

Collection #
M 1089
OM 0545

PRISCILLA DEAN LEWIS COLLECTION, 1923-2006

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Series Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

Zulaiha Razak
May 2014

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

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: 11 artifacts

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

PROVENANCE: Angela Edwards and Elizabeth Krajeck, 11 August 2011

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: 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.

Perfume Locket in Case, n.d.

"SCC" Sash, n.d.

Head Wrap, n.d.

Scarf, n.d.

Iodex C. Methyl Salicylate Tin, 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.

CONTAINER

Box 1 , Folder 1

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 1

Artifact: 2011.0166

Artifact: 2011.0166

Artifact: 2011.0166

Artifact: 2011.0166

Artifact: 2011.0166

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

Checks and Money Orders, 1953-1968	Box 1, Folder 8
Indianapolis Morris Plan Savings Passbook, 1959-1965	Box 1, Folder 9
Receipts, 1940-1942	Box 1, Folder 10
Receipt Book: Peninsular Fire Insurance Company, 1972	Box 1, Folder 11
Bills: Blue Ribbon Ice Cream, 1951	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

CONTENTS

Correspondence, 1940-1945

Indiana Income Tax Forms, 1943

Invitation to Grand Opening, n.d.

Madam Walker Classroom, 1939

Voting Coupon, 1923

Program for Convention, 1941

Madam Walker "Look Your Best To Succeed" Poster,
n.d.

Publications Featuring Madam Walker Co., 1962

Madam Walker Co. Publications, 1928, n.d.

Madam C. J. Walker Yearbook, n.d.

Madam C. J. Walker Annual, 1942-1945

Madam C. J. Walker's Pressing Comb, n.d.

Madam C. J. Walker's Wonderful Temple Salve Tin,
n.d.

Madam C. J. Walker's Shoppe-Size Glossine and
Pressing Oil Tin Cap, n.d.

Scrapbook, n.d.

CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 29

Box 1, Folder 30

Box 1, Folder 31

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 32

Box 1, Folder 33

OM 0545, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 34

Box 1, Folder 35

Box 1, Folder 36

Box 1, Folder 37

Artifact: 2011.0166

Artifact: 2011.0166

Artifact: 2011.0166

Box 1, Folder 38

Series 3: NAACP Materials

CONTENTS

Correspondence, 1940-1942

Correspondence, 1943

Correspondence, 1944

CONTAINER

Box 2, Folder 1

Box 2, Folder 2

Box 2, Folder 3

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

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Correspondence, 1961-68	Box 2, Folder 13
License Applications, 1961	Box 2, Folder 14
Interior of Fashionette Hair Styling Salon, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 7
Personalized Napkins, n.d.	Artifacts: 2011.0166
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, 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
Invoices and Receipts	Box 2, Folder 24
Notes, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 25

Series 5: YMCA Materials

CONTENTS

Correspondence, 1961-1970

Board of Management [Fall Creek Parkway, Central, Eastside, Flat Rock River Camp, Intercollegiate, Jordan, Krannert, Southside Branches], 1963-1969

Executive Committee, 1961, n.d.

Youth Committee, n.d.

Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, n.d.

Announcements and Reports, 1961-1962

Financial Reports, 1962

Y-Indian Guide Report, 1961-1962

Membership Cards, 1966-1968

Membership Campaigns, 1960-1969

Development Tasks, 1962

Awards, 1962

Schedules and Programming, 1961-1963

Special Events, 1958-1963

Annual Meetings, 1962-1969

Meeting Agendas, 1961-1970

CONTAINER

Box 2, Folder 26

Box 2, Folder 27

Box 2, Folder 28

Box 2, Folder 29

Photographs:
Box 1, Folder 9

Box 2, Folder 30

Box 2, Folder 31

Box 2, Folder 32

Box 2, Folder 33

Box 2, Folder 34

Box 2, Folder 35

Box 2, Folder 36

Box 3, Folder 1

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 3

Box 3, Folder 4

Publications, 1961-1963	Box 3, Folder 5
Publications: <i>The Y's Man</i> , 1958-1969	Box 3, Folder 6
<i>YMCA Bulletin</i> , 1968	Box 3, Folder 7
Press Clippings, 1959-1962	Box 3, Folder 8
Job Description, 1962	Box 3, Folder 9
Pep Song, 1962	Box 3, Folder 10
Notes, 1964, n.d.	Box 3, Folder 11

Series 6: National Baptist Convention and Sunday School Materials

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Women's Auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention Correspondence, 1972	Box 3, Folder 12
Women's Auxiliary Annual Meetings and Messages, 1954-1971	Box 3, Folder 13
National Baptist Convention Annual Conventions, 1971-1973	Box 3, Folder 14
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
Record Books and Cards, 1953, n.d.	Box 3, Folder 27
Notes, n.d.	Box 3, Folder 28

Series 7: Mt. Paran Baptist Church and Religious Teaching Materials

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Mt. Paran Baptist Church Services, 1972	Box 4, Folder 1
Mt. Paran Church Service, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 10
Announcements, 1969, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 2
Priscilla Dean Lewis Member Record Card, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 3
Weekly Offerings, 1969	Box 4, Folder 4
Mt. Paran Business and Professional Women's Council, 1965-1969, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 5
Business Women's Council, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 11
Business Women's Council, n.d.	OVA Photographs: Folder 1
Publications: <i>Mt. Paran Reporter</i> , 1963-1973	Box 4, Folder 6
Publications: <i>Mt. Paran Sunday School Crusader</i> , 1957	Box 4, Folder 7

The Manual of Visual Teaching For The Flannelboard, 1956	Box 4, Folder 8
The Ten Commandments Table-Top Pict-O-Graph, 1954	Box 4, Folder 9
Jesus Teaches Us Pict-O-Graph Lessons, 1980-1982	Box 4, Folder 10
Pict-O-Graph Cut-Outs, n.d.	Artifact: 2011.0166
Bible Art Pictures, n.d.	OM 0545, Folder 2
Sunday School Pupil Textbooks, 1939, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 11
Sunday School Certificates, 1950-1954	Box 4, Folder 12
Sunday School Student Drawings, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 13
Notes, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 14

Series 8: Other Activities and Organizations

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Store License, 1943	Box 4, Folder 15
Alpha Chi Pi Omega Sorority and Fraternity, 1959-1963, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 16
Alpha Home Association, 1969	Box 4, Folder 17
Other Church Materials, 1952-1973	Box 4, Folder 18
Cosmetology and Hairdressers Association, 1949-1950, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 12
Crispus Attucks High School, 1965-1966	Box 4, Folder 19
Eastside Christian Center, 1960	Box 4, Folder 20
Ebony Fashion Fair, 1959-1962	Box 4, Folder 21
Greater Bethel AME Church, 1939	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 13
Indiana Hair Designers Institute Inc., 1970	Box 4, Folder 22

Indianapolis Community Fund, 1945	Box 4, Folder 23
Indianapolis Council of Social Agencies, 1945	Box 4, Folder 24
Indianapolis Human Relations Council, 1960	Box 4, Folder 25
Jacobs Bros. Funeral Home, 1940	Box 4, Folder 26
Jacobs Bros. Funeral Home Musician, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 14
Laborers' International Union of North America: Local Union No. 120, 1970-1972	Box 4, Folder 27
Local Union No. 120 Stamp	Artifact: 2011.0166
Le Moderne Girls Spring Party, 1934	Box 4, Folder 28
Le Moderne Girls Garden Party, 1930	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 15
Mayor John J. Barton Victory Dinner, 1967	Box 4, Folder 29
National Association of Colored Women's Clubs Inc., 1965-1972	Box 4, Folder 30
National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs Inc., 1972-1973	Box 4, Folder 31
National Beauty Culturists' League, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 32
National Beauty Culturists' of Apex College, 1947	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 16
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
Prince Hall Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star, 1943-1961	Box 4, Folder 33
Service Men's Club, n.d.	Photographs: Box 1, Folder 19
United Church Women, 1952-1955	Box 4, Folder 34

Series 9: Jack Hartigan Materials

CONTENTS

Jack Hartigan Biography, 2006

Priscilla Dean Lewis Biography, 2006

"The Last Stand" Exhibition Pamphlet and Mailer,
2006

Photographs from Hartigan Collection, n.d.

CONTAINER

Box 4, Folder 35

Box 4, Folder 36

Box 4, Folder 37

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.