



DELAWARE

HUMANITIES

Speakers

CATALOG

NOVEMBER 2025 - OCTOBER 2026

DELAWARE

HUMANITIES

ABOUT US

Founded in 1973, Delaware Humanities is Delaware's independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Delaware Humanities believes diverse human experiences strengthen our communities. We support humanities-based work through our program services and funding.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

Delaware Humanities creates intersectional and engaging programming that helps Delawareans of all ages explore what it means to be human. From speaker presentations on Delaware history to building literacy through family reading, Delaware Humanities programs provide opportunities for lifelong learning throughout the state.

Organizations can host Delaware Humanities programs. Whether you're a library, historic society, museum, or community organization, Delaware Humanities has programs for your audiences.



Scan to learn more!

dehumanities.org/programs

How to Apply for a Speaker

1

Contact the Speaker directly to arrange a date, time, and location for your program. Most presentations are **60-75 minutes** long (45-60 minute lecture, followed by time for audience questions), so please allow enough time for the program and questions at the end.

2

Create and log in to your free Foundant account.
<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=dhf>

3

Submit the online Speaker Request Form at least **four weeks before your program date**.

- Your application may be rejected if you've requested the same program twice in a six month time frame or if you have any outstanding paperwork or payments due to Delaware Humanities.
- An organization may request 4 programs at the subsidized rate within a year.

After your application is approved, you will...

1

Sign the **Presentation Agreement** agreeing to follow DH's rules.

2

Submit payment via check to Delaware Humanities

- Tiered pricing for nonprofits based on your organization's budget
- Free for K-12 school classrooms
- \$350 for organizations that are not nonprofits

3

Promote and enjoy your program! You can request promotional materials from DH. With some exceptions, these programs must be free and open to the public.

4

After your program, return any audience evaluations to DH physically or digitally, and log in to Foundant to complete the final **Program Coordinator Evaluation**.

dehumanities.org/programs/speakers/

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THE ORPHAN TRAIN MOVEMENT

1854-1929

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 4-12

SPEAKER

Donna Aviles

CATEGORIES

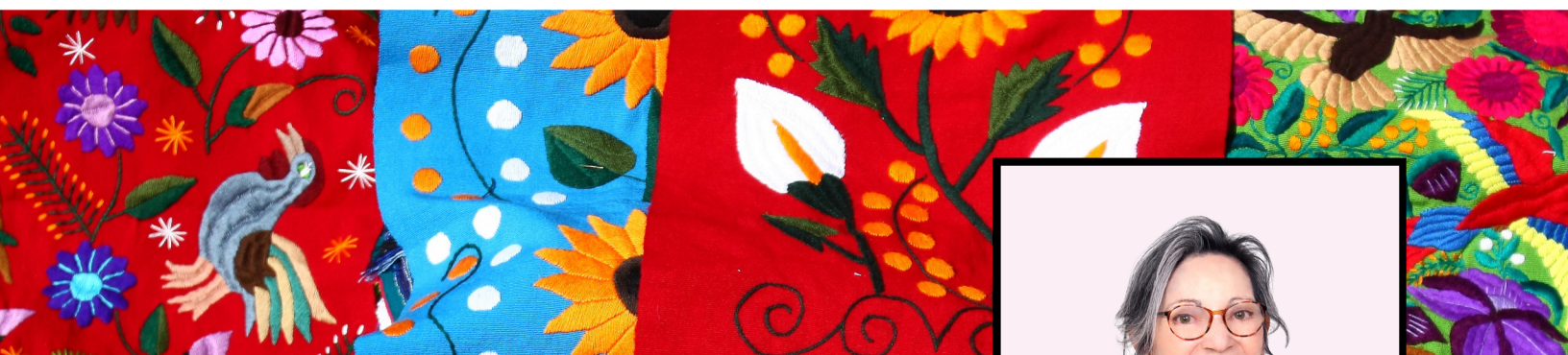
History

SUMMARY

Learn the history of this seventy-five year “social experiment”—now recognized as our country’s first Foster Care System—which transported an estimated 250,000 homeless children from the streets of East Coast cities to farming communities of the Midwest in search of stable homes. This presentation includes the first person account of orphan train rider Oliver Nordmark who, in 1906, traveled with his younger brother from the Children’s Village on Long Island to the small town of Bern, Kansas. Attendees will hear audio recordings of Oliver telling just what it was like to ride the orphan train and then be chosen by a childless farmer and his wife. Additional recordings include “life in the orphanage” and “living in a sod house on the Kansas prairie.” The presentation concludes with a discussion of the importance of journaling one’s own story, through oral history or personal narrative, as a means of preserving social history. Q&A is encouraged throughout the presentation as well as at the end.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Donna Aviles is an author and passionate story teller inspired by her family’s experience with the orphan train.



DIVERSITY IN LATIN AMERICA

Suitable for Adults
Suitable for Schools: Grades 1-12

CATEGORIES

Art & Music Studies

Culture & Identity

History



SPEAKER
Charito Calvachi-Mateyko

SUMMARY

Latin American history, anthropology, geography, language and music disciplines will be blended to present the diversity among the many countries that make up Latin America and their historic presence in the current USA. The presentation combines images of people and places, as well as music and ways of expression through dance. Teachers and audiences can identify specific themes for the presenter to focus on and students will be invited to participate.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Charito Calvachi-Mateyko is a former lawyer, radio show host, author, storyteller, and teacher with a focus on promoting peace and justice within society.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Suitable for Adults



SPEAKER
Charito Calvachi-
Mateyko

CATEGORIES

Civics

Ethics

SUMMARY

What paradigm can we use to reflect in the human experience of what humanity understand as justice? Is our justice language charged with preconceptions? What ancient principles we carry on in the modern concept of justice in general and criminal justice in particular? A former lawyer turned Restorative Justice professional will discuss the theory of restorative justice as an alternative to the current social construct on justice issues. Ms. Calvachi-Mateyko, gives a brief overview of the challenges presented by the current punitive system and invites the participants to consider a community healing path to handle justice today.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Charito Calvachi-Mateyko is a former lawyer, radio show host, author, storyteller, and teacher with a focus on promoting peace and justice within society.



THE HISTORY OF ETIQUETTE: WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 4-12



SPEAKER

Lisa Strong Chase

CATEGORIES

Culture & Identity
History

SUMMARY

The History of Etiquette begins with the Middle Ages, and Erasmus's teaching of classroom etiquette to young men in the Catholic Church classrooms, then progresses to King Louis the XIV's use of the word etiquette, and how the social and etiquette expectations of polite society followed the early settlers of the United States. Audiences will learn how the demonstration of what is known as good manners were a part of survival techniques in the formation of our country! The program will also cover pandemic etiquette (from the Spanish Flu in 1918), to the more recent COVID-19 etiquette, and how that has changed human interaction. The program is very interactive, the audience gets to participate, there are props, and there can be costume changes!

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Lisa Strong Chase developed this program based on her experience with the National League of Junior Cotillions, a program focused on manners, etiquette, team building, leadership, and social dance for youth.

THE RIGHT TO LIE

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12



SPEAKER
Joan DelFattore

CATEGORIES

Literature & Language

Ethics

Civics

SUMMARY

In 2016, a federal appeals court struck down an Ohio law that provided penalties for lying during political campaigns. The reason? There is, in fact, a constitutional right to lie. Sure, you can be prosecuted for things like fraud, perjury, and libel, but those are exceptions. In general, constitutional protection for free speech does not depend on whether the speech is true. And when the topic is politics, untruthful speech is not only protected under the First Amendment, but enjoys the highest level of constitutional protection. Why? For twenty minutes or so, we'll step back from the fray of partisan politics to take a look at the history and ideas behind our current system. Have we reached a point in the history of our country where political lying has so disrupted our electoral system that the public good requires the establishment of legal limits comparable to those placed on perjury? If so, what should such a policy look like, and what unintended consequences might follow?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Joan DelFattore, Ph.D. and clinical psychologist, served as professor emerita of English and legal studies at the University of Delaware with a special focus on freedom of expression.



FAKE NEWS, FRAUD, AND HONEST ERROR: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BELIEF

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12



SPEAKER
Joan DelFattore

CATEGORIES

Literature & Language

Ethics

Civics

SUMMARY

How do we decide what we believe, and what we don't believe? Drawing on philosophical, psychological, and legal resources – and avoiding partisan politics – this talk outlines a few of the unconscious factors that influence the way humans reach conclusions and make decisions.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Joan DelFattore, Ph.D. and clinical psychologist, served as professor emerita of English and legal studies at the University of Delaware with a special focus on freedom of expression.

OCCUPIED FRANCE

ESCAPE FROM HITLER'S EUROPE THE COMET LINE AND ITS HELPERS

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12



SPEAKER
Linda De Roche

CATEGORIES

History

SUMMARY

In 1941, an increasing number of Allied aircraft were being shot down in Nazi-occupied Europe. Although most downed airmen were killed or taken prisoner, some evaded capture and were sheltered by Allied sympathizers and the emerging resistance movement to German rule. The road of safety—and to fight again—for these airmen was a treacherous journey by train, by bicycle, and on foot that stretched hundreds of miles from Belgium, across occupied France, to the Pyrenees Mountains at the Spanish border. My presentation will focus primarily on the brave and selfless resistance women, especially the 24-year-old Belgian Andree de Jongh and the American Virginia d'Albert-Lake, who organized and conducted these journeys on this underground railroad, known as the Comet Line, who helped to save nearly 800 airmen.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Linda De Roche, Ph. D., is a teacher, and focuses on American Literature and culture and gender studies, with a particular interest in the achievements and exploits of unconventional women.



THE RITCHIE BOYS

THE ALLIES' SECRET WEAPON



SPEAKER
Linda De Roche

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

CATEGORIES

History

SUMMARY

The Ritchie Boys, trained in counter-intelligence at Maryland's Camp Ritchie, were essential to Allied victory in World War II. Many were European immigrants or the children of those immigrants; nearly fifteen percent were Jewish; and their fluency in German, French, Italian, Polish, and other European languages as well as their knowledge of local customs and culture was crucial to the war effort, especially after D-Day. They interrogated prisoners of war, acquiring valuable information that contributed to the war effort, and were embedded in Allied combat units, bridging the language barriers that faced British and American soldiers. My Presentation will shine a light on these secret Allied weapons and their contributions to victory in World War II.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Linda De Roche, Ph. D., is a teacher, and focuses on American Literature and culture and gender studies, with a particular interest in the achievements and exploits of unconventional women.



THE SHADOW OF THE GALLOWS:

THE HISTORY OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN AMERICA

SPEAKER
Mike Dixon

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

CATEGORIES

History

Ethics

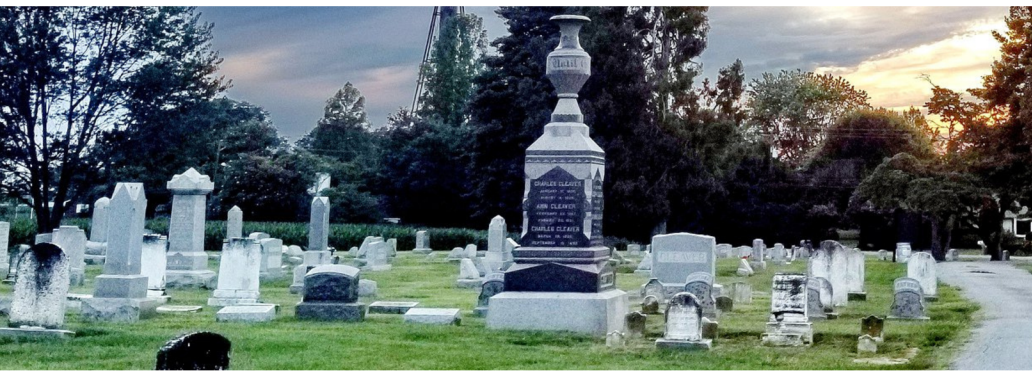
Delaware

SUMMARY

The historical, legal, and ethical evolution of capital punishment in the United States is complex. This program examines public executions—particularly in Delaware and the Mid-Atlantic—from the era when the sheriff was the county executioner to the modern era, highlighting key reforms as the nation debated the abolition of the death penalty and sought more humane methods of execution. Throughout, it analyzes the shifting historical, cultural, legal, and ethical factors that influenced the nation's approach to capital punishment.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Mike Dixon is a historian and writer whose research and teaching focuses on social history and community studies. Mike enjoys seeking out stories that create a distinctive sense of place. Along the way he finds rich, deep, and varied stories about earlier times in our fascinating towns and communities.



TALES THE TOMBSTONES WHISPER: UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF CEMETERIES

SPEAKER
Mike Dixon

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

CATEGORIES

History
Environment

SUMMARY

Cemeteries offer insight into the past, shedding light on local and family history. This program explores the rich and complex cultural history of cemeteries as part of the American landscape by tracing the evolution of cemeteries, discussing changing funerary practices and customs, and considering the meaning of epitaphs and artwork found on tombstones. Practical guidance is provided for uncovering the stories of the stones and deepening historical understanding through visits to old cemeteries as we consider the tales the tombstones whisper.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Mike Dixon is a historian and writer whose research and teaching focuses on social history and community studies. Mike enjoys seeking out stories that create a distinctive sense of place. Along the way he finds rich, deep, and varied stories about earlier times in our fascinating towns and communities.



ALLIES FOR JUSTICE:

DELAWARE'S ROLE IN BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

SPEAKER
Kathy Doyle

CATEGORIES

History
Civics
Delaware

SUMMARY

Brown v. Board of Education is one of the most famous Supreme Court decisions. But without two extraordinary Delawareans—Louis Redding and Collins Seitz—and the Delaware families seeking justice, the *Brown* decision may have turned out very differently. This program tells an important Delaware story about the pursuit of justice and equality, specifically within the public school system for African Americans.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Kathleen Marie Doyle is a writer and award-winning teacher committed to education, the environment, and democracy. She continues to educate all ages, after spending more than 30 years teaching teachers and teenagers in Delaware. Her published works include *Allies for Justice*, *How Louise Redding and Collins Seitz Changed the Complexion of America's Schools* – the story of Delaware's role in *Brown v. Board of Education*; *Blue's River* — a YA book about a Great Blue Heron, a 10-year-old girl and the St. Jones River; and *Finding Pop Pop*— a children's picture book about love, loss and joy.



RETHINKING OUR HOME LANDSCAPES



Suitable for Adults
Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

SPEAKER
Kathy Doyle

CATEGORIES

Environment
Art & Music Studies

SUMMARY

There is much in this world over which we have very little control, but we have complete control over how we treat our property. Our obsession with large, green lawns is harming the health of watersheds, soil, insects, birds, and us. Reimagining our home landscape so that native plants cover more space than turf grass is a powerful place to begin making a difference for our health and that of the planet's.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Kathleen Marie Doyle is a writer and award-winning teacher committed to education, the environment, and democracy. She continues to educate all ages, after spending more than 30 years teaching teachers and teenagers in Delaware. Her published works include *Allies for Justice*, *How Louise Redding and Collins Seitz Changed the Complexion of America's Schools* – the story of Delaware's role in *Brown v. Board of Education*; *Blue's River* — a YA book about a Great Blue Heron, a 10-year-old girl and the St. Jones River; and *Finding Pop Pop*— a children's picture book about love, loss and joy.



MARY ANN SHADD CARY: DELAWARE'S FORGOTTEN DAUGHTER

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

SPEAKER
Lora Englehart

CATEGORIES

Culture & Identity
Delaware
History

SUMMARY

Mary Ann Shadd Cary was born to free blacks in Wilmington in 1823. At a time when women's talents were confined to the home, Mary Ann became a teacher, writer, staunch abolitionist, suffragist, the first black woman to publish a newspaper in North America, the first female admitted to Howard Law School and one of our country's first female lawyers. On the 200th anniversary of her birth, learn about her amazing life, her Delaware ancestors (dating before the Revolutionary War) and see how Delaware is finally recognizing the importance of this "diamond" of the "Diamond State."

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Lora Englehart is fascinated by the little known *herstory* in our country. A simple newspaper article sent her on a journey of discovery into the life of Wilmington-born Mary Ann Shadd Cary, and along the way, she's learned about other incredible women and men previously left out of our history books.



WHAT YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT NANCY DREW

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 6-12



SPEAKER

Lora Englehart

CATEGORIES

Literature & Language
History

SUMMARY

The 1930's icon changed the way girls and women were viewed in literature and beyond. This presentation shines a light on the multiple factors that ignited the instant popularity of Nancy Drew, the investigator who changed girlhood for millions of readers. Bravery and independence mixed with style and substance, Nancy Drew shaped the decades ahead with her leadership and perseverance. With this program, you'll learn behind-the-scenes "secrets" about the writing world, the publishing industry and the drama behind Nancy Drew's author "Carolyn Keene." Nancy Drew has also evolved through the ages; join us to see how the stories have remained relevant to today's audience to include TV shows, movies, and games, and spinoffs. Most importantly, we will talk about your relationship and memories of Nancy Drew!

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Lora Englehart is fascinated by the little known *herstory* in our country. A simple newspaper article sent her on a journey of discovery into the life of Wilmington-born Mary Ann Shadd Cary, and along the way, she's learned about other incredible women and men previously left out of our history books.



WHY THE WORLD NEEDS ANTHROPOLOGISTS

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12



SPEAKER
Carla Guerrón-
Montero

CATEGORIES

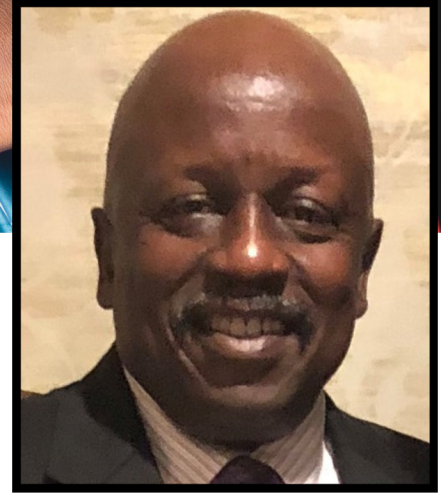
Culture & Identity
History

SUMMARY

Anthropology as a discipline grapples with a straight forward yet exceptionally complex question: What does it mean to be human? Due to its broad scope and holistic approach, the discipline of anthropology is particularly equipped to offer potential solutions to world problems, such as climate change, migration, racial and social inequalities, and the ethics of artificial intelligence and automation, among others.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Carla Guerrón Montero is a cultural and applied anthropologist trained in the United States and Latin America, and specialized in the anthropology of tourism, the anthropology of food, and the African diaspora. She currently teaches at the University of Delaware.



FREEDOM POEMS

CONVERSATION WITH A POET

Suitable for Adults

CATEGORIES

Art & Music Studies
Culture & Identity
History

SPEAKER
Sidney Jacobs

SUMMARY

Listen as Dr. Sidney Jacobs—veteran, sociologist, professor, and poet—performs two of his poems from his upcoming book *Freedom Poems*: "Harriet" and "Where's the Unum?". Learn about his writing process, hear where he finds his inspiration, and get crucial insight into key figures and references in the pieces.

"Harriet" reflects Dr. Jacobs's personal experience after viewing the movie *Harriet* and his numerous conflicting conversations about Harriet Tubman with members of his family. This poem explores the complexity of the modern Black experience, particularly themes of generational trauma, agency within slavery, and forgiveness.

"Where's the Unum?" explores Dr. Jacobs's experiences as a veteran alongside the current cultural and political divides in the United States. Dr. Jacobs straddles the double consciousness of what it means to be an American, a Black American, and a veteran, tackling the idea of loving a country so much that one feels obligated to scrutinize it.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Sidney R. Jacobs, Ph.D., is an Air Force Veteran, sociologist, poet, and former college professor. His areas of expertise include: race, class, gender, reentry, and deviance. More, he uses poetry to deliver his "sociology." Dr. Jacobs recently published his first book entitled *Freedom Poems: Poems to Live, Love, Fight, Die, and Resurrect By* (Balboa Press).



FOLK ART & CULTURE



SPEAKER
Eunice LaFate

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 4-12

CATEGORIES

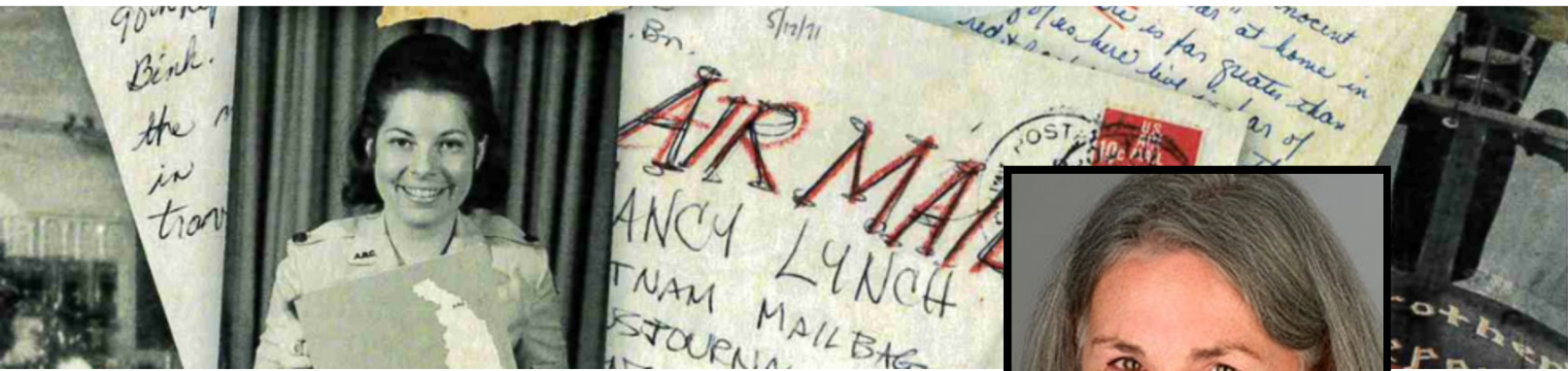
Art & Music Studies
Culture & Identity

SUMMARY

Folk art is the art produced by self-taught people. Every culture has its share of folk artists, yet art historians often deny folk art its rightful place alongside fine art. Ms. LaFate, a Jamaican born, prize-winning folk artist, addresses this issue and explores the concepts of folk art and culture. Audience members will have the opportunity to create their own folk art!

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Born in Jamaica, Eunice LaFate is a self-taught artist whose early works were influenced by the landscape, tones and culture of her island heritage. As an educator, artist, former banker, human services administrator, writer, story-teller, and public speaker on Folk Art and Culture, Eunice LaFate has impacted the lives of countless people by sharing her talents, her art, and her respect for diversity.



THE REAL WOMEN, VETERANS OF VIETNAM

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

SPEAKER

Nancy E. Lynch

CATEGORIES

History

Delaware

Literature & Language

SUMMARY

Inspired by Kristin Hannah's best seller, *The Women*, a fictional account of Army nurse Frankie McGrath's experiences in war-torn Vietnam, journalist Nancy E. Lynch reads and discusses actual correspondence she received from REAL Delaware women in Vietnam.

Delaware military nurses wrote to Ms. Lynch's award-winning newspaper column, Nancy's Vietnam Mailbag, a popular read from 1968 to 1972 in *The Morning News*, then a statewide paper. And a special civilian "Donut Dolly" visited her newspaper office in 1970 to share her experiences.

Ms. Lynch included these women's letters, among the nearly 900 she received from Delaware troops in Vietnam, in her acclaimed book, *Vietnam Mailbag, Voices From the War: 1968-1972*. She has since gifted these war letters to Delaware Public Archives for their preservation.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Journalist Nancy E. Lynch is the author of the award-winning social history, *Vietnam Mailbag, Voices from the War: 1968-1972* in which she collected nearly 1,000 letters and photos from Delaware troops on the front lines during the Vietnam War.



VIETNAM MAILBAG

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12



SPEAKER
Nancy E. Lynch

CATEGORIES

History
Delaware

SUMMARY

When American troops in Vietnam answered the call to correspond with a young reporter four decades ago, they could not have envisioned the enduring relevancy of their war letters or the rich legacy their words, photographs and memorabilia would leave to succeeding generations. Ms. Lynch discusses and reads selected war letters from her book, *Vietnam Mailbag, Voices From the War: 1968-1972*, based on her popular newspaper column, "Nancy's Vietnam Mailbag." She is accompanied by Vietnam veteran Rick Lovekin, a Huey helicopter door gunner, Cobra crew chief, and frequent letter writer to Nancy, who shows slides from Vietnam set to 1960s music.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Journalist Nancy E. Lynch is the author of the award-winning social history, *Vietnam Mailbag, Voices from the War: 1968-1972* in which she collected nearly 1,000 letters and photos from Delaware troops on the front lines during the Vietnam War.



OH SAY CAN YOU SEE:

THE ORIGIN OF THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER



SPEAKER
Eric Mease

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

CATEGORIES

Art & Music Studies
History

SUMMARY

Recently, the “Star Spangled Banner,” our National Anthem, has been a touch stone for civil rights issues and national controversy. Its words were born out of national crisis, written by a man who was himself no stranger to controversy — the song’s melody originated with a British men’s club celebrating wine and sex. This lecture explores the origin of the song, the author, a few of the controversies, and the times during which our anthem was conceived.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Eric Mease is an American History buff with a specific interest in the Early American period. He has taught continuing education classes around a wide range of topics including the American Civil War, America’s Founding Fathers and Mothers, the Declaration of Independence, Alexander Hamilton, and many more at Cecil College, Harford CC, and Del Tech.



REMEMBER THE LADIES

SPEAKER
Eric Mease

Suitable for Adults
Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

CATEGORIES

Culture & Identity
History

SUMMARY

The musical, *Hamilton: An American Musical*, introduced us to Elizabeth Schuyler-Hamilton who, until recently, was known mainly to historians. Now, our kids and grandchildren sing her praises! Elizabeth Schuyler-Hamilton is only one of many women in the pantheon of American's founders. This lecture helps us abide by Abigail Adams's wish that we "remember the ladies," including both Elizabeth Hamilton and Abigail Adams, as well as Martha Washington and Dolley Madison.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Eric Mease is an American History buff with a specific interest in the Early American period. He has taught continuing education classes around a wide range of topics including the American Civil War, America's Founding Fathers and Mothers, the Declaration of Independence, Alexander Hamilton, and many more at Cecil College, Harford CC, and Del Tech.



DELAWARE'S SIGNERS AND SLAVERY:

IT'S COMPLICATED

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 9-12

SPEAKER
Eric Mease

CATEGORIES

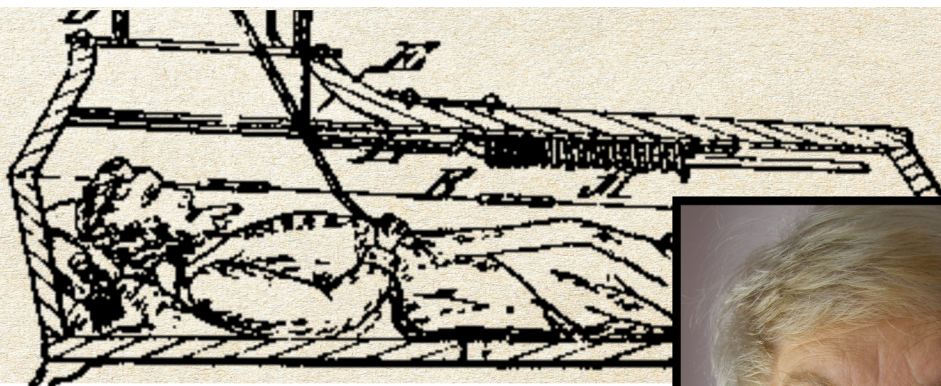
History
Civics
Delaware

SUMMARY

When Delaware's 3 signers of the Declaration of Independence stepped up to sign over "our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor" on the document, 2 of them were enslavers. However, by 1787, when it was time to sign the new U.S. Constitution, only one of Delaware's 5 signers was an enslaver. So, what happened? This presentation broadens our understanding of Delaware during the American Revolutionary period by telling the complicated relationship between Delaware's signers and enslavement and the impact of that relationship on Delaware's struggling abolitionist movement.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Eric Mease is an American History buff with a specific interest in the Early American period. He has taught continuing education classes around a wide range of topics including the American Civil War, America's Founding Fathers and Mothers, the Declaration of Independence, Alexander Hamilton, and many more at Cecil College, Harford CC, and Del Tech.



SAVED BY THE BELL:

HOW AMERICANS AVOIDED BEING BURIED ALIVE

SPEAKER
Margaret Opsata

Suitable for Adults

CATEGORIES

History
Literature & Language

SUMMARY

The line dividing life from death was not clearly defined in the 1800's. In the rush to bury a corpse quickly, before contagious disease could spread, people who were comatose, catatonic, sedated, or just plain drunk were sometimes mistaken for dead. Factual and fictional accounts of unfortunate souls awakening in their coffin, combined with medical disagreements about how to test definitively for absence of life, created widespread panic and led to imaginative inventions for preventing premature burial. Learn about this historic phenomenon and how Americans tried to avoid being buried alive—including being “saved by the bell.”

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Margaret Opsata is an award-winning writer and editor in love with language. She has over 30 years of experience writing and editing articles for magazines in fields like personal finance, retail marketing, and historic preservation.



THE DELAWARE POISON CANDY MURDERS OF 1898

Suitable for Adults



SPEAKER
Margaret Opsata

CATEGORIES

History
Delaware

SUMMARY

One Delaware summer afternoon, a young wife in Dover received a gift box of candy in the mail. Two days after enjoying the treat with family and friends, she and her sister were dead of arsenic poisoning. Discovering who had sent the deadly delicacies, and why, exposed a tangle of lies, jealousy, adultery and betrayal in a trial that mesmerized the entire country in 1898.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Margaret Opsata is an award-winning writer and editor in love with language. She has over 30 years of experience writing and editing articles for magazines in fields like personal finance, retail marketing, and historic preservation.



AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE CIVIL WAR



Suitable for Adults
Suitable for Schools: Grades 1-12
See following page for school details

SPEAKER
Kathy Trusty

CATEGORIES

Culture & Identity
History

SUMMARY

The Civil War was a defining moment in American history and the experiences and contributions of African Americans were pivotal during that time. In this presentation, we will explore the overlooked roles African Americans played during the war. We will examine the lives of civilians, including those who were forced to aid the Confederacy, and the brave women who supported the Union cause in various capacities. Additionally, we will honor the United States Colored Troops, whose courage and sacrifice helped shape the course of the war and the future of African Americans in this country.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Kathy Trusty is an historian, writer, and Black history educator. She always loved history and became enthusiastic about Black history when she received a grant to document the history of African Americans in Paterson, New Jersey, where she lived before moving to Delaware.

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE CIVIL WAR SCHOOL PROGRAM



PRESENTATION TOPICS

African Americans and the Civil War is available by topic for K-12 schools. The presentations are shorter, approximately 20 minutes each, leaving time for included topical activities.

The Teacher/Coordinator will have the option of choosing one of the following topics below for their classroom presentation. All presentations include a Civil War “artifacts” display.

- Black Soldiers: Triumphs, Challenges, Valor (Grades 6-12)
- Key African American Figures and Heroes (All Grades)
- Laws, Proclamations, Field Orders, Constitutional Amendments (Grades 6-12)
- Delaware in the Civil War (All Grades)
- Juneteenth (Grades 2-5)
- War and Play: How Children Lived During the Civil War (Grades 2-5)
- Role of African American Women During the Civil War (All Grades)

ACTIVITIES

Below are some possible activities that can be included in each presentation. Adjustments and specializations are possible according to each classroom’s needs.

Grades 2-4

- Word Search or Word Scramble Puzzle using key terms and historical figures
- Who Am I? Can you tell who these figures are by their description?
- Fact or Fiction? Determine if certain statements are true or false

Grades 5-8

- Analyze Primary Source Documents. What did the writer mean? Feel?
- What If? Review an event or result and discuss what if...?

Grades 9-12

- Document Analysis. Analyze an Order, decipher its language, what was its impact?
- Photo Interpretation. What did the photo mean at the time? its impact?
- Opposing Views: Abraham Lincoln v Frederick Douglass



THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE:

A REVOLUTION OF WORDS, ART, AND ACTIVISM

Suitable for Adults

Suitable for Schools: Grades 4-12

SPEAKER
Kathy Trusty

CATEGORIES

Culture & Identity

Civics & Government

History

SUMMARY

The Harlem Renaissance was a period of rich African American artistic and cultural activity. This program explores the Harlem Renaissance and its significance in American history and Black culture. It discusses key figures and their contributions to art, literature, music and theater, along with the rise of Black pride, self-expression, and artistic freedom.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Kathy Trusty is an historian, writer, and Black history educator. She always loved history and became enthusiastic about Black history when she received a grant to document the history of African Americans in Paterson, New Jersey, where she lived before moving to Delaware.

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE SCHOOL PROGRAM



PRESENTATION TOPICS

The Harlem Renaissance is available by topic for K-12 schools. The presentations are shorter, approximately 20 minutes each, leaving time for included topical activities.

The Teacher/Coordinator will have the option of choosing one of the following topics below for their classroom presentation.

PRESENTATION TOPICS

- The New Negro Movement, Black Pride, Artistic Freedom
- Literary Contributors: Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Claude McKay, Alice Dunbar Nelson,
- Visual Artists: Aaron Douglas, Augusta Savage
- Music: Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong
- Performing Arts: Josephine Baker, Paul Robeson
- Photography of James Van Der Zee

ACTIVITIES

- Analyze a poem. What does the writer mean? What are they feeling?
- Interpret photographs. What is the photo telling you about life in Harlem during the Renaissance?
- What Do You See? Interpret Aaron Douglas' paintings "Aspects of a Negro Life."
- Billie Holiday, the Rapper: Turn her song lyrics into a Rap.



TRANSFORMING DELAWARE'S FORGOTTEN CEMETERIES

ILLUMINATING CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

SPEAKER
Faith B. Kuehn

Suitable for Adults

CATEGORIES

Delaware
Ethics
Environment

SUMMARY

Cemeteries honor the dead and reflect our values and shared history. This program focuses on the restoration projects of two historic, forgotten Delaware cemeteries—on Delaware Health and Social Services' Herman Holloway Campus in New Castle—and how those projects offer a reflection of social and environmental values. Who is buried at these sites, and why? How did these cemeteries become forgotten? By restoring these cemeteries, we can encourage healing from years of disrespect shown to those buried there, paved over by the interstate. Restoration can also remedy some of the massive ecological damage caused by diverting the Christina River and destroying its surrounding wetland during the construction of I-95.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Faith B. Kuehn currently works as a Delaware Department of Health and Social Services' contract employee, leading efforts to restore and dignify the three Potter's Field cemeteries on the Herman Holloway Campus in New Castle. She holds a Ph.D. in Entomology and is a certified Delaware Master Naturalist.

POLARIZATION: CAN WE FIND COMMON GROUND?

Suitable for Adults

CATEGORIES

Civics
Ethics



SPEAKER
David Stradley

This program is an interactive conversation, rather than a lecture-style presentation. Audience members will participate through activities and discussion. Please allow 90 minutes for this program at your site.

SUMMARY

Recent data shows that Americans report feeling more polarized than ever. In today's political climate, we may feel there is a wide gulf between ourselves and our fellow citizens, colleagues, community members, or loved ones. How do we talk with people who may hold views that differ steeply from our own? In this conversation, we'll explore our associations with polarization, consider our own discomforts and barriers, and find ways to meet one another on common ground.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

David Stradley has twenty years of experience connecting a broad mix of Delawareans to ideas and to each other. David moved to the First State in 2002 for a position at Delaware Theatre Company, where he directed productions, developed audience engagement events, and ran educational programs. From 2011-2023, he served as Producing Artistic Director of Delaware Shakespeare, launching the Community Tour, which shares free theatre with the full spectrum of humanity in our state by traveling to locations such as prisons, homeless shelters, and community centers. David is now Director of Membership and Community Engagement with the Local Journalism Initiative.

SITTING WITH DISCOMFORT: SELF-KINDNESS IN A COMPLICATED WORLD

Suitable for Adults

CATEGORIES

Health & Wellness

This program is an interactive conversation, rather than a lecture-style presentation. Audience members will participate through activities and discussion. Please allow 90 minutes for this program at your site.

SUMMARY

How do we find ways to take care of ourselves? Recent studies show that Americans report feeling more stressed than ever. In our complicated world, patience, understanding, and support may feel far away. We may find it difficult to practice empathy and understanding not only towards others, but towards ourselves. In this conversation, we'll navigate the complexities of inner struggles and work towards cultivating self-compassion. Participants will practice resiliency strategies and learn self-care tactics that they can apply in their everyday lives.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Heather Klemanski is the founder of "Inner Mean Girl Intervention" and a passionate Self-Love Specialist and dedicated guide in dismantling barriers of shame, fear, doubt, and negative self-talk. With expertise in mindful self-compassion and safe space facilitation, Heather adeptly unravels the layers of the inner "mean girl." Her mission centers on fostering self-kindness, courage, and joy within professional women and heart-centered organizations, guiding them to bravely uncover authentic voices. Her specialty lies in building communities fueled by support and understanding, making her coaching a transformative journey towards self-love and empowerment.



SPEAKER
Heather Klemanski



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A DELAWAREAN?

*A Special Program from
Delaware Humanities*

SPEAKER
Michele Anstine

Suitable for Adults

CATEGORIES

Delaware
History
Culture & Identity

SUMMARY

As Delaware kicks off its commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and breaking away from England, Delaware Humanities' Executive Director, Michele Anstine, examines at the question "What does it mean to be a Delawarean?" Drawing on different humanities subjects such as history, literature, and philosophy, this program examines aspects that contribute to the Delaware identity. Rather than reaching a definitive conclusion, the talk aims to equip attendees with new perspectives and humanities tools to help them tackle life's "big questions."

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Michele Anstine is Executive Director of Delaware Humanities. She joined Delaware Humanities in 2018 after working over 20 years in the history and museum field. Her undergraduate degree focused on American History, but she pursued a Master's degree in Liberal Studies, realizing that her research and work was most effective when her approach was multidisciplinary. She is a board member of both the Delaware Museum Association and the Forum of Executive Women Delaware.