

FLORIDA HIGHWAYMEN

The Spady Cultural Heritage Museum is proud to present an exhibition featuring two of the original Florida Highwaymen Painters, Alfred Hair (1941-1970) and Harold Newton (1934-1994).

“**The Highwaymen**” is the name given (in 1994) to the group of African American friends from Fort Pierce, Florida who wanted to earn their living from their art rather than in the fields or packing houses in the 1950s and ‘60s.

Their story began when Alfred Hair, an enterprising student at Lincoln Park Academy, took art lessons from A.E. “Bean” Backus, who was one of Florida’s best know landscape artists at the time. Hair began recruiting and teaching his friends what he learned from Backus and soon, the group began mass producing their paintings, loading them up in their cars on the weekends, and selling them to motels, restaurants and anyone else who was interested.

Many early Highwaymen paintings were done on Upson board with whatever painting materials they had on hand, including house paint. Highwaymen traveled the highways and byways of south Florida selling their paintings as far south as the Miami area, as far north as the Daytona Beach area and throughout the inland areas of the state.

The Highwaymen style of landscape painting depicts a Florida paradise with billowing pink clouds, windswept palm trees, lakes, oceans and spectacular sunsets. The Highwaymen inadvertently created an awareness of and appreciation for Florida regional art. Their impact is growing and increasingly being recognized throughout the art world.



Alfred Hair



Harold Newton

Note to teachers

This material is on our website with hyperlinks to assist students with the definitions of unfamiliar terms and concepts.

Suggested topics to review with the class before your visit to the Spady Museum:

- What are some characteristics of Florida’s landscape?
- Why do you think they are called the Florida Highwaymen?
- What does it mean to mass produce?
- The Highwaymen sold their paintings for \$25. If average monthly living expenses were \$600 per month, how many paintings did the Highwaymen need paint and sell per month to pay their bills?

Online Resources:

- <http://www.floridahighwaymenpaintings.com/>
- <http://aarf.com/fehwyphen01.htm>
- <http://www.sptimes.com>
- <http://www.highwaymenpaintings.com/articles.htm>

EPOCH, doing business as The Spady Cultural Heritage Museum, is a non-profit organization located in Palm Beach County and is dedicated to discovering, collecting and sharing the African American history and heritage of Florida. Located in the former home of the late Solomon D. Spady, the most prominent African American educator and community leader in Delray Beach from 1922 to 1957, the museum opened in July 2001 and is the only African American Cultural Heritage museum of its kind in Palm Beach County. In addition to hosting permanent and traveling exhibits, the museum provides community outreach programs, a lecture series and an annual heritage festival. The Spady Museum is located at 170 NW 5th Avenue in downtown Delray Beach. Call 561.279.8883 or visit our website www.spadymuseum.org for more information.

