

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Muriel W. Foster

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Foster, Muriel W., 1931-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Muriel W. Foster,
Dates:	December 14, 2004 and January 9, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2004 and 2005
Physical Description:	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:58:51).
Abstract:	Dance instructor Muriel W. Foster (1931 -) is the director of the Sammy Dyer School of Theatre and a former member of the 1950s dance group, The Dyerettes. Foster was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 14, 2004 and January 9, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_261
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dance instructor and arts administrator Muriel Foster was born Muriel Burns, January 16, 1931 in Chicago, Illinois. Her mother, Hattie was from Dayton, Ohio and her father, William D. Burns, a veteran vaudevillian and one of the Four Harmony Kings, was from Denver, Colorado. Foster started dance instructions at age four with Sadie Bruce. In 1941, she enrolled in the school of her father's friend from "Shuffle Along" Sammy Dyer. She attended Carter Elementary School and while still in school Foster and four of her friends, Shirley Hall, Jean Cornell, Clarice White, and Gloria Broussard started performing as the sensational "Dyerettes." Under Dyer's tutelage, Foster still graduated from DuSable High

School in 1948 all the while still performing with Sammy Davis, Jr., Nat King Cole, Benny Green, Ruth Brown, Roy Hamilton, Tito Puente, Billy Eckstine and other greats. Earning an A.A. degree from Wilson Junior College in 1951, Foster continued to tour the United States and Canada. Known for their polished professionalism and unexpected acrobatics, the Dyerettes performed at the Club DeLisa, the Lafayette Theatre and the Apollo Theatre.

Foster married Bobby Wilson, a baseball player with the Dodgers, in 1955 and continued to perform through 1956. However, as other members got married, the Dyerettes retired. Divorced, Foster worked in the Personnel Department at Wieboldt's Department Stores in Chicago until the stores went bankrupt in 1988. Since 1988, Foster has been Human Resources coordinator for Chicago's Merchandise Mart, but, despite a full career, Foster has actively supported the Sammy Dyer School of Theatre. Over the years the school has produced performers like George Patterson, Tedd Levy, Brill Barrett and Geraldine Johnson. When Mr. Dyer away passed in 1960, Dyerette, Shirley Hall directed the school from 1960 to 1998. Foster has been the director of the school since 1998.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Muriel W. Foster was conducted by Larry Crowe on December 14, 2004 and January 9, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Dance instructor Muriel W. Foster (1931 -) is the director of the Sammy Dyer School of Theatre and a former member of the 1950s dance group, The Dyerettes.

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:

Foster, Muriel W., 1931-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Foster, Muriel W., 1931---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Dance Instructor

HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers

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 Muriel W. Foster, December 14, 2004 and January 9, 2005. 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 (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 Muriel W. Foster, Section
A2004_261_001_001, TRT: 0:29:30 2004/12/14

Video Oral History Interview with Muriel W. Foster, Section
A2004_261_001_002, TRT: 0:28:50 2004/12/14

Video Oral History Interview with Muriel W. Foster, Section
A2004_261_001_003, TRT: 0:29:10 2004/12/14

Video Oral History Interview with Muriel W. Foster, Section
A2004_261_001_004, TRT: 0:29:10 2004/12/14

Video Oral History Interview with Muriel W. Foster, Section
A2004_261_001_005, TRT: 0:25:30 2004/12/14

Video Oral History Interview with Muriel W. Foster, Section
A2004_261_001_006, TRT: 0:26:10 2004/12/14

Video Oral History Interview with Muriel W. Foster, Section
A2004_261_002_007, TRT: 0:10:31 2005/01/09