

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Ebenezer Bush

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Bush, Ebenezer, 1920-2016
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Ebenezer Bush,
Dates:	November 21, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:00:35).
Abstract:	Dentist Dr. Ebenezer Bush (1920 - 2016) was the first African American dentist to establish a practice in Long Beach, California. Bush was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 21, 2002, in Compton, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_214
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Born in Shreveport, Louisiana, on March 20, 1920, Dr. Ebenezer Bush attended segregated schools while growing up. Graduating from Shreveport's Central Colored High School, he was admitted to the Tuskegee Institute as a work student, taking classes at night and working during the day.

After graduating from Tuskegee, Bush taught agriculture at the high school level until the outbreak of World War II. In the Army for three years, Bush served a tour of duty in the Pacific theater. After being discharged, Bush enrolled in Howard University's School of Dentistry, graduating in 1952. From Howard, Bush moved to Long Beach, California, where he became the first African American to establish a dental practice.

Bush was a member of numerous professional organizations, including a life member of the American Dental Association. He received numerous awards. Family Service of Long Beach presented him with the Family Life Award, he received the key to the city of Long Beach, and he was honored by both Howard University and the Tuskegee Institute as a distinguished alumnus. He was also active with civic organizations, including founding and serving as the first president of the Long Beach Community Credit Union and serving on the board of the Long Beach City College Foundation.

Bush and his wife, Wynona, had two sons, both of whom are doctors.

Bush passed away on August 20, 2016 at age 96.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Ebenezer Bush was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 21, 2002, in Compton, California, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Dentist Dr. Ebenezer Bush (1920 - 2016)

was the first African American dentist to establish a practice in Long Beach, California.

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:

Bush, Ebenezer, 1920-2016

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Bush, Ebenezer, 1920-2016--Interviews

African American dentists--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Dentist

HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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 Dr. Ebenezer Bush, November 21, 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 Dr. Ebenezer Bush, Section A2002_214_001_001, TRT: 0:29:30
?

Dr. Ebenezer Bush was born on March 20, 1920 in Shreveport, Louisiana, to Ebenezer Bush, Sr., who was born in Louisiana, and Gertrude Blackmore Bush, who was born in Natchitoches, Louisiana. Bush's paternal grandparents lived in Shreveport, and his grandmother was a former slave from Martinique. Bush's maternal grandparents were sharecroppers in Natchitoches, and later moved to Shreveport. Ebenezer Bush, Sr. was a staunch Baptist, and as a child, Bush, Jr. attended Oakland Baptist Church in Shreveport, and participated in the Baptist Youth Union. Ebenezer Bush, Sr. was married before he met Gertrude Blackmore Bush, and he had a son who lived in Chicago, Illinois. Bush grew up in segregated Shreveport during the Depression, and he and his family farmed

and sold their produce to the wealthier families there. Bush received encouragement from his teachers at Central Colored High School in Shreveport, where he learned black history. A successful black businessman, Ed Hudson, mentored Bush growing up.

African American dentists--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Ebenezer Bush, Section A2002_214_001_002, TRT: 0:29:25
?

Dr. Ebenezer Bush graduated from Central Colored High School in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1938; and during school, he was mentored by a local businessman, Ed Hudson. Bush then attended Tuskegee University in Alabama, as a five-year work-study student, where he studied agriculture with goals of attending dental school. When he first arrived at Tuskegee University, Bush contracted tuberculosis and recovered back home in Shreveport. He returned to Tuskegee University, and had difficulty continuing his job on campus, but worked in the school's supply center. As a work-study student, Bush helped other students obtain work to finish their degrees. While there, he met Dr. George Washington Carver, whose advice about not letting hate destroy you he still treasures. Bush graduated from Tuskegee University in 1943, after writing his thesis on the Tuskegee Airmen who were training at the university at that time. As a student, he participated in the ROTC, and later entered the U.S. Army during World War II.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Ebenezer Bush, Section A2002_214_001_003, TRT: 0:30:40
?

Dr. Ebenezer Bush graduated from Tuskegee University in 1943 with a degree in agriculture. He studied at the university's hospital, unaware of the Tuskegee syphilis experiment. After graduating, he stayed involved with Tuskegee University and with Dr. Frederick Douglass Patterson's United Negro College Fund. In 1943, Bush taught agriculture in Minden, Louisiana, where he was mentored by the dentist there, Dr. Simms. Before going to dental school, Bush served with the U.S. Army in Japan during World War II. While there, he witnessed the devastation of the Japanese people. After his discharge from the U.S. Army, Bush entered Howard University School of Dentistry in Washington, D.C. in 1948. In 1950, he became very ill, and he learned he was the last patient treated by Dr. Charles Drew, before Drew was killed in an auto accident. Bush graduated in 1952, and moved to Long Beach, California in 1954, where he became the city's first black dentist. He joined the local NAACP and fought employment discrimination.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Ebenezer Bush, Section A2002_214_001_004, TRT: 0:31:00
?

Dr. Ebenezer Bush was the first African American to open a dentistry practice in Long Beach, California, in 1954. While in Long Beach, he became civically involved, working with the NAACP to fight the city's employment discrimination and to open up educational and vocational opportunities for black students. Bush was a lifetime NAACP Golden Heritage member, and the founder and first president of the Long Beach Community Credit Union. He worked to get African Americans fairly treated and represented in the Long Beach and Los Angeles, California government administration. Bush reflects upon his legacy and how he wants to be remembered. He described his hope that the black community work to own more of their community, and he encouraged Howard University in Washington D.C. to own and not rent the real estate it occupied. Bush then narrated his photographs.