

# BIRDIE L. WHITESIDE COLLECTION, 1944-1986

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Collection #:  
M 658

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## Table of Contents

[User Information](#)  
[Historical Sketch](#)  
[Scope and Content Note](#)  
[Box and Folder Listing](#)  
[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by:  
Wilma L. Gibbs  
5 July 1995

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## USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 4 manuscript boxes

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1944-1986; Bulk 1980-1986

PROVENANCE: Birdie L. Whiteside, Indianapolis, Indiana, 29 July 1986

RESTRICTIONS: None

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the Indiana Historical Society.

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 86.0524

NOTES: The Birdie L. Whiteside Collection was donated during the Black Women in the Middle West Project. The Black Women in the Middle West Project was a collecting effort to gather the primary source materials of African American women in Illinois and Indiana. The project, spearheaded by Darlene Clark Hine and Patrick Bidelman at Purdue University, was conducted in three phases from 1977-1985. Project records are located at five repositories within the two states including the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) [also houses the project's administrative records], Calumet Regional Archives, and the Northern Indiana Historical Society in Indiana and the Chicago Historical Society and the Illinois State Historical Society in Illinois. (Although the implementation phase of the project was from 1984-1985, several of the collections were donated to IHS in 1986.)

Additional information about the project is contained in *The Black Women in the Middle West Project: A Comprehensive Resource Guide, Illinois and Indiana* (E185.6 .B53 1986), edited by Hine and Bidelman, et. al. and Wilma L. Gibbs's article, "In Retrospect: The Black Women in the Middle West Project at the Indiana Historical Society," in *Indiana's African-American Heritage: Essays from Black History News & Notes* (E185.93 .I4 B52 1993).

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## HISTORICAL SKETCH

Birdie Mary Lee Whiteside (1911- ) was born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. After receiving a Bachelor of Missions degree from Simmons University in Louisville in 1949, she returned to Indianapolis, having lived in the city prior to going to the university.

In 1953, Whiteside founded the Guiding Light Christian Service, a tape ministry designed to take recorded religious sermons to the sick and shut-in. The organization was incorporated in Indianapolis in 1958. During the 1950s, Whiteside began preparing and delivering Easter baskets and Christmas socks/stockings to shut-ins, as part of the organization's service. The volunteer organization grew to also include institutions and shut-ins in counties adjacent to Marion County. As a result of the organization's work, it along with Whiteside, has received numerous commendations and awards.

A longtime member of 25th Street Baptist Church, Birdie L. Whiteside joined Messiah Baptist Church in 1970. Her church activities have included choir, missionary societies, the Baptist Training Union, and Sunday School. Whiteside has been affiliated with several organizations including Church Women United, Council of Women, Three Sisters Nursing Home, and the Juvenile Center Auxiliary.

Sources: Materials in the collection.

Darlene Clark Hine, et. al. *The Black Women in the Middle West Project: A Comprehensive Resource Guide Illinois and Indiana*.

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## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection consists of four manuscript boxes and spans the years 1944 to 1986. There are nine scrapbooks and 16 folders that contain correspondence, photographs, program booklets, certificates of appreciation, and newsclippings, mostly pertaining to Birdie L. Whiteside and her work with the Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. (GLCS). The organization, founded by Whiteside to take tape recorded religious programs to the sick and shut-in, was incorporated in 1958. Original incorporation papers are in scrapbook #8 (box 4, folder 2); a photostat copy is in box 1, folder 5.

Whiteside has received many honors for her work with the Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. A 1984 proclamation from Indianapolis Mayor William Hudnut III and certificates of appreciation are in box 1, folders 1, 2, and 8. There are also certificates honoring Whiteside and/or the organization throughout the nine scrapbooks in boxes 2-4. Program booklets are in box 1, folder 9 and newsclippings about the work of Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. are in box 1, folder 10. (Additional program booklets and newsclippings are located in the collection's scrapbooks.)

Birdie Whiteside's interest in parliamentary procedures can be deduced from her association with the Hoosier Roundtable Unit of the National Association of Parliamentarians and the Parliamentary Practice Club of Indianapolis. Collection materials related to these organizations are located in box 1, folders 11-16.

A descriptive list of each scrapbook in the collection follows:

Scrapbook #1 (1944-1986) Correspondence, photographs, program booklets, and newsclippings. Photograph of Pastor J. B. Carter (25th Street Baptist Church in Indianapolis) and Birdie L. Whiteside; 25-year service program booklet of

the Guiding Light Christian Service, Incorporated; and 1983 and 1984 Ivy Award Luncheon (sponsored by the Volunteer Action Center of the United Way) program booklets.

Scrapbook #2 (1948-1982) Correspondence, photographs, certificates of appreciation, and newsclippings. Photograph of Birdie L. Whiteside singing at the WIBC Mutual Radio Network; 1948 program booklet from the St. Stephen Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky; and a 1949 Bachelor of Missions degree from Simmons University.

Scrapbook #3 (1955-1973) Correspondence, program booklet, and newsclippings. A preponderance of letters, mostly from the Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. and a five-page history of the organization.

Scrapbook #4 (1957-1980) Correspondence, photographs, receipt, and newsclippings. Several newsclippings about Birdie Lee Whiteside's work with the Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc.; photographs of volunteers making Easter baskets; 1957 thank-you letter to Marcus Stewart, *Indianapolis Recorder* publisher, about an article in his newspaper pertaining to the work of the Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc.

Scrapbook #5 (1959-1983) Correspondence, photographs, program booklet, and newsclippings. Photographs of various GLCS volunteers; obituary programs for missionary Willa Thomas and businessman and GLCS philanthropist Louis C. Buehler; 1969 and 1980 letters from GLCS soliciting community support; and program booklet for 30-year anniversary celebration of GLCS at Jones Tabernacle African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

Scrapbook #6 (1965-1980) Correspondence, photographs, certificates of appreciation, and newsclippings. Recommendation letters for Birdie L. Whiteside to be named the "Woman of the Year" by the *Indianapolis Star* and 1979 program invitation acceptance letter to Whiteside from Beth Bowen, first lady of Indiana.

Scrapbook #7 (1969-1981) Correspondence, photographs, certificates of appreciation, and newsclippings. Newsletter from Three Sisters Nursing Home and certificates of appreciation from Central State Hospital and the Marion County Juvenile Center.

Scrapbook #8 (1969-1986) Correspondence, photographs, certificates of appreciation, and newsclippings. GLCS articles of incorporation; photograph of Birdie L. Whiteside with Indiana Governor Robert Orr, et. al.; and an undated history of the Greenview Manor Nursing Home in Indianapolis.

Scrapbook #9 (n.d.) Photographs. Mostly undated photographs of Easter baskets and GLCS volunteers preparing Easter baskets.

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## BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

### **BOX 1: Certificates; Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc.; Parliamentary organizations FOLDER CONTENTS**

1 "Birdie Whiteside Day" Proclamation, 1984

2 Certificates of Appreciation

3 "Reviving the Old Songs with Stories of Yesteryears," compiled by Birdie Whiteside

4 Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. History

5 Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. Incorporation papers (photostat copy)

6 Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. Correspondence, 1965-1986, n.d.

7 Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. Nursing home lists

8 Guiding Light Christian Service, Inc. Certificates of appreciation, 1976-1986, n.d.

9 Program booklets

10 Newsclippings

11 Hoosier Roundtable Unit of the National Association of Parliamentarians By-laws

12 Hoosier Roundtable Unit of the National Association of Parliamentarians Minutes, 1982-1983

13 Parliamentary Practice Club of Indianapolis By-laws

14 Parliamentary Practice Club of Indianapolis Minutes, 1983

15 Parliamentary Practice Club of Indianapolis Financial records

16 Newly revised, Roberts Rules of Order

**BOX 2: Scrapbooks, 1944-1984**

**FOLDER CONTENT**

1 Scrapbook #1, 1944-1984

2 Scrapbook #2, 1948-1982

3 Scrapbook #3, 1955-1973

**BOX 3: Scrapbooks, 1957-1983**

**FOLDER CONTENT**

1 Scrapbook #4, 1957-1980

2 Scrapbook #5, 1959-1983

3 Scrapbook #6, 1965-1980

**BOX 4: Scrapbooks, 1969-1986, n.d.**

**FOLDER CONTENT**

1 Scrapbook #7, 1969-1981

2 Scrapbook #8, 1970-1986

3 Scrapbook #9, Photographs (mostly undated)

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**CATALOGUING INFORMATION**

MAIN ENTRY: Whiteside, Birdie L., 1911-

SUBJECT ENTRIES: Whiteside, Birdie L., 1911-

Black Women in the Middle West Project

Guiding Light Christian Service

Afro-American women--Indiana--Indianapolis

Afro-Americans--Indiana--Indianapolis

Afro-Americans--Indiana--Indianapolis--Charities

Sermons

Church charities--Indiana--Indianapolis

Aged--Religious life--Indiana--Indianapolis

Invalids--Religious life--Indiana--Indianapolis

Nursing homes--Indiana--Indianapolis

Parliamentary practice--Indiana--Indianapolis--Societies, etc.

Scrapbooks--Indiana--Indianapolis

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