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Jennings, Oscar Ben, 1907-1996 (MSS 366)

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Descriptive Inventory

MSS 366 JENNINGS, Oscar Ben, 1907-1996

1 ½ boxes. 22 folders. 461 items, 1912-1996. Originals, photocopies, photographs, and video cassette.

1996.111.1

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Oscar Ben Jennings spent most of his life in Henderson, Kentucky. He graduated in 1925 from the Barret Manual Training High School (BMTHS) in Henderson. After graduation he directed, produced and designed costumes for a series of local minstrel shows, several of which were sponsored by the Henderson Elks Lodge and the Henderson American Legion post. He loved music and was the drum major for the American Legion Band.

Jennings began his professional career an administrative deputy sheriff in Henderson. After an election in which he backed the losing candidate, he took an accounting position with Tapp Motor Company. He became the first Henderson Housing Authority executive director in 1949. He remained in that position until 1954 when he took a field agent position with the Internal Revenue Service. He later worked as an IRS accountant and retired from that position.

Jennings owned two historic homes in Henderson, one on North Main burned in 1967. Starting over, Jennings purchased the 1868 William Barret House one of Henderson's finest Italianate houses at 204 South Elm Street. He decorated the 24-room house and landscaped the grounds to his taste, and it was often included on tours of the community by visiting groups and dignitaries. In 1978 the house was the first Henderson residence to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. When the home was auctioned by Herron Auction & Realty after Jennings death in 1996, over 1,000 people attended the open house.

Jennings was involved in a number of civic organizations, including the Henderson Rotary Club, the Henderson Masonic Lodge, the Community Boys Band, the Henderson Chamber of Commerce, as well as Henderson's First Christian Church. He also served on the Henderson City Commission. Jennings organized the 50th, 60th, and 70th reunions for the BMTHS's class of 1925.

Jennings died on 13 May 1996 and was interred in Henderson's Fernwood Cemetery.

COLLECTION NOTE

This collection contains some personal correspondence (Folder 2), but the bulk of the collection relates to the 50th reunion of the Barret Manual Training High School class of 1925— including correspondence, questionnaires, photographs, mementos— and materials about the Henderson Rotary Club. The collection also contains news clippings collected by Jennings about historic places in Henderson and about the making of the movie “A League of Their Own,” which was filmed in Henderson in 1991; these articles found in Folder 15 are arranged chronologically. In the 1980s and 1990s, Jennings also clipped obituaries of people he knew, particularly fellow members of the BMTHS class of 1925; these obituaries found in Folder 14 are arranged alphabetically. News clippings and photos of Jennings’s home are found in Folder 5 and a video of the home and his belongings filmed for his estate is included in Folder 7.

Box 2 contains information about the Henderson Rotary Club, including copies of the By-Laws, a few sets of minutes from the late 1970s, correspondence, some financial statements and budgets from 1969 to 1985, news clippings and historical data, newsletters from 1977 to 1979 when Jennings was newsletter editor, and directories from 1977 to 1992.

SHELF LIST

BOX 1	Oscar Ben Jennings	1912-1996	331 items
Folder 1	Inventory, separation sheets and biographical data	1995-1996	9 items
Folder 2	Correspondence	1947-1996	75 items
Folder 3	Event programs	1922-1993	12 items
Folder 4	Pictures (miscellaneous)	1920s-1975	
Folder 5	Historic house information	1990-1996	19 items
Folder 6	Miscellaneous – Membership cards, publications, drawing, etc.	1912-1990	18 items
Folder 7	Estate video	1996	1 item
Folder 8	BMTHS Reunion – Correspondence	1974-1995	51 items
Folder 9	BMTHS Reunion – Questionnaires	1975	41 items
Folder 10	BMTHS Reunion – Mementos	1925-1980	21 items
Folder 11	BMTHS Reunion – Photographs	1975	2 items

Folder 12	Notes about the Henderson Junior Chamber of Commerce	1936	1 item
Folder 13	Rudolph Friedrich – Relating to	1922-1949	7 items
Folder 14	News clippings – People	1957-1994	43 items
Folder 15	News clippings – Places and events	1985-1991	31 items
BOX 2	Henderson Rotary Club	1917-1992	130 items
Folder 1	Henderson Rotary Club – By-laws	1976-1982	3 items
Folder 2	Henderson Rotary Club – Minutes	1977-1979	7 items
Folder 3	Henderson Rotary Club – Correspondence	1977-1986	17 items
Folder 4	Henderson Rotary Club – Financial papers	1969-1985	18 items
Folder 5	Miscellaneous – News clippings, programs, notes on history, list of presidents, etc.	1917-1985	22 items
Folder 6	Henderson Rotary Club – <i>Action</i> (newsletter)	1977-1979	54 items
Folder 7	Henderson Rotary Club – Directories	1977-1992	9 items

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

MSS JENNINGS, Oscar B., 1907-1996 1912-1996
366

Personal correspondence, news clippings, estate video, event programs, and sundry materials collected by Oscar Ben Jennings of Henderson, Kentucky. Several folders of material relate to the 50th reunion of the Barret Manual Training High School class of 1925. Also includes information about the Henderson Rotary Club.

1 ½ boxes. 22 folders. 461 items. Originals, photocopies, photographs and video cassette.
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SUBJECT ANALYTICS

Abell, Albert M., d. 1982 B1,F2,8
 Acree, Margaret B1,F2
 American Legion – Henderson – Relating to, 1930 B1,F3
 Barkley, Alben William, 1877-1956 B1,F2
 Barret Manual Training High School – Henderson – Reunion, 1975 B1,F2,8-11
 Begley, John B. B1,F2
 Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks – Henderson – Relating to, 1922 B1,F3
 Berndt, Jessie J., d. 1993 B1,F2,3
 First United Methodist Church – Henderson – Relating to, 1993 B1,F3
 Ford, Wendell Hampton, b. 1924 B2,F3
 Friedrich, Rudolph – Mentioned B1,F2
 Ginger, Lyman V. B1,F8-9
 Hambleton, John O., d. 1984 – Relating to B1,F14
 Harris, Lillian Wade B1,F8
 Hartig, Lillian B1,F2
 Hatchett, Louis, Jr. – Relating to B1,F14
 Henderson County Genealogical and Historical Society – Relating to B1,F2
 Henderson – Historic houses – Photos B1,F5
 Henderson – Historic preservation – Comments about, 1992 B1,F2
 Henderson – History – Relating to B1,F2
 Henderson – Photos B1,F4-5
 Herman, Joan A. (Heiner) B1,F2
 Jaycees – Henderson – Relating to, 1936 B1,F12
 Jennings, Oscar Ben, d. 1996 – Estate – Relating to, 1996 B1,F1,7
 Hicks, Sam, d. 1979 – Comments about B1,F2
 “A League of Their Own” (motion picture) – Relating to B1,F15
 Leadership Henderson – Relating to, 1987 B1,F3
 Lindsey Wilson College – Relating to, 1989 B1,F2
 Minstrels – Henderson – Relating to, 1922-1930 B1,F3
 O’Nan, Walter Lee, 1907-1985 – Letter to B2,F3
 Overby, Fred, 1929-1991 – Relating to B1,F3
 Panama Canal – Comments about, 1978 B2,F6
 Pets – Relating to B1,F2
 Railroad stations – Henderson – Relating to B1,F2
 Ringham, Lou Verna (Kennedy) B1,F8
 Rotary Club – Henderson B2
 Rudolph, Friedrich B1,F13
 Rue, Dorothy B1,F2
 Rue, Frank B1,F2
 Smullen, Marvin E. B1,F2
 Squires, Bill – Correspondence B1,F2
 Tempel, Mary E. B1,F2
 Tempel, Theodore “Ted” B1,F2
 Warren, George H. – Letters to B2,F3

Williams, Louis P., 1920-1993 B1,F2,3
Williams, Martha H. B1,F2
Wilson, C. Russell B1,F2

SEE and SEE ALSO

Elks

See:

Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks

Henderson Junior Chamber of Commerce

See:

Jaycees - Henderson

Jeffrey 04/26/2011