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# The Charlotte Post

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THE AWARD-WINNING "VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY"

50 Cents

## Edwards Saw City With Magical Lens

By M. L. LaNEY  
Post Correspondent

To have a sense of focus was central to the life of photographer Colin Marshall Edwards. He lived 75 of his 86 years in pursuit of it. Mr. Edwards (as he was known by most people) died Monday, November 27, at home after a prolonged decline in his health. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Mrs. Novella Edwards, an only son, C. Morgan Edwards (presently of Raleigh) along with two granddaughters, Thersa D. and Hayley E. Edwards' work was professionally replete. He was prolific in compiling an historic photographic record with his images of the Westside of Charlotte (wherever that happened to be) and the surrounding area.

He was born in Shelby on January 8, 1903. At age 11 he began an apprenticeship with an established studio for a white photographer named Shuford. He continued even after enrolling to attend Livingstone College for two years. Afterwards, Mr. Edwards was a school teacher around the Shelby area and before he became a cook with the railroad.

"My father loved to cook, it was like his hobby," said Morgan Edwards. "He quit the railroad in the mid-'30s and came to Charlotte. Shuford, meanwhile,

moved from Shelby to Charlotte and he hired my father to do the lab (darkroom) work. He then worked for the St. John's Studios and at others like Gaddy's and Broomfield's. These were established studios contracted to the major department stores here. They did layouts for ads."

By the early 1940s, Edwards says he started operating on his own out of his home. In 1945 he sat up his own studio at 2207 Booker Ave., operating it continuously until the early '70s. During this time his photographs were used by such respected rag sheets ('40s' slang for newspapers) as The Charlotte Post, the now defunct Charlotte News and The Charlotte Observer. They appeared in court cases via his work with the Charlotte Police Department. He also did countless weddings, awards ceremonies, graduations and the like.

His photography has captured, in crystalline fashion, a slice of black life in the Southern Piedmont. His work chronicles the social, the athletic, the religious and the commonplace aspects of Charlotte's black community but his photographs were of all people, for all people. He was a positive thinker, a man considered by some to be the "dean of black photographers" in these parts.

James Peeler, a long-time pro-

fessional photographer, remembers Edwards well. "He was an institution around Charlotte," recounted Peeler, after listing a few facts concerning Edwards' accomplishments. Like the fact that, "for a long time he (Edwards) was the only black photographer on the westside," and one of two in all of Charlotte.

Edwards was also known as the driving force behind the technical influence on aspiring snap-shooters, encouraging them to higher achievement. Photographers sought his advice from the basics on up.

Some went on to establish their own credentials in the profession. Towns, Covington and Hill are chief among them. By all who knew him, he is remembered as a remarkable gentleman with a respected eye for images.

Edwards looked deeply into the possibilities of his subjects, the community activities that marked the progress of blacks in and around Charlotte, seeking to document the diverse vitality that characterized the post-war era of the Carolinas. His success is enhanced by the humility and humanity displayed by his sensitivity to those he photographed.

Edwards believed that the historical nature and value of any See EDWARDS On Page 2A



Colin Edwards photographed black life in Charlotte for most of his 86 years, including the first black police officers in city history in the early 1940s.



Dow Chemical Co. employee Sterling Gatling spoke Wednesday at West Charlotte Senior High School.

## Scientist Challenges Students

### Gatling's Message To West Charlotte: 'I Made It--You Can Too'

By MILLICENT LINK  
Post Staff Writer

Sterling Gatling did not come to West Charlotte Senior High Wednesday to bring a magic chemistry show.

He came to encourage students to follow their dreams and believe in their abilities.

Gatling, a placement supervisor for Dow Chemical Co. in Midland, Michigan, challenged the students of the Minority Achievement Program to reach deep within and take a look at where they are and where they are going.

He told the students to stop saying they can't make it and believe in their capabilities.

"Whatever is lurking down inside of you, let it come out," said Gatling.

Many students need an attitude adjustment and do not have enough confidence in themselves, Gatling said. "Students need to change their pattern of

thinking," he said.

Gatling told students to be careful whom they listen to and be careful in what they do. "You are your worst enemy," he said.

He also emphasized the importance of establishing a mentor. "Everyone needs someone that they can look up to and respect," he said.

As Gatling spoke from the topic "I Made It--You Can Too," he urged the Lions to stay in school and go on to college. "So you will have a choice instead of a chance," said Gatling. He told students that his pet peeve is to be stereotyped; however he discovered that he was guilty of stereotyping himself.

After attending an all black high school and going on to a predominantly white junior college, Gatling began to struggle with himself. He began to question his own capabilities. "I couldn't understand why my friends were making A's and B's

and I was struggling to make a C average," said Gatling.

Subconsciously I felt inferior.

However the next semester he began to excel academically. "I realized that it didn't matter who was in my class; I had a brain too," he said.

The N.C. Central University graduate did not decide until his senior year in college that he wanted to major in chemistry. He changed his major two times before he made a decision. After taking a chemistry class, a professor encouraged him to major in chemistry.

Although his friends said that chemistry would be too difficult, his mentor saw a hidden talent.

"He saw something in me that I didn't see," said Gatling.

As a child growing up on a North Carolina farm, he lived somewhat of a sheltered life style. Gatling believes that this contributed to his lack of self-confidence.

"Once the confidence came, this allowed my true performance to come out," said Gatling.

Before coming a supervisor of the student program at Dow, Gatling worked as a research chemist with 15 years of experience in the area of process research. He developed and optimized processes for the manufacturing of Dow products.

Gatling decided to take a break from the lab in order to help young people get first-hand experience. "It is not enough to read the students need hands on experience," he said.

Gatling has received many awards and honors over the years. He was presented with the Inventor of the Year award, The Dow Chemical MASTL Science Award and received three patents on the process improvement of insecticides.

## Color Keeps Blacks From Integrating

By MICHAEL MORAN  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER  
NEWARK, N.J. (AP) --- A majority of residents trace ancestry to people unwillingly brought to America in chains. Not surprisingly, there is little nostalgia for the concept of this nation as a great melting pot.

"It's a lot easier to change your name when you get to America than the color of your skin," said Howard Taylor, a Princeton University sociologist and former head of the school's Afro-American studies program. "There is ongoing resentment on the part of the black community for what they perceive as the advancement of other immigrant groups at their expense."

Taylor and other experts say institutional bigotry in the United States, linked primarily to skin color, has prevented blacks from following in the

footsteps of the Irish, Poles, Jews and other immigrant groups.

No one disputes that black Americans have made strides in the past 20 years toward overcoming the systematic discrimination that denied them access to so much.

And in many ways, Newark was a catalyst for that progress, from the explosive expression of rage in 1967's race riots to the 1970 election of Kenneth Gibson as the first black mayor of a major American city.

But economic and social progress for blacks in New Jersey and nationwide has been uneven, experts say. Often it must be forced on the majority white population by court orders and discrimination suits.

David Surrey, an urban affairs professor at St. Peter's College in Jersey City, said black resentment of the upwardly mobile

immigrant can be traced to the racism directed at American blacks by segments of white society.

"Hiring patterns in institutions traditionally open to immigrants, like police, fire and education jobs, continue to leave blacks out," said Surrey. "For blacks, that leaves the distinct impression that the deck is stacked against them."

Just this month, Camden's police department and its union agreed to a plan to promote three blacks and a Hispanic officer, pending the outcome of a discrimination suit filed by minority officers. The agreement was the result of a two-year legal battle.

Dr. Pauline Coleman, a sociologist at Drew University's Afro-American studies program, said skin color alone does not ex-

plain the lagging social standing of black Americans. Class and educational considerations also play a part, she said.

As evidence, she cites studies showing that immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa do better in America than the average native-born black.

"People of African decent not born here already have money or middle class aspirations or they wouldn't have been able to get here in the first place," she said. "It's comparing apples and oranges."

Most black Americans, she said, "grow up in poor areas with the poorest schools and little upward mobility."

Many African immigrants come here as students, said Dr. Niki Chukunta, a Nigerian who came to study at Rutgers University in the late 1960s.

"Contacts between Afro-Americans and African immi-

grants are not very common," said Chukunta, an advisor at Essex County Community College. "The relationship can often be tense."

He said the friction is most acute in jobs where immigrants compete directly with black Americans for jobs.

"A case study is the Haitian immigrants of Newark, who have practically taken over the taxi business," he said. "A young Afro-American might look at that and say, 'That could have been my job.'"

By far the most commonly cited solution is better schools.

"The political progress of blacks is encouraging, like taking the elections in Virginia and New York," said Surrey. "But housing problems are getting worse and unskilled jobs scarce. Without improved education to improve their position in society, the tensions will remain."

## Dwight To Speak On History

Dr. Margaret Dwight, a historian at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, will present a symposium on black history Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Ubiquitous Gallery at 1936 East 7th St.

Dr. Dwight is a member of UNCC's Afro-American, African Studies and Women's Studies departments. Her various awards, publications and professional experiences include Fulbright appointments in West Africa and is co-author of "Mississippi Black History Makers."

For more information, contact Dwiggin Swift at 332-6687. A \$5 honorarium contribution is requested. Refreshments will be served.

## Shoney's Signs To Help Elderly African-Americans

WASHINGTON-- Shoney's, Inc. has agreed to provide on-going technical assistance and management consulting to the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged (NCBA). Together, the two organizations will create expanded employment opportunities for low-income seniors, and increase NCBA's ability to develop and manage housing

services for the low-income elderly.

Older blacks are three times as likely to be poor as elderly whites, and two and a half times as likely to have incomes that are 125 percent below the poverty level.

Mitchell Boyd, Shoney's chairman and CEO, announced the arrangement recently at the Na-

tional Press Club with Samuel J. Simmons, president of the NCBA. The arrangement may be the first of its kind between a social services agency and a major corporation. Shoney's, Inc. will provide consultants from its food services operations to work with NCBA in developing methods and strategies to improve training systems. The goal is to

better prepare older workers for employment in the fast food industry, cafeterias.

NCBA is a national nonprofit organization based in Washington and founded to improve the quality of life for aged blacks. It is the only national organization that focuses its attention almost exclusively on the needs of older blacks.

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