Summary

Creator: Benjamin, Bennie

Title: Bennie Benjamin papers

Date: 1907-1992

Size: 1.42 linear feet (5 boxes)

Source: Donated by Patricia E. and Howard M. Larsen, and Jack N. Albert (executor) in 1997.

Abstract: Claude A. "Bennie" Benjamin was a well-known lyricist of popular songs from 1941 until his death in 1989. This collection comprises biographical information, correspondence, sheet music, printed material, and four scrapbooks. The scrapbooks contain letters, postcards, flyers, notes, cards, photographs, v-mail (faxes), and newspaper and magazine clippings from Decca, Cashbox, Billboard, and the Virgin Island Daily News from 1941 to 1955. The bulk of the collection documents Benjamin's agreements with music publishing companies, artists' agreements with Benjamin's music publishing companies, and sheet music.

Access: Advance notice required.

Conditions Governing Access: All reproduction requests subject to limitations noted in divisional policies.

Conditions Governing Use: Information on copyright available from repository.

Preferred citation: [Item], Bennie Benjamin papers, Sc MG 604, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Creator History
Claude A. "Bennie" Benjamin was born in Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands in November 1907, and relocated to New York City at the age of twenty. He was a well-known lyricist of popular songs from 1941 until his death in 1989. Benjamin, Sol Marcus, and Eddie Seiler wrote the lyrics and music for "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire," a song made famous by the Ink Spots. He also co-authored, with George Weiss, the hit song, "When the Lights Go On Again (All Over the World)." Benjamin and Weiss wrote the musical scores and lyrics for two Walt Disney full length movies, "Fun and Fancy Free" and "Melody Time." He was both a co-owner with singer, Perry Como (1950), and later sole owner (1968) of his own music publishing company.

Key Terms
Subjects
Lyricists -- United States
Popular Music -- 1941-1980
Popular music -- United States
Popular Music -- Writing and publishing -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic
Scrapbooks
Sheet music

Names
Como, Perry, 1912-2001
Marcus, Sol, 1912-1976
Powell, Adam Clayton, Jr., 1908-1972
Seiler, Eddie, 1911-1952
Weiss, George
Container List

b. 1 f. 1  Biographical Information 1907-1989
b. 1 f. 2  Memorial Book
b. 1 f. 3  Correspondence 1957-1989
b. 1 f. 4  American Guild of Authors/Composers - Copyrights, Contracts 1975-1979
b. 1 f. 5  Bennie Benjamin Music, Inc 1979-1983
b. 1 f. 6  Chappell Music Company 1975-1988
b. 1 f. 7  Laurel Music Corporation 1949-1955
b. 1 f. 8  Leeds Music Corporation 1944-1946
b. 1 f. 9  Oxford Music Corporation 1947-1948
b. 1 f. 10 Santly-Joy Inc 1946-1948
b. 2 f. 1  Valando Music Corporation 1951-1954
b. 2 f. 2  Sundry Companies 1945-1954
b. 2 f. 3  List of Songs undated
b. 2 f. 4  Recording Artists undated
    Programs
b. 2 f. 5  Bennie Benjamin 1978-1992
b. 2 f. 6  Other Programs 1983, 1989, undated
b. 2 f. 7  Musical Play of BB by Edward Earle undated
b. 2 f. 8  Press Releases 1964
    Printed Matter
b. 2 f. 9  Newspaper Clippings 1959-1983
b. 2 f. 10 Newsletters 1987, undated
    b. 3  Sheet Music 1941-1966
    Scrapbooks
b. 4  1925, 1941-1955
b. 5  1949-1952