

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Maureen Bunyan

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Bunyan, Maureen
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Maureen Bunyan,
Dates:	August 29, 2012
Bulk Dates:	2012
Physical Description:	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:31:40).
Abstract:	Television news anchor Maureen Bunyan (1945 -) worked with WUSA-TV and WJLA-TV ABC News in Washington D.C. She is a founding member of the National Association of Black Journalists, as well as the International Women's Media Foundation. Bunyan was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 29, 2012, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2012_230
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Television news anchor Maureen Bunyan was born in 1945 on the island of Aruba to Arthur and Wilhelmina Bunyan. Her parents had moved from Guyana to Aruba in the 1930s, looking for better work opportunities. The family immigrated to the United States when Bunyan was just eleven years old, after her father accepted a job with a company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Arthur Bunyan always stressed the importance of education to his children and at one point all members of the family were enrolled in local schools, each studying for an undergraduate degree. Bunyan

herself received her B.A. degree in English and education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Still in college, she worked as a free-lance writer for the *Milwaukee Journal*.

Bunyan went on to attend the Columbia University School of Journalism in 1970. After school, she worked in broadcasting with Boston's WGBH-TV and later New York's WCBS-TV. In 1973, Bunyan became the lead news anchor and reporter at WTOP-TV (now WUSA-TV), the CBS affiliate in Washington, D.C. After working on the *Eyewitness News Team*, she became a co-anchor with Gordon Peterson and remained in this position until she resigned in 1995. Bunyan returned to school to receive her M.A. degree from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education in 1980. As a lead news anchor, Bunyan covered major local, national, and international stories, traveling to Central and South America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa. Bunyan established a reputation as a clear-thinking, clear-spoken, fair-minded and dependable newsperson. From 1997-1999, Bunyan served as the chief correspondent for PBS' *Religions and Ethics Newsweekly*.

In 1999, Bunyan joined WJLA-TV ABC 7 News in Washington D.C. as a primary anchor. Five years later, she was reunited with co-anchor Gordon Peterson for the 6:00pm EST news. During her career, Bunyan also served as a frequent substitute host for *Talk of the Nation* on National Public Radio and *The Derek McGinty Show* on WAMU Radio. Bunyan was one of the founding members of the National Association of Black Journalists in 1975, as well as the International Women's Media Foundation in 1990. She has won a number of awards including *Journalist of the Year* in 1992, the *Immigrant Achievement Award* from the American Immigration Law Foundation in 2002, as well as receiving a number of local Emmys for her captivating work.

Maureen Bunyan was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 29, 2012.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Maureen Bunyan was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 29, 2012, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Television news anchor Maureen Bunyan (1945 -) worked with WUSA-TV and WJLA-TV ABC News in Washington D.C. She is a founding member of the National Association of Black Journalists, as well as the International Women's Media Foundation.

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:

Bunyan, Maureen

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Bunyan, Maureen--Interviews

African American television journalists--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Television News Anchor

HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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 Maureen Bunyan, August 29, 2012. 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 Maureen Bunyan, Section
A2012_230_001_001, TRT: 1:31:54 2012/08/29

Maureen Bunyan describes her family's Guianese background. Her mother, Wilhelmina Hill, was born in Georgetown, British Guiana, on April 28, 1913. Her father, Arthur Hughborn Mendes Bunyan, was born and raised on a sugarcane plantation in Berbice, Guiana. Unable to continue his schooling under the British educational system due to a bout of malaria, he went on to become an electrician's apprentice. In the 1930s, Bunyan's parents moved to Aruba, where she and her sisters were born. They worked at the oil refinery that was built by the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. In the 1950s they moved to Wisconsin, where her father worked full-time and also earned his bachelor's degree, two master's degrees and completed a portion of his Ph.D. degree. Bunyan talks about how her parents met in Guiana, their influence on her life, her mother's death from breast cancer, her father's glaucoma, and her family's life in Wisconsin. She discusses Guiana's socio-economic history, and racial diversity.

Immigrant families.

Fathers--Education, Higher--United States.

Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.

Parents.

Guiana.

Video Oral History Interview with Maureen Bunyan, Section
A2012_230_001_002, TRT: 2:30:47 2012/08/29

Maureen Bunyan and her sisters, Kathleen and Pamela, were born in Aruba in the 1940s while her father worked at an American oil refinery and her mother worked as a nurse at a hospital there. She describes the cultural diversity of Aruba, her family's life there, growing up in a close-knit community of Guianese immigrants, and attending church and school. In the 1940s, her father bought one of the first cars that were imported to the island, and one of her favorite childhood memories was driving with her family to the local airport to watch the planes take off and land. In the 1950s, her father applied for and accepted a job with the Harnischfeger Corporation in Wisconsin, and her family immigrated to the United States. She discusses the differences in the racial policies of Guiana, Aruba and the United States in the 1950s, and her family's adjustment to their new life in Wisconsin. Bunyan also talks about her father as her role model, and the life lessons that she learned from him.

Immigrant families.

Childhood and youth--Aruba.

Harnischfeger Corporation.

Fathers and daughters.

Race relations.

Role models.

Video Oral History Interview with Maureen Bunyan, Section
A2012_230_001_003, TRT: 3:28:56 2012/08/29

Maureen Bunyan began her schooling in Aruba, where she attended Queen Julianna School until lower middle school. It followed the Dutch educational system. When her family moved to Wisconsin in 1956, she enrolled in middle school there. Bunyan contrasts her structured education in Aruba with her schooling in the U.S. While at Muskego High School, she stayed involved in extracurricular activities, including the school newspaper, while engaging in debates and public speaking. Bunyan

describes her family's move to the U.S., having to adjust to the differences in climate and culture, her mother's three-year long struggle with breast cancer, her death, and her family's financial and emotional distress. She discusses the lack of substantial insurance coverage for her mother's treatment, and her father's financial hardships. She also talks about the warmth and support that her family received from the community in Muskego, and finding a way to manage her depression through exercise and music.

Immigrants--Education, Elementary--Activities.

Emigration and immigration.

Mothers--Death.

Coping.

Education--Wisconsin--Muskego.

Video Oral History Interview with Maureen Bunyan, Section
A2012_230_001_004, TRT: 4:30:04 2012/08/29

In the fall of 1962, Maureen Bunyan began her undergraduate studies at Eau Claire State College, where she faced discrimination while trying to find housing in the college dormitory. She describes the unjustness of the housing system and how she stayed with a German family in Eau Claire. In 1963, Bunyan dropped out of Eau Claire College and moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as a part-time student, and also worked part-time. In 1964, she ran away from home and travelled in Europe. Bunyan describes her experience in Europe, and living and working in Germany, before returning to the U.S. in 1965. She also discusses her father's spiritual quest following her mother's death, his joining the Baha'i faith, and the tenets of the faith.

University of Wisconsin--Eau Claire.

Discrimination in housing--Wisconsin--Eau Claire.

University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee.

African Americans--Travel--Europe.

African American fathers--Religion--Wisconsin--Milwaukee.

Bahai Faith.

In 1965, Maureen Bunyan returned to the United States after spending several months traveling in Europe. She returned to school at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, where she was exposed to the Civil Rights Movement and the open housing movement in Milwaukee. She interned at the 'Milwaukee Journal', and began to work on freelance assignments for them. Bunyan talks about black journalists in Milwaukee, her own role as a journalist, and the socio-political scene in the U.S. in the 1960s. In 1970, she attended Columbia Graduate School of Journalism's Summer Program for Minorities and Women, which was established in response to the Kerner Commission's findings on the lack of minorities in the media. Bunyan also talks about the discrimination she faced during her brief employment at WITI television station in Milwaukee, and finding a new job in Boston, Massachusetts.

University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee.

Civil rights movements.

Milwaukee journal.

African American journalists--Wisconsin--Milwaukee.

Columbia University.

Discrimination in employment.

WITI-TV (Television station : Milwaukee, Wis.).