

Physical description:

.35 linear feet including 96 black and white photographs.

Dates:

1959-1962.

Provenance:

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.

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.

Scope and content (continued):

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".

Location:

The correspondence, catalogs and promotional booklets are filed by accession number with other manuscripts. The photographs are filed under Davidson, Bruce in the proper name photograph file .