



**THE CENTER FOR POPULAR MUSIC, MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY,
MURFREESBORO, TN**

BRUCE D. DAVIDSON PAPERS

90-038

Creator:

Davidson, Bruce D. (1917- May 25, 1987)

Type of Material:

Manuscript Materials, Photographs, Trade Catalogs, press kits

Physical Description:

.35 linear feet

Including 96 black and white photographs

Languages:

English

Dates:

1959-1962

Access/Restrictions:

The collection is open for research use. *All materials in this collection are subject to standard national and international copyright laws. Center staff are able to assist with copyright questions for this material.*

Preferred Citation: (Box Number, Folder Number/Name), Bruce D. Davidson Papers 90-38, Center for Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Provenance and Acquisition Information:

The Center received this collection from Doug Seroff, Fairview TN in December 1990. The papers were given to him by Mrs. Bruce Davidson, the creator's widow.

Subjects/Index Terms:

Radio

Jazz Music

Music Business

Capitol Records

Agency History/Biographical Sketch:

Bruce Davidson, born in 1917 in Palmyra NJ, broke into radio in the early 1940s at station WIP in Philadelphia PA. In 1947 he joined RCA-Victor Records in Camden NJ as editor of publications, but became Capitol Records sales promotion representative in Philadelphia in the early 1950s, beginning a 14 year career with the company which ended with a tour at company headquarters in Hollywood CA as singles merchandise manager.

After leaving Capitol he worked as public relations director for a Pasadena CA radio station before moving to Nashville TN in 1970 as executive vice president of Mega Records. Following the demise of Mega he held positions at two other independent record labels in Nashville and organized Music Media, a company specializing in graphics for the music industry.

While in Philadelphia Davidson began a life-time of jazz record collecting, and after moving to Nashville helped found the Tennessee Jazz and Blues Society. He and Nashvillian Brad McCuen co-hosted the popular weekly jazz radio series Upbeat which originated at WPLN Nashville and was syndicated to public radio stations across the country.

At the time of his death 25 May 1987 his friend and cohost Brad McCuen said of Davidson, a longtime member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, "He was a thorough record man . . . He was a man whose deepest love was jazz but he was completely capable of operating successfully in country music, popular music, [or] soul music." (Nashville Tennessean 27 May 1987)

Scope and Content:

Letters and carbons of letters, 1959-1962, between Bruce Davidson, sales promotion representative for Capitol Records in Philadelphia PA and Capitol staff in New York and California, dealing primarily with Davidson's performance and his ideas for record promotions and recording projects. Also scattered letters of appreciation to Davidson from radio personalities and program directors and from Capital artists and their representatives. Three printed items from Philadelphia radio station WIP follow this correspondence, which is arranged chronologically.

Catalogs and flyers from record companies and record retailers, primarily for jazz records, arranged alphabetically by company name. These appear to date from the late 1940's to the mid-1950's.

Press kits/promotional booklets, primarily jazz artists, arranged alphabetically by performer, followed by multi-artist "bio-booklets" from Mercury and RCA records. This material appears to be from the same time period as the catalogs and flyers described above.

96 photographs including (1) 3 5x7 black and white autographed photographs of The Three Suns and of Hal McIntyre; (2) 32 3x4 black and white snapshots of Capitol artists Glen Gray of Casa Loma Orchestra, Sonny James, Spike Jones, George Shearing and Frank Sinatra during promotional visits to Philadelphia including radio interviews, autograph sessions and other public appearances, arranged alphabetically by performer; (3) 3 8x10 black and white record company photographs of promotional events including the first delivery of a sound recording to a retail outlet a store after the

1948 "Petrillo ban"; (4) 40 8x10 blacks and white publicity photographs of Louis Armstrong, Frankie Avalon, Mildred Bailey, Bing Crosby, the Four Preps, Glen Gray, Johnnie Guarnieri, Phil Harris, Woody Herman, the Letttermen, Jimmie Lunceford, Wingy Manone, Metronome All-Star Band, Red Norvo, Buddy Rich, Trude Richards, Jane Russell, George Shearing, Frank Sinatra, Jess Stacy and Dakota Stanton, some distributed by the record company and others, which may include Davidson and/or Philadelphia dj Dick Clark, taken during promotional visits to Philadelphia, arranged alphabetically by performer; and (5) 18 8x10 black and white record company photographs promoting motion picture sound track albums including "Benny Goodman Story", "Glen Miller Story", "High Society", "Orchestra Wife", "The Pride and the Passion" and "Saint Joan".

Arrangement:

Original arrangement is unknown. It appears the original processing archivist organized the collection by type and themes that appeared naturally in the collection. The items have been organized chronologically for ease of access.

Collection Contents (Box/Folder List):

Box # Folder # Title / Description

Box 1

Folder 1 Correspondence

Letters and carbons of letters, 1959-1962, between Bruce Davidson, sales promotion representative for Capitol Records in Philadelphia PA and Capitol staff in New York and California, dealing primarily with Davidson's performance and his ideas for record promotions and recording projects. Also scattered letters of appreciation to Davidson from radio personalities and program directors and from Capital artists and their representatives. Three printed items from Philadelphia radio station WIP follow this correspondence, which is arranged chronologically.

Folder 2 Catalogs

Catalogs and flyers from record companies and record retailers, primarily for jazz records, arranged alphabetically by company name. These appear to date from the late 1940's to the mid-1950's.

Folder 3 Press kits / flyers

Press kits/promotional booklets, primarily jazz artists, arranged alphabetically by performer, followed by multi-artist "bio-booklets" from Mercury and RCA records. This material appears to be from the same time period as the catalogs and flyers described above.

Folder 4 Photographs

8x10 blacks and white publicity photographs of Louis Armstrong, Frankie Avalon, Mildred Bailey, Bing Crosby, the Four Preps, Glen Gray, Johnnie Guarnieri, Phil Harris, Woody Herman, the Letttermen, Jimmie Lunceford, Wingy Manone, Metronome All-Star Band, Red Norvo, Buddy Rich, Trude Richards, Jane Russell, George Shearing, Frank

Sinatra, Jess Stacy and Dakota Stanton, some distributed by the record company and others, which may include Davidson and/or Philadelphia dj Dick Clark, taken during promotional visits to Philadelphia, arranged alphabetically by performer

Folder 5 Photographs

photographs including 3 5x7 black and white autographed photographs of The Three Suns and of Hal McIntyre;

32 3x4 black and white snapshots of Capitol artists Glen Gray of Casa Loma Orchestra, Sonny James, Spike Jones, George Shearing and Frank Sinatra during promotional visits to Philadelphia including radio interviews, autograph sessions and other public appearances, arranged alphabetically by performer;

3 8x10 black and white record company photographs of promotional events including the first delivery of a sound recording to a retail outlet a store after the 1948 "Petrillo ban";

18 8x10 black and white record company photographs promoting motion picture sound track albums including "Benny Goodman Story", "Glen Miller Story", "High Society", "Orchestra Wife", "The Pride and the Passion" and "Saint Joan".

Materials Cataloged Separately:

Posters have been cataloged separately for storage and ease of access. Those separated items can be searched in the Center's catalog by accession number.

Location:

These materials are located in the manuscripts section of the archival stacks, filed chronologically by accession number.

Related Materials:

Other related materials in the Center collections include Brad McCuen Collection (97-023), Ray Avery Collection (86-009). Other related items are searchable in the Center's catalog.