

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Sanford T. Roach

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## Overview of the Collection

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| <b>Repository:</b>           | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616<br>info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com  |
| <b>Creator:</b>              | Roach, Sanford T., 1916-2010   |
| <b>Title:</b>                | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Sanford T. Roach,   |
| <b>Dates:</b>                | December 10, 2002  |
| <b>Bulk Dates:</b>           | 2002   |
| <b>Physical Description:</b> | 5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:08:00).  |
| <b>Abstract:</b>             | Elementary school principal, high school basketball coach, and high school principal Sanford T. Roach (1916 - 2010 ) coached Lexington's Dunbar High basketball team for twenty-two years, in addition to teaching and becoming the first African American principal of an integrated elementary school in Lexington, Kentucky. Roach was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 10, 2002, in Lexington, Kentucky. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| <b>Identification:</b>       | A2002_225  |
| <b>Language:</b>             | The interview and records are in English.  |

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Educator and basketball coach, Sanford T. Roach, was born in Frankfort, Kentucky. Roach graduated from Danville Bate High School in 1933 in Danville, Kentucky, where he was a basketball and football star and salutatorian of his class. In 1937, Roach earned his B.S. degree in natural sciences from Kentucky State University, where he was the captain of the basketball team, a track and field star, editor of the student newspaper, and a student council member. In 1955, Roach earned his M.A. degree in education from the University of Kentucky.

After graduating from college, Roach returned to his old high school to teach and coach basketball. Over the course of three years, Roach's coaching record was 98-24; in 1941 he gained notoriety for benching his five starting players the day of the district tournament for disobeying his curfew rule. Roach's strict sense of discipline on the court caught the attention of the principal of Lexington's Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, and he was soon hired as teacher and coach. Roach taught biology, physiology, and anatomy classes; by 1943 he had become head basketball coach. In his twenty-two years as head coach, Roach led Dunbar High to a 512-142 record.

In 1965, Roach's first wife, Mary, herself a basketball enthusiast, died unexpectedly. Shortly after, Roach retired from coaching. Between 1965 and 1966, Roach served as principal of George W. Carver Elementary School, becoming the first black principal of an integrated elementary school in Lexington. Between 1966 and 1975, Roach worked as an administrator at Lexington Junior High, and became the first black principal of a Fayette County secondary school. From 1975 to 1988, Roach worked as a minority recruiter and principal assistant for the state secretary of transportation, and from 1989 to 1995 he worked for Mayors Scotty Baseler and Pam Miller.

Roach received numerous awards and honors for his educational and coaching career. In 1974, Roach became the first African American board member of the University of Kentucky Athletic Association; in 1991, the new Paul Laurence Dunbar High School dedicated its S.T. Roach Sports Center in his honor. Roach was featured in the

National High School Sports Hall of Fame; the Kentucky Athletic Hall of Fame; and the Kentucky State University Athletic Hall of Fame.

Roach passed away on September 2, 2010 at the age of 94.

Roach married Lettie in 1967, and had two children: Sandra Cole and Tom Roach.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Sanford T. Roach was conducted by Larry Crowe on December 10, 2002, in Lexington, Kentucky, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Elementary school principal, high school basketball coach, and high school principal Sanford T. Roach (1916 - 2010 ) coached Lexington's Dunbar High basketball team for twenty-two years, in addition to teaching and becoming the first African American principal of an integrated elementary school in Lexington, Kentucky.

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## 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®.

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## 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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

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

### Persons:

Roach, Sanford T., 1916-2010

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Roach, Sanford T., 1916-2010--Interviews

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Coaches (Athletics)--Interviews

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African American educators--Interviews

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African American school principals--Interviews

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African Americans--Genealogy

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Danville (Ky.)--Social life and customs

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School sports

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Sports administration

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African American families

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African American young men

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African American High School Students

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Basketball--Coaching

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Basketball

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Basketball coaches--United States--Interviews

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Basketball players--United States

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College sports

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College athletes

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Kentucky State College (Frankfort, Ky.)

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Children and death

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Parents--Death--Psychological aspects

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Merchant marine

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University of Kentucky

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Racism--United States

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Racism in sports

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Discrimination in sports

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## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## **Occupations:**

High School Basketball Coach

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

SportsMakers

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## **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 Sanford T. Roach, December 10, 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).

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## **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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Sanford T. Roach, Section A2002\_225\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:50  
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Educator and coach Sanford Roach outlines his family history, describing both his mother's and father's sides of the family tree, and their backgrounds. Roach then remembers his childhood home and neighborhood in Danville, Kentucky, where he remembers his favorite activities, and describes attending school at Bate High School, detailing his athletic and academic accomplishments.

Coaches (Athletics)--Interviews.

African American educators--Interviews.

African American school principals--Interviews.

African Americans--Genealogy.

Danville (Ky.)--Social life and customs.

School sports.

Sports administration.

African American families.

African American young men.

African American high school students.

Basketball--Coaching.

Basketball.

Basketball coaches--United States--Interviews.

Basketball players--United States.

College sports.

College athletes.

Kentucky State College (Frankfort, Ky.).

Children and death.

Parents--Death--Psychological aspects.

Merchant marine.

University of Kentucky.

Racism--United States.

Racism in sports.

Discrimination in sports.

Video Oral History Interview with Sanford T. Roach, Section A2002\_225\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:09  
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Educator and coach Sanford Roach details his days playing basketball for Bate High School in Danville, Kentucky. Roach describes the areas in which the team played, and explains how the sport has changed over the years. Roach also discusses his sports career at Kentucky State College in Frankfort, Kentucky. In addition to these topics, Roach pauses to remember another story about his parents and to reflect on the early death of his father.

Video Oral History Interview with Sanford T. Roach, Section A2002\_225\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:45  
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Educator and coach Sanford Roach discusses his high school basketball coaching career, starting with his first coaching stint at his alma mater, Bate

High School in Danville, Kentucky, and his twenty-three year tenure at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School in Lexington, Kentucky. Roach also has a lengthy discussion about basketball strategy, and digresses to talk about his experience as a Merchant Marine on the Great Lakes.

Video Oral History Interview with Sanford T. Roach, Section A2002\_225\_001\_004, TRT: 0:28:44  
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Educator and coach Sanford Roach details his tenure as the basketball coach at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School in Lexington, Kentucky, where he spent twenty-three years. Roach shares stories of traveling to different parts of Kentucky, recalls former players, and explains how he helped to mentor the young men who played for him. Roach also discusses the history of segregation in the University of Kentucky's basketball program, and gives a detailed example of racism he encountered at a Kentucky basketball game.

Video Oral History Interview with Sanford T. Roach, Section A2002\_225\_001\_005, TRT: 0:12:32  
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Educator and coach Sanford Roach discusses race relations at the University of Kentucky, particularly in the basketball program, and describes how he uses his stature to help blacks in Lexington be able to attend games. Roach then considers his legacy and describes how he would like to be remembered. He also narrates photographs depicting his family and career.