

BENJAMIN A. OSBORNE COLLECTION, 1928-1986

Collection #
M 0162
OM 0328

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Processed by:
Wilma L. Gibbs
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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 manuscript box and 2 oversize folders
COLLECTION DATES:	Inclusive 1928-1986; Bulk 1972-1986
PROVENANCE:	Dr. Muriel Osborne Wellmon, Washington, D.C., 27 February 1987
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the Indiana Historical Society.
ALTERNATE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
RELATED HOLDINGS:	None
ACCESSION NUMBER:	1987.0660

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Benjamin Augustus Osborne (15 November 1898-30 August 1986) was born in the South American nation British Guiana (now Guyana). While a young man, he moved to Indianapolis. He became a naturalized citizen in 1927. He was a graduate of the United States College of Chiropractic Medicine. During the late 1930s he served as a part-time deputy sheriff. From 1935 to 1943, he was a probation officer in Marion County Criminal Court. Upon completing the term of Robert E. Murray, he was elected Center Township trustee in November 1966, a position that he held until his death.

As Democratic township trustee, Dr. Osborne's career was plagued by numerous controversies, many of them along party lines. He sought additional funds to replenish an overspent budget. An advocate for his poor relief constituents, he often suggested using public works programs (such as those created during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration) to train the poor and help them become useful citizens.

Dr. Osborne served in the Merchant Marines. He was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Indianapolis Urban League, and the National Medical Society.

Sources: Materials in the collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection is comprised of 1 manuscript box and w oversize folders of material that spans 1928-1986. Folder 1 contains a small amount of correspondence, mostly related to Benjamin A. Osborne's tenure as Center Township trustee in Marion County, Indiana from 1966-1986. In folders 2-6 the collection also includes Osborne's United States Passport; 1976 personal calendar; writings in Osborne's hand including speeches, a press release, possibly a letter to an editor, and a poem; and awards. Osborne suffered a heart attack in 1979 and during his absence from the trustee's office, his staff prepared a scrapbook (folder 7) with photographs and captions indicating their desire for his return. Folders 8, 16, 17, and 18 include a drawing of a Center Township Trustee Project and several photographs of the office complex.

Osborne was honored posthumously at the Black History Month Achievement Banquet and Ball at the Indianapolis Convention Center on 27 February 1987. A program booklet commemorating this event is in folder 9. Obituaries and other newsclippings are in folder 10.

Folder 19 includes photographs of Osborne with Hubert Humphrey and Andrew Young. There is also a 1966 photograph of

Osborne being sworn in as Center Township trustee. In 1980 Osborne hosted First Lady Rosalynn Carter and Billy Graham at the Center Township Trustee Office. Folder 20 contains photographs of that occasion, along with pictures of other political gatherings. There are photographs of Osborne with Mayor William H. Hudnut, III, Senator Julia Carson, Graham, President and Mrs. Carter, and Carter cabinet member, Patricia Roberts Harris. Folder 22 includes a photograph of a 1970 United Nations' reception for the Prime Minister of Guyana.

BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

BOX 1: CORRESPONDENCE; CENTER TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE OFFICE

Folder Contents

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Correspondence, 1928-1986 |
| 2 | Passport, 1984 |
| 3 | Calendar, 1976 |

- 4 Speeches
- 5 (ART) Plaque
- 6 (OM 0328) Awards, 1972, 1977 (folders 1, 2)
- 7 Scrapbook, 1979
- 8 (VC) Drawing, Center Township Trustee Project
- 9 Black History Month Program, 1987
- 10 Newsclipping
- 11 OVC) Benjamin A. Osborne (b/w)
- 12 (VC) Benjamin A. Osborne, et. al (b/w)
- 13 (VC) Benjamin A. Osborne, et. al (color)
- 14 (VC) Family homes (b/w)
- 15 (VC) Groups, unidentified (color)
- 16 VC) Center Township Trustee Building-Interior (color)
- 17 (VC) Center Township Trustee Building-Exterior (color)
- 18 VC) Center Township Trustee Building-Schematics (color)
- 19 VC) Political gatherings (b/w)
- 20 (VC) Political gatherings (color)
- 21 (VC) Jimmy Carter (b/w)
- 22 (VC) United Nations Reception, 1970 (b/w)

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's [online catalog](#)
2. Click on the "Local Catalog" icon.
3. Search for the collection by its call number, using the letter or letters designation and **four** digits (e.g., M 0715, SC 2234).
4. When you find the collection, go to the "Holdings" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.

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