

Finding aid for the Calvin College Great Migration oral histories Collection 415

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
December 2014
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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Title	Calvin College Great Migration oral histories
Date	2002
Extent	0.3 Linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>This collection includes oral histories of Black men and women from Grand Rapids, Michigan who were part of the Great Migration. The interviews were conducted as part of an interim course at Calvin College in January 2002, taught by Dr. Randal Jelks. Students interviewed 15 individuals and wrote papers summarizing the interviews and reflecting on their experience. The interviews focus on childhood memories, family, education, work, faith, differences between the north and south and experiences as Black men or women. The recorded interviews are available for 7 of the 15 individuals.</p>

Biographical/Historical note

These oral histories were collected as part of an interim course at Calvin College. The course was taught by Dr. Randal Jelks in January 2002, and focused on the Great Migration. Students conducted an oral history interview with Black women and men who were part of the migration. The interviews were generally conducted by groups of 2-3 students. Each student then wrote a paper summarizing the interview and what they learned from the process.

The people interviewed were mostly born in the 1910s to 1930s and were born in or lived in southern states such as Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana and Missouri. A few were also from Connecticut or Indiana. They moved north for various reasons and at different times. Some of them came straight to Grand Rapids, while others initially moved to other cities like Chicago or Detroit. The interviews focus on childhood memories, family, education, work and faith. The students asked questions about differences between living in the north and south, particularly pertaining to race relations. They also asked about the individual's experiences as Black men or women.

Scope and Contents note

A total of 15 individuals were interviewed. The collection includes one to three student papers on each individual. The papers summarize the interviews, place each interview in the context of the Great Migration and discuss what the students learned from the interview experience.

Also included are recorded interviews for 7 of the individuals. The interviews were recorded on cassette tapes or microcassette tapes. Recorded interviews are not available for Martha Dean, Bernyce/Bernice Jones, Fannie Mae Jones, Lee Ella Merrit, Amma Mae Polly, Luecile Gosa Posey and Mae Turner.

The collection also includes several brief papers written for other class assignments. These are included with the student's interview paper.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department December 2014

Restrictions

An oral history release form is included only for Gloria McIntosh. Due to the lack of release forms, the remainder of this collection is restricted until 2020.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Randal Maurice Jelks, 2002.097

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- oral histories

Personal Name(s)

- Jelks, Randal Maurice

Subject(s)

- African Americans -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- African Americans -- Migrations -- History -- 20th century

Collection Inventory

Oral histories		
Dollie Allen		
	Box	Folder
Dollie Allen / Ellen Winohradsky January 2002	1	1
Dolly Allen / Jennifer Kett January 2002	1	2
Dollie Allen / Stephanie Artz January 2002	1	3
Recorded interview January 2002	2	1
Peggy Lawrence Burns		
	Box	Folder
Peggy Lawrence Burns / Jim Thrower January 2002	1	4
Peggy Lawrence Burns / Emily Smith January 2002	1	5
Recorded interview January 2002	2	2
Martha Dean		

Alma Lilibbett Dolly

	Box	Folder
Martha Dean / Davis Watson January 2002	1	6
Alma Lilibbett Dolly		
	Box	Folder
Alma Lilibbett Dolly / Ryan Chesney January 2002	1	7
Recorded interview January 2002	2	3
Rachel Amanda Gooch		
	Box	Folder
Rachel Amanda Gooch / Annette Homan January 2002	1	8
Recorded interview January 2002	2	4
Virginia Holmes		
	Box	Folder
Virginia Holmes / Mike Dallas January 2002	1	9
Virginia Holmes / John Barkel January 2002	1	10
Recorded interview January 2002	2	5

Bernyce Jones

Bernyce Jones		
	Box	Folder
Bernice Jones / Daniel Chandler January 2002	1	11

Bernyce Jones / Matt Van Dyken January 2002	1	12
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Fannie Mae Jones		
	Box	Folder
Fannie Mae Jones / T.D. Van Goor January 2002	1	13

Fannie Mae Jones / Katie Walter January 2002	1	14
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Charlene Malone		
	Box	Folder
Charlene Malone / Mariano Avila January 2002	1	15

Recorded interview January 2002	2	6
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Gloria McIntosh		
	Box	Folder
Gloria McIntosh / George Groh January 2002	1	16

Lee Ella Merrit

Gloria McIntosh / Eric Krauss January 2002	1	17
Recorded interview January 2002	2	8, 9
Lee Ella Merrit		
	Box	Folder
Lee Ella Merrit / Jane Visser January 2002	1	18
Lee Ella Merrit / Andrea Schutter January 2002	1	19
Amma Mae Polly		
	Box	Folder
Amma Mae Polly / John Schoon January 2002	1	20
Lucile Gosa Posey		
	Box	Folder
Lucile Gosa Posey / Nathan Brewster; Kelly O'Roark January 2002	1	21
E.J. Spearman		
	Box	Folder
E.J. Spearman / Ben Anderson January 2002	1	22

Mae Turner

E.J. Spearman / Derek DeWeerd January 2002	1	23
Recorded interview January 2002	2	7
Mae Turner		
	Box	Folder
Mae Turner / Nelly Doelman January 2002	1	24
Mae Turner / Kim Koeman January 2002	1	25
Miscellaneous		
	Box	Folder
Cultural Summary / Dave Dannenberg January 2002	1	26