



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Austin Hansen papers

1946-1985

Sc MG 213

Home to Harlem Project, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Summary

Creator: Hansen, Austin, 1910-1996

Title: Austin Hansen papers

Date: 1946-1985

Size: 0.83 linear feet (2 boxes)

Source: Gift, Hansen, Austin, 1984

Revision History: This finding aid was updated by Allison Hughes.

Abstract: The Austin Hansen Papers reflect Hansen's career as a photographer in Harlem, New York, and includes correspondence, news clippings featuring his photographs, photo captions, and programs for special events held at many historic Harlem churches and other social events in Harlem and elsewhere, presumably photographed by Hansen.

Preferred citation: [Item], Austin Hansen papers, Sc MG 213, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Creator History

Austin Hansen (1910-1996) was a Harlem, New York–based photographer. He produced a massive collection of over 500,000 portraits of African American families, clergymen, political leaders, sportsmen and writers. He was noted for his photographs of Harlem architecture, churches, brownstones, professional schools and organizations, as well as his decisive images of the commonplace, celebrations, street scenes, and weddings. Hansen was born in the Virgin Islands where he began his photography career at age fourteen. Following his stint in the U.S. Navy, where he was trained as a combat/war photographer, he opened the A. Hansen Photographic Studio in Harlem.

Scope and Content Note

The Austin Hansen Papers reflect Hansen's career as a photographer in Harlem, New York, and includes correspondence, news clippings featuring his photographs, photo captions, and programs for special events held at many historic Harlem churches and other social events in Harlem and elsewhere, presumably photographed by Hansen. The correspondence discusses Hansen's services at functions for fraternal organizations, businesses, churches, and publications, among others. A significant portion of the collection consists of news clippings featuring Hansen's photographs in such papers as *The New York Amsterdam News*, *The People's Voice*, *The New York Age*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Chicago Defender*, and *The Staten Island Advance*. There are also photo captions as well as programs, announcements, and brochures for commencements and other events. Hansen's role as photographer of numerous events at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine is reflected in photo captions, programs, press releases, and news clippings. Financial records include invoices and client files.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American photographers -- New York (State) -- New York
African Americans -- New York (State)
African Americans -- Social life and customs

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Programs

Names

Hansen, Austin, 1910-1996
A. Hansen Studio (New York, N.Y.)
Cathedral of St. John the Divine (New York, N.Y.)

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-2 Correspondence 1946-1980
- b. 1 f. 3-9 News Clippings 1942-1982
- b. 1 f. 10-11 Photo Captions
Programs
- b. 1 f. 12 Commencements and Events 1949-1977
- b. 1 f. 13 Receptions Honoring Ralph M. Paiewonsky, Governor of U.S. Virgin Islands
1962
- b. 2 f. 1 Black Achievers Dinners 1976-1979
- b. 2 f. 2 Miscellaneous 1947-1985
- b. 2 f. 3 Organizational Announcements and Brochures 1948-1969
Cathedral of St. John the Divine 1955-1961
- b. 2 f. 4 Photo Captions
- b. 2 f. 5 Programs and Press Releases
- b. 2 f. 6 Press Releases
- b. 2 f. 7 News Clippings
- b. 2 f. 8 The National Council - Protestant Episcopal Church Correspondence, Photo
Captions 1955-1958
- b. 2 f. 9 Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture Exhibit - "Hansen's Harlem"
1989
- b. 2 f. 10-11 Printed Material - Miscellaneous
Financial Records
- b. 2 f. 12-13 Invoices and Client Files 1955-1979
- b. 2 f. 14 Miscellaneous 1954-1981