

## Tom Bass Collection (AC87)

### ***Introduction:***

Tom Bass was an internationally renowned horseman who won many awards over multiple decades. This collection contains objects and documents relating to Tom Bass specifically, as well as objects and documents from an event that honored his life and legacy, along with documents from the horse show he helped found, the American Royal.

### ***Descriptive Summary:***

Creator: FIC

Title: Tom Bass Collection

Date Range: 1906-1977

Bulk Dates: 1930-1949, 1985-1997

Size: 0.77 linear feet (2 boxes)

Collection Number: AC87

### ***Donor Information:***

Found in Collection.

### ***Citation Note:***

Tom Bass Collection (AC87), Black Archives of Mid-America, Kansas City, Missouri.

### ***Related Collections:***

Dyan Wilson Collection-AC64

### ***Administrative Information:***

Reproduction Restrictions: Unrestricted.

Access Restrictions: Unrestricted.

### ***Biographical Sketch:***

Tom Bass was a world-renowned horse trainer. He was initially born a slave a few years before the end of slavery in the United States, the son of a slave and her master. He lived in Mexico, Missouri for most of his life, aside from his time in slavery and a short period when he lived in Kansas City, Missouri, during which he met and married his wife, Angie Jewell. He gained fame over time as a horse trainer, eventually being invited to perform in front of the Queen of England

which he declined as well as helping to create what would eventually become the American Royal horse show.

*Scope and Content Note:*

**Series 1: Ephemera**

This series contains artifacts and objects. It contains a book, a horse bit, and some smaller objects that don't fit neatly in other series.

**Series 2: Tom Bass Biographies**

This series consists of many brief biographies of Tom Bass. The biographies are about a page long each.

**Series 3: American Royal Documents**

This series consists of documents related only to the American Royal as an organized event. These include a donation request, advertisements and a schedule for American Royal events.

**Series 4: Black Archives and American Royal Collaboration**

This series consists of documents related to the collaboration between the Black Archives and American Royal to celebrate and honor Tom Bass. There are documents from the Black Archives and American Royal, as well as plans made and items from the reception that came out of the planning.

**Series 5: Correspondence**

This series consists of correspondence, mostly between the Black Archives and American Royal planning what would become a reception honoring Tom Bass' legacy and his then-living descendants.

**Series 6: Pamphlets**

This series contains pamphlets in the collection. Many are pamphlets discussing Tom Bass and his history, as well as invitations to the reception led by the Black Archives and American Royal. There are also some very old pamphlets from an unidentified time period.

**Series 7: Newspapers**

This series contains newspapers and photocopies of newspapers in the collection. Some of them are full newspapers, but the majority are photocopies of newspapers and newspaper clippings. Some discuss Tom Bass and his death, while others focus on his legacy.

**Series 8: Magazines**

This series contains magazines found in the collection. The magazines are largely focused on horse shows or Black cowboys.

**Series 9: Miscellaneous Documents**

This series contains documents that don't fit neatly into other series.

**Series 10: Images**

This series contains photographs and photocopies of photographs. These include images of Tom Bass' horses, unidentified people, as well as some images of horse shows.

**Series 11: Audio/Visual**

This series consists of VHS tapes that discuss Tom Bass and/or the reception honoring him. They are kept separate from the rest of the collection in the Audio/Visual Library.

***Collection Inventory*****Series 1: Ephemera**

- f. 1 Horse Bit
- f. 2 Book-*Tom Bass: Black Horseman*
- f. 3 "Goin' To The Royal!" Ribbons
- f. 4 Ephemera

**Series 2: Tom Bass Biographies**

- f. 5 Tom Bass Biographies

**Series 3: American Royal Documents**

- f. 6 American Royal Documents

**Series 4: Black Archives and American Royal Collaboration**

- f. 7 Black Archives and American Royal Collaboration

**Series 5: Correspondence**

- f. 8 Correspondence

**Series 6: Pamphlets**

- f. 9 Pamphlets
- f. 10 Souvenir Program

**Series 7: Newspapers**

- f. 11 Large Newspapers

f. 12 Photocopies of Newspapers

**Series 8: Magazines**

f. 13 Magazines

**Series 9: Miscellaneous Documents**

f. 14 Miscellaneous Documents

**Series 10: Images**

f. 15 Images

**Series 11: Audio/Visual**

f. 16 Audio/Visual

**Processed by David Rocha, AmeriCorps VISTA, April 2024.**

**Sources:**

Jolley, Laura R. *Tom Bass*. African American Heritage Trail of Kansas City. Accessed April 29, 2024.

<https://aahtkc.org/tom-bass>.