



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

Guide to the

555th Parachute Infantry Association collection

1949-1998 [bulk 1998]

Sc MG 687

Summary

Creator: 555th Parachute Infantry Association

Title: 555th Parachute Infantry Association collection

Date: 1949-1998 [bulk 1998]

Size: 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Gift of Bruce Johnson, 1999.

Abstract: The 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion (PIB), formed in 1944, was the first African American parachute unit to actually use parachutes in the military; the first to become smoke jumpers who fought forest fires; and the first African American battalion to integrate the armed forces just months before President Truman officially directed the integration of the United States military. This collection is comprised of newspaper articles, letters, photocopies of pictures, and lists of members.

Preferred citation: [Item], 555th Parachute Infantry Association collection, Sc MG 687, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Accessioned by P. Williams, May 2001.

Separated Materials:

Transferred to the General Research and Reference Division: books and magazines

Transferred to the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division: audio and moving image materials. For more information, please contact the division at schomburgaudiovisual@nypl.org or 212-491-2270.

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

Creator History

The 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion (PIB), formed in 1944, also known as the Triple Nickels and the Smoke Jumpers, received recognition throughout the armed forces because they were: the first African American parachute unit to actually use parachutes in the military; the first to become smoke jumpers who fought forest fires; and the first African American battalion to integrate the armed forces just months before President Truman officially directed the integration of the United States military. In addition, the Triple Nickels were participants in Operation Fire Fly, a mission to locate and dispose of balloon bombs dropped by the Japanese over parts of the midwestern United States at the start of World War II.

Scope and Content Note

The 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion Association collection is comprised of newspaper articles; copies of letters recognizing the accomplishments of the unit; photocopies of pictures; and lists containing the names of those who served with the Triple Nickels of the Third Battalion. There are also commemorative programs for reunions held in 1998, minutes of a 1998 Executive Board meeting, a treasurer's report, and a list of active members of the Association.

Key Terms

Subjects

Armed Forces -- Minorities
Retired military personnel

Geographic Names

United States -- Airborne troops
United States -- Armed Forces -- African Americans

Names

555th Parachute Infantry Association
United States. Army -- African American troops.
United States. Army -- Parachute troops.
United States. Army. Parachute Infantry Battalion, 555th

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 History, programs, and minutes 1998
- b. 1 f. 2 List of members 1998
- b. 1 f. 3 News clippings 1949-1980