



ArchivesSpace

Finding aid for the Black history exhibit collection Collection 113

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections
Department

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Summary Information

Repository:	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Title:	Black history exhibit collection
ID:	Collection 113
Date [inclusive]:	circa 1880-1990
Physical Description:	0.88 Linear Feet Three boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Black History exhibit collection documents a joint 1984-1985 project by Alpha Kappa Alpha, the Grand Rapids Study Club, the Suburban Club, the Grand Rapids Public Library, the Grand Rapids Public Schools and the Grand Rapids Public Museum to detail the history of the Black community in Grand Rapids. Historic items, including photographs, were collected and reproduced. From the collected data a photo exhibit, "150 Years: An Exhibit of the African American Presence in Grand Rapids," was ready for the 1985 Black History Week. The exhibit traveled through the local schools. The materials here reflect the Grand Rapids City Historian's files related to the project. Little or no documentation on the original source of the historical items is provided, though some of the items come from other Grand Rapids Public Library archival collections.

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Biographical / Historical

The project was sponsored by several local Black women's groups and the Grand Rapids City Historian to prepare a display for Black History Week in February 1984. The project grew and expanded and the display, titled "150 Years: An Exhibit of the African American Presence in Grand Rapids," was not ready until the 1985 Black History Week.

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Scope and Contents

The collection contains documentation of a joint project by Alpha Kappa Alpha, the Grand Rapids Study Club, the Suburban Club, the Grand Rapids Public Library, the Grand Rapids Public Schools and the Grand Rapids Public Museum to detail the history of the Black community in Grand Rapids. Documentation, including photographs, was collected and reproduced. The material documents the people and their occupations during the first 150 years of Grand Rapids' history.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department

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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

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URL: <http://www.grpl.org>

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Grand Rapids City Historian, accession number 1990.008

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Several other collections in the GRPL Archives contain information on African Americans. See Coll. 249, which is a general collection on African Americans, with cross references to holdings in other collections.

See also the African American Clipping file. An index to the newspaper clippings is on the GRPL website.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Exhibitions -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
 - Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
 - African Americans -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
 - records (documents)
-

Collection Inventory

Series I. Files, 1888-1988.

Title/Description	Instances	
Battle Creek Black Heritage Day, 1984	Box 1	Folder 1
"Black History: The Negro in Grand Rapids, 1840-1956," n.d.	Box 1	Folder 2
Brochures drafts, 1984-1985	Box 1	Folder 3
Business and professional data, 1956-1984	Box 1	Folder 4
Correspondence, 1984-1985	Box 1	Folder 5
Display photographs (photocopies), 1984	Box 1	Folder 6
Freedman's Progress, 1915	Box 1	Folder 7
Grand Rapids Urban League, n.d.	Box 1	Folder 8
Lampkins, Daniel Boone data, 1914, 1944, 1968-1969.	Box 1	Folder 9
Minisee genealogy, c.1984	Box 1	Folder 10
Moore family, 1977	Box 2	Folder 1
Photo captions, 1984-1985	Box 2	Folder 2
Photocopies, 1886, 1888, 1892, 1905, 1908, 1916, 1936, 1946, n.d.	Box 2	Folder 3
Research notes, 1984-1985	Box 2	Folder 4
Richard Allen home, n.d. (2 photocopied sheets; location & type of original source unknown) Sheet 1. Richard Allen Home for Colored Girls. Includes an image of the building at 195 Bates Street. Appears to be the front & back of a flyer. Sheet 2. "The Objects of the Home"—left page "Mrs. Goggins, President"—her image on the right page.	Box 2	Folder 5

"Smith, George M.," 1979	Box 2	Folder 6
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Series II. Copy Photographs, 1870-1984, n.d.

Title/Description	Instances	
Baseball team. Grand Rapids Colored Athletics of 1917, Champions of Michigan	Box 3	Folder 1
Clean-up Week, 1949. Cleaning up neighborhoods. 5 people, Lydia Brown center. Young man at right with paint can. Young woman at right with broom. Older man & woman at left.	Box 3	Folder 2
Comstock's Row, ca. 1880. Comstock Row, Housing for employees in Charles Comstock's pail factory.	Box 3	Folder 3
Contact sheets, 1984	Box 3	Folder 4
Cosmopolitan Restaurant & Bakery, just north of Sweet's Hotel, where the entrance to the Pantlind now is. Staff or others standing in front of store. ca.1870.	Box 3	Folder 5
Bands. ca. 1920. A large group of people, with some in uniform, standing in front of a large building (Old City Hall). Bands, two with marked drums: (1) [Elks Club] Wolverine Lodge, (2) Grand Rapids Melody Band. See the Grand Rapids Herald, June 12, 1927 page 12 column 1: "Negro Elks Open State Convention This Afternoon"	Box 3	Folder 6
First Community Church, n.d.	Box 3	Folder 7
Grand Rapids Heavy Moving Co. Advertisement, from GR City Directory, ca 1900. Grand Rapids Heavy Moving Co., 50 & 52 N. Division St., John J. Johnson, manager	Box 3	Folder 8

Grand Rapids Study Club, n.d.

Title/Description	Instances	
Paul Richens House/Grand Rapids Study Club Clubhouse, added to the Michigan State Register of Historic Places in 1985.	Box 3	Folder 9
Close up view of "Grand Rapids Study Club" sign	Box 3	Folder 9
Grave stone, n.d. (1) Marked: Unknown. 102 U.S. Colored.	Box 3	Folder 10
Baseball Team. Jess Elster's All-stars, ca. 1915. Group photo. Jess Elsters Colored Giants of Grand Rapids. Shows the team in uniform standing or seated in front of empty bleachers. Bats & other equipment on the ground in front. Clarence Mabin is one of the players.	Box 3	Folder 11

[Related Materials:](#)

Related Materials

See also: Coll. 251 Kent Co. African American Baseball Collection

Land patent, 1861. Mecosta County Tract Book. James Guy SE¼ of SW½ section 4, T 14 N, R 7 W	Box 3	Folder 12
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General

Received from Guy's descendants in Grand Rapids

Lincoln Literary Club, 1930. Interior. Annual Dinner Dance, Feb. 12.	Box 3	Folder 13
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Lumbering, c.1880

Title/Description	Instances	
Bill Weaver Camp. Two girls with horse team.	Box 3	Folder 14
Jim Woods, father of Harriet Hill, driving team. Men with a large wheeled transport, and two horses pulling the logs, in a wooded scene.	Box 3	Folder 14
Lumber camp of Joseph Lett. Mecosta Co. Images includes Aaron Morgan, an early settler of Mecosta Co., and Stella Lett Chandler at 2 year old, Aunt of donor of photo, seated on lady's lap front row.	Box 3	Folder 14
View of several men with logs, and equipment, in a well worked landscape. African American & Caucasian workers unidentified.	Box 3	Folder 14
African American man in center holding 2 horses, with large logs behind, man to his right & left. Logging in background.	Box 3	Folder 14
Minisee house & farmstead, c.1880	Box 3	Folder 15
George Mink. Home Auto Service, ca. 1920	Box 3	Folder 16

People

Related Materials:

Related Materials

See also Mabin, Edmund 1986.387, Coll. 54

Title/Description	Instances	
Bracy, Foy & Veda (Toddlers)	Box 3	Folder 17

Claytor, Robert & Helen

Title/Description	Instances	
Portrait photo of Helen Claytor, Grand Rapids political & social activist.	Box 3	Folder 18

Dr. Robert Claytor, seated in front of book shelves, smiling.

	Box 3	Folder 18
Earlier view of Dr. Robert Claytor speaking to an unidentified group from a banquet table with lit candle & flowers. A woman & 2 men seated at table are unidentified.	Box 3	Folder 18
Corbin, Tom	Box 3	Folder 19
<u>Conditions Governing Use:</u>		
Conditions Governing Use		
For reproduction with GR Press permission only		
Glover, Mrs.	Box 3	Folder 20
Goggins, Mrs.	Box 3	Folder 38
Green, James & Lester	Box 3	Folder 21
Guy, Jim. Portrait photo of Jim Guy, Wheatland Township, Mecosta Co., early settler	Box 3	Folder 22

Groups

Title/Description	Instances	
Interior. School classroom. An over-sized music score for "The Big Machine hung in front of the blackboard. 2 boys standing left, 2 girls standing right.	Box 3	Folder 23
Interior. Unidentified group in unidentified setting. Browning, center front. James B. Green, rear right.	Box 3	Folder 23
Group of school(?) children standing in entrance of school(?)house	Box 3	Folder 23
Three elderly men in band(?) uniforms, one wearing base drum left, one wearing snare drum center, one with piccolo(?) right, in front of large building, perhaps a Michigan veterans home.	Box 3	Folder 23
"Suffrage". Three women in suits, hats, crossing the street near DeLullo's Restaurant.	Box 3	Folder 23
Group photo of women outside of a large building, ca. 1960's, Helen Claytor center front. From unidentified printed source, with formal caption The silent march in support of the American Indians at Wounded Knee.	Box 3	Folder 23
Interior. Group of children in costume (Halloween or play)	Box 3	Folder 23
Interior. Large room with low ceiling, streamers hung throughout. Two long tables stretching into the background, full of people eating, some with balloons. Ca. 1920's-1930's?	Box 3	Folder 23
Interior. 5 women seated at a small table, looking at programs(?), lamp & window behind, with view of building across the street.	Box 3	Folder 23
Interior. 4 women, looking at unidentified item in foreground.	Box 3	Folder 23

Interior. 6 women, 3 seated on sofa, 3 standing behind.	Box 3	Folder 23
Interior. Floyd Skinner, speaker, Walter Coe, seated at right, with a band behind with instruments. Drum has "BK"	Box 3	Folder 23
Barr School, Wheatland Township, Mecosta County. View of a group of young people standing in front of the school. Many name identifications on back of photo.	Box 3	Folder 23
Formal photo of Homer Cross, Sr., left and Charles Pointer right. Two young men in suits, seated.	Box 3	Folder 23
Exterior view of 3 men. Ted Rasberry (Raspberry) at left. Man in white dinner jacket in center. Unidentified Detroit baseball player at right.	Box 3	Folder 23
Interior group photo. Grand Rapids Study Class / Grand Rapids Study Club. See Coll. 082 for another copy & more information.	Box 3	Folder 23
Exterior. Group of men, lined up in a row, facing toward the left.	Box 3	Folder 23
Exterior. Group of mostly women lined up in a row, facing left, but most leaning on the one ahead for support.	Box 3	Folder 23
Exterior. Group, women standing, men & children seated on ground.	Box 3	Folder 23
Hackley, Loretta	Box 3	Folder 24
Johnson, Martha & Anna	Box 3	Folder 25
Minisee Family	Box 3	Folder 26
Morgan, Aaron, Kathryn, Mrs. Aaron	Box 3	Folder 27
Norman, Ida & Rose	Box 3	Folder 28
Pettitor, Enoch	Box 3	Folder 29
Philips, Paul I	Box 3	Folder 30
Reed, Elijah	Box 3	Folder 31
Beverly-Robinson, Hattie J.	Box 3	Folder 32
Skinner, Floyd	Box 3	Folder 33
Sleet Family	Box 3	Folder 34
Smith, George	Box 3	Folder 35

Unidentified

Title/Description	Instances	
8x10. 2 men. Ted Rasberry(Raspberry) left; a Harlem Globetrotter on right	Box 3	Folder 36

8x10 Unidentified male in suit, hat & bowtie, with cigar in mouth, standing in front of a brick wall.	Box 3	Folder 36
Regent? Theater exterior. African American in uniform, perhaps chauffeur, holding door open of auto at the curb. Jack Holt "In Empty Hands" on marquee.	Box 3	Folder 36
Train conductor, standing at entrance of train car, with one foot on a stool, and other on the platform.	Box 3	Folder 36
Unidentified male & female seated in decorative Rattan chairs.	Box 3	Folder 36
Two men standing on sidewalk. Walter Coe left, unidentified white male at right.	Box 3	Folder 36
Man seated in an office. Milo Brown. Brown's Funeral Home.	Box 3	Folder 36
Three children, two African American, one Caucasian, standing on a table.	Box 3	Folder 36
Woods, Esta	Box 3	Folder 37
Richard Allen Home for Colored Girls, 195 Bates St., n.d.	Box 3	Folder 38
621st Ordinance Ammunition Co., 1942	Box 3	Folder 39
St. Luke's Church, n.d.	Box 3	Folder 40

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