

Collection #
SC 2992
CT 2189–2195
DVD 2145-2150

HAMPTON SISTERS ORAL HISTORY, 1992

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: Seven folders, six cassette tapes, six audio DVDS

COLLECTION DATES: 1992

PROVENANCE: Clio Grant, Indiana Historical Society, 1992

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2006.0496

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

From the late 1920s or early 1930s, Clarke “Deacon” Hampton formed a family band that included his children. The twelve children learned from an early age to play various musical instruments. By 1938, the Ohio-based family that had traveled throughout the Midwest performing at fairs, tent shows and other venues had relocated to Indiana—first to Shelbyville, then to Indianapolis. They experienced various degrees of success as individual acts or with an assortment of ensemble configurations. By the 1940s, the Deacon Hampton Family Band had transitioned to the Duke Hampton Band and the Hampton Family Orchestra. Many of the family members played a variety of instruments in the band. The group recorded on the Aladdin and King labels, and had engagements at Carnegie Hall, Savoy Ballroom, and the Apollo Theatre. Trombonist Locksley “Slide” Hampton is probably the best known individual musician of the family.

The Hampton sisters (Aletra, Carmilita, Dawn, and Virtue) were once known as the Hamptonians, but by the late 1960s they had become the Hampton Sister Group. They became a trio and then a duo with sisters Aletra and Virtue performing at Indianapolis events well into their 80s.

Sources:

Materials in the collection

Bodenhamer, David J. and Barrows, Robert G. *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994

“RetroIndy: The Hampton Sisters,” Indystar.com, January 9, 2013.
<http://www.indystar.com/article/99999999/NEWS06/80817020/>

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

In 1992, as part of a Clio grant provided by the Indiana Historical Society, Aletra Hampton and Virtue Hampton Whitted, known professionally as the Hampton Sisters were recorded on cassette tape. The oral history interviews were conducted by Gwen Crenshaw. Glenn S. White served as the project director and William Nelson was the technician. The Madame Walker Urban Life Center was the fiscal agent for the project, “The Hamptons: A Family Rooted in Jazz.” The six oral history interviews were taped in January/February 1992. The interviews included the sisters’ recollections about their family history, musical pursuits in Indianapolis and other places, jazz along Indiana Avenue, and the development of a female-led jazz group. The collection also includes a transcription of the tapes.

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