



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

Guide to the

Daphne Weekes collection

1939-1994

Sc MG 741

Summary

Creator: Weekes, Daphne, 1913-2004

Title: Daphne Weekes collection

Date: 1939-1994

Size: 0.83 linear feet (2 boxes)

Source: Gift of Eileen Millett, June 2006.

Abstract: Trinidadian born Daphne Weekes was the first female calypso bandleader in the U.S. The Daphne Weekes collection consists primarily of printed material.

Preferred citation: [Item], Daphne Weekes collection, Sc MG 741, 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 Nurah-Rosalie Jeter, December 2006.

Separated Materials:

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

Creator History

Trinidadian born Daphne Weekes migrated to the United States in 1939. A well-known pianist in Trinidad and Tobago, she was the first female calypso bandleader in the U.S. Her 12-piece band, known as "Daphne Weekes and her Versatile Caribbean Orchestra", was sought after and well traveled, playing in major cities and around the world. In her heyday, she performed three to five engagements or more per week. Weekes was also a featured judge of the steel band competition for the West Indian Day Parade on Eastern Parkway. In her later years, Weekes continued to play for several senior citizen centers in Brooklyn and was featured at the Annual Senior Citizen Day at Lincoln Center.

Scope and Content Note

The Daphne Weekes collection consists primarily of printed material. Included are certificates of appreciation, annotated sheet music, programs, flyers, and clippings for events where she and the band performed. There is also a transcript of an interview Weekes did for the West Indian Carnival Documentation project of the Brooklyn Historical Society, which captures her recollections of her life and work as a bandleader, and her work with the West Indian Day Parade in Brooklyn.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American women entertainers
Calypso musicians -- Trinidad and Tobago
Caribbean Americans -- New York (State) -- New York -- Music
Latin jazz -- New York (State) -- New York
Popular music -- Caribbean Area
Popular music -- New York (State) -- New York
Trinidadians -- New York (State) -- New York -- Music
Women jazz musicians
Women pianists

Occupations

Authors, Black

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Programs
Sheet music

Names

Weekes, Daphne, 1913-2004
Daphne Weekes and her Versatile Caribbean Orchestra

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence 1967-1994
- b. 1 f. 2 Passport
- b. 1 f. 3 Oral history interview transcript for West Indian Carnival Documentation project, Brooklyn History Society, interview by Bill Pincheon
- b. 1 f. 4 Certificates 1939-1992
- b. 1 f. 5 LEGAMEC
- b. 1 f. 6 Sheet music
- b. 1 f. 7 Tickets 1954-1980
- b. 1 f. 8 News letters 1968-1983
- b. 1 f. 9 Programs 1958-1990
- b. 1 f. 10 Clippings
- b. 1 f. 11 Flyers
- b. 1 f. 12 St. Teresa of Avila Parish Church Centennial Restoration Campaign 1987
- b. 1 f. 13 Travel booklets
Souvenir journals 1953-1993
- b. 2 f. 1 A-BI 1953-1985
Includes American Aid Society for West Indies, 4th Annual Dance, April 18, 1953; Ancient Order of Foresters, Marian Circle, No. 15, Testimonial Dinner Honoring Sister Julia Miller, Sister Mabel Stewart, and Sister Doris Whiteman, October 27, 1963; Bedford-Stuyvesant Real Estate Board, "A Tribute to Jesse L. Vann", October 28, 1954; Belizean Girl International Cable T.V. Extravaganza, Tammy Faye Show, PTL, Charlotte, NC 28279; Black Academy of Arts and Letters, 3rd Annual Awards Banquet; and Blenman (Christopher) Senior Center, *Alert and Alive after Sixty Five*, Fifteenth Anniversary Celebration and Luncheon, November 23, 1985.
- b. 2 f. 2 Bri-Chi 1957-1990
Includes British Guiana Benevolent Association, Testimonial Dinner, April 25, 1965; British West Indies War Veterans, 35th Annual Ball, September 28, 1963; Brooklyn Musics Today Festival, June 9-10, 1989; Carnival Development Committee Presents Trinidad's Carnival, 1961; Carnival FESTIVAL, 1981; Celestial Lodge, No. 3, I.O.M.P.U., 38th Annual Ball and Floor Show, December 14, 1957; and Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Omicron Chapter, 35th Annual Luncheon, October 20, 1990.
- b. 2 f. 3 Com-Eve 1966-1983
Includes Community Service Society, Broadway Salutes the RSVP Volunteers, 12th Year Recognition Day, October 27, 1983; Court Trinity No. 10197, A.O.F. Young People's Group, Scholarship Luncheon and Fashion Show, May 1977-May 1978, and 50th Anniversary Dinner and Dance, 1978; Dominica Benevolent Society of N.Y., 62nd Anniversary Dinner Dance, March 20, 1981; Edna Jones's Musical Art Studio Presents Her Artist Students: Autumn Classic Musical Recital, October 23, 1966; and *Everybody's Magazine* and Caribbean House Honors Man and Woman of the Year, June 5, 1982.
- b. 2 f. 4 K-P 1954-1984
Includes Key Women of America, *Twelve Years*, 11th Anniversary Scholarship Luncheon, May 19th, 1984; Kiwanis Club of Jenkins, Kentucky, Thirtieth Annual KIWANIS KAPERS, January 24-25, 1975; Mount Zion Lodge No. 1670, 85th Annual Reception and Prize Drawing, November 25, 1960; National Chaplains Association, 3rd Annual Award Presentation to NCA Regional Commander Dr. Michelle Berry and 86th Anniversary; New Amsterdam Musical Association, Golden Anniversary Entertainment and Dance, November 12, 1954; and Professional League of Virgin Islands, Progress of the Virgin Islands 10th Anniversary, 1959.

Souvenir journals (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 5-6 **Sa 1958-1966**
Includes Saint Agnes Guild Church of St. Mark, 8th Annual Show and Dance, May 14, 1965; Saint Clement's Episcopal Church, 6th Annual Reunion and Dance Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Its Founding, December 2, 1960; Saint Luke's Church Spring Reception, May 22, 1959 and May 18th, 1962; Saint Martin's Church, 30th-32nd Annual Spring Reception Dance Featuring *A Nite in Trinidad*, May 9, 1958-May, 13, 1960; Saint Nicholas Businessmen's Club, Seventh Annual Dance, January 15, 1966; and Saint Paul's Memorial Church Caribbean Festival, undated.
- b. 2 f. 7 **So-Un 1965-1993**
Includes Society of Foreign Consuls in New York Trinidad and Tobago Alliance of U.S.A. 10th Annual Luncheon Dance, 1970; Trinidad and Tobago Folk Arts Institute Presents "A Gala Pan Salute to Kitchener", May 17, 1992, and Gala Awards Dinner, March 19, 1993; Trinidad and Tobago "Gayap" Organization of America, Women's Auxiliary Celebrates the 3rd Anniversary of the Independence of Trinidad and Tobago, September 12, 1965; Trinidad and Tobago United Cultural Association 10th Anniversary, 1972; and Union Congregational Church, Testimonial Dinner in Honor of Rev. C. B. Gladwin Fraser, Sponsored by Pastor's Aid Club, May 1, 1966.
- b. 2 f. 8 **Un-W 1964-1975**
Includes United Benevolent Societies Introductory Dinner, May 22, 1966; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America Anniversary Dinner Dance, April 7, 1972; Utopia Lodge No. 27 A.F and A.M Testimonial Dinner Dance Honoring the Past Masters R.W. Richard Davis, D.G.M., Bro. Robert Gordon, P.M, and Bro. William Lazenby, P.M, February 15, 1975; Victoria United Benevolent Society Golden Anniversary Luncheon, November 9th, 1969; and Windward Islands Progressive League Golden Jubilee Anniversary Dinner, November 1, 1964.