



Smithsonian

National Postal Museum

Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band Scrapbooks and Photographs Collection

Mitch Toda, Head Archivist

May 14, 2024

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Postal Museum Archives
Title:	Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band Scrapbooks and Photographs Collection
Date:	1890-2020
Identifier:	NPMA.2023.4
Creator:	Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band
Extent:	4.94 Cubic feet (Fifteen (15) flat boxes (12 x 15.5 x 3 in.) and one (1) oversize folder)
Language:	English .
Summary:	The National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 40, was established in Cleveland, Ohio, on October 6, 1889 as the Cleveland Letter Carriers' Mutual Benefit Association. While a national association did not exist at this time, representatives of the Cleveland association met with representatives of other independent associations in 1890 to form the National Association of Letter Carriers. Cleveland received its official charter from the national organization on August 28, 1890 and the Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band was established the same year. This collection consists of fifteen scrapbooks and six oversize photographs. The scrapbooks contain photographs, newspaper clippings, correspondence, brochures, pamphlets, programs and other related ephemera which document the band's performances, activities, and members. The oversize photographs consists of group portraits of the band.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Group portrait - Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band - State convention, Akron, Ohio, 1987. Photo by Daniel Mainzer.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Donated by Jeanne A. Tischler, through Judy and Tom Herbert, 2023.

Related Materials

In addition to the materials in this collection, badges, a NALC banner, drums, uniforms and hats from the Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band were donated to the National Postal Museum (See accession 2023.2019).

Additionally, the museum's collections also contain a number of [other items related to Letter Carriers' Bands](#) .

Processing Information

Processed by Mitch Toda, Head Archivist, April-May 2024

Preferred Citation

Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band Scrapbooks and Photographs Collection, NPMA.2023.4, National Postal Museum, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Access to original archival materials is by appointment only. Researchers must submit request for appointment in writing. Please direct reference inquiries to the National Postal Museum Archives: NPM_Archives@si.edu.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Letter carriers' bands associated with union branches date back to the nineteenth century. The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) members and band participants believed letter carriers' bands could "[kindle] the union spirit at NALC conventions and rallies" through music. Updates from various cities published in *The Postal Record* show friendly competition grew with the creation of local bands.

The National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 40, was first established in Cleveland, Ohio, on October 6, 1889 as the Cleveland Letter Carriers' Mutual Benefits Association. While a national association did not exist at this time, representatives of the Cleveland association met with representatives of other independent associations in 1890 to form the National Association of Letter Carriers. Cleveland received its official charter from the national organization on August 28, 1890 and the Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band was established the same year. Organized by William Llewellyn, the early band consisted of a brass band with 26 pieces. Its first Drum Major was William Kirby and another early band member was Francis J. Horner.

After the NALC convention in 1890 until the fall of 1899 the band struggled along, supported by dues and honorary memberships until it became untenable to continue. At the time the members of the band enlisted as a whole in the 5th Regiment Ohio National Guard under Colonel C. X. Zimmerman, an ex-letter carrier. They were honorably discharged on February 20, 1902; re-enlisted on July 1, 1902, and again honorably discharged February 20, 1904. For the next three years, due to a variety of difficulties and obstacles, the activities of the band were at an all time low, but in the summer of 1907 a push was made to reassert the group and the Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band was reorganized to function as the band seen today. In September of 1907, the first rehearsal was called with the following members present: William Llewellyn, President; Thomas Edwards, Secretary-Treasurer; William J. Lucas, Director; F. Amsberg; B. H. Butler; Joe David; W. F. Jacobs; Tom Edwards; W. Giesel; J. C. Mangan; Samuel Mott; H. Rimmel; J. C. Thompson; F. H. Eger; Frank Horner; F. H. Nelson; F. Pekar; W. Wallace; _____ Burke; _____ Betz; and Art Driggs.

Letter carriers' bands had become such a large part of the NALC that by the 1911 St. Paul Convention a National Association of Letter Carriers' Bands was created. The founding members were the Boston, New York, Brooklyn, Cleveland, and Chicago Letter Carriers' Bands. The Association was organized with three objectives in mind: To promote measures for the musical education of its members; the improvement of the musical features of the conventions of the NALC; and to unite, fraternally and socially, all the letter carriers' bands of the United States for their mutual benefit and enjoyment.

Throughout the twentieth century, bands performed at the biennial NALC conventions as part of multi-day programs. According to the donor of this collection, Jeanne A. Tischler, the union covered all travel and accommodation expenses, making band membership an opportunity for members to tour and connect with postal workers across the country in a way they might not have done on their own. Additionally drum majorettes became a part of the band as it expanded to encompass more members.

The Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band's most significant performance is at NALC conventions, but over time its interests expanded to performing at local and regional events, performing at charitable institutions, and taking part in civic and patriotic affairs in Cleveland and around the country. During non-NALC convention years, the band performs at the Ohio State Association. To this day the band continues to perform locally in the Cleveland area.

For more information about Letter Carriers' Bands see the "Bands" section of the National Postal Museum research article, "[Postal Employees After Hours](#)".

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of fifteen scrapbooks and six oversize photographs. The scrapbooks contain photographs, newspaper clippings, correspondence, brochures, pamphlets, programs and other related ephemera which document the band's performances, activities, and members. The oversize photographs consist of group portraits of the band.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged by format and then chronologically within.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Bands (Music)
- Drum majorettes
- Letter carriers
- Letter carriers -- United States
- Parades
- Scrapbooks

Names:

- Amsberg, F.
- Butler, B. H.
- Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band
- David, Joe
- Driggs, Art
- Edwards, Thomas
- Edwards, Tom
- Eger, F. H.
- Giesel, W.
- Horner, Francis J.

Horner, Frank
Jacobs, W. F.
Kirby, William
Llewellyn, William
Lucas, William J.
Mangan, J. C.
Mott, Samuel
National Association of Letter Carriers (U.S.)
National Association of Letter Carriers (U.S.). Branch 40 (Cleveland, Ohio)
National Association of Letter Carriers (U.S.). Convention
Nelson, F. H.
Ohio. National Guard
Pekar, F.
Rommel, H.
Thompson, J. C.
Tischler, Jeanne A.
Wallace, W.
Zimmerman, C. X.

Places:

Cleveland (Ohio)
United States -- Social life and customs

Container Listing

Box 1, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 1, 1890-1953
Box 2, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 2, 1954-1959
Box 3, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 3, 1960s
Box 4, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 4, 1970s
Box 5, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 5, 1980-1985
Box 6, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 6, 1986-1987
Box 7, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 7, 1988-1989
Box 8, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 8, 1990
Box 9, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 9, 1991-1995
Box 10, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 10, 1996-1999
Box 11, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 11, 2000-2005
Box 12, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 12, 2006-2007
Box 13, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 13, 2008-2009
Box 14, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 14, 2010-2015
Box 15, Item 1	Scrapbook - Volume 15, 2016-2020
Map-folder 1	Photographs, 1909-1989
Map-folder 1, Item 1	Group portrait - Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band - NALC Convention, St. Paul, Minnesota (two copies), 1909
Map-folder 1, Item 2	Group portrait - Letter carrier bands - NALC Convention, Cleveland, Ohio - Photographer: The Heiser Co., 1935
Map-folder 1, Item 3	Group portrait - Letter carrier bands - NALC Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (two copies), 1939
Map-folder 1, Item 4	Group portrait - Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band - State convention, Akron, Ohio - Photographer: Daniel Mainzer, August 21, 1987

Image(s): Group portrait - Cleveland Letter Carrier Band - State convention,
Akron, Ohio - Photographer: Daniel Mainzer

Map-folder 1, Item 5

Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band - Veterans Memorial Bridge dedication on
Veterans Day, Saturday, November 11, 1989

Map-folder 1, Item 6

Group portrait - Cleveland Letter Carriers' Band - NALC Convention, Atlantic
City, New Jersey, August 21-27, 1994