

Collection #
M0635

INDIANAPOLIS MUSIC PROMOTERS COLLECTION, 1903–1977

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19 March 2010

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION:

Manuscript Materials: 1 document case
Visual Materials: 2 panoramic photographs

COLLECTION
DATES:

Inclusive 1903–1977; Bulk 1945–1977

PROVENANCE: Ethel K. Bannister, Indianapolis, Indiana, 4 August 1982

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1982.0817

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Indianapolis Music Promoters (IMP) was founded in 1919, as a branch of the National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM). Adelaide Thornton Riley and Ellen Thomas Meriwether, who served as first president of the IMP, established the branch after attending an organizational meeting of the national association in Washington, D. C. The purpose of the club was to encourage the members to pursue musical study and to foster musical talents among youth. Many of the club members directed musical groups at local churches, schools, and businesses. Programs were performed regularly at Caleb Mills Hall, Phyllis Wheatley Young Women's Christian Association, Indiana War Memorial, Clowes Memorial Hall, and the Christian Theological Seminary.

In more recent times, the organization's members (most of who are retired from their professions) work to attract the involvement of young people. Since 1979, the Indianapolis Music Promoters, in conjunction with The Children's Museum, has sponsored, annually, the Music Stars of Tomorrow program. Open to advanced junior and senior high school music students, the program promotes individual accomplishments and exposure to various cultures. Other activities of the organization include conducting workshops and clinics, and the identification and development of musical talent.

The Indianapolis Music Promoters meet monthly September – June, every fourth Sunday. They have met at St. Peter Claver, All Saints Episcopal and Saint Phillips Episcopal churches and in the homes of members. Current officers include Laverne E. Newsome, president; Mildred Watson, corresponding secretary; Maenell H. Newsome, recording and financial secretary; Clifford Henderson, treasurer; and R. H. Holloway, chaplain.

The Indianapolis Music Promoters 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 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) [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*, 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*

Sources:

Materials in the collection.

Information about the organization's more recent activities came from a brief interview with Laverne E. Newsome, president. Interviewed by I.H.S. staff member, Wilma L. Gibbs.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Indianapolis Music Promoters collection is comprised of one document case and two panoramic photographs. The collection was donated during the Black Women in the Middle West Project. Most of the material in the collection pertains to the National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM) or its local affiliate, the Indianapolis Music Promoters (IMP). The IMP records (folders 1–5) include correspondence, yearbooks, programs, and other materials that identify Ellen Thomas Meriwether and Adelaide Thornton Riley as founders of the organization. The IMP celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with the publication of *Looking Back with the Indianapolis Music Promoters, 1919–1969* (folder 5). A tribute to Lillian Morris Le Mon, pianist, founder of the Cosmopolitan Music School in Indianapolis, and a charter member and early president of the Indianapolis Music Promoters is located in folder 18. A scrapbook compiled by Clara Kirk Hill, pianist and also past president of IMP is contained in folder 19. The records related to the National Association of Negro Musicians (folders 8–14) include correspondence, addresses, programs, and the organization's plans for the 1976 United States bicentennial celebration. There are also references to NANM's plans for the 1939 World's Fair in New York City, and Marian Anderson being honored as the organization's first scholarship recipient.

Also included in the collection are a 1942 annual report, annual convention program booklets, and programs pertaining to the Indiana State Association of Negro Musicians (folders 6 and 7). Several Indianapolis Music Promoters members including Charles Amos, Clara Hill, Lillian Le Mon, Ellen Meriwether, and Roscoe Polin were also active in the state (ISANM) and national (NANM) organizations.

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Indianapolis Music Promoters: Correspondence, 1926–1972	Box 1, Folder 1
Indianapolis Music Promoters: Yearbooks, 1961– 1973	Box 1, Folder 2
Indianapolis Music Promoters: Musical Programs, 1944–1976	Box 1, Folder 3
Indianapolis Music Promoters: Tickets, Invitations, and miscellaneous, 1948–1973	Box 1, Folder 4
<i>Looking Back with the Indianapolis Music Promoters, 1919–1969</i>	Box 1, Folder 5
Indiana State Association of Negro Musicians: Music Programs, 1930–1950	Box 1, Folder 6
Indiana State Association of Negro Musicians Report, 1942 and Convention Program, 1947	Box 1, Folder 7

National Association of Negro Musicians: Correspondence, 1937–1976	Box 1, Folder 8
National Association of Negro Musicians: Annual Addresses, 1969–1972	Box 1, Folder 9
National Association of Negro Musicians: Programs, 1939–1952	Box 1, Folder 10
National Association of Negro Musicians: Programs, 1953–1977	Box 1, Folder 11
National Association of Negro Musicians: Musical Programs, 1941–1970	Box 1, Folder 12
National Association of Negro Musicians and the USA Bicentennial Celebration	Box 1, Folder 13
National Association of Negro Musicians: Invitations and Announcements, 1949–1973; NANM Stationery	Box 1, Folder 14
Other Musical Programs, 1903–1974	Box 1, Folder 15
Publications, 1947–1949	Box 1, Folder 16
Clippings	Box 1, Folder 17
Lillian Le Mon Tribute	Box 1, Folder 18
Clara Kirk Hill's Scrapbook	Box 1, Folder 19
Caption: “The National Association of Negro Musicians, Seventh Annual Session, July, 26–31, 1925 at Indianapolis, Ind. R. Nathaniel Dett, President.” Photographer: “Photo by Patton Studio”	Panoramic Photographs: Folder 1
Size: 8 x 30 ½ inches Description: group in front of Simpson M.E. Church]	
Caption: “25 th Annual Convention, National Association of Negro Musicians Inc. Aug. 22–28, [1943] Columbus, Ohio” Photographer: American Photograph Co. Size: 10 ½ x 20 inches Description: group in front of Shiloh Baptist Church	Panoramic Photographs: Folder 1

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M0635).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.