

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Marion Anderson

PERSON

Anderson, Marion, 1926-2015

Alternative Names: Marion Anderson;

Life Dates: April 18, 1926-February 14, 2015

Place of Birth: Charleston, South Carolina, USA

Residence: New York, NY

Occupations: Master Tailor; Tailoring Instructor

Biographical Note

Master tailor and tailoring instructor Marion William Anderson was born to Ethel and William Anderson on April 18, 1926, in Charleston, South Carolina. Ethel Anderson was a beautician and William Anderson was a presser. Anderson's mother encouraged him to pursue a trade at Burke Industrial High School in Charleston. In 1947, after serving the U.S. Army in Asia for a few months, he graduated from high school, majoring in tailoring. In 1949, Anderson moved to Harlem, New York, in order to look for work. After a few jobs in industrial tailoring, Anderson pursued a teaching career.

After refining his skills at the American Gentleman School of Designing, he started teaching at the Empire Trade School, a school that catered to African American World War II veterans. In 1956, Anderson began instructing prisoners in the tailor shop on Rikers Island. Four years later, he convinced the New York City Board of Education to create a tailoring curriculum, and he was hired at Sterling High School in Brooklyn, New York, where he would teach tailoring for thirty-three years. Anderson was the first African-American to be licensed by the City of New York to teach tailoring.

In 1987, Anderson founded his own school, the Manhattanville Needle Trade School, in Harlem. In 2007, Anderson celebrated his twentieth year as the director at the school. During his lengthy career, he tailored suits for many members of the Harlem elite, and taught a valuable trade to hundreds in Harlem and New York City.

Anderson passed away on February 14, 2015 at age 88.

Related Entries

Henry P. Archer School in Charleston [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Burke High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Manila [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Adelphi University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

American Gentleman School of Design [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Sam Berlin Men's Shop [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 194801 to 194909]

Tailor and Fitter

Popular Manufacturing Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 194902 to 194903]

Bushelman and Examiner

New York (State). Department of Corrections [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 195603 to 196010]

Teacher

John Rughermer Custom Tailors [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 194704 to 194711]

Pants Maker

Empire Trade School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 194904 to 195212]

Teacher

Harry Irwing Manufacturing Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 194905 to 195006]

Bushelman and Examiner

Mark Riley Custom Tailor [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 195006 to 195603]

Designer and Tailor

High School of Fashion Industries [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 197309 to 197706]

Teacher

Sterling High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 197309 to 197406]

**Coordinator of After School Occupational Programs for Socially Maladjusted
and Emotionally Handicapped Teenagers**

New York (N.Y.). -- Board of Education [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 196010 to 199306]

Teacher

Manhattanville Needle Trade School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1987 to ?]

Founder and Director

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

private