

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Maycie Herrington

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Herrington, Maycie, 1918-2016
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Maycie Herrington,
Dates:	November 19, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:26:55).
Abstract:	Civic leader Maycie Herrington (1918 - 2016) was an award-winning community leader who works to preserve the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen. Herrington was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 19, 2002, in Long Beach, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_211
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Civic leader Maycie Herrington was born in Raleigh, North Carolina, on November 7, 1918, to Dicie and Thomas Copeland. She attended St. Augustine College for grade school and later Lucille Hunter School. Herrington graduated from Washington High School in 1936. She returned to St. Augustine's College, worked for her tuition and graduated with a B.S. in 1940. In 1943, during World War II, Herrington married former St. Augustine's College classmate, Aaron Herrington, who was soon sent by the army to Tuskegee, Alabama, for flight training.

Herrington quit her job as a bookkeeper with Mechanics and Farmers Bank and joined her husband in Tuskegee where she found employment with the Red Cross. In Tuskegee, Herrington became a familiar face to many of the Tuskegee Airmen. After the war, Herrington and her husband moved to Long Beach, California, where she found employment as a social worker with the Bureau of Public Assistance. There, she was assigned to work with the Long Beach Area Welfare Planning Council United Way, and to coordinate summer camps and Christmas activities. Herrington served in that capacity for more than thirty years. The emergency food assistance program in Compton that Herrington started is still in existence today.

Active in community affairs, Herrington was a member of the Long Beach Altrusa Club, the Long Beach County Grand Jurors' Association, and the African American Heritage Society of Long Beach. As a historical conservator, she was active in keeping the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen alive. One of Herrington's contributions was a set of Tuskegee Airmen trading cards. Each card includes a photo and biography of a Tuskegee Airman. These cards educate the public and help finance the Airmen's youth outreach programs. Herrington was the recipient of the Hannah G. Solomon Award, the Women Helping Women Award, the Rick Racker Woman of the Year Award, and the National Conference for Community and Justice Humanitarian Award.

Herrington passed away on May 24, 2016.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Maycie Herrington was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 19, 2002, in Long Beach, California, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Civic leader Maycie Herrington (1918 - 2016) was an award-winning community leader who works to preserve the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Herrington, Maycie, 1918-2016

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Herrington, Maycie, 1918-2016--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Long Beach (Calif.). Dept. of Health and Human Services

Occupations:

Nonprofit Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Maycie Herrington, November 19, 2002. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Maycie Herrington, Section A2002_211_001_001, TRT: 0:29:30
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Maycie Herrington describes her family background. Her father, Thomas Edward Copeland, was born in Franklin County, North Carolina in 1884, and was of Indian and African American descent. Her mother, Dicie Chavis, was born near Raleigh, North Carolina in 1888, and was of Caucasian and African American descent. Copeland attended Shaw University in Raleigh, North, and

worked as a sharecropper and part-time minister. The couple gave birth to Maycie Herrington on November 7, 1918. Copeland was a lenient father, and Chavis, an overprotective mother. Herrington was unaware of segregation in her community, as it was a mixture of black and white sharecropping families. Herrington helped her family sharecrop and attended elementary school at St. Augustine's Normal School. She then transferred to Lucille Hunter School, where she was bullied for having light skin and forced to write with her right hand by the school principal. Herrington enrolled at Washington High School in 1936, and graduated from there in 1940.

Video Oral History Interview with Maycie Herrington, Section A2002_211_001_002, TRT: 0:29:40
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Maycie Herrington graduated from Washington High School in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1940, and worked as a live-in babysitter for Governor John C.B. Eringhaus in order to save money for college. She enrolled at St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1940, where she had classes with members of Raleigh's prominent Delany family. After graduating with her B.S. degree in 1940, Herrington worked as a secretary at the Mechanics and Farmers Bank in Raleigh, North Carolina. By the time she married Aaron Herrington in 1942, she had been promoted to bookkeeper. In 1943, Aaron Herrington enlisted in the U.S. Army, and trained as a pilot at Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama. He also secured a job for her as a Red Cross secretary. The Herringtons gave birth to their daughter in 1944. After her husband crashed his plane during training, Herrington worked as a U.S. Army secretary. Herrington talks about the discrimination the Tuskegee Airmen faced, and her brother's experiences in the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Video Oral History Interview with Maycie Herrington, Section A2002_211_001_003, TRT: 0:29:10
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In 1944, Maycie Herrington's husband, Aaron, crashed his plane while training to become a Tuskegee Airman, rendering him unable to fly combat missions. He was discharged from the U.S. Army in 1946, and moved to Raleigh, North Carolina to complete his undergraduate degree at St. Augustine's College. Maycie Herrington stayed in Tuskegee, Alabama to work as a U.S. Army secretary. The couple moved to Long Beach, California in 1948, and Herrington was hired as a social worker for Bureau of Public Assistance in 1949. In 1972, she was promoted to Resource Coordinator for the Department of Public Social Services, where she built relationships with the Coroner's Office and the District Attorney's Office. She retired in 1981, and was selected to sit on the Los Angeles County Grand Jury in 1982. She describes hearing the "Twilight Zone: The Movie" accident case, where director John Landis was charged with the deaths of actor Vic Morrow and two illegally-hired child actors following a horrific on-set helicopter accident.

Video Oral History Interview with Maycie Herrington, Section A2002_211_001_004, TRT: 0:29:20
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Maycie Herrington served on the Los Angeles County Grand Jury from 1982 to 1983. She describes some of the cases she heard, including the John Belushi wrongful death case and a case involving a corrupt Los Angeles County judge. In 1974, Herrington's husband, Aaron Herrington, joined the Los Angeles Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. Maycie Herrington took on her husband's membership after he died in 1995, and became chapter secretary in 1998. She also developed Tuskegee Airmen trading cards in 2001. Herrington has received a number of civic honors, including the National Council of Jewish Women's Hannah G. Solomon Award in 1984; the Soroptimist Club's Women Helping

Women Award in 1989; the Rick Racker Woman of the Year Award in 1996; and the City of Long Beach's Outstanding Woman of the Year Award. Herrington also talks about her late husband, how she would like to be remembered, and the uniform and insignia of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Video Oral History Interview with Maycie Herrington, Section A2002_211_001_005, TRT: 0:29:15
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Maycie Herrington narrates her photographs.