Table of Contents

Collection Overview ................................................................. 1
Administrative Information ....................................................... 1
Historical Note ........................................................................ 1
Introduction ............................................................................. 2
Descriptive Entry ...................................................................... 2
Names and Subjects ............................................................... 2
Collection Overview

Repository: Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title: Oral history interviews with Louise Daniel Hutchinson
Identifier: Record Unit 9558
Date: 1987
Extent: 4 audiotapes (reference copies).
Creator: Hutchinson, Louise Daniel, interviewee
Language: English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation
Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9558, Oral history interviews with Louise Daniel Hutchinson

Use Restriction
Restricted. For information about use of this interview, contact SIHistory@si.edu.

Historical Note

Louise Daniel Hutchinson (1928- ), was Director of the Research Center at the Anacostia Museum from 1974 to 1986. Born on 3 June 1928 in Ridge, Maryland, she grew up in Washington, D.C. Her parents, Constance Eleanor Hazel and Victor Hugo Daniel, were teachers and active in African American community affairs. She attended Miner Teachers College, Prairie View A & M College and Howard University, where she received a B.A. degree in 1951 and pursued additional graduate studies in sociology. After her marriage to Ellsworth W. Hutchinson, Jr., she taught as a substitute teacher while raising their six children.

In 1971, Hutchinson began her Smithsonian career as a researcher at the National Portrait Gallery [NPG], where she worked with the William E. Harmon and Winold Reiss collections of portraits of African Americans and on the exhibit, *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*. After her 1972 appointment as an Education Research Specialist, she focused on the creation of cooperative programs between the NPG and the District of Columbia Public Schools and the development of a curriculum on the history of the District of Columbia.

Hutchinson left the Smithsonian in 1973 to become an Education Research Specialist for the National Park Service at the Frederick Douglass Home in Anacostia. At the Douglass Home, she trained staff to use artifacts and historical writings to enhance interpretation of the site.

In 1974, Hutchinson was appointed Historian and Director of Research at the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum [renamed Anacostia Community Museum (ACM) in 2006]. At the museum, Hutchinson was
responsible for research in support of exhibits, including The Anacostia Story: 1608-1930, Out of Africa: From West African Kingdoms to Colonization, and Black Women: Achievements Against the Odds. During her tenure, Hutchinson also worked to define a mission for the ANM; increase dialogue with the museums on the Mall; build a permanent collection; establish close ties with the local community; and create exhibits which responded to community needs and the changing mission of the ANM. She developed the ANM’s program of recording community history through oral history and was a catalyst in the formation of the Anacostia Historical Society. Hutchinson retired from the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum in 1986.

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.

Hutchinson was interviewed for the Oral History Collection because of her pioneering career in black history at the National Portrait Gallery and Anacostia Neighborhood Museum. Additional information about Hutchinson can be found in the Records of the Anacostia Community Museum, which are also housed in the Smithsonian Institution Archives. Hutchinson’s personal papers will be available to researchers at the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama.

Descriptive Entry

The Louise Daniel Hutchinson Interviews were conducted for the Smithsonian Institution Archives in January and July of 1987 by Anne McPherson Rogers, a graduate student at the University of Maryland, as part of course requirements for an oral history seminar. The interviews discuss Hutchinson’s family history, youth, education, work at the NPG and Frederick Douglass Home, career at the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, and reminiscences of colleagues such as John R. Kinard, S. Dillon Ripley, and Lawrence Erskine Thomas, c. 1928-1986. Box 1 contains the transcripts of the interviews and cassette copies of the original reel-to-reel recordings. They consist of 3.0 hours of tape, 77 pages of transcript, and occupy 0.07 linear meters of shelf space. The interviews are open to researchers but may not be cited, quoted or reproduced without the permission of Louise Daniel Hutchinson prior to 2025.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
- African Americans -- History
- African Americans -- Washington (D.C.)
- Art
- Education
- 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
- Frederick Douglass Home
- Hutchinson, Louise Daniel
- Kinard, John, 1936-1989
- National Portrait Gallery (Smithsonian Institution)
- Ripley, S. Dillon (Sidney Dillon), 1913-2001
- Rogers, Anne M. interviewer
- United States. National Park Service