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Douglass High School Reunion Committee Records, 1924-1996



Special Collections Department
James E. Morrow Library
Marshall University
Huntington, West Virginia
2021

Douglass High School Reunion Committee Records, 1924-1996

Summary:

Title: Douglass High School Reunion Committee Records

Span Dates: 1924-1996

Creator: Various

Repository: Marshall University Special Collections, Morrow Library (Huntington, WV)

Processed by: Elizabeth James, 2021

Accession Number: 2020/12.0864

Date Completed: July, 2021

Access to Collection: Open

Extent: 5.5 linear feet

Donor: Unknown

Language: English

Search terms:

Black history

African American history

Frederick Douglass High School

Frederick Douglass Junior and Senior High

Segregated schools

High school reunions

Huntington, WV

Biographical Notes:

The Douglass High School Reunion, Inc. planned and executed reunions for students who attended Douglass High School, a varyingly combined elementary through high school institution that served the African American community in Huntington, WV prior to desegregation.

As stated by historian Dr. Ancella Bickley,

“Frederick Douglass Junior and Senior High School served for many years as a major academic, social, and cultural resource for Black families in Huntington. Erected in 1924, on 10th Avenue at the corner of Bruce Street, the school was actually the second one in Huntington to bear the Douglass name. The first Douglass School, a building on 16th Street and Eighth Avenue, had grades one through 12 and graduated its first high school class in 1893. Both were named for the abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

The 1924 three-story brick building was constructed because of the changing educational needs at the secondary level and an increased Black enrollment. When Douglass's name was transferred, the old school was renamed Barnett in honor of

one of Huntington's pioneer African-American ministers.

Appointed principal of the new school in 1925, Henry Davis Hazelwood served until his retirement in 1949. His successors were Henry Smith Jones, 1950–51; Leonard H. Glover, 1952–55; and Joseph A. Slash, 1955–61. During the Hazelwood administration, Douglass emerged as a first-class high school, gaining accreditation from the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges in 1927. The school also fielded a band and varsity athletic teams, developed choirs and dramatic activities, and brought speakers and performers to the community.

Douglass High School closed in 1961 after the integration of public schools in West Virginia. In its two locations the school existed for 70 years, 33 years as a combined elementary-secondary institution, and 37 years as a junior and senior high school. During those decades, Douglass touched the lives of most of Huntington's Black families and educated nearly four generations of their children. In 1985, the Douglass Junior and Senior High School building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places."

Bickley, Ancella R. "Douglass High School." e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia. <https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/1949>. 22 March 2021. Web. 22 July 2021.

Scope and Content:

The collection is divided into three series:

Series 1: Reunion Planning and Alumni Materials – This series includes materials related to the planning and execution of Douglass High School reunions as planned by Douglass High School Foundation Incorporated and materials distributed to alumni outside of reunions. Materials include subcommittee and officer reports, alumni newsletters, and financial and organizational documents. Most materials date between 1988 and 1996.

Series 2: Clippings and Ephemera – This series includes assorted clippings and ephemera related to Douglass High School history, alumni, and Black Huntingtonians more broadly. Most materials are mounted on cardstock, seemingly for presentation or other sharing purposes.

Series 3: Student and Original Materials – This series consists primarily of student materials originally belonging to Cornelia Gertrude Smith between 1930 and 1934, but also includes a small amount of other materials related to student life at Douglass High School.

Processing Notes:

This collection was already processed at the time the finding aid was created. Minimal changes to folder titles, order, or content were made.

Preferred Citation:

Douglass High School Reunion Committee Records, 1924-1996, Accession No. 2020/12.0864, Special Collections Department, Marshall University, Huntington, WV

Access and Use:

For more information or to use any collection, contact:

Special Collections, Morrow Library

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Container**Contents**

Series 1: Reunion Planning and Alumni Materials**Box 4**

- Folder 1 – Douglass High School Reunion Souvenir Book, 1973
- Folder 2 – “Welcome Douglassites” flyers, invitation, and tickets for 1978 reunion
- Folder 3 – Douglass High School Reunion bumper stickers, 1983 and 1986
- Folder 4 – Douglass High School Reunion Check Records, 1985-1993
- Folder 5 – Registration Committee Report, 1986
- Folder 6 – Douglass High School Reunion Planning Invoices, 1985-1986
- Folder 7 – Attendance Records, Douglass Reunion Committee, 1989-1990
- Folder 8 – Meeting with city officials reunion plans, 1989
- Folder 9 – Scholarship Committee Report, 1989
- Folder 10 – Contact Committee Report, 1988-1990
- Folder 11 – Douglass High School Reunion bills paid, circa 1989
- Folder 12 – Souvenir Book for 1990 reunion and advertising form
- Folder 13 – Educaiton Committee, 1990
- Folder 14 – Publicity, 1990
- Folder 15 – Douglass High School Reunion, circa 1990, order slips
- Folder 16 – Douglass High School Reunion letters to alumni and businesses, 1990
- Folder 17-Registrations, 1990
- Folder 18 – Douglass High School reunion bills and registration, 1990
- Folder 19 – Douglass High Reunion Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting, 1993
- Folder 20 – Reunion 1990 (personals, planning notes)
- Folder 21 – Financial Report, 1993-1994
- Folder 22 – Douglass High School Reunion Incoming Correspondence, 1990
- Folder 23 – Douglass High School Reunion Minutes and Registration Letters, 1993
- Folder 24 – Financial and Insurance Records, 1990-1993
- Folder 25-Proposed Budget (committees), 1990

Folder 26 – Advertisements for yearbook, Douglass High School Reunion, 1990
 Folder 27 – Committee Reports, 1990
 Folder 28 – “Gideon” color photo, 1986
 Folder 29 – Douglass High School Reunion order forms, VHS, 1990
 Folder 30 – Outgoing correspondence, 1989-1990
 Folder 31 – Contact persons by class year, 1990
 Folder 32 – Program committee report, 1990
 Folder 33 – Banquet committee report, 1990
 Folder 34 – Memorial committee report, 1990
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 Folder 54 – Communication to board of directors, 1991
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Box 5

Folder 1 – Diggs, Cecil letters, 1993 (includes class of 1950 newsletters and updates)
 Folder 2 – Douglass High School Reunion Financial Statement, 1993-1996
 Folder 3 – Certificate of recognition, 1993
 Folder 4 – Douglass High School Reunion bills, circa 1993
 Folder 5 – Douglass High School Reunion Steering Committee Reports, 1993
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 Folder 12 – Registration, 1993
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Folder 26 – Letter to Alumni for 1996 Reunion
Folder 27 – Insurance, 1996
Folder 28 – Heritage Alive event organization forms, 1996
Folder 29 – Douglass High School Foundation Incorporated Info. 1996
Folder 30 – Registration, 1996

Box 6

Broken trophy for Coach Z. L. Davis for "Meritorious Services / Douglas High School / 1915 – 39"

Blue and white ribbon for the Douglass High School Reunion, 1993

Blue and white ribbon with a lion or wildcat for the 1993 Douglass High School Centennial Celebration

Plaque, "To C. E. Barnett from 8-B Home Room, 1960"

Badge, "AAA Lieutenant School Safety Patrol"

Plaque, "Tri Cities R/C Racing / presents this plaque to / James Venable / in appreciation for the support / and help with the track"

Plaque, "Douglass High School / Reunion / 1990 / Chairman / Jack Forte"

Plaque, "Frank Green / Douglass High School / Faculty / For Dedicated Service / Presented July 6th, 1996"

Class ring, heavily corroded

Box 7

Two painted figures of Douglass High School on wooden board. Stamps on the bottom of the board say, "1425 Huntington, WV Series Douglass High School" and "My Home Towne, Inc. Williamsport, MD". On the back is printed, "Douglass High School / Established – 1892 Closed—1961 / Douglass High School educated nearly four generations of the city's black you and was a major social and cultural resource. The school became a focal point of the community and has touched the lives of nearly every black family in Huntington. The doors of the high school were closed in 1961. Douglass High School was placed on the National Register of Historical Places in 1985."

Two handmade photo albums (empty) customized with blue and white fabric and lace

Two handmade bears dressed like Douglass High School cheerleaders

Box 8

Certificate issued to the Ladies of the Loyal Order of Bisons' president Beatrice Taylor on November 14th, 1980 for "recognition of outstanding contribution to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and its programs aimed at eliminating racial inequality."

Plaque, 1962, stating that the Loyal Order of Bisons is a Life Member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Photo of four men, one being handed a check. Stamps on the back state, "Foto Studio Brent Ball" and "Engraving Dept. Sep., 9, 1955, HUPCO". "Bisons" is written on the back in pencil.

Water damaged photograph of four women and a man, one woman is receiving a check or certificate. A stamp on the back states, "Engraving Dept. Jan. 19, 1955 HUPCO". "Bisons" and "Pic to Boyd Jarrell" are written in pencil.

Series 2: Clippings and Ephemera

Box 3

- Folder 1 – The Party Taxi Co., clippings about a student who attended Douglass
- Folder 2 – Scans of postcards depicting the "Colored Residents Section" of Huntington, WV
- Folder 3 – "The Ebony Golf Classic", student who attended Douglass
- Folder 4 – John Spotts Article, student who attended Douglass
- Folder 5 – Huntington Centennial, 7/1/1971 Clippings
- Folder 6 – Newspaper special edition, Howard University Centennial, 1967, The Afro-American Newspapers, February 25, 1967, Special Gravure Supplement
- Folder 7 – Correspondence, programs, and ephemera of the Carter G. Woodson Foundation, 1994
- Folder 8 – List of Home Churches in Huntington
- Folder 9 – "Thanks Mrs. Stella Fuller" news clipping
- Folder 11 – "The Blue & White" student newspaper clipping, 1929
- Folder 12 – Program schedule for 1935 extemporaneous speaking and declamatory contests and 1930 commencement invitation
- Folder 13 – "Something Special" clipping copy, 2-9-1978/1973 on Douglass Reunion
- Folder 14 – Douglass High School Band photo
- Folder 15 – Douglass Center – Nettie Douglass
- Folder 16 – Official Contract, West Virginia Athletics Union, Nov. 7, 1935
- Folder 17 – Negative for printing, "Girls Sports Mrs. E. J. Cecil Coach"

Series 3: Student and Original Materials

Box 1

- Folder 1 - Smith, Gertrude (Student), correspondence, photographs, library cards, and clippings documenting Gertrude Smith's time at Douglass High School circa 1930-1931.

- Folder 2 – Geography Test, Undated, features Biblical references
- Folder 3 – Chemistry and other assorted class notebook belonging to Gertrude Smith, 1932
- Folder 4 – Music book, 1924
- Folder 5 – Typewriting book, 20th Century Touch Typewriting by Grisso, undated. Copy belonged to Viola Smith.
- Folder 6 – History composition book, circa 1933, belonging to Gertrude Smith, teacher is Mr. Conley
- Folder 7 – Combined English textbook and composition book belonging to Gertrude Smith, 1932
- Folder 8 – Grade 9A English, Gertrude Smith composition book, 1929-1930, teacher is C. E. Barnett

Box 2

- Folder 1 – Biology notebook of Gertrude Smith, 1930, instructor is S. C. Wade
- Folder 2 – “Exercises in writing and thinking” by J.M. Steadman, Jr., H. Prentice Miller, and Phil S. Grant, used by Gertrude Smith, 1934
- Folder 3 – “At the end of the rainbow” by Lindsey Barbee, Denison’s Select Plays, copyright 1910
- Folder 4 – “Practical Statistics for Teachers” workbook and textbook, 1930, belonged to Cornellia Gertrude Smith
- Folder 5 – Clothing and sewing class notebook belonging to Gertrude Smith, teacher is Miss Smith. Notebook features fabric samples and sketches of clothing.
- Folder 6 – Modern History composition book belonging to Cornelia Gertrude Smith circa 1932, teacher is Miss Nadine Wallman
- Folder 7 – Geometry and other assorted class notebook belonging to Gertrude Smith, undated but circa 1930

Box 3

- Folder 10 – “Popularity Contest” ticket for “Miss Douglass” with a vote for Gloria Matney, September 1947

Box 8

- Oversized book, “Standard graded course of studies for the piano forte in ten grades”, Standard Grade I