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OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

In Memory

THE *PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY* lost a dear friend and supporter in June 2008 with the death of editorial board member Eric Ledell Smith. A nationally recognized scholar in Pennsylvania history and African American history, Eric was the curator of the African American Museum in Philadelphia from 1992 to 1993. Since 1993, he served as the African American and Pennsylvania historian for the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission under both the Bureau of Archives and History and the State Museum of Pennsylvania.

A prolific scholar, Eric was the author or editor of five books: *Bert Williams, A Biography* (McFarland, 1992), *Blacks in Opera: an Encyclopedia* (McFarland, 1995), *African Americans in Pennsylvania: Shifting Historical Perspectives*, edited with Joe Trotter (Penn State Press, 1997), *African American Theater Buildings, a Historical Directory* (McFarland, 2003), *African Americans in Pennsylvania*, and *African Americans in Harrisburg*, written with John Weldon Scott (Arcadia, 2005). His sixth book, *The State Museum of Pennsylvania: a Centennial History 1905–2005* is available on the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Web site.

Eric presented more than twenty papers at conferences. He appeared on the national television channel C-Span as well as public access stations in Harrisburg and York. He published more than thirty journal articles, including encyclopedia articles.

Eric's article about black disenfranchisement in Pennsylvania in the journal *Pennsylvania History* won him the Philip S. Klein Award from the Pennsylvania Historical Association for the best history article of

1999. In July 2005, the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* published his Notes and Documents essay, "Rescuing African American Kidnapping Victims in Philadelphia as Documented in the Joseph Watson Papers at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania."

Eric became a member of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1993. He served on the editorial board of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* from 2002 until his death. We will miss him.