their dental needs, and will accept their preferred method of payment. Additionally, the site provides the dentist’s practice hours, philosophy, credentials, years of practice, special treatments offered and technical advances to ensure the patient is comfortable.

All dentists who apply for membership with 1-800-Dentist are meticulously screened and not all are accepted. The company promotes and supports regular dental office visits as part of each consumer’s regimen for health care.

## Upcoming Meetings

### 2004

<b>July 7-11</b>	Academy of General Dentistry’s 52nd annual meeting, Anaheim, (888) 243-3368, ext. 4339; <a href="http://www.agd.org/annual.meeting/Anaheim/index.html">www.agd.org/annual.meeting/Anaheim/index.html</a>
<b>Aug. 11-14</b>	Fifth annual World Congress of Minimally Invasive Dentistry, San Francisco, (800) 973-8003
<b>Sept. 8-11</b>	International Federation of Endodontic Association’s sixth Endodontic World Congress, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, <a href="http://www.ifea2004.im.com.au">www.ifea2004.im.com.au</a> .
<b>Sept. 10-12</b>	CDA Fall Scientific Session, San Francisco, (866) CDA-MEMBER (232-6362).
<b>Sept. 29-Oct. 2</b>	American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons 86th annual meeting, Scientific Session and Exhibition, San Francisco, <a href="http://www.aaoms.org">www.aaoms.org</a>
<b>Sept. 30-Oct. 3</b>	ADA Annual Session, Orlando, Fla., (312) 440-2500.
<b>Nov. 7-13</b>	U.S. Dental Tennis Association Annual Meeting, Palm Desert, (800) 445-2524, <a href="http://www.dentaltennis.org">www.dentaltennis.org</a>

### 2005

<b>April 6-9</b>	Academy of Laser Dentistry 12th annual Conference and Exhibition, New Orleans, (954) 346-3776.
<b>April 12-16</b>	International Dental Show, Cologne, Germany, <a href="http://www.koelnmesse.de">www.koelnmesse.de</a>

To have an event included on this list of nonprofit association meetings, please send the information to Upcoming Meetings, *CDA Journal*, P.O. Box 13749, Sacramento, CA 95853 or fax the information to (916) 554-5962.