



St. Louis Blues Musicians Research Collection (S0546)

Collection Number: S0546

Collection Title: St. Louis Blues Musicians Research Collection

Dates: 1975-1986

Creator: Thomas, Kenn, 1958-

Abstract: The St. Louis Blues Musicians Research Collection contains photocopies of newspaper clippings and magazine articles about blues musicians who began their careers in St. Louis, Missouri. Journalist, Kenn Thomas, gathered the research materials in the 1980s for a column in the *Riverfront Times* regarding St. Louis blues musicians.

Collection Size: 1 cubic foot
(30 folders)

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. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Rights & Reproductions](#) on the Society's website for more information about reproductions and permission to publish.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *St. Louis Blues Musicians Research Collection* (S0546); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the Western Historic Manuscript Collection by Kenn Thomas on November 20, 1992 (Accession No. SA3096).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the St. Louis Blues Musicians Research Collection can be found in the following collections:

Kenn Thomas Papers (S1195)

Processed by: Processed by Rachael Heriford, April 2023

Biographical:

Kenn Thomas was born on June 12, 1958, in St. Louis City, Missouri. Thomas started his writing career as a freelance rock music critic for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *St. Louis Globe Democratic*, and the *Riverfront Times*. During this time, Thomas also hosted a radio program focusing on Beat-era writers titled, *Off the Beaten Path* (later retitled *Offbeat*), for St. Louis-based radio station KDHX. In 1988, he also launched the magazine *Steamshovel Press* to publicize his unpublished music reviews and interview pop-culture icons such as Amiri Baraka and Ram Dass. Thomas shifted the focus of *Steamshovel Press* in 1992 to examine conspiracy theories due to his lifelong interest in the topic. The magazine gained popularity and large distribution in conspiracy circles. During the 2000s, Thomas published several conspiracy theory books on the JFK assassination, most notably *Maury Island UFO: The Crisman Conspiracy*. In addition to contributing to and publishing books about conspiracy theories, Thomas has traveled and lectured throughout the United States and Europe regarding conspiracy theories and promoting *Steamshovel Press*.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged alphabetically by musician names.

Scope and Content Note:

The St. Louis Blues Musicians Research Collection contains photocopies of newspaper clippings from newspapers such as the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, and photocopies of blues magazines such as *Blues Unlimited*. Kenn Thomas gathered research materials for an article in the *Riverfront Times* about St. Louis-based blues musicians. This collection is not a comprehensive overview of blues music in St. Louis. Topics of interest include research materials about Ike and Tina Turner, Kings of Rhythm, and Lonnie Johnson. The collection has been arranged alphabetically by musicians' names into 30 folders. The materials in the collection are from 1975 to 1986.

Container List:

Box 001

- | | |
|-------|-----------------------------|
| f. 1 | Bankhead, Tommy, 1983-1984 |
| f. 2 | Blues (general), 1981, 1987 |
| f. 3 | Byrnes, Jim, 1981 |
| f. 4 | Crutchfield, James, 1984 |
| f. 5 | DeShay, James, 1982 |
| f. 6 | Edick, George, 1982 |
| f. 7 | Fowler, Samuel, 1981 |
| f. 8 | Gayles, Billy, no date |
| f. 9 | Hall, Tom T., no date |
| f. 10 | Harp Attack '86, 1986 |
| f. 11 | Hinds, Jimmy, no date |
| f. 12 | Hutto, J.B., 1983 |
| f. 13 | Johnson, Lonnie, 1975 |
| f. 14 | Johnson, Stacy, no date |

f. 15	Kings of Rhythm, 1986
f. 16	Love, Clayton, no date
f. 17	Montgomery, Robbie, no date
f. 18	Nighthawk Records, 1986
f. 19	Oglesby, Erskine, no date
f. 20	O'Shaughnessy, Mark, 1979-1982
f. 21	Peek, Billy, 1983, 1987
f. 22	Pierson, Leroy, 1987
f. 23	Price, Zella Jackson, 1984
f. 24	Rondo, 1987
f. 25	St. Louis Blues Club (Kings of Rhythm), 1986
f. 26	St. Louis Blues Festival, 1986
f. 27	Sykes, Roosevelt, 1981, 1983
f. 28	Thimes, Lou, 1984
f. 29	Townsend, Henry, 1977, 1981, 1985-1986
f. 30	Turner, Ike and Tina, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1996

Index:

Index Terms	Folder
African Americans--Missouri--Saint Louis--Music--History	1-30
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Blues (Music)--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-30
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DeShay, James, 1919-1998	5
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Hall, Thomas, 1936-2021	9
Hinds, Jimmy, 1950-	11, 15, 25
Hutto, Joseph Benjamin, 1926-1983	12
Johnson, Lonnie, 1899-1970	13
Johnson, Stacy, 1945-2017	14, 15, 25
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Montgomery, Robbie, 1940-	15, 17, 25
Musicians--Missouri--Saint Louis	1-30
Music--Missouri--Saint Louis--History	1-30
Oglesby, Erskine, 1937-2004	15, 19, 25
O'Shaughnessy, Mark P., 1952-2017	15, 20, 25
Peek, Billy, 1940-	21
Pierson, Leroy	22
Price, Zella Jackson, 1940-	23

Index Terms	Folder
Saint Louis (Mo.)--Social life and customs	1-30
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Thomas, Kenn, 1958-	1-30
Townsend, Henry, 1909-2006	29
Turner, Ike, 1931-2007	15, 25, 30
Turner, Tina, 1939-	15, 25, 30