



## **Bernie Hayes Papers (S0480)**

**Collection Number:** S0480

**Collection Title:** Bernie Hayes Papers

**Dates:** 1961-1989

**Creator:** Hayes, Bernard, 1935-

**Abstract:** Bernard “Bernie” Hayes was a Black radio broadcaster in Louisiana, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco before becoming an announcer at KATZ in St. Louis in 1965. In 1972 and 1977, he helped organize efforts to ensure that local Black-owned radio stations retain their Black employees and programming. He became the news director of KWMU in March 1982. The collection includes scrapbooks, photographs, an oral history and a cassette and recordings produced or recorded by Hayes.

**Collection Size:** 0.4 cubic feet  
(16 of folders, 105 photographs, 2 audio tapes)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [stlouis@shsmo.org](mailto:stlouis@shsmo.org).

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Bernie Hayes Papers* (S0480); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Saint Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Saint Louis].

**Donor Information:** The collection was donated to the Western Historical Manuscripts Collection by Bernard Hayes on November 30, 1989 (SA2937).

**Alternate Forms Available:** Digital images of this collection are available online at the State Historical Society of Missouri Digital Collections: <https://digital.shsmo.org>.

**Separated Materials:** Tapes with S0829.

**Related Materials:** Additional materials related to the Bernie Hayes Papers can be found in the following collections:

*African-American Pioneers in Journalism* (S0624)

*Gloria Pritchard Papers* (S0150)

*Charles Bannister Photograph Collection* (S0583)

**Processed by:** Processed by WHMC staff, date unknown. Finding aid updated by Erin Purdy, July 2022.

### **Historical Note:**

Bernard "Bernie" Hayes was born in 1935 in Chicago. He began his radio career in the Air Force in 1950 as an announcer for the Armed Forces Radio Service. After his military service, Hayes returned to the University of Illinois and graduated with a degree in journalism. In 1956 he began work as the Black on-air personality and first Black news announcer for a radio station in Alexandria, Louisiana. Hayes went on to other broadcasting jobs in New York and New Jersey in 1961 and in Chicago throughout 1962 and 1963. In Chicago, Hayes worked for WMMP, the first Black-owned radio station in the Midwest; WSBC and WGES, narrowcast stations that programmed for ethnic areas within the city; and WVON ("Voice of the Negro"), a radio station owned by the Chess brothers, whose record label featured such blues and rock artists as Muddy Waters and Chuck Berry. Hayes moved to San Francisco in 1964 and joined the staff of KSOL, a soul music station. Hayes also worked as a producer and recording artist for Volt, a subsidiary of the soul music label, Stax Records.

Hayes arrived in St. Louis in April 1965, working first for KXLW and then as an announcer for KATZ, a Black music station. His career in St. Louis radio took several controversial turns. In May 1972, Hayes and seven other Black disc jockeys walked off the job at KWK Radio, forcing a halt to the station's broadcasts. The disc jockeys had organized to protest Hayes' demotion to advertising salesman and other personnel changes made by a new, all-white management team from Tennessee. The Congress of Racial Equality supported this action with pickets. Replaced in March 1977 as the program director at Black-oriented KKSS-FM by Scott St. James, a white male, Hayes filed a EOCC class action suit against the station charging hiring discrimination. Listeners also organized a petition drive and advertiser boycott against the station. The Missouri Commission on Human Rights decided in favor of Hayes. Finally, in September 1983 the management of KATZ Radio cancelled the discussion part of Hayes' Sunday morning program, a noted forum for Black politics. After many listener complaints and a meeting with local Black aldermen, the program was reinstated.

Bernie Hayes became the news director at KWMU radio in March 1987, while working as community affairs director for station KIRL. In 1989 Hayes began an independent record label, Mission Park, which released a 45 RPM single, "In My Eyes," sung by his wife, Uvee, and produced by a renown local rhythm and blues artist, Oliver Sain. The Mission Park Record Company was active until 2011.

Hayes began teaching as a media professor at Webster University in 1987. He was interim executive director at the National Blues Museum in 2018 and in 2010 was a founder of the National Black Radio Hall of Fame. He wrote a regular column for the *St. Louis American* from

1979 to 2009. Hayes has received many awards from civic groups for his contributions to improving the quality and diversity of radio programming for the Black community in St. Louis.

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into the following 2 series:

Scrapbooks

Tapes

**Scope and Content Note:****Scrapbooks**

The Bernard Hayes papers document Bernie Hayes' career as a radio broadcaster from 1961-1988, although four photographs date from the 1950s. The collection includes photocopies of scrapbooks containing publicity literature and photographs reflecting Hayes' radio work in Chicago, Louisiana, New York and San Francisco from the early to mid-1960s. The papers also contain memoranda and newspaper clippings pertaining to Hayes' involvement in lawsuits and pickets against KWK in 1972 and KKSS in 1977. One scrapbook includes copy photographs of Bernie Hayes from childhood, in high school in 1952, and in the Armed Forces. Other photographs include images of local radio personalities, civic leaders, rhythm and blues and soul musicians, and record company personnel. Some copy photographs taken from Instamatic prints appear unclear.

**Tapes**

The collection contains an oral history with Bernie Hayes and a cassette tape of records he produced or recorded, 1966-1989.

**Container List:**

f. 1-14	Scrapbooks
Box 001 f. 1	News clippings, 1983-1989
f. 2	Record Labels, 1966-1989
f. 3	Scrapbook, 1961-1977
f. 4	Scrapbook, 1964-1966
f. 5	Scrapbook, 1969-1973
f. 6	Scrapbook, 1972-1978
f. 7	Scrapbook, 1974-1976
f. 8	Scrapbook, 1975-1978
f. 9	Scrapbook, 1977-1978
f. 10	Scrapbook Photographs 14086-14125, 1964-1978
f. 11	Scrapbook Photographs 14126-14140, 1969-1973
f. 12	Scrapbook Photographs 14141-14144, 1972-1978
f. 13	Scrapbook Photographs 14146-14148, 1975-1978
f. 14	Photographs 14149-14191
f. 15-16	Tapes
f. 15	T1041 - Oral History Interview, conducted by Kenn Thomas and Doris Allen, December, 1989.

f. 16

T1042 - 45 RPM Singles: Bernard Hayes, producer. Fontella Bass. "The Pill" and "I Don't Want Nobody But My Baby." Nentu, NTS 107, nd. Bernie Hayes and the Junior Wells Band. "The Soul Pearl" and "Calling On My Buddy's [sic]." Bright Star, BS 500, 1966. Bernie Hayes. "Tribute To A Black Woman, Parts 1 and 2. " Volt, VOA-4032, January 1970. Bernie Hayes. "Cool Strut, Parts 1 and 2." Volt, VOA-4047, August 1970. Bernard Hayes, executive producer. Fontella Bass. "You Can Betcha In Love." Epic, 8 50341, 1977. Uvee Hayes. "In My Eyes" and "Do Ya?" Mission Park, MP-1946-A-2, June 1989

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Index Terms	Folder	Image
African American broadcasters	1-15	
African American journalists	1-15	
African American Musicians	1-15	
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Amaturo, Joseph	3, 9	
Anderson, Gene	10	Yes
Atkins, Charles "Deek"	10	Yes
B. Q., Robert	10, 11, 14	Yes
Baker, Josephine	8	
Bar-Kays (R&B Band)	11	Yes
Basie, Count	10	Yes
Bass, Fontella	1, 2, 16	
Bishop, Jimmy	14	Yes
Brown, James	10, 11	Yes
Burks, Jessie "Spider"	10, 14	Yes
Burks, Solomon	10	Yes
Byrd, Bobby	11	Yes
Cervantes, Mayor Alfonso, J.	10	Yes
Chandler, Gene	10	Yes
Cheers, Leo	14	Yes
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Congress Of Racial Equality	1-15	Yes
Cunningham, Chuck	11	Yes
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Davis, Carl	10	Yes
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Index Terms	Folder	Image
Eisenberg, Alan	3, 7, 9	
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Hayes, John	11	Yes
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Horton, Gladys	10	Yes
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Ingram, Luther	14	Yes
Jackson, Walter	10	Yes
Jones, Buster	11, 14	Yes
Jones, E. Rodney	14	Yes
Jones, Johnny	3, 9	
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KKSS (Radio station : Saint Louis, Mo.)	3, 7, 9	
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Index Terms	Folder	Image
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Stamz, Richard	10	Yes
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Taylor, Johnny	11	Yes
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WGES (Radio station : Chicago, Il.)	3	
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Wilson, Spanky	14	Yes
WMMP (Radio station : Chicago, Il.)	4, 10	Yes
WVON (Radio station : Chicago, Il.)	8	