

Collection #
M 1506

**CHARLES H. "CHUCK" TAYLOR
COLLECTION, CA. 1917-1974**

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 manuscript box, 1 half-sized box of photographs, 1 folder color photographs, 1 envelope acetate negatives
COLLECTION DATES:	ca. 1917-1974
PROVENANCE:	Transfer from Exhibitions Dept.; Abraham Aamidor, 2022
RESTRICTIONS:	None
COPYRIGHT:	
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.
ALTERNATE FORMATS:	
RELATED HOLDINGS:	Todd Gould, <i>Pioneers of the Hardwood: Indiana and the Birth of Professional Basketball</i> , GV885.72.I6 G68 1998
ACCESSION NUMBER:	2022.0088; 2022.0098
NOTES:	Color photographs and negatives are kept in cold storage and require at least four hours to acclimate to room temperature. Patrons are advised to call ahead if they wish to view those items. Also, all negatives in this collection have corresponding prints available in black & white photograph folders.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Known as “Basketball’s Ambassador,” Charles H. “Chuck” Taylor began his career as a semi-professional basketball player in 1919 and as the player-manager for the Converse All-Stars basketball team in the mid-1920s, but he became widely known as a salesman and promoter of Converse All Star basketball shoes.

Taylor was born in Brown County, Indiana in 1901. At Columbus High School, he became captain of the varsity basketball team his sophomore year. The sport was relatively new, and the equipment, court, and rules were still developing. Taylor played his first semi-professional basketball game on 19 March 1919, as a member of the Columbus Commercials. He subsequently played stints with several teams including the Akron (OH) Firestone Non-Skids, and finally, Converse.

Based in Chicago, the Converse Rubber Company had hired Taylor as a traveling salesman to promote its athletic shoes. He traveled the country providing local basketball clinics, making special appearances, and meeting with customers in local sporting goods stores to promote the company's basketball shoes. In the mid-1920s Converse sponsored a basketball team, the All-Stars. Taylor was player-coach during the 1926-27 season. By 1932, Taylor had earned enough celebrity that Converse put his name on their All Star shoe.

During World War II he coached the Wright Field Air-Tecs basketball team during the 1944-45 season and served as a physical fitness instructor for the U.S. military before resuming his career as a traveling salesman for Converse.

In the late 1950s Taylor met Lucy Kimbrell, wife of former basketball coach Eugene Kimbrell. By 1962 Lucy had divorced Kimbrell and married Taylor. The pair bought a house in Port Charlotte, Florida. From there Taylor continued his nomadic salesman lifestyle, conducting clinics and playing golf, often accompanied by Lucy. Taylor finally retired from work in 1968.

The following year, Taylor was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Shortly afterward, he suffered a fatal heart attack. He died on 23 June 1969, one day before his 68th birthday.

Taylor was posthumously inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 1989.

Chuck Taylor All Stars, often referred to simply as “Chucks,” have today become an iconic casual shoe, embraced by subcultures and top-tier celebrities alike. Nike acquired Converse in 2003, and as of 2015, was selling over 270,000 pairs a day.

Sources:

Abe Aamidor, “Who was Chuck Taylor? The Man and the Shoe,” *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History*, Summer 2007

Jeff Sommer, “Converse Treads Carefully in Updating Well-Worn Chuck Taylor Brand,” *New York Times*, 1 August 2015

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This items in this collection were acquired from different sources in support of an Indiana Historical Society exhibit on Chuck Taylor. Most of the items were obtained from Taylor's biographer, Abe Aamidor.

Relatively few of the items in the collection are dated, but the processor has arranged them as closely as possible into chronological order. Essentially, the items in the collection document the last two decades of Chuck's life. The exceptions are a xeroxed copy of a photograph ca. 1926 showing an unknown basketball team with some players identified on verso (Taylor is not among them), several portraits of Taylor, and a ca. 1937 booklet titled "'Chuck' Taylor presents Basketball Buildup."

The collection also includes three travel diaries kept by Lucy Taylor during sales trips with Chuck. Travel diary 1 includes entries up until three days prior to Taylor's death.

A few acetate negatives are included. However, prints from these exist within the black and white photograph folders in the collection.

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CONTENTS

Chuck Taylor with siblings, ca. 1917 [reproduction]

Basketball team photo with identifications, ca. 1926

Chuck Taylor portraits, 1920s-1960s

“Chuck” Taylor presents Basketball Buildup booklet,
ca. 1937

Chuck teaching clinics, 1950s

Chuck portrait in hat, Chuck teaching clinic, 1950s

Uruguay trip, 1957

Clipping from Uruguay newspaper [with translation],
1957

John Wooden headshot with personalized inscription,
ca. 1959 [reproduction]

Furman University tribute flier, 1962

Notes to Lucy, 1963-1965, n.d.

Chuck with Lucy and others, 1960s

Chuck and Lucy at home, ca. 1968

Chuck and Lucy in front of home, Chuck with hotel
sign, 1960s

Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame submission form
and congratulatory notes, 1968-1969

CONTAINER

Photographs,
Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 1

Photographs,
Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 2

Photographs,
Box 1, Folder 3

120
Acetate Negatives:
Envelope 1

Photographs,
Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 3

Photographs,
Box 1, Folder 5

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

Photographs,
Box 1, Folder 6

120
Acetate Negatives:
Envelope 1

Color Photographs:
Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 6

Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame induction ceremony, 1969	Photographs, Box 1, Folder 7
Chuck Taylor last will and testament, 1964; death certificate, 1969	Box 1, Folder 7
Lucy Taylor travel diary 1, 25 Sept. 1963-20 June 1969	Box 1, Folder 8
Lucy Taylor travel diary 2, 1 Jan. 1964-20 Nov. 1965	Box 1, Folder 9
Items removed from Lucy Taylor travel diary 2, 1966-1974	Box 1, Folder 10
Lucy Taylor travel diary 3, 24 Sept. 1967-5 Nov. 1967	Box 1, Folder 11
Lucy (Prater) Taylor, ca. 1929-ca. 1960	Photographs, Box 1, Folder 8