



Smithsonian

Anacostia Community Museum

A Finding Aid to the Joy McLean Bosfield
papers, 1923-1995, bulk dates 1945-1985 in
the Anacostia Community Museum Archives

Kim L. Dixon

February 2010

Anacostia Community Museum Archives
1901 Fort Place, SE
Washington, D.C. 20020
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<http://www.anacostia.si.edu/Collections/ArchiveCollection>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Anacostia Community Museum Archives
Title:	Joy McLean Bosfield papers
Date:	1923-1995 (bulk 1945-1985)
Identifier:	ACMA.06-008
Creator:	Bosfield, Joy McLean , 1924-1999
Extent:	3.41 Linear feet (4 boxes)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Joy McLean Bosfield papers, which dates from 1923 to 1995 and measures 3.41 linear feet, documents the professional life of Joy McLean Bosfield. The papers are comprised of personal and professional correspondence, concert programs, contracts, newspaper clippings, photographs, radio scripts, and record albums.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Joy McLean papers were donated to the Anacostia Community Museum in September 1985.

Provenance

The Joy McLean papers were donated to the Anacostia Community Museum in 1985 by Joy McLean.

Processing Information

The records were processed in February 2010 by Kim L. Dixon.

Preferred Citation

The Joy McLean Bosfield papers, Anacostia Community Museum, Smithsonian Institution, gift of Joy McLean Bosfield.

Restrictions

The collection is open for unrestricted research. Use requires an appointment.

Ownership and Literary Rights

The Joy McLean papers are the physical property of the Anacostia Community Museum. Literary and copyright belong to the author/creator or their legal heirs and assigns. Rights to work produced during the normal course of Museum business resides with the Anacostia Community Museum. For further information, and to obtain permission to publish or reproduce, contact the Museum Archives.

Biographical Note

Joy McLean Bosfield was born on January 27, 1924 to John and Florence Mearimore. Her mother, an immigrant from Demerara, Guiana, married McLean's father, a prominent New York businessman, in March of 1923 in New Jersey. She lived with her family in Paramus, New Jersey until 1940, when she graduated from Ridgewood High School. During that same year McLean was accepted to the prestigious Hunter College, in New York. Her mother moved with her to New York City where they lived with Mrs. Mearimore's older brother. During her time in New York, McLean developed important relationships that helped shape her professionalism and creativeness.

On February 26, 1945, McLean performed in her first recital at St. Martin's Little Theatre. It was the beginning of a long and distinguished career as a soprano opera singer. Three years after graduating and making her debut, she went on to perform at Carnegie Hall. In June of 1948, McLean married Charles McLean and moved to England. Mr. McLean, originally from British Guiana, wished to study law at London University, while Ms. McLean continued to develop her career by working for the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) as a solo soprano for several of their programs.

In 1952 Ms. McLean toured with an American company of Porgy and Bess. Through the production she travelled all over the world including eastern and western Europe and the Middle East. When she returned to the United States, McLean joined several musicals and continued to give recitals and public appearances. At some point, McLean married Samuel Bosfield and began being known as McLean Bosfield. She claimed the name change reflected her many years as a public figure and the importance of the associated reputation it generated.

Later in life, McLean moved to Washington D.C. with her husband where she continued to work on her career by giving recitals and performing as a piano accompanist. She also began working for the Frederick Wilkerson Studio of Voice as a vocal coach. After the death of Wilkerson, McLean took over the studio in the 1980s. She called it the McLean Bosfield Vocal Studio. Besides vocal training she also produced public recitals for her students. The final student concert of the studio was held on March 17, 1985. It was not only the final concert for the studio (Ms. McLean retired and closed the studio in 1985) but it would also be Ms. McLean's final public performance. With the death of her husband, Samuel Bosfield, and her mother in 1983 and 1984 McLean found no reason to stay in D.C.

She moved to Chapala, Mexico in 1985 after reconnecting with an old family friend she knew when she lived in New York City while attending college. Upon moving to Mexico, McLean married her long time friend, Bill Jackson who was several years her senior and had moved to Chapala years earlier with his deceased first wife. Jackson and McLean spent several fruitful years together, participating in community theater productions and other community functions until his death in 1991 at the age of 91. On April 4, 1999, Joy McLean Bosfield died.

Scope and Contents

The collection which dates from 1923 to 1995, bulk dates 1945-1985, documents the professional career of Joy McLean Bosfield. The papers document Ms. McLean's professional career as a singer and vocal teacher through photographs and recital programs. In particular, there are two scrapbooks which focus on Ms. McLean's employment with a traveling theater production of Porgy and Bess. There are also radio scripts from Ms. McLean's stint with the British Broadcasting Corporation and phonograph records that captured her vocal talent.

Arrangement

The papers are arranged into five series. Folders are arranged alphabetically within series, while documents are organized chronologically. Undated material appears in the front of folders. Oversized material appears in the Career Series.

- Series 1: Biographical Files
- Series 2: Career
- Series 3: Correspondence
- Series 4: Music Collection
- Series 5: Photographs

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

African American singers
African American theater
British Broadcasting Corporation
Gershwin, George, 1898-1937. Porgy & Bess

Types of Materials:

Certificates
Clippings
Contracts
Correspondence
Financial records
Phonograph records
Photographic prints
Programs (documents)
Radio scripts
School records
Scrapbooks

Names:

Bosfield, Joy McLean , 1924-1999

Places:

Chapala (Jalisco, Mexico)
London (England)
Washington (D.C.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical files, 1991, 1959

1 Folder

Scope and Contents: This series contains material related to the private life of Joy McLean. The folder comprises identification cards from professional organizations and her time spent in Europe traveling with the Porgy and Bess production in the 1950s. There is very little in way of biographical material in the collection; however, there are newspaper clippings referring to the marriage of McLean's parents, her marriage to Charles McLean, as well as other various personal material in two scrapbooks located in the Career series.

Box 1, Folder 1 Personal Effects, 1959, 1991, undated

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Series 2: Career, 1923-1995

2.91 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series contains material related to Ms. McLean's extensive singing career. The series includes programs from her multiple recitals, phonographic recordings of her singing, and a teaching certificate. There are also two scrapbooks created and maintained by Ms. McLean, which document her time with the traveling Porgy and Bess production company as well as programs and articles referring to her debut recital while in college.

Box 1, Folder 2	Awards, 1974, 1971, 1967 [oversize]
Box 1, Folder 3	BBC Scripts, 1952
Box 1, Folder 4	Broadside--Eljos Orchestra, Sunday 6th April, circa 1952 [oversize]
Box 1, Folder 5	Certificate--National Association of Singing, Inc., 1969
Box 1, Folder 6	Clippings, 1956-1995, undated
Box 1, Folder 7	Contacts, 1973, 1964, undated
Box 1, Folder 8	Financial Records, 1979, circa 1976-1977, 1963
Box 1, Folder 9	Programs, 1952-1993, undated
Box 1, Folder 10	Programs--Lakeside Little Theatre, 1991-1994
Box 1, Folder 11	Programs--McLean Bosfield Vocal Studio, 1985
Box 1, Folder 12	Programs--Miscellaneous, 1977, 1974, 1972, undated
Box 1, Folder 13	Scrapbooks--Book I, 1923-1964 [oversize]
Box 1, Folder 14	Scrapbooks--Book II, 1945-1985 [oversize]
Box 1, Folder 15	Vitae, 1973, 1963
Box 2, Folder 1	Record Album-- "Depreis Le Jour" From Louise, 1944
Box 2, Folder 2	Record Album-- "The Lord's Prayer," by Joy McLean and Billy Pilgrim, 1950
	Oversize
Box 3, Folder 1	Awards, 1971, 1974, 1967

Bin 3, Folder 2 Broadside--Eljos Orchestra, Sunday 6th April, circa 1952

Box 3, Folder 2 [Scrapbooks--Book I, 1923-1964](#)

Box 4 [Scrapbooks--Book II, 1945-1985](#)

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Series 3: Correspondence, 1952-1985

1 Folder

Scope and Contents: This series contains personal and business correspondence generated throughout Ms. McLean's life. Although this series holds the majority of correspondence in the collection there are a few pieces located in the scrapbooks created and maintained by Ms. McLean.

Box 1, Folder 16 Business and Personal, 1952-1985

[General letter to "original cast" member from Norman Scribner, 1972
February 16](#)

1 Letter (11 x 8 1/2 inches.)

Genre/Form: Correspondence -- 20th century

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Series 4: Music Collection, undated

0.25 Linear feet

Scope and Contents: This series contains phonograph records collected by Ms. McLean.

Box 2, Folder 3	"The Blind Ploughman/Tomorrow," undated
Box 2, Folder 4	"Come O' Come/The Birds-Pans," undated Notes: [not to be played]
Box 2, Folder 5	"For You Alone/Because," undated
Box 2, Folder 6	"I'm Falling in Love with Someone/Tramp, Tramp, Tramp Along the Highway," undated
Box 2, Folder 7	" My Hero/Kiss Me Again," undated
Box 2, Folder 8	"None But the Lonely Heart/Pilgrim's Song," undated
Box 2, Folder 9	"Rose-Marie/The Mounties," undated
Box 2, Folder 10	"Sincerely Yours/Melancholy," undated
Box 2, Folder 11	" The Song from Moulin Rouge/Swedish Rhapsody," undated
Box 2, Folder 12	"Trees/By the Waters of Minnetonka," undated
Box 2, Folder 13	"Were You There/I Know the Lord has Laid His Hands on Me," undated

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Series 5: Photographs, 1977, 1985-1987, 1994

1 Folder

Scope and Contents: This series contains photographs of Joy McLean and various people associated with her. There are also framed images of Ms. McLean with cast members from the production of Porgy and Bess, along with publicity shots. Photographs also appear in the two scrapbooks located in the Career series.

Box 1, Folder 17 Photographs of McLean and others, 1985-1987, 1977, 1952, 1994, undated

[Spring Song Festival, 1985](#)

1 Photograph (1 color photograph; 6 x 4 inches.)

Creator: Farmer, Sharon, 1951-

Names: Bosfield, Joy McLean , 1924-1999

Topic: Concerts

Place: Washington (D.C.) -- District of Columbia -- United States

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