

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with A. Paul Moss

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Moss, Alonzo Paul, 1911-2010
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with A. Paul Moss,
Dates:	June 10, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:04:21).
Abstract:	Nonprofit executive A. Paul Moss (1911 - 2010) served as an executive with the Springfield and national branches of the YMCA, and worked with the Baltimore Department of City Services Advisory Board, the Maryland Food Bank, and on the University of Maryland Board of Regents. Moss was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 10, 2004, in Ellicott, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_069
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

YMCA administrator, educator and civic leader Alonzo Paul Moss was born May 16, 1911 as the sixth of seven sons and one daughter born to strict iron worker, Robert Moss and his wife Ida Byrd Moss in Springfield, Ohio. Moss attended Fulton Elementary School, Central Junior High School and Springfield High School where he was a star athlete and honor student. Moss graduated from West Virginia's Bluefield Teachers College in 1935.

Moss returned to Springfield in 1936, was married and started working for the Center Street YMCA, a place he attended as a youth. In seventeen years with the Springfield YMCA, Moss rose to branch executive, raising \$300,000.00 for a new facility, which opened in 1950. A Springfield community leader, Moss sang bass in the Second Baptist Chorus with Coretta Scott (King) then a student at nearby Antioch College, (Rear Admiral) Benjamin Thurman Hacker, then a student at Wittenberg University, Gertrude Carter, and Prof. Charles Wallace. He knew boxing champion Davey Moore, musician Johnny Lytle and mentored young Crud Ayers, the father of future NBA coach, Randy Ayers.

In 1960, in order to revive East Baltimore's YMCA's, the national office of the YMCA recruited Moss. He expanded programs at Cherry Hill and Turner Station and as camp director, founded Camp King's Landing and helped form the King's Landing Mother's Club. That club founded the city's Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast in 1968.

Integrating and supervising five county branches, Moss also served for 16 years on the Baltimore Department of City Services Advisory Board, the Maryland Food Bank, and for more than a decade on the University of Maryland Board of Regents. After retirement, Moss coordinated community programs for the Community College of Baltimore and volunteered in local prisons.

Moss' first wife, Evelyn, died in an accident on the Pennsylvania Turnpike shortly after moving to Baltimore. Their son, Michael Moss, is a college athletic administrator. Moss married Elizabeth (Bettye) Murphy Phillips of the *Afro-American* in 1963 and helped raise three more children. Honored by Alpha Phi Alpha and community leaders in Springfield and Baltimore, Moss, now lives in Ellicott City, Maryland. Moss passed away on September 9, 2010.

Moss was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 10, 2004.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with A. Paul Moss was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 10, 2004, in Ellicott, Maryland, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Nonprofit executive A. Paul Moss (1911 - 2010) served as an executive with the Springfield and national branches of the YMCA, and worked with the Baltimore Department of City Services Advisory Board, the Maryland Food Bank, and on the University of Maryland Board of Regents.

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:

Moss, Alonzo Paul, 1911-2010

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Lane, Edgar Carey (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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 A. Paul Moss, June 10, 2004. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

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

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 A. Paul Moss, Section
A2004_069_001_001, TRT: 0:30:45 2004/06/10

A. Paul Moss was born on May 16, 1911 in Springfield, Ohio. His father, Robert Moss, was born in Berea, Kentucky, but moved to Lockland, Ohio early in life. Moss' father served in a militia and was a figure skater before settling in Springfield where he worked as a cupola tender. Moss' mother, Ida Byrd Moss, was born and raised in Springfield, where she was the secretary of the Knights of Pythias. The couple had seven children, six boys and one girl; one served in World War I, one joined an aviation company in California, one drove a tractor-trailer. Moss attended Fulton School, but was held out of school by his mother in third grade to protest its conversion from integrated to all-black. He attended Central Junior High School, where he was a star basketball player. Moss once had to be rushed onto his team bus to avoid riots after playing against an all-white team in Xenia, Ohio. His mother was attuned to the possibility of her son being lynched, and decided to send Moss to a historically black college.

Video Oral History Interview with A. Paul Moss, Section
A2004_069_001_002, TRT: 0:31:12 2004/06/10

A. Paul Moss was six years old when there was a lynching in Springfield, Ohio, in 1917. Moss attended Springfield High School. He hoped to become an electrical engineer due to his math skills, but was dissuaded due to his race.

He was a star basketball player, and respected his coach, who taught him a stern lesson after he stayed out all night in Cincinnati after a game. Moss graduated from high school in 1930, and attended Bluefield State College in Bluefield, West Virginia where he met his wife, Evelyn Harmon. He graduated with a B.S. degree in mathematics in 1935, and worked as a teacher and in an iron foundry. After volunteering on the construction of a new YMCA gymnasium for Springfield, he was hired as a boys' work executive. He worked there from 1936 to 1960, where his achievements included leading the capital campaign to construct a new branch building. During World War II, Moss led the local United Service Organization (USO) and his wife worked at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Video Oral History Interview with A. Paul Moss, Section
A2004_069_001_003, TRT: 0:31:12 2004/06/10

A. Paul Moss explains the history of the Rosenwald Foundation's contributions to building YMCAs in African American communities and the library at Wilberforce University. In his time with the YMCA of Springfield, Ohio, Moss taught several children who became famous, including Crud Ayers, the father of NBA coach Randy Ayers, boxer Davey Moore, musician Johnny Lytle, football player Ron Burton, U.S. Navy Admiral Benjamin T. Hacker, and HistoryMaker Father Richard L. Tolliver. While living in Ohio, Moss met Coretta Scott King, with whom he sang in a quartet. Moss moved to Baltimore, Maryland to work for the YMCA's national office. He worked to integrate YMCA camps in nearby Calvert County that served Baltimore. His first wife, Evelyn, died in a car accident while she was driving from Springfield to Baltimore, and he later married Elizabeth Murphy Phillips, whose family owned the Baltimore Afro-American. Moss was appointed to the University of Maryland's Board of Regents in 1970, and served for eighteen years.

Video Oral History Interview with A. Paul Moss, Section
A2004_069_001_004, TRT: 0:31:12 2004/06/10

A. Paul Moss retired from the YMCA in 1976. Following his retirement, he took graduate courses at Notre Dame of Maryland University in Baltimore, Maryland, after which he taught adult education courses at the Community

College of Baltimore and at Jessup Correctional Institution. Moss retired from teaching in 1998. He is close with his children: his son works as an assistant athletic director for the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Wisconsin; his daughter Marie is a pastor at the Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Washington, D.C.; and his daughter Faye has provided care and support for him. Moss considers whether he would have done anything differently in life. He describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community, reflects upon his legacy, and describes how he would like to be remembered. Moss narrates his photographs.