

WINTERTHUR



Winterthur Press Release

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Contact: Mark Nardone
Mnardone@winterthur.org
302.888.4803

Historic Photographs Preserve the Spirit of Small Business

Images of popular local places with businesses from across the country show how photography helped create identities.

Winterthur, DE, August 22, 2019—A 19th-century prosthetics workshop, a Polish-American car dealership, and a prominent local jazz club are very different businesses, but owners and workers at each turned to photography to portray themselves and their goods or services. See how in *Open for Business: Photography, Trade, and Self-Image, 1870–1950* at Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, on view September 10, 2019, through January 5, 2020.

The exhibit includes personal interviews and crowdsourced photographs, in addition to more than 30 photographs, images, and objects from the collections of Winterthur and Delaware Historical Society. Visitors and the public are encouraged to participate in the exhibition by submitting their own historic photographs of businesses at <http://submitphoto.winterthur.org/>.

Highlights of *Open for Business* include images of a woman-operated ice cream shop on Staten Island, New York, from the late 19th century, with an oral history component about early ice cream businesses, and a late 19th -century ambrotype depicting a shoemaker at his worktable with his tools and violin, which includes an interactive display that explains how rapid technological advancements in photography stimulated increased use in advertising.

Three images of the Spot Café, contributed by Delaware Historical Society, show nightlife in Wilmington, Delaware, in the 1940s. The photographs depict jazz performers as well as interracial groups of patrons at the popular jazz club. The Spot Café, in the Royal Hotel, is only one business in the exhibition featured in the *Negro Motorist Green Books*. The *Green Book*, as this publication was commonly called, was an annual national guide published from the 1930s to

1960s that listed hotels, restaurants, and other venues friendly to African Americans travelers during the Jim Crow era.

Partnering with the Delaware Historical Society allowed Winterthur's student curators of *Open for Business* to represent national businesses alongside iconic 20th-century Wilmington locales such as Elsie's Chicken, Federal Bakery, and Salamon's Motors. The objects reflect contemporary scholarship on historic photography, self-representation, and business history.

ABOUT DELAWARE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Delaware Historical Society owns and operates the Delaware History Museum; the Jane and Littleton Mitchell Center for African American Heritage; a nationally recognized Research Library; Old Town Hall; Willingtown Square, four 18th-century houses surrounding a picturesque urban courtyard in downtown Wilmington; and the National Historic Landmark Read House & Gardens in New Castle, five miles south of Wilmington. For more information, call (302) 655-7161, email deinfo@dehistory.org, or visit dehistory.org.

ABOUT WINTERTHUR MUSEUM, GARDEN & LIBRARY

Winterthur—known worldwide for its preeminent collection of American decorative arts, naturalistic gardens, and research library for the study of American art and material culture—offers a variety of tours, exhibitions, programs, and activities throughout the year. General admission includes a tour of some of the most notable spaces in Henry Francis du Pont's former home as well as access to the Winterthur Garden and Galleries, special exhibitions, a narrated tram tour (weather permitting), the Campbell Collection of Soup Tureens, and the Enchanted Woods children's garden.

Winterthur, located on Route 52, six miles northwest of Wilmington, Delaware, and five miles south of U.S. Route 1, is closed on Mondays (except during Yuletide), Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Museum hours are 10:00 am–5:00 pm, Tuesday–Sunday. \$20 for adults; \$18 for students and seniors; \$6 for ages 2–11. Memberships are available for free and discounted admission. Winterthur is committed to accessible programming for all. For information, including special services, call 800.448.3883, 302.888.4600, or TTY 302.888.4907, or visit winterthur.org.

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