Table of Contents

Collection Overview......................................................................................................... 1
Administrative Information .............................................................................................. 1
Historical Note.................................................................................................................. 1
Introduction....................................................................................................................... 1
Descriptive Entry.............................................................................................................. 2
Names and Subject Terms ............................................................................................. 2
Container Listing............................................................................................................. 3
Collection Overview

Repository: Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Creator: Pearis, Ella B. Howard. interviewee
Title: Ella B. Howard Pearis Interview
Dates: 1986
Quantity: (Reference copies).

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation
Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9540, Pearis, Ella B. Howard. interviewee, Ella B. Howard Pearis Interview

Access Restriction
(1) Restricted; (2) see finding aid for details on restrictions; (3) use of this record unit requires prior arrangement with the Archives staff.

Historical Note

Ella B. Howard Pearis is a fourth generation resident of Anacostia in Washington, D. C. She comes from a family of community activists, and, through her own involvement in organizations such as the Southeast Service Center of the American Red Cross, has carried on that tradition. Pearis is a founding member of the Anacostia Historical Society, a group which has worked closely with the Smithsonian's Neighborhood Museum.

Begun as the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum in 1967, an experimental bureau of the Smithsonian Institution, ANM was the first community-based institution founded under the aegis of a major institution and became the prototype for other small neighborhood museums. It was developed as part of a broader plan to encourage museum access to a diverse cultural and socioeconomic group of museum goers. As a community-based museum, ANM sought to address issues of importance to its local constituency, as reflected in early exhibits. With the expansion of its mission, the museum's research and exhibits programs came to reflect its commitment to African American history and culture. In 2006, it was renamed the Anacostia Community Museum to reflect its role as a model community museum.

Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of...
its staff. Program staff conduct interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also interviews conducted by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Pearis was interviewed for the Oral History Collection because of her affiliation with the Anacostia Historical Society and Anacostia Neighborhood Museum.

Descriptive Entry

Pearis was interviewed in 1986 by Sabine K. Lovett of the University of Maryland as part of a class project. This interview covers her childhood, education, and career in Washington, D.C., and her work with the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum and Anacostia Historical Society.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
- African American history
- African Americans -- Washington (D.C.)
- History

Types of Materials:
- Audiotapes
- Interviews
- Oral history

Names:
- Anacostia Historical Society
- Anacostia Museum. Anacostia Neighborhood Museum
- Anacostia Neighborhood Museum
- Anacostia Neighborhood Museum. Anacostia Museum
- Lovett, Sabine K. interviewer.
- Pearis, Ella B. Howard
- United States. Bureau of Engraving and Printing
Container Listing

Box 1

Transcript of Interview

Interview 1: 4 December 1986

Audio Recording of Interview

Interview 1: 4 December 1986