



**Keefe, Tammis, 1913-1960.**

**Wilmington, Delaware : silk screen map on linen handkerchief  
circa 1944-1960**

**Abstract:** American textile artist Tammis (Margaret Thomas) Keefe (1913-1960) designed this vintage fabric handkerchief depicting a map of Wilmington, Delaware, which was silk-screened by J. H. Kimball, Inc., New York.

## Descriptive Summary

**Identification:** GRA 098, Item 0002  
**Creator:** Keefe, Tammis, 1913-1960.  
**Title:** Wilmington, Delaware : silk screen map on linen handkerchief  
**Inclusive Dates:** circa 1944-1960  
**Extent:** 1 item  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

## Administrative Information

**Citation:** GRA 098, Item 0002, Tammis Keefe, Wilmington, Delaware : silk screen map on linen handkerchief, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

**Shelving Summary:** Shelved in SPEC GRA 098 mapcase

**Location:** Special Collections, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: <http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/>

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**Processing:** Processed and encoded by Anita Wellner, February 2014.

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## Biographical Note

American textile artist Tammis (Margaret Thomas) Keefe (1913-1960), was best known for her handkerchiefs, linen kitchen towels, and scarves, which featured bright colors and playful designs.

Keefe also created designs for other home textiles, clothing, dishware, greeting cards, and product packaging.

Tammis Keefe originally studied mathematics at Los Angeles Community College, but following a visit to the Art Institute of Chicago during a trip to the 1933-1934 World's Fair, she changed to a career in art. Keefe studied at the Chouinard Art School in Los Angeles (today the California Institute of the Arts). During World War II, Keefe was Art Director of *Arts and Architecture* magazine, but also worked in advertising design and packaging.

By 1948, Keefe was working in New York City; through her contact with American weaver and designer Dorothy Wright Liebes, Keefe began to supply printed textile designs to the furnishings firm, Goodall Industries. Eventually she designed home decorative lines and wallpaper for various firms. Her design, "Lemons," created for Golding Decorative Fabrics, was shown at the Museum of Modern Art *Good Design Exhibition of 1950*.

In the 1940s Keefe began to design handkerchiefs; the first six designs were commissioned by J. H. Kimball and promoted through Lord & Taylor. J. H. Kimball produced silk-screened handkerchiefs which printed the designer's signature in the corner. Between 1940 and 1960, Tammis Keefe created hundreds of the handkerchief designs, all of which featured her trademark whimsical humor and bright colors.

### Sources:

"A Tribute to Tammis Keefe," Making It Fun (blog).

<http://makingitfun.blogspot.com/2010/11/tribute-to-tammis-keefe.html> (accessed February 19, 2014).

Tammis Keefe Home Page. <http://www.tammiskeefe.com/> (accessed February 19, 2014).

"Tammis Keefe." <http://www.nsfestival.com/tammis> (accessed February 19, 2014).

## Scope and Content Note

American textile artist Tammis (Margaret Thomas) Keefe designed this vintage fabric handkerchief depicting a map of Wilmington, Delaware, which was silk-screened by J. H. Kimball, Inc., New York.

Tammis Keefe's design is silk-screened on linen with her signature printed in the lower right corner and an embossed paper sticker for J. H. Kimball adhered in the lower left corner. This handkerchief, colored in blues and tans, with black writing, depicts a map of Wilmington, Delaware, with noted landmarks and dates. The landmarks and the dates they were established are the John Wanamaker [building] (1950), Old Town Hall (1798), The Rocks (1638), Old Swedes Church (1698).

The handkerchief is framed using archival quality materials, including glass treated to provide protection from ultraviolet light.

## **Selected Search Terms**

### **Personal Names**

Keefe, Tammi, 1913-1960.

### **Corporate Names**

J. H. Kimball, Inc.

### **Topical Terms**

Handkerchiefs--United States--History--20th century.

Screen process printing--United States--History--20th century.

Textile crafts--United States--History--20th century.

### **Geographic Names**

Wilmington (Del.)--History--20th century.

### **Form/Genre Terms**

Handkerchiefs.

## Detailed Description of the Collection

Wilmington, Delaware : silk screen map on linen handkerchief, circa 1944-1960 [Item 002]

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