

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Jeanne Brayboy

PERSON

Brayboy, Jeanne, 1930-

Alternative Names: Jeanne Brayboy;

Life Dates: February 23, 1930-

Place of Birth: Camden, South Carolina, USA

Residence: Charlotte, North Carolina

Occupations: Civil Rights Activist;

Biographical Note

Civil rights activist and school teacher Jeanne Martin Brayboy was born on February 23, 1930, in Camden, South Carolina. Her father, John Wendell Martin, was a high school teacher and football coach; and he started the first African American athletic conference in South Carolina. Her mother, June Singleton Martin, was a librarian. Brayboy and her younger sister, Thomasina, grew up under strict segregation, and they recognized the disparities between whites and blacks in Camden's educational system. She attended Mather Academy, an African American boarding school founded in 1867 by the Women's Division of the Northern Methodist Church in Camden, where the teachers stressed academic excellence and community responsibility. Brayboy graduated from Mather Academy in 1947.

Brayboy went on to attend Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina, as a music major, where she became active in the Bennett Choir among other campus activities. In 1951, Brayboy graduated from Bennett College with honors and received her B.A. degree in music. She entered Boston University to pursue her M.A. degree in music education. During her tenure at Boston University, Brayboy met Martin Luther King, Jr. Brayboy and King were a part of a small group of friends that attended black social gatherings on campus. She graduated from Boston University in 1953, and started her teaching career in Charlotte, North Carolina. In 1954, she married the late Dr. Jack Brayboy, who was an administrator at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Brayboy spent forty years as a teacher in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, from 1953 to 1993. While she worked in the segregated Charlotte schools, she witnessed bus boycotts and sit-ins during the Civil Rights Movement. In 1969, Brayboy became one of the first African American teachers to integrate the Charlotte-

Mecklenburg Public Schools. Brayboy retired in 1993.

The mother of two adult children, Jack and Joyce, Brayboy devotes her time to many civic organizations including the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Levine Museum of the New South and the Foundation for the Carolinas. In 2011, Brayboy was awarded the Marie R. Rowe Award by the Symphony Guild of Charlotte, Inc.

Jeanne Martin Brayboy was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 20, 2007.

Related Entries

Boylan-Haven-Mather Academy [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

High School Diploma

Boston University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

M.A.in Music Education

Bennett College for Women [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

B.A.

Elementary Music Workshop [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Consultant

Barber-Scotia College [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Instructor in Music Education

Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1953 to 1993]

Elementary Music Teacher

Johnson C. Smith University [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1999 to ?]

Office of Protocol

Foundation for the Carolinas [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Committee Member

Music Educators National Conference [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Mint Museum of Art [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Levine Museum of New South [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Swann Fellowship - Interfaith Friends for Integrated Education [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

North Carolina Music Educators Association [MEMBEROF]

[from 1974 to 1976]

District Six, Chairperson