

Allen Carnell Lyons Collection (AC35)

Introduction

The Allen Carnell Lyons Collection contains photographs and other items related to the career of tap dancer Allen Carnell Lyons.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Normagene L. Smallwood
Title: Allen Carnell Lyons Collection
Dates: 1938-1992 [Bulk: 1983-1992]
Size: 0.04 linear feet, 1 box
Collection Number: AC35

Donor Information

Donated by Normagene L. Smallwood, 1993.

Citation Note

Allen Carnell Lyons Collection (AC35), Black Archives of Mid-America, Kansas City, Missouri.

Administrative Information

Reproduction Restrictions: Unrestricted.
Access Restrictions: Unrestricted

Biographical Sketch

Allen Carnell Lyons was born August 6, 1917, in Kansas City, Missouri, to Earnest and Daisy Lyons. Lyons started tap dancing at the age of twelve and launched his dance career at the Lincoln Theater and Scott Theater in the 18th and Vine district. During the 1930s and 1940s, Lyons danced with the “Three Rags of Rhythm” and “Three Businessmen of Rhythm.” Lyons traveled throughout the United States with bands and shows, appearing with Milton Berle, Kate Smith, Jackie Gleason and others in the 1950s. He moved to Berlin, Germany, around 1976 and started teaching tap dance, helping to initiate the “tap revival” in Europe. Lyons died September 12, 1992, in Berlin, Germany.

Scope and Content Note

This collection primarily consists of candid and professional photographs of Allen Carnell Lyons. Also included are programs and flyers for workshops featuring Lyons and newspaper and magazine clippings discussing Lyons’ career and death. Additionally, the collection contains three letters received by Normagene L. Smallwood, sister of Allen Carnell Lyons. The collection is arranged by item type.

Collection Inventory

- f. 1 Photographs, 1938-1984
- f. 2 Photographs, 1992
- f. 3 Photographs, n.d.
- f. 4 Programs and flyers, 1983-1992
- f. 5 Clippings, 1984-1992, n.d.
- f. 6 Smallwood correspondence, 1989, 1991

Processed by Michael Sweeney, Collection Librarian, November 2014.