



120 Academy Street, Trenton, N.J. 08608  
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## **Collection 468 Daniel Aubrey Collection**

**By Ellen R. Callahan  
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### **Biography**

Daniel Aubrey is the cultural editor for *U. S. 1 Newspaper*. His professional background includes serving as the theater and arts columnist for the *Times of Trenton*, staff member for the New Jersey State Council of the Arts public arts and arts-in-education programs, and the former director of communications for the New Jersey State Museum. He was also involved with the Original Trenton Coffeehouse, the Trenton Theater Guild and the establishment of the Trenton Artists Workshop Association and the Passage Theater Company.<sup>1</sup>

### **Scope and Content**

The collection includes material which documents Aubrey's involvement with the Original Trenton Coffeehouse, the Trenton Theater Guild, Passage Theater, and the Trenton Artists Workshop Association (TAWA). Also included are two of his newspaper articles and a few miscellaneous documents regarding other projects he was involved in. Record types include promotional flyers, event programs, play programs, newspaper clippings and photographs. This material will be useful to researchers interested in efforts to revitalize cultural activities in Trenton in the 1980s with particular emphasis on events at the Original Trenton Coffeehouse, TAWA's Eyes on Trenton arts festival and the east coast premiere of Trenton playwright William Mastrosimone's play *The Undoing* in Trenton.

The collection is broken into four series as described below.

### **Series Descriptions**

#### **Series 1. Original Trenton Coffeehouse, 1979-1983**

The Original Trenton Coffeehouse (OTC) opened in January of 1980 in the basement of the First United Methodist Church at Front and Broad Streets. It was a non-profit organization incorporated under TAWA and designed to provide a weekend gathering location for cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Biography provided by Mr. Aubrey.

activities such as live music, art showings, poetry readings and films, especially emphasizing local talent<sup>2</sup>. This series includes three subgroups which document the creation and activities of OTC. Administrative materials include histories of the organization, yearly lists of activities and schedules, correspondence, and minutes from a July 20, 1980 meeting. Flyers and notices advertise and sometimes describe upcoming events, and newspaper clippings provide background information about the creation of the OTC and its activities up to 1983.

### **Series 2. Theater Groups, 1983-1987**

This series includes information about two theater groups, The Trenton Theater Guild (TTG) and Passage Theatre Company. The Trenton Theatre Guild was a non-profit organization dedicated to “protect and revitalize legitimate theater in the Trenton Area.”<sup>3</sup> The bulk of the material in this subseries consists of flyers and events programs of the Guild. Also included is a grant application from the Guild to the New Jersey Council on the Arts to assist in the production of Trenton resident William Mastrosimone’s play, *The Undoing*.

Passage Theater Company “was born from the critical and financial success of *The Undoing*”<sup>4</sup>. Information in this subseries consists of a 1986 grant application submitted by Pride in Trenton (another not-for profit Trenton organization) and the Passage Theater Company to the New Jersey Council on the Arts requesting matching funds to assist in the production of Trenton playwright Don Evans’ play, “Louis.” The grant provides background information about the formation of Passage, including biographical sketches of those involved and news clippings from 1985 to 1986 documenting the Trenton theater scene from 1985 to 1986. Also included is a copy of Dan Aubrey’s article “[Don] Evans finds opportunity in Cleveland.” *The Times* [Trenton, N.J.], April 26-28, 1985, p. 13.

### **Series 3. Trenton Artists Workshop Association, 1978-1981**

The Trenton Artists Workshop Association (TAWA) is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1979, which promotes cultural events and programs. Activities and membership in TAWA included cross over with other Trenton cultural groups including OTC, TTG and Passage. The highlights of this series include events catalogues, promotional flyers, and newspaper clippings about the Eyes on Trenton Arts Festival sponsored by TAWA in 1981; programs, newspaper clippings and photographs regarding the east coast premiere of Trenton playwright William Mastrosimone’s play *The Undoing* and other clippings featuring TAWA exhibits.

### **Series 4. Miscellaneous Material, 1969, 1978, 1980**

This series includes newspaper articles on Trenton artist Thomas Malloy, and information on other projects that Aubrey was part of.

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<sup>2</sup> “Description of Organization” (undated) [folder 1]

<sup>3</sup> *Trenton Theater Guild 1983-1984 Season Program* [folder 4]

<sup>4</sup> “The Passage Theatre Company Background Information,” 1986 [folder 6]

## Container List

### Box / Folder / Folder Title

- 1 / 1 / Original Trenton Coffeehouse - Administrative Materials ca. 1979-1981
- 1 / 2 / Original Trenton Coffeehouse - Flyers, etc., ca. 1979-1983
- 1 / 3 / Original Trenton Coffeehouse - Clippings, 1979-1983
- 1 / 4 / Theater - Trenton Theater Guild - Flyers, events programs, etc., ca. 1983-1987
- 1 / 5 / Theater - Trenton Theater Guild - Grant Application to produce *The Undoing*, 1984
- 1 / 6 / Theater - Passage Theatre Company, 1986
- 1 / 7 / Trenton Artists Workshop Association - Eyes on Trenton Arts Festival – Events programs, Traveling Exhibition Catalogue, etc. 1981
- 1 / 8 / Trenton Artists Workshop Association - Eyes on Trenton Arts Festival Clippings, 1981
- 1 / 9 / Trenton Artists Workshop Association - *The Undoing*, flyers, programs, etc., 1985
- 1 / 10 / Trenton Artists Workshop Association - *The Undoing*, photographs – 5 8”x10” B&W, 1981 group shots that include producer Daniel Aubrey, Mayor Author J. Holland, playwright William Mastrosimone, director Veronica Aubrey, Cyril Collins of New Jersey Bell (which contributed funding to production) and *Times of Trenton* publisher Richard Bilotti (the *Times* also provided funding), 1985
- 1 / 11 / Trenton Artists Workshop Association - *The Undoing*, - Clippings, 1985
- 1 / 12 / Trenton Artists Workshop Association - Trenton artist Frank Greco - signed May 24, 1978 note from artists explaining how he creates his art; *Frank Greco: Posters and Lettering* [exhibition catalog], 1980
- 1 / 13 / Trenton Artists Workshop Association - Clippings - Frank Greco, 1970 & 1980; TAWA Summer Exhibits at Ellarslie, 1980
- 1 / 14 / Miscellaneous - Clippings re. Trenton artists Thomas Malloy, 1969 & 1978
- 1 / 15 / Miscellaneous - Daniel Aubrey, Burlington County College, Pemberton, NJ student ID
- 1 / 16 / Miscellaneous - Projects - State Street Stroll Planning Committee contact list, 1980; Project Description for Native Tongue (concept for anthology of writings of Trenton area writers), no date; cast and staff list for “Naropa,” written by Jean-Claude van Itallie, no date.

## Provenance

Daniel Aubrey donated this material to Trentoniana.

## Related Collections

Trenton Artists’ Workshop Association (TAWA) Collection

Collection 353, Pride in Trenton Collection, 1980-1986

State Street Stroll Collection