Overview of the Collection

Repository: The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com

Creator: Ross, Frank K., 1943-

Title: The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Frank K. Ross,

Dates: April 25, 2001

Bulk Dates: 2001

Physical Description: 5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:15:30).

Abstract: Accountant Frank K. Ross (1943 - ) was a partner at the accounting firm KPMG since 1976. Ross served as the KPMG managing partner for the Mid-Atlantic and managing partner of the Washington, D.C., office. He was dedicated to maintaining KPMG’s market share. Ross was also an instructor at Howard University, teaching a class on auditing. Ross helped found the National Association of Black Accountants. Ross was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 25, 2001, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.

Identification: A2001_073

Language: The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Businessman Frank Kenneth Ross was born on July 9, 1943, on the island of St. Kitts. He and his siblings moved to the United States after his father’s death to live with an uncle in Yonkers, New York. As a youth, Ross dreamed of becoming a lawyer. However, he opted for what he thought a more practical degree and commuted two hours a day from Yonkers to Long Island University in Brooklyn.
There, he took courses in business and accounting while also working as a bookkeeper for a community organization in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood.

After graduating, Ross took a position at the accounting firm Peat Marwick Mitchell, now KPMG, at its office in New York while continuing at Long Island University to study for his M.B.A. There, he met Cecelia, the woman who would become his wife.

Although already a senior manager, in 1973 Ross decided to start his own practice, Ross, Stewart & Benjamin. Government programs of that era were attempting to encourage more minority-owned businesses and Ross felt that the time was right to start his own. Ross, Stewart & Benjamin garnered a significant client base. However, Ross was lured back to KPMG in 1976 and within a year promoted to partner, transferring to the Washington, D.C., office in 1979.

Today, Ross serves as the KPMG managing partner for the Mid-Atlantic and managing partner of the Washington, D.C., office. He is dedicated to maintaining KPMG’s market share. Ross also serves as an instructor at Howard University, teaching a class on auditing. He remains active on numerous community boards, including the National Association of Black Accountants (which he helped found); the Washington, D.C. Urban League; Corcoran Gallery of Art; the United Negro College Fund for Washington and Baltimore; and the Hoop Dreams Scholarship Fund.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Frank K. Ross was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on April 25, 2001, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Accountant Frank K. Ross (1943 - ) was a partner at the accounting firm KPMG since 1976. Ross served as the KPMG managing partner for the Mid-Atlantic and managing partner of the Washington, D.C., office. He was dedicated to maintaining KPMG’s market share. Ross was also an instructor at Howard University, teaching a class on auditing. Ross helped found the National Association of Black Accountants.

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:**

- Ross, Frank K., 1943-
- Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)
- Bieschke, Paul (Videographer)

**Subjects:**

- African Americans--Interviews
- Ross, Frank K., 1943- --Interviews

**Organizations:**
Occupations:

Accountant

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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


Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).
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 Frank K. Ross, Section A2001_073_001_001, TRT: 0:29:22 2001/04/25

Businessman Frank K. Ross talks about his parents' backgrounds and recalls his family history. He recounts his move from the West Indies to the United States and then explains why he was raised by an aunt and uncle. Ross remembers events from his childhood as he tells of the segregated elementary school in Yonkers, New York. He then talks of his decision in choosing which high school to attend.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank K. Ross, Section A2001_073_001_002, TRT: 0:29:32 2001/04/25

Businessman Frank K. Ross discusses how he was influenced to go to college by his brother's interest in higher education. He talks about teachers that served as role models in his academic life and then names his favorite subjects during high school. Ross recalls his childhood personality and deems himself a dreamer. Frank K. Ross remembers factors that played into his decision to attend Long Island University and recounts his early experiences and successes there.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank K. Ross, Section A2001_073_001_003, TRT: 0:30:48 2001/04/25

Businessman Frank K. Ross recalls the effect of the Civil Rights Movement on student life. He then discusses racial discrimination in accounting firm recruitment. Ross details his relationship with two of his mentors at KPMG. He also talks about facing racism during his professional career. Frank K. Ross recounts the reasons he left KPMG to start
Frank K. Ross recounts the reasons he left KPMG to start his own firm and then tells of the factors that led me back to his former employer. Finally, Ross reflects on what he learned while running his own accounting firm.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank K. Ross, Section A2001_073_001_004, TRT: 0:29:50 2001/04/25

Businessman Frank K. Ross recalls running his own accounting firm. He reflects on his career and discusses family life before reflecting on his successes and philanthropic activity. Frank K. Ross shares his plans for the future and considers his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank K. Ross, Section A2001_073_001_005, TRT: 0:15:58 2001/04/25

Businessman Frank K. Ross discusses founding the National Association of Black Accountants and how he gained support and momentum for the group. He then reflects on the the NABA's successes.