

350 Years of African American Heritage in Delaware



The Afro-American
Historical Society of Delaware

COVER: Peter Spencer and the Big Quarterly by Simmie L. Knox. Courtesy of Delaware King Memorial Foundation

Mr. Knox was born in Mobile, Alabama. He holds both a B.F.A. and M.F.A. from Temple University in Philadelphia. Though he has worked in a variety of media, it has been through portraiture that he has received national acclaim. His portraiture has been commissioned by Alex Haley, Dorothy Height and Bill Cosby, to name a few. Mr. Knox's paintings are in the permanent collections of the state capitols of South Carolina and Tennessee and the Museum of African Art of the Smithsonian Institution. He formerly taught art at Howard High School and the Delaware Art Museum.

**350 Years of African American Heritage
in Delaware**

**Art from the exhibit at The Gallery of
The Afro-American Historical Society of Delaware
Howard High School
Thirteenth & Poplar Streets
Wilmington, Delaware**

**Sponsored by:
The Afro-American
Historical Society of Delaware**

Opening - June 2, 1989

Introduction

African American settlers were among the first in Delaware. Their native African culture blended with the Anglo customs they were forced to adopt, forging a vibrant heritage. In capsule form, "350 Years of African American Heritage in Delaware" proudly displays that birthright. It commemorates the achievements of African American men and women whose victories in their public lives have inspired many as well as those whose private acts of courage have passed unnoticed. The artwork in the exhibit, reproduced in this catalog, was created by Black and white artists, most with Delaware roots -- some amateurs, some teachers and some professionals. These artists have enriched their work with the legacy of Delaware's African American traditions.

The Afro-American Historical Society of Delaware was founded with the recognition that if African Americans do not take the initiative to preserve and teach the heritage of our forebears, then it is destined to disappear. Through exhibits such as this one, we hope to raise the public's awareness of the struggles and triumphs of African Americans throughout Delaware's history.

The Gallery of the Afro-American Historical Society of Delaware at Howard High School will be the future setting for more exhibits exploring the contributions of African Americans to history, art and other fields of endeavor both locally and nationally.



Harmon R. Carey

President and Founder

Afro-American Historical Society of Delaware

June, 1989



Arthur E. Wheeler

Howard High School

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, Mr. Wheeler came to Wilmington in 1923, following his graduation from Springfield College. He taught physical education at the original Howard High School (12th & Orange Streets), "new" Howard and several elementary schools. Though he painted strictly for personal enjoyment, his sister, Laura Wheeler Waring, was a nationally known artist. Obviously, artistic talent runs in the family as demonstrated by this painting of his beloved "Howard High School."

Theodore E. Wells, I

Self-Portrait

Theodore E. Wells, I moved to his adopted home state of Delaware after serving under General George S. Patton for three years in the Second World War. After viewing so much ugliness, he has taken as his motto "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," and has provided over thirty years of art instruction and inspiration to students in the Delaware school system. He has studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania and Tyler School of Art of Temple University from which he received his M.F.A. This self-portrait reveals his introspective nature and extraordinary talent.



Teresa I. Haman

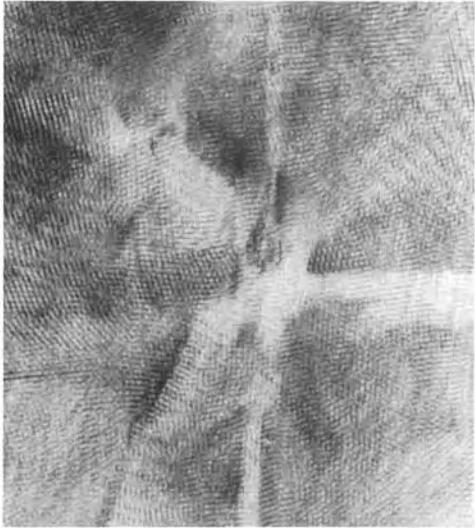
Grandma's Hands

Teresa I. Haman was born in Milford, Delaware. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Education in College Counseling from the University of Delaware. A student of Edward Loper, Sr., she has participated in numerous art shows in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. She is currently Coordinator of Admissions/Enrollment Services at Salem Community College in Carneys Point, New Jersey.



The Spirit of Richard Allen





Robert O'Neal

Eastside in Transition

(Panel shown is one from a series of six)

Robert O'Neal, a native Delawarean, received a BS Degree in Industrial Design from the Philadelphia College of Art and a Master of Arts Degree in Design from Cornell University. Since 1975 been a faculty member in the Industrial Design Department at the Rhode Island School of Design. He believes the purpose of the Industrial Design profession is to give form interpretation to the technological and industrial goods produced by our society.

Ben Pearce

Ethiopia, 1984: We Are the Children

Mr. Pearce is a graduate of Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, Ohio. He has exhibited in numerous shows including the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, the Caribbean Cultural Arts Festival and the Delaware African American Art Exhibition. He has won several national and international graphic art awards, including California's Lathem Foundation International Poster Award. He is currently a graphic artist on the faculty of Delaware Technical and Community College, Wilmington Campus.



Edwin A. Harleston

Pierre Samuel duPont

Mr. Harleston was born in 1882, in Charleston, South Carolina. During the second and third decades of the 20th century, he was widely recognized for his skill in portraiture and landscape art. When the Black community decided to honor Pierre S. duPont for his contributions to Black education in Delaware, they commissioned Edwin Harleston to paint his portrait. This portrait was unveiled in an awards ceremony on December 4, 1924. Mr. Harleston died in 1931.



THE AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DELAWARE

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Exhibit Catalogue - Communigraphics