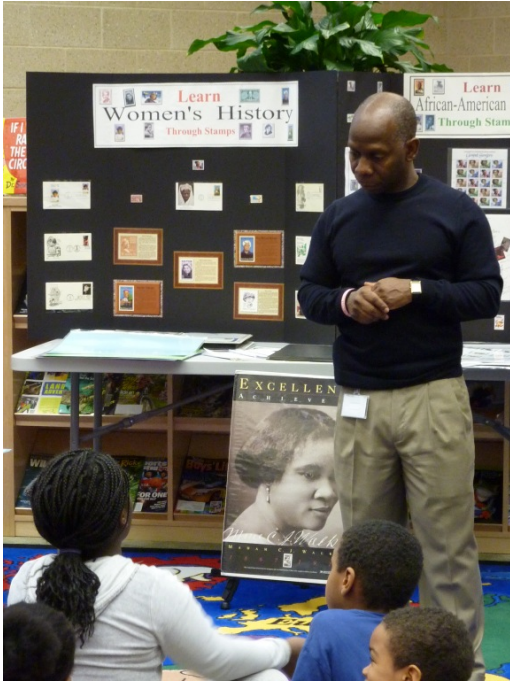


My Stamp Collecting Bio



My name is Clarence McKnight webmaster for ESPER. I received my introduction to Philately (stamp collecting) from a close friend in 1986. I attended a First Day Cancellation Ceremony in Montclair for the 22 cents Statue of Liberty stamp. There was a dual cancellation between the United States and France.

In 1993, I began collecting First Day Covers from Artcraft. Presently, I have all of the First Day Covers on African Americans from Artcraft. In 1994, I attended my first stamp show and discovered hand painted cachets. I was very impressed and purchased several that day by Fred Collins. At that show, I received a copy of Linn's newspaper (a philatelic newspaper) and noticed one of the advertisements placed by the cachet artist Fred Collins of Allentown, New Jersey. He mentioned that I could purchase directly from him and save. I have continued to purchase from him and others at shows.

My focus had been to collect African- American cachets and stamps. My interest has now expanded to Multicultural cachets and stamps. My collection includes US singles, posters, cachets, souvenir pages, mint sheets, stamp pins, proofs by Fleetwood and a few First Day Ceremony Programs.

Due to my enthusiasm for stamps, my family members became interested in stamp collecting. My wife and son are collectors in their own rite. My wife is a collector of Women on stamps, antiques, dolls and African American art. My son Kristian learned the value of stamp collecting for its historic, educational and monetary at a younger age. He collects stamps for Chinese New Year and animals on stamps. Kristian graduate college in 2015 and is now teaching in Maryland.

My wife Sandra is an educator. One year she was interested in me presenting my collection during African American History Month. We both have found that history can be taught through stamps. Other educators heard about my presentation and were interested in my presenting to their classes. A couple of years later my wife's administrator gave my carte blanche regarding location and presentation aides for her school. I presented for the entire school and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I have been informed by many educators that due to my presentation several students have become stamp enthusiasts.

I have been giving presentations to pre-schoolers through eight graders. In May of 1998, I received an invitation to participate in a career day program at an elementary school in East Orange. I was asked to give a presentation on stamp collecting as a hobby and as an investment for the future. I repeated that presentation in the 1999 school year.

My presentations are not only visual but inspirational as well. I try to give positive thoughts on the importance of a good education. One of the most frequently asked questions is why I am a stamp collector. I tell them that it is fun, educational and that each stamp I collect is a history lesson. Many friends and co-workers have asked me why I have spent my days off going to schools and giving presentations. I tell them that not only is it good for stress but that as a child there was a teacher who gave his free time to me and other children and I never forgot it. This is my way to give back. I also tell them, "What good is knowledge if I can't share it or pass it on." Over the years, I have presented at churches in Essex and Bergen County. I also presented to youth groups such as, The Links, Jack and Jill in Montclair and Englewood, New Jersey, Scouting groups in Montclair and elementary schools throughout Northern New Jersey and New York. Some of my presentations included Power Point and videos presentations. I have setup exhibits and gave presentations for Prudential Insurance in Hanover, New Jersey, Hoffman Roche in Nutley, New Jersey, Municipality of East Orange and Municipality of Perth Amboy, New Jersey, local libraries (Montclair, East Orange and Newark), Rutgers University in Newark, Kean University, Passaic County Community College in Wanaque and Passaic campus, plus Post Offices in Hudson, Bergen, Essex and Passaic Counties throughout the years with special emphasis during African American History, Hispanic History and Women's History Month.

For nine years I was stamp club advisor at Lacordaire Academy in Upper Montclair, New Jersey (my son's past elementary school). I started the club when he was in pre-K. I had two groups of students. The students were grouped into pre-kindergarten /kindergarten, -grade 2 and grade 3-grade 8. It was a rewarding experience working with them over the years.

My present goal is to help promote The Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections and begin collecting African Americans on worldwide stamps.

I'm the former New Jersey State Director and board member and past Editor in Chief of "Reflections" I served in this position for 4 years. With the help of James Daniels and his daughter we publish "Reflections" in color. We won several newsletter awards during that time period. To this day we are the only philatelic newsletter in color. I also help create and setup the ESPER's first web site in 2002 with Sanford L. Byrd and Richard Tucker. I also designed ESPER's current logo. I'm also finishing up my book on collecting African-Americans on Stamps and designing stamp posters and banners. With the help of Don Neal we rebuild and launch ESPER new website May 2016.