

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ronald H. Brewington

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Brewington, Ron, 1946-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Ronald H. Brewington,
<b>Dates:</b>	April 28, 2005
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2005
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:18:01).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Broadcast executive Ronald H. Brewington (1946 - ) was a former bureau chief for American Urban Radio Networks. He was initiated into the Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2007. Brewington was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 28, 2005, in El Segundo, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2005_112
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Broadcast executive Ronald H. Brewington was born with his twin brother, Rudolph, on November 2, 1946 in Harlem, New York. Tradition has it that his mother, Moseetta Smalls of Charleston, South Carolina was a descendent of Reconstruction era congressman, Robert Smalls. Brewington attended PS5, St. Charles Borrmeo and St. Thomas, the Apostle schools. He studied aviation mechanics at Aviation High School, and joined the United States Navy after graduating in 1964. Brewington earned a certificate in Journalism from UCLA in 1985; a B.A. in Broadcast journalism from California State University, Long Beach and a Masters of Arts degree from Harrington University.

Brewington, attracted to broadcasting, started at KEYS-AM in Corpus Christi, TX. He worked at KEXX-FM and KRIS-TV, and then became Director of Navy Broadcasting Service Detachments in Adak, Alaska and Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory. This was followed by KKFX-AM in Seattle, WA. He then moved to the USS New Jersey (BB-62), then to KLON-FM, Long Beach, CA. From there, Brewington worked at KGFJ-AM and KJLH-FM in Los Angeles, CA. He served for seventeen years. Starting at KRIS-TV in Corpus Christi, Texas, Brewington worked as an anchor/reporter at KKFX-AM in Seattle; KLON-FM, Lon Beach; KGFJ-FM and KJLH-FM in Los Angeles. He served for seventeen years as the Los Angeles bureau chief for American Urban Radio Networks, covering the Democratic National Conventions in 1980 and 2000, the 1984 Summer Olympics, the Rodney King trial and the subsequent rebellion and both O.J. Simpson trials. Brewington covered entertainment events like the Academy Awards, Grammy Awards, Soul Train Music Awards, American Music Awards, Emmy Awards, Billboard Music Awards, Golden Globe Awards, NAACP Image Awards, Screen Actors Guild Awards, BET Awards and others. Currently a news/entertainment stringer for Associated Press Radio Network and Los Angeles correspondent to U.K. based Chatbusters News Service.

Brewington was the producer of the nationally syndicated three hour tributes to the late Marvin Gaye: *Marvin Gaye: Pride and Joy* and the sequel, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Motown*. He produced *Labor Day Soul Jam*, *King: A*

*Celebration of the Man and His Dream, Back to the Roots: A Soul Music Celebration, A Man Named King, Merry Soul Christmas and Street Scene*. He also writes, produces and hosts the two-hour *R&B Superstars Series*. Brewington is the voice of the NAACP Image Awards, Heroes and Legends Awards, Hollywood Black Film Festival and Black Talent News Awards. He has been the prime mover in the campaign to include African American stars to the Hollywood Walk of Fame and to get a commemorative postage stamp for Marvin Gaye. Brewington is known for giving silver dollars to community heroes.

Brewington was inducted into the Broadcasters Hall of Fame in Akron, Ohio on November 4, 2007 along with his twin brother and broadcasting colleague, Rudolph Brewington.

Ronald H. Brewington was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 28, 2005.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Ronald H. Brewington was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 28, 2005, in El Segundo, California, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Broadcast executive Ronald H. Brewington (1946 - ) was a former bureau chief for American Urban Radio Networks. He was initiated into the Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2007.

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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:

Brewington, Ron, 1946-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Brewington, Ron, 1946---Interviews

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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:

Broadcast Executive

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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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 Ronald H. Brewington, April 28, 2005. 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 Ronald H. Brewington, Section A2005\_112\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:44 ?

Ronald H. Brewington was born on November 2, 1946 in New York City. His mother, Moseetta Smalls, the great-granddaughter of Robert Smalls, famed for commandeering a Confederate ship to bring himself and seventeen other slaves to freedom during the Civil War, and the niece of Ed Smalls, proprietor of Smalls Paradise in Harlem, was born on August 15, 1917 in Charleston, South Carolina. She moved to New York City when she was four years old. His father, William Brewington, was born on December 24, 1918 in Broadway, North Carolina. After his parents divorced in his infancy, Brewington did not reconnect with his father until he was twenty-one. Brewington's mother instilled discipline and good manners while single-handedly raising him and his twin brother, Rudolph, and working as a cook and cook manager for the New York City Board of Education. Brewington remembers wandering the city with his brother, enjoying the food from street vendors and seeing Moms Mabley and Chuck Jackson perform at the Apollo Theater.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald H. Brewington, Section A2005\_112\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Ronald H. Brewington loved listening to his favorite disc jockey, Frankie Crocker, during his childhood. Growing up in Harlem during the 1960s, Brewington encountered well-known political figures like Malcolm X and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. and enjoyed reading books at the Countee Cullen Branch of the New York Public Library. His mother's conversion to Catholicism led her to place him and his brother in Catholic grade schools. At Aviation High School, Brewington learned aviation mechanics, ran track and field and was in student government. With his twin brother in the U.S. Marine Corps, Brewington joined the U.S. Navy in 1964. After volunteering to be a training device man, he was sent to Memphis, Tennessee where a racist café owner refused him service while brandishing a shotgun. Alerted by Brewington, the Memphis NAACP picketed the café, causing it to close. Brewington first became involved with broadcasting while stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas after being hired as a disc jockey for KEYS-AM.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald H. Brewington, Section A2005\_112\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

Ronald H. Brewington started his broadcasting career in 1975 at KEYS AM while stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas. He then became public service director for KEXX FM radio, where he also hosted a weekly community program for which he interviewed Douglas Edwards of CBS Evening News. In 1977, Brewington attained the rank of chief journalist in the U.S. Navy. He was deployed to the Naval Air Facility Adak on the Aleutian Islands of Alaska, the Naval Communications Station on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, and USS New Jersey in Long Beach, California, where he served as public affair officer before retiring in 1985. Brewington worked as an assistant director for the Bob Hope Hollywood USO Club. He then headed Sheridan Broadcasting Network's news bureau in Los Angeles, California, which was later renamed the American Urban Network. Brewington talks about covering the 1984 Summer Olympics, the 1984 Democratic National Convention, the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, and various awards shows.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald H. Brewington, Section A2005\_112\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:00 ?

Ronald H. Brewington was attending a rally for HistoryMaker The Honorable Maxine Waters in 1984 when he learned that Motown artist Marvin Gaye had been shot and killed. Since then, Brewington has been involved with the Marvin P. Gaye, Jr. Memorial Foundation's efforts to memorialize the singer. He produced the radio documentary 'Marvin Gaye, Pride and Joy' and campaigned to honor Gaye with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. At the time of the interview, Brewington was working to have a commemorative stamp produced for Marvin Gaye and to create scholarships in his name. Brewington encountered O.J. Simpson after reporting on his criminal and civil trials. He also became known among Hollywood stars for his trademark of handing out Eisenhower silver dollars. Since being diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1999, Brewington has educated others about the disease through his work with the Real Men Cook Foundation. He also has raised awareness about the ethnic cleansing in Darfur.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald H. Brewington, Section A2005\_112\_001\_005, TRT: 0:21:37 ?

Ronald H. Brewington, at the time of the interview, hosted a Comcast show, 'Minute by Minute,' which features community members and local events in Los Angeles. Inspired by the stories of the original Tuskegee Airmen he encountered, Brewington joined the Los Angeles chapter of Tuskegee Airmen Inc., which was campaigning for a commemorative postage stamp as well as a Congressional Gold Medal for the Airmen when the interview occurred. As an adjunct professor, Brewington teaches broadcasting and journalism at Santa Monica College and West Los Angeles College. Brewington talks about his four children, Governor Schwarzenegger's remarks on immigration in California, his respect for Dick Clark, and the fight that broke out at the 2004 Vibe Awards. Brewington concludes his interview by reflecting on his hopes and concerns for the African American community, his legacy, and how he would like to be remembered. He narrates his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald H. Brewington, Section A2005\_112\_Brewington\_Ron\_06\_MED\_001\_01, TRT: 0:56:04

Video Oral History Interview with Ronald H. Brewington, Section A2005\_112\_Brewington\_Ron\_06\_MED\_001\_02, TRT: 0:51:43