

JOHN P. LEE

John P. Lee, who was Chief of Police at the University of Montevallo from 1984 through early 2008, died on March 26, 2008, leaving behind hundreds of paintings of birds and plants. A meticulous artist, he used the finest paintbrushes to achieve the detail he strived for. Commenting on his passion for detail, Chief Lee noted: "People say I don't own a brush larger than a triple ought. I build my paintings feather by feather, leaf by leaf"

He constructed paintings in much the same manner as the old Renaissance Masters, achieving a dimension and luminescence not commonly found today. Most of his paintings are watercolor, but he occasionally used oil.

Born on February 13, 1941, in Chambers County, Alabama, John Lee lived the early years of his life close to nature on a farm where he became fascinated with the native wildlife. Spending many an hour hunting and fishing near his home, he began drawing and painting wildlife. His formal training in art began at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. After transferring to Troy State University in Troy, Alabama, and earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Art Education, he taught art for five years in public schools in Florida.

Having worked his way through college in law enforcement, John returned to a law enforcement career. He attained the rank of Chief of Police in Troy, Alabama, and then served as Chief of Police at the University of Montevallo for twenty-four years. He earned a Master's degree in Criminal Justice Administration and was a graduate of the FBI National Academy. His forty-one years in law enforcement helped provide the discipline necessary to render such sharp detail to the subject matter in his paintings.

A student of wildlife artists Claude Peacock and Woody Ishmael, John Lee won the competition for a painting used for the waterfowl stamp on Alabama hunting licenses in 1983-84 and again in 2003-04. John Lee's work has been exhibited throughout the Southeast and is in collections in all fifty states.