

Collection #
SC 3272

STARLIGHT MUSICALS RECORDS ADDITION, 1947–2007

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 1 manuscript folder

COLLECTION
DATES: 1947–2007

PROVENANCE: Margot L. Eccles, Indianapolis, IN; March 2007

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE
FORMATS:

RELATED
HOLDINGS: Starlight Musicals Records M 0955

ACCESSION
NUMBER: 2007.0058

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL SKETCH

For almost 50 years, Starlight Musicals entertained Indianapolis with summer musical theater productions and concerts. Started in 1944 as Stars Under the Stars, the company later changed its name to the Indianapolis Theatre Association, then to Starlight Musicals. Productions were performed at the State Fairgrounds and the Butler Bowl. In 1955, Starlight Musicals relocated to the open-air Hilton U. Brown Theater at Butler University. For many years, Starlight Musicals functioned as a resident professional musical theater company. By 1980, the organization preferred to book traveling shows instead. However, by 1989, Starlight Musicals returned to its roots as a resident company. Over the years, Starlight Musicals attracted top-notch talent to Indianapolis. Performers and actors have included Yul Brenner, Carol Burnett, Jack Benny, Liberace, Liza Minelli, Dick Van Dyke, Bob Newhart, Joan Rivers, Wayne Newton, Debbie Reynolds, and Tony Randall to name just a few. During the 1980s and 1990s, Starlight Musicals struggled with financial difficulties. In 1993, facing slow ticket sales and a difficult financial situation, Starlight Musicals closed shortly before the start of the summer season and filed for bankruptcy.

Margot Lacy Eccles(1936–2012) served on Starlight Musicals board of directors for many years and donated this collection to the Indiana Historical Society. Ms. Eccles attended Tufts University and studied at the American Theater Wing of NYC and the University of Paris. Vice President of Communication and Shareholder Relations and board member at LDI, Ms. Eccles still found time to be involved in her community. She served as the Chair of the Lacy foundation, acted as the director for the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, sat on Franklin College’s board of trustees, and was a member of the Indiana Symphony Society, the Junior Achievement of Central Indiana and United Way of Central Indiana. Ms. Eccles also served on the Heartland Film Festival board of governors and was a member of the Indiana Black Expo Cultural Pavilion Gala Committee and the Race Relations Leadership Network Committee. In 2007, she won the 400 Bricklayer Award from the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Sources:

Bodenhamer, David J. and Robert G. Barrows. *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*.

Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

LDI Ltd., LLC. “Our Executive Team.” www.ldiltd.com. Accessed March 9, 2008.

Theater. Clippings file. Indiana Historical Society.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection addition contains materials related to Starlight Musicals and Stars Under the Stars. This includes an email from Howard Caldwell to Margot Eccles, a listing of starlight musicals as compiled by Howard Caldwell, assorted programs and playbills, articles and press releases, and a teleprompter script for a story on Starlight's 40th Anniversary.

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CONTAINER

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