

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Julie Hunter

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hunter, Julie, 1912-2009
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter,
Dates:	March 2, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:37:20).
Abstract:	Real estate entrepreneur and retail entrepreneur Julie Hunter (1912 - 2009) is a former representative at the U.S. Social Security Administration, and is the owner and manager of her own real estate company. Hunter was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 2, 2002, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_004
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Julie Hunter was born on December 4, 1912 in Jacksonville, Florida to dressmaker Mary Collins and post office superintendent Dez Corbett. She went on to become a successful businesswoman active in charitable organizations.

An energetic only child, Hunter (then Corbett) grew up playing every sport she could. Her parents separated when she was only seven. After her mother moved with her to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1920, Hunter never saw her father again. That year, Hunter tasted the thrill of performing when she recited a poem on stage. She moved back to Jacksonville, graduating from Stanton High School. Then she moved to New York City, where she remains. Musically talented, she worked as a singer in various theaters and nightclubs beginning in 1933, including a week at the Apollo Theater in 1938. Her husband, Edward Hunter, sadly died the next year and she stopped performing.

Hunter then became a representative for the U.S. Social Security Administration in 1941. She began to buy apartment buildings in 1950, and by 1965 she had secured the capital to open Julie Hunter Wines and Liquors. She left her position with the S.S.A. to manage this new business full-time. Although she retired from her liquor store in 1989, Hunter continues to own and manage her real estate business, which has expanded to include eight apartment buildings.

Hunter has been active in several civic groups, including the New York Continental Society, which she served as vice president and treasurer, and the Group, which holds annual benefits that have profited the United Negro College Fund and the Harlem School of the Arts, among other worthy recipients. Hunter was also active in ABC Black Charities as well as the Bon Bons, a social organization for which she served as president and treasurer.

Julie Hunter was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 2, 2002.

Ms. Hunter passed away on October 9, 2009.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Julie Hunter was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on March 2, 2002, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Real estate entrepreneur and retail entrepreneur Julie Hunter (1912 - 2009) is a former representative at the U.S. Social Security Administration, and is the owner and manager of her own real estate company.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Hunter, Julie, 1912-2009

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hunter, Julie, 1912-2009--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Real Estate Entrepreneur

Retail Entrepreneur

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter, March 2, 2002. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter, Section A2002_004_001_001, TRT: 0:29:28 ?

Julie Hunter describes her family background. Hunter was born to Dez and Mary Staley Corbett on December 4, 1912 in Jacksonville, Florida. Raised in Aiken, South Carolina, Corbett was the product of a mixed-race relationship. Corbett was working for his farmer father when he married his wife, Mary Staley Corbett, also raised in Aiken South Carolina. The two moved to Jacksonville,

Florida around 1912, and Dez Corbett became the superintendent of the post office, while his wife became a dressmaker. The couple separated around 1919, and Mary Staley Corbett moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, leaving Dez Corbett to raise their children. Julie Hunter and her brother, James, moved to Philadelphia to live with their mother around 1920. As a youth in Philadelphia, Hunter played sports at the local YWCA and was active in social clubs. It was at a social club dance that she met her husband, Edward Hunter. The couple married between 1929 and 1930, immediately before the start of the Great Depression.

Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter, Section A2002_004_001_002, TRT: 0:29:01 ?

Around 1930, Julie Hunter and her husband, Edward Hunter, were struggling to live due to the impact of the Great Depression. Hunter was invited to sing at Bernie's Supper Club in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for three weeks, yet her act became so popular that she stayed for nine months. After this, Hunter traveled all over the United States and Canada, performing in venues like the Apollo Theater and the Kit Kat Club in New York City, New York; the Plantation Club in Detroit, Michigan; Grand Terrace nightclub in Chicago, Illinois; and Club Harlem in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Hunter performed with artists like Count Basie; Moms Mabley; Billie Holiday; and Billy Daniels. Hunter talks about the owners of some of the venues she performed in, as well as how shows were produced in the 1930s. Hunter ended her singing career upon the death of her husband in 1939, after which she settled in New York City, New York, and took a job with the Social Security Administration.

Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter, Section A2002_004_001_003, TRT: 0:30:32 ?

In 1941, Julie Hunter started working at the Social Security Administration. She began investing in real estate in 1950, where she refurbished and created rental properties. Hunter accumulated enough capital to purchase a storefront, and successfully entered a lottery to open a liquor store. She opened Julie Hunter's Wines and Liquors in 1964. Hunter describes the liquor store application and lottery process in 1960s New York City, as well as her earliest investment properties. She eventually sold Julie Hunter's Wines and Liquors, as well as most of her investment properties, due to the stress of managing them. Hunter was active in many social and civic clubs in New York City, including the Continental Society and the Bon Bons. Hunter talks about prominent African American businesswomen in New York City in the 1960s and 1970s like Rose Morgan and Selbra Hayes, her business philosophy, and the importance of black business owners. She also describes meeting her second husband, whom she married in 1960.

Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter, Section A2002_004_001_004, TRT: 0:30:06 ?

In 1960, Julie Hunter met her second husband at a party for one of her social clubs, the Bon Bons. The couple married in September, but Hunter had the marriage annulled by March of 1961 because he did not support her business ventures. Hunter shares a story about visiting Nat King Cole's home in California where she socialized with celebrities like Count Basie, Sugar Ray Robinson, and Sarah Vaughn. She also talks about her love of New York City. Through the duration of her career as a businesswoman, Hunter encountered many prominent African Americans, including HistoryMakers Rose Morgan, Reverend Calvin Butts, and David Dinkins, and businesswomen like Fannie Pierre and Selbra Hayes. Hunter talks about the historical significance of her apartment building, as well as her legacy and how she would like to be remembered. She also shares her hopes and concerns for the African American community. She closes the interview by narrating her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter, Section A2002_004_001_005, TRT: 0:31:19 ?

Julie Hunter narrates her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Julie Hunter, Section A2002_004_001_006, TRT: 0:06:54 ?

Julie Hunter narrates her photographs.