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Manuscript Collection

Finding Aid

➤ William M. Jones Papers, 1929 to 1996 ◀
UM 90

Size: .25 linear feet

Provenance: William M. Jones, Los Angeles, CA; 3/12/96

Access: Open

Related Collections:

Processing Note:

Condition: Good

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Location: R 2/S B

Completed by: Barbara Floyd, May 1st 1996

Biographical/Historical Sketch

William M. (Bill) Jones was born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1914. He attended Washington Elementary School, Woodward High School, and graduated from Libbey High School in 1931. During his high school years, he played on the city league championship basketball teams at Woodward in 1928 and 1929. He married Geraldine V. Davis (1915-1994) in 1932.

Jones entered the University of Toledo in 1932. While attending school, he worked nights at the Ft. Meigs Hotel in Toledo, attended school during the day, and played and practiced basketball after classes. He often walked home after basketball, sleeping only a few hours before returning to work. Despite these difficulties, he played basketball for UT his sophomore year under Coach Dave Connelly. He was the leading scorer in 1933-34, although he only played one semester, and was awarded a letter that year. He was forced to quit school in 1934 due to economic hardships.

Jones worked to support his family between 1934 and 1936, but was able to return to UT in the second semester on 1936. He again joined the basketball team, then coached by Harold "Andy" Anderson.

The 1936-37 basketball team won 18 games and lost just 4, due to the ability of Jones and his teammates Charles "Chuck" Chuckovits, Dale Crow, Al Alvarez, Willard Swihart, and Charles Cupp. The team gained a regional and state reputation and was honored with an appreciation dinner sponsored by Toledo's newspapers. Jones was awarded his second letter in 1937, and a third in 1938. Unfortunately, because Jones had received his first letter as a sophomore and the university only allowed players to earn three career letters, he was ineligible to play in the 1938-39 season when the UT basketball team played in a tournament in Madison Square Garden. He was appointed intramural manager that year, and produced the first written report on intramurals at UT.

Jones graduated from UT in 1939. He continued to play basketball for several Toledo professional and semi-professional teams including Joe's Toledoans (later Ciralsky Packers), the Brown Bombers, the White Huts, and Jim White Chevrolets. The Brown Bombers and the Ciralsky Packers were African-American teams with huge followings in the city. They frequently played teams with national reputations, including the New York Celtics and the Chicago Crusaders. Jones joined the White Huts in 1939, becoming the first African American to play professional basketball on an integrated team. ("Willie and Dolly Together?" *The Sunday Plain Dealer*, June 5, 1977).

The Toledo White Huts, which also included Chuck Chuckovits, had much success, and were invited to participate in the World's Championship Basketball Tournament, held in Chicago's International Amphitheatre on March 15-19, 1941. The team had little money and was forced to wear old UT uniforms. But, they became the "Cinderella" team of the tournament, making it into the semi-final round. During the tournament, Chuckovits set an all-time record with 82 points in four games.

In 1942, Jones joined the Harlem Globetrotters in Chicago, and traveled all over the country playing basketball. However, he never lost sight of his career goal of becoming a teacher. He turned down offers to teach in several segregated school districts, and took a job in Toledo as a welfare case investigator after leaving the Globetrotters. In 1943, he decided to move his family to Los Angeles, taking his wife and children across country by train. There he continued his interest in basketball as owner, coach, and player of the Hollywood

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All Stars (1948-1949). At the same time, he also directed free basketball clinics sponsored by Los Angeles City and County Recreation and Parks and the Hollywood Athletic Company.

In California, he worked for several aerospace contractors, became the first industrial relations officer for the Urban League, and finally realized his dream to become a teacher with the Santa Monica School District, where he taught for 25 years. He later transferred to the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools Office, where he supervised occupational programs in the school district of Santa Monica Unified, Beverly Hills Unified, Culver City Unified, and Las Virgenes Unified. He retired in 1974, and owns a management consulting firm, W.M. Jones and Associates.

In 1991, Jones began an effort to re-dedicate the University of Toledo Field House, an event which was planned for 1996, commemorating and memorializing the 65th Anniversary of the historic building.

William M. Jones lived in Los Angeles until he died in 2006 at the age of 92.

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Scope and Content Note

This collection contains the papers and associated memorabilia of William M. (Bill) Jones. Graduate of the University of Toledo class of 1939. The papers document the life of Jones, including his career as a UT basketball player from 1933-1938, and his professional and semi-professional career from 1939 to 1952.

The collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title. Included in a photocopy of a scrapbook compiled by Jones for the Basketball Hall of Fame, Springfield Massachusetts. The scrapbook contains copies of newspaper clippings, correspondence, and publications documenting Jones' career in basketball from his high school days until 1952. Of particular interest are clippings documenting the early professional and semi-professional teams of Toledo, including the Ciralsky Packers and the Toledo White Huts. The scrapbook contains the program from the World's Professional Basketball Tournament held in Chicago in 1941.

Also include in the collection are miscellaneous publications, copies of correspondence from the Basketball Hall of Fame, and copies of correspondence with William "Pops" Gates, one of the pioneers of basketball.

Also included is the 1940 Annual Report of Men's Intermural Department of the University of Toledo. Jones wrote the report while serving as director of intramurals in 1939-1940. Of special note is the Varsity "T" letter presented to Jones by athletic director and basketball coach David Connelly in 1933-1934.

For related material, see AV-57, William M. Jones Oral History.

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Folder List

Box	Folder	Item Description
1	1	Correspondence, misc. 1995-1996
1	2	Men's Intramural Dept. Annual Report, 1940
1	3	Publications, misc. 1977-1996
1	4	Scrapbook, pp. 1-46
1	5	Scrapbook, pp. 47-88
1	6	Varsity "I" Letter, 1933-1934