

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Delories Ricks-Wallace

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Ricks-Wallace, Delories, 1933-2011
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Delories Ricks-Wallace,
<b>Dates:</b>	July 29, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:39:45).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Transportation entrepreneur Delories Ricks-Wallace (1933 - 2011 ) owns and operates a limousine company. Ricks-Wallace was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 29, 2002, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_138
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Businesswoman Delories Dell Ricks-Wallace was born on August 28, 1933, in Huntsville, Alabama. She moved with her family to Fort Wayne, Indiana, when she was 10 years old. By the age of 11, Ricks-Wallace was earning money by altering clothes in her uncle Norvel Ricks' dry cleaning business. She has combined her innate creative talents and sharp business acumen to become a true entrepreneur.

After high school, Ricks-Wallace attended Lockharts Tailoring School and obtained the skills needed to open her first sewing business. Her business prospered, and Wallace's business expanded to include a designer men's clothing line, WenDell's World Manufacturing Co. in Indianapolis, Indiana. The garments created there were sold in clothing stores she owned in Indianapolis and Bloomington, Indiana. In 1975, Ricks-Wallace founded Impulse Florist in Fort Wayne and showed the world yet another talent.

Ricks-Wallace's son, Kim, died in 1982. She closed her businesses, but two years later opened Luxury Limousine, Fort Wayne's first limousine service. Together with her husband Charles "Charlie Bob," Ricks-Wallace has owned and operated many other businesses, including Charlie's Tap, Kim's Korner, Wallace Maintenance, Club Zimmer and Blackman Prairie Subdivision-a collection of single-family homes located in Fremont, Indiana.

Over the years, Ricks-Wallace has been active at Turner Chapel A.M.E. Church, the Old Fort YMCA, the Fort Wayne Urban League Guild and the Ladell Traveling Club. Wallace and her husband raised seven children: Yvonne, Charles, Kim, LeeAnn, Emmett, Clifton and Wendell, as well as Kim's three children: Tara, Kim Jr. and Delories. Their grandchildren number twenty-four, not counting their seventeen great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Ricks-Wallace passed away on February 15, 2011.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Delories Ricks-Wallace was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 29, 2002, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Transportation entrepreneur Delories Ricks-Wallace (1933 - 2011 ) owns and operates a limousine company.

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## 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®.

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## 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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

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

### Persons:

Ricks-Wallace, Delories, 1933-2011

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Ricks-Wallace, Delories, 1933-2011--Interviews

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African American businesswomen--Interviews.

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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## The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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### Occupations:

Transportation Entrepreneur

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### HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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## 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 Delories Ricks-Wallace, July 29, 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).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Delories Ricks-Wallace, Section A2002\_138\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:50 ?

Delories Ricks-Wallace describes her family background. Her mother, Nellie Hatton, was born in Huntsville, Alabama in 1911. Nellie Ricks' grandfather, Ed Lowry, fled to Huntsville, Alabama from Nashville, Tennessee with his family after his sister stole money from Civil War soldiers. Lowry became a shoemaking instructor at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University and

married Nellie Lowry, a Cherokee Indian. Their offspring built the family homestead on Tenth Calvary Hill in Huntsville. Nellie Hatton married Colliss Ricks in the mid-1900s. Born in 1900 in Tuscumbia, Alabama, Colliss Ricks was the descendant of English Quakers and a slave father, George Ricks. He and Nellie Ricks gave birth to Delories Ricks-Wallace on August 28, 1933 in Huntsville, Alabama. Her maternal grandmother, aunt, and mother were respected seamstresses in the town, and she learned to sew from her grandmother. She later learned to tailor clothes from her paternal uncle. In 1943, the Ricks family moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana.

African American families--Alabama--Huntsville--Social life and customs.

African American families--Indiana--Ft. Wayne--Social life and customs.

African American families--Tennessee--Nashville.

Bankhead, Tallulah, 1902-1968

Boyd, Henry Allen, 1876-1959

Alabama A & M University.

Video Oral History Interview with Delories Ricks-Wallace, Section A2002\_138\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:30 ?

As a teenager in the 1940s, Delories Ricks-Wallace left school and married Charles Robert Wallace. The couple had seven children. Ricks-Wallace tried to secure a job in the alteration shop at Fishman's Department Store in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, but was offered a job as an elevator operator because of her race. She stayed in this position for a short time, and then became a cleaning woman at Nobson's Department Store. She later enrolled at Lockhart's Tailoring School, and opened her first tailoring shop in 1968. In 1972, she sold the shop and opened a men's store, Mr. Adrian, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Ricks-Wallace faced many threats and several robberies upon opening the store, and was faced with a lawsuit. She sold Mr. Adrian in 1974 and moved back to Ft. Wayne. She opened Impulse Florist in 1975, but closed it upon her son's death in 1984. Later that year she and her husband opened Luxury Limousine. Their celebrity clientele included HistoryMakers Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, Earl Graves, Sr., and Dionne Warwick.

African American businesswomen.

Entrepreneurship--United States.

Women tailors.

Florists.

Limousine services.

Video Oral History Interview with Delories Ricks-Wallace, Section A2002\_138\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:12 ?

Delories Ricks-Wallace talks about the Fort Wayne African/African American Historical Society Museum building, as well as the "Old Fort Wayne" neighborhood. In addition to her business ventures, Ricks-Wallace is involved civically. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Old Fort YMCA, and is a pastoral steward at Turner Chapel A.M.E. Church. Her hopes and concerns for the African-American community include blacks taking more pride in, and being supportive of, their communities. Ricks-Wallace is also concerned with the lack of respect of today's youth. She hopes to leave a legacy of wisdom, and would like to be remembered as a fair, positive, affectionate person. She closes the interview by narrating her photographs.

National Urban League--History--20th century.

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968.

African Americans--Indiana--Fort Wayne--social life and customs.

Video Oral History Interview with Delories Ricks-Wallace, Section A2002\_138\_001\_004, TRT:  
0:09:13 ?

Delories Ricks-Wallace narrates her photographs