

Guide to the Beryl Harrell Papers

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Harrell, Beryl, 1918-1977
Title:	Beryl Harrell Papers
ID:	MS-00872
Date [inclusive]:	1940s-1970s
Physical Description:	0.98 Cubic Feet (3 boxes)
Physical Description:	2.42 Linear Feet
Physical Description:	5 Digital Files (0.195 GB) WAV
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The collection (approximately 1940s-1970s) is comprised primarily of personal and professional photographs, ephemera, and scrapbooks of steel guitar player Beryl Harrell who performed with different musical acts in California and Nevada throughout the 1940s to the 1960s. There are a number of personal photographs of Beryl's family, namely her son, Don Triolo. The collection includes an optical disc with five recordings of Harrell playing the steel guitar for different musical acts. The collection also contains clippings and magazine articles about Harrell's life and career.

Preferred Citation

Beryl Harrell Papers, 1940s-1970s. MS-00872. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Biographical Note

Beryl Deane Harrell was a steel guitar (also known as the Hawaiian guitar) player who primarily performed with old-time country music acts in California and Nevada throughout the 1930s until the 1960s. Harrell was born in Vancouver, Washington in 1918 and lived in Los Angeles, California, where she began taking steel guitar lessons with Hawaiian steel guitar legend, Sol Ho'opi'i. Harrell began her career performing with musical groups such as the Hula Bluettes and Eva Harpster and Her Four Co-Eds Orchestra. She was a regular performer on the hillbilly music scene in Los Angeles throughout the 1940s and 1950s. In 1954 Harrell moved to Las Vegas, Nevada and became part of the "Polly Possum Show" which alternated

between the Riverside Hotel in Reno, Nevada and the Golden Nugget Hotel in Las Vegas. In 1960 Harrel was part of a female trio that performed at the El Cortez Hotel. Harrel was married twice and had one son, Don Triolo. She committed suicide in 1977. As a tribute, Don Triolo published a memorial to his mother on the anniversary of her death and birth date in a local newspaper in Las Vegas.

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Scope and Contents Note

The collection (approximately 1940s-1970s) is comprised primarily of personal and professional photographs, ephemera, scrapbooks of steel guitar player, Beryl Harrell who performed with different musical acts in California and Nevada throughout the 1940s to the 1960s. She lived and performed in Las Vegas, Nevada like the El Cortez Hotel and the Golden Nugget Hotel throughout the 1960s. There are a number of personal photographs of Beryl's family, namely her son, Don Triolo. The collection includes an optical disc with five recordings of Harrell playing the steel guitar for different musical acts. The collection also contains clippings and magazine articles about Harrell's life and career.

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Arrangement

Materials remain as they were received.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Reproductions and Use](#) on the UNLV Special Collections and Archives website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish.

Acquisition Note

Materials were donated in 2017 by Jon Wall; accession number 2017-156.

Appraisal

One optical disc with scanned images of Beryl Harrell are duplicative of physical photographs in the collection. The images on the disc were appraised and disposed by Tammi Kim during accessioning.

Processing Note

These records are unprocessed. A summary of materials was created by Tammi Kim in 2018. To prepare the summary, the described materials were reviewed to create a contents list, estimate dates, and identify material types. Digital audio files from one optical disc were transferred and converted to WAV files. No other work has been performed on the materials.

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Names and Subjects

- Hawaiian guitar
- Women musicians
- Photographs
- Old-time music

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
The Story of Paul Bigsby: Father of the Modern Electric Solidbody Guitar (2008), The Fretboard Journal Vol. 23 (2011), The Shell Family (1953), Don Triolo, Jr., baby book (1940s), Don Triolo, Sr., portrait, Arabian horse certificate, Steel Guitar Stylings of Beryl Harrell (5 optical discs), commemorative toy reindeer with printed memorial tribute for Harrell from her son, 1940s-1953, 2008, 2011	box 01
Scrapbook, undated	box 02
Beryl Harrell professional headshots, personal photographs of Beryl Harrell and her family, 1940s-1950s	box 03
Steel Guitar Stylings of Beryl Harrell, undated	digital file 00