



**Smithsonian Institution**

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

## **Delegate Magazine 1973**

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## FIRST BLACK AMERICAN NAMED TO KNIGHTS OF MALTA

[[image - black & white photograph of a man kneeling while being knighted into the Knights of Malta. One man (Prince Robert Bassaraba von Brancovan) knighting him, another (Dr. George Ritchie Englert) standing off to the side]]

Steven N. Lockett became the first black American member of the Knights of Malta, Rome-based, world-wide order honoring outstanding men and women of all faiths. The ceremony took place at the Seagram Building in New York City.

Mr. Lockett is assistant to the vice president and general sales manager of Seagram Distillers Company. The Knights of Malta own and support hospitals and clinics in many countries, as well as aid missions, train doctors and nurses and contribute to charities the world over.

Founded in the 11th century, the order originally was limited to Catholic men and woman of noble birth. Today, the Cross of Malta honors the nobility of the "common man."

Mr. Lockett, a native of Los Angeles, is now a resident of Fort Lee New Jersey. Knighthood in the order was conferred on him by Prince Robert Bassaraba von Brancovan, Grand Chancellor of the Knights of Malta (America), assisted by Dr. George Ritchie Englert, Chief of Protocol.

It has been 65 years since the first American was honored with Knighthood in the Sovereign Military and Hospitaler Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, briefly known as the Knights of Malta. The honor is bestowed upon individuals whose dedication to international, national, state or community needs reflects a universal understanding of man's responsibility to man.

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