

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Bert Mitchell

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Mitchell, Bert, 1938-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Bert Mitchell,
Dates:	June 29, 2018
Bulk Dates:	2018
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:37:46).
Abstract:	Accountant Bert Mitchell (1938 -) was the co-founder of Mitchell & Titus LLP, one of the most successful minority accounting firms in the United States. Mitchell was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 29, 2018, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2018_136
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Accountant Bert Mitchell was born on April 12, 1938 in Manchester, Jamaica to Joseph and Edith Mitchell. He grew up on his family's farm in Jamaica and attended Kingston Technical High School. In 1958, Mitchell immigrated with his parents and six siblings to New York City. There, he worked as a full-time clerk at a local Teamster labor union while taking night classes at Baruch College, CUNY. Mitchell earned his B.A. degree in business administration in 1963.

Mitchell was the 100th African American certified CPA in U.S. history and joined J.K. Lasser & Company as their first African American CPA in 1963. In 1965, Mitchell became the CFO of Intra-American Life Corporation, a life insurance company founded by civil rights leader and lawyer Clarence B. Jones. Mitchell began working with the Ford Foundation in 1966. While there, he earned his M.B.A. degree at Baruch College in 1968. In 1969, Mitchell became a partner at Lucas, Tucker & Company, the oldest African American owned CPA firm in the U.S. and remained there until 1972 when he started an independent accounting firm with James L. Tatum, Jr. Mitchell then partnered with Robert P. Titus to found Mitchell & Titus LLP later that year, which became the largest minority-owned accounting firm in the U.S. He served as chairman and CEO of the firm, and worked with the NAACP, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Jackie Robinson Foundation and the A. Philip Randolph Institute. To expand their business, Mitchell & Titus LLP entered joint venture agreements with major accounting firms such as Peat Marwick and Ernst & Young LLP. They also acquired other minority firms including Stewart, Benjamin & Brown and Leevy Redcross & Co. After serving as CEO of Mitchell & Titus LLP for thirty-six years, Mitchell retired in 2008.

Mitchell helped found the National Association of Minority CPA Firms in 1971. In 1977, he was elected to the board of directors of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, becoming the first African American to serve on the board. He also served as chair of the board of trustees of Ariel Mutual Funds, and was the first African American to serve as chairman of the New York State Board of Accountancy. In 1987, Mitchell became President of the New York State Society of CPAs (NYSSCPA), the largest CPA Society in the United States.

During his tenure, the NYSSCPA launched the Career Opportunities in the Accounting Profession (COAP) program whose focus was to increase the number of minorities in the profession.

In 2012, the Journal of Accountancy, in celebration of its 125 years of existence in America, listed Bert Mitchell among the 125 CPAs of most impact in the accounting profession.

Mitchell and his wife, Carole Mitchell, have three children: Tracey, Robbin, and Ronald.

Bert Mitchell was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 29, 2018.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Bert Mitchell was conducted by Harriette Cole on June 29, 2018, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Accountant Bert Mitchell (1938 -) was the co-founder of Mitchell & Titus LLP, one of the most successful minority accounting firms in the United States.

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:

Mitchell, Bert, 1938-

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Mitchell, Bert, 1938- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Accountant

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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 Bert Mitchell, June 29, 2018. 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 Bert Mitchell, Section A2018_136_001_001, TRT: 1:37:49 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Bert Mitchell, Section A2018_136_001_002, TRT: 2:29:14 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Bert Mitchell, Section A2018_136_001_003, TRT: 3:28:52 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Bert Mitchell, Section A2018_136_001_004, TRT: 4:28:57 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Bert Mitchell, Section A2018_136_001_005, TRT: 5:24:01 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Bert Mitchell, Section A2018_136_001_006, TRT: 6:08:53 ?