

Collection #
M 1089
OM 0545

**PRISCILLA DEAN LEWIS
COLLECTION, 1923-2006**

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May 2014

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: Manuscript Materials: 4 manuscript boxes; 2 OM folder
Visual Materials: 1 half-size box photographs; 1 folder OVA photographs; 1 folder graphics
Artifacts: 2 artifacts

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1923-2006; Bulk 1923-1983

PROVENANCE: Angela Edwards and Elizabeth Krajeck, 11 August 2011

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Madam C. J. Walker Papers, 1910-1980 (M 0399; OMB 0022; BV 2667-2678)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2011.0166

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Priscilla Dean Lewis, nee Oates (1906-2001) was born in Dardenella, Arkansas. She moved to Kansas City, Missouri to work as a maid and child care provider for the Carl Brand family, but left the family in 1928 when she was unable to stay at their home every night. She was married twice in her life, first to Chester Arthur Lewis on 22 January 1931 and later to (Dr.) James D. Ramsey, a pastor, in 1973.

She entered the Walker College of Beauty Culture in Kansas City and advanced quickly through the company, eventually serving as interim principal. After additional training at the A.B. Moler School in Chicago, she moved to Indianapolis and served as principal of the Madam Walker national headquarters in 1935.

She earned her B.A. degree from the New Jersey City Academy. She was also a graduate of the Emporia State Teachers College, and she studied at Butler University School of Religion, Indiana University, Columbia University, and the Wilfred Academy in New York.

She served in leadership roles in the Indianapolis chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She was first appointed a member of the executive committee in December 1942, when the organization underwent revitalization. She went on to serve as vice president and president in the late 1930s and early 1940s. She was especially instrumental in the organization's Indianapolis Youth Council.

In the 1960s Lewis founded and directed the Fashionette Beauty and Barber School in Indianapolis. In 1961, she became the first woman to be appointed to the Fall Creek Parkway YMCA board of directors and was the first woman to head the branch's financial campaign in 1962. She was a member of the Mt. Paran Baptist Church in Indianapolis, where she taught Sunday School and served as president of the church's Business and Professional Women's Council. She also served as secretary of the Women's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention of America, Indiana Hair Designers Institute, and secretary-treasurer of the Indiana Barber School. She was the first woman of color to head the World Day of Prayer committee of the Indiana Council of the United Council of Church Women. In the 1970s, she worked for the Indianapolis chapter of the Laborers' International Union of North America.

She was a member of the Alpha Home Board for 24 years and volunteered with the Eastside Christian Center, Alpha Chi Pi Omega Sorority, Human Relations Council, and Order of the Eastern Star.

Sources:

Materials in collection.

Bundles, A'Lelia. *Madam Walker Theatre Center: An Indianapolis Treasure*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2013. 72.

"Mrs. Lewis First to Head YWCA Drive." *The Afro-American*. 3 March 1962: p. 11.
<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=UBnQDr5gPskC&dat=19620303&printsec=frontpage&hl=en> accessed 5-20-2014.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The materials in this collection deal with several organizations that Priscilla Dean Lewis was involved with during her lifetime. The collection is divided into nine series' that focus on Priscilla Dean Lewis, the organizations she worked with, and Jack Hartigan, who collected these materials. The series' are arranged in roughly chronological order of her work with each organization. The bulk of the collection centers on her work from the 1930s to 1970s. The more recent materials from 2006 are related to Jack Hartigan.

Series 1 contains personal materials related to Priscilla Dean Lewis, including her Indiana driver's license, beauty culturist license, NAACP membership card, personal correspondence, certificates, drawings, and photographs. There are some personal artifacts of jewelry and accessories. There is a recommendation letter from the Carl Brand family, whom she worked for as a maid and child care provider, and correspondence to Mrs. Carl A. Brand are included as well. There are materials regarding her finances, including her savings book, checks, money orders, bills, and receipts. Receipts are arranged by company. Invitations and business cards she received, news clippings about her, and hand-written notes she took are also included.

Series 2 contains materials related to Priscilla Dean Lewis's work with the Madam C. J. Walker Company from 1923 to 1945. It includes the company's correspondence, invitations, programs, posters, and photographs. There are several small pamphlets and booklets published by the Madam Walker Company and other publications that feature Madam Walker products as well. There is a tin of Madam C. J. Walker's Wonderful Temple Salve, Glossine and Pressing Oil, and a pressing comb—signature products manufactured by the Madam Walker Company. A scrapbook made by Priscilla Dean Lewis featuring various Madam Walker products and classroom tips and tricks is also included.

Series 3 contains materials related to Priscilla Dean Lewis's work with the Indianapolis chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1940 to 1969. It includes correspondence, press releases, announcements, speeches, publications, and news clippings regarding NAACP activities.

Series 4 contains materials related to the Fashionette Beauty and Barber School, founded by Priscilla Dean Lewis in the 1960s. It includes correspondence, licensing information, and teaching materials like examinations, photographs of hair styles, rules and regulations, employment, teacher's manuals, and a list of instructor responsibilities. There are napkins produced by the school embossed with its name, and there are materials related to other beauty supply companies, schools, and clinics. Publications, invoices, receipts, and notes related to the Fashionette Beauty and Barber school are also included.

Series 5 contains materials related to Priscilla Dean Lewis's work with the YMCA in Indianapolis from 1958 to 1970. The bulk of the series focuses on the members, committees, programming, and activities of the Fall Creek Parkway branch, but materials related to the Central, Eastside, Flat Rock River Camp, Intercollegiate, Jordan, Krannert, and Southside Branches are also included.

Series 6 contains materials related to Priscilla Dean Lewis's involvement with the National Baptist Convention and Sunday School from 1952 to 1993. Materials regarding her work with the Women's Auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention are also included. There are several publications and program books published by the Convention. Information regarding the National Baptist Sunday School and annual conventions are also included. There are also some certificates awarded to Priscilla Dean Lewis.

Series 7 contains materials related to Priscilla Dean Lewis's involvement with Mt. Paran Baptist Church from 1934 to 1982 and the religious materials she used for teaching Sunday School there. It includes materials regarding her role in the church's Business and Professional Women's Council. There are pamphlets and photographs regarding church service and materials regarding announcements, record cards, and weekly offerings. There are newsletters published by the church, the *Mt. Paran Reporter* and the *Mt. Paran Sunday School Crusader*. The religious teaching materials include pictures, pict-o-graphs, drawings, textbooks, and certificates.

Series 8 contains materials related to several activities and organizations Priscilla Dean Lewis was involved with between 1934 and 1973.

Series 9 contains materials related to Jack Hartigan, who collected these materials on Priscilla Dean Lewis. It includes a brief statement about his life and interest in Priscilla and biographical information on her. There are some photographs from his personal collection and pamphlets and mailers from an exhibition held after his death in 2006. These materials are separate from the rest of the collection.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Personal Materials

CONTENTS

Personal Correspondence, 1953-1970

Portraits of Priscilla Dean Lewis, n.d.

Licenses and Membership Cards, 1926-1941

Certificate of Recognition, 1972

Recommendation Letter [Brand Family], 1928

Brand Family Correspondence, 1928

Drawing and Tracing of a Bird, n.d.

Gatherings with Priscilla Dean Lewis, 1946, n.d.

Beauticians Banquet, 1942, n.d.

Unidentified Children, 1947-1964, n.d.

Unidentified Men. n.d.

Invitations, 1969

Business Cards. n.d.

Checks and Money Orders, 1953-1968

Indianapolis Morris Plan Savings Passbook, 1959-1965

Receipts, 1940-1942

Receipt Book: Peninsular Fire Insurance Company, 1972

Bills: Blue Ribbon Ice Cream, 1951

CONTAINER

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Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

Upright Graphics:
Folder 1

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 2

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 3

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 4

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 5

Box 1 , Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Box 1, Folder 8

Box 1, Folder 9

Box 1, Folder 10

Box 1, Folder 11

Box 1, Folder 12

Bills: Ernst Johnson Coal Company, 1971	Box 1, Folder 13
Bills: H.P. Wasson and Company, 1971-1972	Box 1, Folder 14
Bills: Indiana Fur Company, 1957	Box 1, Folder 15
Bills: J.C. Penney Company, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 16
Bills: Kansas City Power and Light Company. n.d.	Box 1, Folder 17
Bills: Kentucky Central Life Insurance Company. n.d.	Box 1, Folder 18
Bills: L.S. Ayres & Company, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 19
Bills: Medical Bills, 1971	Box 1, Folder 20
Bills: Metropolitan Oil Company, 1971	Box 1, Folder 21
Bills: Midwest Bank Card, 1969-1970	Box 1, Folder 22
Bills: The Singer Company, 1971-1972	Box 1, Folder 23
Bills: Troy Oil Company, 1971	Box 1, Folder 24
Bills: WM H. Block Company, 1970, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 25
Bills: W.T. Grant Company, 1965	Box 1, Folder 26
Clippings, 1961-1973, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 27
Notes, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 28

Series 2: Madam Walker Materials

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Invitation to Grand Opening, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 31
Madam Walker Classroom, 1939	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 6
Voting Coupon, 1923	Box 1, Folder 32
Program for Convention, 1941	Box 1, Folder 33

Madam Walker "Look Your Best To Succeed" Poster, n.d.	OM 0545, Folder 1
Publications Featuring Madam Walker Co., 1962	Box 1, Folder 34
Madam Walker Co. Publications, 1928, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 35
Madam C. J. Walker Yearbook, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 36
Madam C. J. Walker Annual, 1942-1945	Box 1, Folder 37
Scrapbook, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 38
Artifact: Madam C. J. Walker's Shoppe-Size Glossine and Pressing Oil Tin Cap, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 39
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Series 3: NAACP Materials

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Correspondence, 1945	Box 2, Folder 4
Correspondence, 1946-1955	Box 2, Folder 5
Life Membership Club, 1969	Box 2, Folder 6
Press Release, 1945	Box 2, Folder 7
Announcements, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 8
Speeches, 1945	Box 2, Folder 9
NAACP Publications, 1944	Box 2, Folder 10
A Guide to the Microfilm Edition of Black Studies Research Sources: Papers of the NAACP [Part 25 & 26], 2000	Box 2, Folder 11
Clippings, 1947-1962, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 12

Series 4: Fashionette Beauty and Barber School Materials

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License Applications, 1961	Box 2, Folder 14
Interior of Fashionette Hair Styling Salon, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 7
Hair Styles, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 8
Rules and Regulations, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 15
Examinations, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 16
Instructor Responsibilities, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 17
Employment Outlook for Beauty Operators, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 18
Cosmetology Teacher's Manual Order Form, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 19
Publications Featuring Fashionette Beauty School, 1963	Box 2, Folder 20
Business Cards, Personalized Fashionette Napkins, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 21
Beauty Schools and Clinics, 1961, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 22
Beauty Supply Companies, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 23
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Series 5: YMCA Materials

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Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 9
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Meeting Agendas, 1961-1970	Box 3, Folder 4
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<i>YMCA Bulletin</i> , 1968	Box 3, Folder 7
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Women's Auxiliary Plan of Work, 1973	Box 3, Folder 15
Mailing List, n.d.	Box 3, Folder 16
Publications: <i>Primary Quarterly</i> , 1952-1956	Box 3, Folder 17
Publications: <i>Baptist Training Union Adult Quarterly</i> , 1969-1970	Box 3, Folder 18
Publications: <i>Adult Bible Quarterly</i> , 1970	Box 3, Folder 19
Publications: <i>Beginners Quarterly</i> , 1971-1972	Box 3, Folder 20
Publications: <i>The Children's Hour</i> , 1969	Box 3, Folder 21
Publications: <i>Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Guide and Program Book</i> , 1949-1970	Box 3, Folder 22
Publications: <i>Guide for Starlight Bands</i> , 1941-1972	Box 3, Folder 23
Publications: <i>Guide for Shepherd Boys' League and Girls Auxiliary</i> , 1972	Box 3, Folder 24
<i>National Baptist Sunday School</i> , 1939-1956, n.d.	Box 3, Folder 25
<i>Official Program Book of the National Baptist Sunday Church School and Baptist Training Union Congress</i> , 1993	Box 3, Folder 26
Priscilla Dean Lewis Advanced Christian Workers Diploma, 1957	OM 0545, Folder 1
Priscilla Dean Lewis Certificates of Religious Education, 1955	OM 0545, Folder 1
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Announcements, 1969, n.d.

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Priscilla Dean Lewis Member Record Card, n.d.

Box 4, Folder 3

Weekly Offerings, 1969

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Mt. Paran Business and Professional Women's
Council, 1965-1969, n.d.

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Business Women's Council, n.d.

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Business Women's Council, n.d.

OVA Photographs:
Folder 1

Publications: *Mt. Paran Reporter*, 1963-1973

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Publications: *Mt. Paran Sunday School Crusader*,
1957

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The Manual of Visual Teaching For The Flannelboard,
1956

Box 4, Folder 8

The Ten Commandments Table-Top Pict-O-Graph,
1954

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Jesus Teaches Us Pict-O-Graph Lessons, 1980-1982

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Artifact: 2011.0166

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OM 0545, Folder 2

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Alpha Chi Pi Omega Sorority and Fraternity, 1959-1963, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 16
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Greater Bethel AME Church, 1939	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 13
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Indianapolis Community Fund, 1945	Box 4, Folder 23
Indianapolis Council of Social Agencies, 1945	Box 4, Folder 24
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Jacobs Bros. Funeral Home Musician, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 14
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Mayor John J. Barton Victory Dinner, 1967	Box 4, Folder 29
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National Beauty Congress of the National Beauty Culturists' League, 1947	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 17
Phillips Temple [Graduation with Rev. Calhoun], 1945	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 18
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Priscilla Dean Lewis Biography, 2006	Box 4, Folder 36
"The Last Stand" Exhibition Pamphlet and Mailer, 2006	Box 4, Folder 37
Photographs from Hartigan Collection, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 20

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, M 1089).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.