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## **Guide to the Grover Barnes Papers CEMA 115**

Finding aid prepared by Processed by Callie Bowdish, Danely Segoviano, Daisy Martinez, and Mari Khasmanyar

**UC SANTA BARBARA**

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**Title:** Grover Barnes Papers

**Identifier/Call Number:** CEMA 115

**Contributing Institution:** University of California, Santa Barbara, Davidson Library, Department of Special Collections, California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives

**Language of Material:** English

**Physical Description:** 8.5 linear feet

**Date (bulk):** Bulk, 1985-2006

**Date (inclusive):** 1920-2009

**General Physical Description note:** 9 document boxes, 3 binder boxes and 2 oversize boxes

**Abstract:** This collection chronicles the life of Grover Barnes, the man whom Santa Barbara has dubbed "The Ambassador of Hospitality." His extraordinary charm and service as a "Bell Captain" at the Hotel Miramar Resort has made him famous in the community. He lived a life of civic involvement and participated in many local groups such as the NAACP Santa Barbara Chapter, the Eastside Study Group, the George Washington Carver Scholarship Society and the St. Paul AME Church in Santa Barbara. He received many honors on his 100th birthday. Barnes' correspondence, editorials, original writings, and photographs are featured in this collection.

**Conditions Governing Access note**

Service copies of audiovisual items may need to be made before viewing or listening. Please consult Special Collections staff for further information.

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**Related Collections**

Santa Barbara African American Local History Collection (CEMA 99), Santa Barbara Afro-American Oral History Project Collection (CEMA 42), James McMillan Papers (CEMA 007), and Anita Mackey Papers (CEMA 57)

**Biographical/ Historical note**

Grover Cleveland Barnes was born to John R. and Nannie Barnes on November 18, 1906 in Percialla, Texas. He left the farm in 1922 for Grockett, Texas where he worked in a private home. He later graduated from high school earning an athletic scholarship to Bishop College. Due to difficulties he was unable to finish his almost complete degree in History.

Grover Barnes moved to Tyler, Texas where he worked in construction and cleaning and pressing. Grover immigrated to California in the 40's. He became a porter at the Hotel Miramar Resort and was a "Bell Captain" from 1947 until 1981. It has been said that Grover Barnes is an inimitable part of history of the city of Montecito. His level of service is remembered by generations of guests. He was known for his warm hospitality to the young and old, the rich and famous, and the not so rich and famous. Mr. Barnes was also close friends with the Gawzner family who owned the Miramar Resort at the time.

Barnes resided in Santa Barbara for over half a century with his wife Ethel, and at one point was the oldest man alive in the city. In 2001, *The Santa Barbara Independent* designated him as a Local Hero in Santa Barbara and affectionately called him "The Ambassador of Hospitality." He was actively involved in many community organizations including the NAACP Santa Barbara Chapter, the Brotherhood of Santa Barbara, The Mason Lodge, the Eastside Study Group and the George Washington Carver Scholarship Society. Grover Barnes was a member of the St. Paul AME Church in Santa Barbara for over 50 years.

Grover Barnes passed away at the age of 103 on May 3, 2010 at his home in Santa Barbara.

**Scope Note**

This collection covers Grover Barnes records from the 1920s to 2009. It consists of nine document boxes, three photo albums (binder boxes) and two oversize boxes. There are seven series that cover personal biographical information, his correspondence, original writings and editorials, church documents, the Miramar Hotel related documents, photos from the 1940s-2000's, and items like plaques and Miramar memorabilia.

**Series Description**

**Series I Personal and Biographical, 1906-1992**

This series housed in box 1 and oversized boxes 5 and 6 includes awards and plaques, articles about Grover, his telephone books, birthday guest sign in books, and a collage that was presented to Grover Barnes.

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**Series II Correspondence, 1956-2007**

In boxes 1-3 are incoming letters to Barnes and copies of outgoing letters from Barnes that were collected over the years. The bulk of these are letters and cards to him. These letters include the envelopes with some of his notes about their contents. Barnes remained active in the Santa Barbara community after his retirement by writing letters to the editor of the *Santa Barbara News Press*. His letters to the editor were published on a regular basis. Copies of his letters sent are included in the four folders titled under *Santa Barbara News Press*.

**Series III Original Writings, 1985-2008**

Barnes wrote consistently and submitted articles for his church newsletters. These and other writings, including articles about holidays like Mother's Day and Father's Day are included in this series.

**Series IV Churches, 1950-2006**

Barnes was active in various Santa Barbara churches such as the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. Included in this series are various newsletters and documents related to such churches, as well as an audio cassette of a sermon.

**Series V Miramar Hotel**

Having worked as a Bell Hop Captain at Miramar for about 35 years, Barnes was closely connected with other co-workers and staff and has many memorabilia from those years. This series contains his written work *Does a Bellman Talk?*, various hotel related documents, his bell hop jacket, and magazine articles he collected relating to the Miramar.

**Series VI Subjects and Publications**

This series contains side projects and events related to Barnes' life. Subjects include various collage materials, the Black Santa Barbara Historical Calendar, and collections of magazines and articles pertaining to black history. Barnes corresponded with a wide variety of people and wrote to local officials as well as prominent national figures such as then-U.S. Senator Barack Obama who was a presidential contender and this is included in the political folders of this series. NAACP documents are also included, as well as documents relating to his fund named after his wife, Ethel B. Barnes.

**Series VI Photos, 1940s-2000s**

Photos represent various moments in Grover Barnes' life. There are photos of his family and friends in the Santa Barbara area as well as photographs of the Grover Barnes Centennial Birthday Celebration dinner. Photos range from Polaroids to digital copies.

**Preferred Citation note**

Grover Barnes Papers, CEMA 115, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.

**Processing note**

Processed by Callie Bowdish, Danely Segoviano, Daisy Martinez, and Mari Khasmanyman

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

African American--California--Santa Barbara  
African Methodist Episcopal Church  
Bellhops  
Centenarians  
Miramare  
Montecito (Calif.)  
Santa Barbara County (Calif.)--History, Local.

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**Series I Personal and Biographical 1906-2006**

Oversize-Box 14	<b>100th Birthday Guest List Sign in Book</b>
Oversize-Box 14	<b>Birthday Guest List Sign in Book 2002</b>
Box 1, Folder 1-3	<b>Address and Telephone Books</b>
Box 1, Folder 4	<b>Articles on Grover Barnes</b>
Box 1, Folder 5-8	<b>Awards and Certificates 2001-2005</b>
Oversize-Box 14	<b>Silver tray</b>
Oversize-Box 14	<b>Awards and Plaques</b>
Box 7, Folder 13	<b>Barnes Centennial Celebration 2006</b>

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Box 1, Folder 9	<b>Biographical Information 1947-2007</b>
Box 1,	<b>Personal</b>
Folder 10-14	
Oversize-Box 13	<b>Plaque given to Martha Clyde from Grover Barnes</b>
Box 1,	<b>Martha Clyde Scrapbook on Grover Barnes</b>
Folder 15-26	
Box 1,	<b><i>Montecito Magazine</i> "Welcome to the Miramar Mr. Grover, Sir!" Fall 2000</b>
Folder 27-28	

**Series II Correspondence 1956-2007 and undated**

Box 2, Folder 1-21	<b>Incoming</b>
Box 3, Folder 1-18	<b>Incoming</b>
Box 4, Folder 1-29	<b>Outgoing 1955-2009</b>
Box 4,	<b><i>Santa Barbara News Press</i> - Letters to the Editor 1993-2008</b>
Folder 30-34	

**Series III Original Writings 1985-2008 and undated**

Box 5, Folder 1-2	<b>Articles by Grover Barnes</b>
Box 5, Folder 7	<b>Holiday - Father's Day</b>
Box 5, Folder 8	<b>Holiday - Mother's Day</b>
Box 5, Folder 9	<b>Holidays - Various Days</b>
Box 5,	<b>Original Writings</b>
Folder 14-24	

**Series IV Churches 1950-2006**

Box 6, Folder 1	<b>African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church 1950-2002</b>
Box 6, Folder 2-3	<b>Funerals</b>
Box 6, Folder 4	<b>Hymns and Pamphlets</b>
Box 6, Folder 5	<b>Miscellaneous Church Documents</b>
Box 6, Folder 6-8	<b>Saint Paul AME</b>
Box 6, Folder 9	<b>Saint Paul AME Church Business Records 1990s</b>
Box 6, Folder 10	<b>Santa Barbara African American Church Anniversaries</b>
Cassette A17251	<b>Santa Barbara High School Visitors Concert undated</b>
Cassette A17249	<b>Sister Bernadette 1st Sermon, Family Meeting Mosleys and LLL undated</b>

**Series V Miramar Hotel**

Box 5, Folder 3-6	<b><i>Does a Bellman Talk?</i> 20 July 1966</b>
Box 8, Folder 7	<b>Miramar-Business Proposal for Creative Food Company September 2001</b>
Box 8, Folder 8-12	<b>Miramar Hotel undated</b>
Box 8,	<b>Miramar Hotel and Book</b>
Folder 13-14	
Oversize-Box 14	<b>Miramar Bell Hop Jacket with Name Tag</b>
Box 5,	<b>Miramar Writings</b>
Folder 10-13	
Box 9, Folder 6	<b><i>Montecito Magazine</i> "Behold the Miramar! A Seaside Resort with Old-Time Flavor" Fall 1989</b>
Box 9, Folder 7	<b><i>Montecito Magazine</i> "Harold Doulton's Historic Photos and Childhood Memories of.. Growing Up at the Miramar" Fall 1997</b>

**Series VI Subjects and Publications 1976-2009 and undated**

Cassette A17249	<b>About Mrs. Shirley with Big Jim undated</b>
Box 7, Folder 1-12	<b>Articles</b>
Box 7, Folder 14	<b>Black Santa Barbara Historical Calendar 1995</b>
Box 7,	<b>Collage Materials</b>
Folder 15-20	
Oversize-Box 13	<b>Collages - Large</b>
Box 7, Folder 21	<b>Ethel B. Barnes Fund 2002</b>

Box 8, Folder 3-6	<b>Magazines</b>
Box 8, Folder 1-2	<b>Magazine Covers featuring African Americans</b>
Box 8, Folder 15-17	<b>Miscellaneous undated</b>
Box 9, Folder 1-5	<b>Miscellaneous-Events undated</b>
Box 9, Folder 8-11	<b>NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People</b>
Oversize-Box 13	<b>Newspapers</b>
Box 9, Folder 12-24	<b>Politics undated</b>

**Series VII Photos 1940s-2000s**

Box 10	<b>Grover Barnes Photo Album 1</b>
Box 11	<b>Grover Barnes Photo Album 2</b>
Box 12	<b>Grover Barnes Photo Album 3</b>
Oversize-Box 13	<b>Larger Photographs</b>