

The Filson Historical Society

Mervin Aubespain (1937-) Photograph Collection, 1937-2013

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contact the Curator of Photographs and Prints.

Size of Collection:

1.33 cubic ft

Location Number:

020PC11

Mervin Aubespın (1937-) Photograph Collection, 1937-2013

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of 91 folders and includes material related to Mervin Aubespın's career as a journalist, as well as some material from his personal life. Material throughout the collection reflects Aubespın's lifelong mission to bring more people of color and underrepresented populations into the field of journalism.

Throughout his career at the Courier-Journal, Aubespın was also involved in numerous professional journalism organizations including, but not limited to the National Association of Black Journalists and the American Copy Editor Society. The collection documents Aubespın's involvement with these organizations and several mentorship programs, such as the Rainbow Institute.

In addition, the photographs document Aubespın's numerous international journalism trips and his involvement with the United Nations Development Programme focusing on such issues such as HIV/AIDS in Africa and media images of Africa, among other topics. Finally, photographs document Aubespın's work as co-author of *Two Centuries of Black Louisville: A Photographic History* alongside Kenneth Clay and Dr. Blaine Hudson.

Related Collections:

Mervin Aubespın museum collection [2020.27.1-2]

Mervin Aubespın 1937- Papers, 1910-2020 (bulk: 1980-2015) [Mss. A A892]

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Historical Note

Mervin Aubespain was born in 1937 in Opelousas, Louisiana. In 1958, he graduated from the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University). While studying at Tuskegee, Aubespain became involved with the Civil Rights movement, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott and march from Selma to Montgomery. Upon graduation Aubespain moved to Louisville where he became a teacher and remained involved in the civil rights demonstrations in the city. He then took a job at BF Goodrich, which according to Aubespain resulted in the loss of his draft deferment. In an interview, Aubespain stated that while serving his obligatory two years of military service, he decided to spend his free time studying art.

Following honorable release from the military, Aubespain returned to Louisville where he and other Black artists founded the Louisville Art Workshop. In 1967, Aubespain took a job at the *Courier-Journal* as a news artist.

It was during a period of pronounced racial unrest in 1968 that Aubespain's career as a reporter began. During this time as it became unsafe for his white coworkers to report from the scene, Aubespain assumed the role of reporter and relayed stories of what was occurring in west Louisville to the writers at the *Courier-Journal*. Aubespain says he eventually returned to his job as an artist before being approached months later by the publisher of the newspaper and told that he was more valuable to the *Courier-Journal* as a reporter. In 1971, he entered the Minority Journalism Program at Columbia University.

Aubespain's career as a journalist for the *Courier-Journal* spanned decades and included countless stories. Throughout his time at the *Courier-Journal* he worked in several positions and retired from the newspaper in 2002 as the Associate Editor/Development. Aubespain served as a consultant on media to the United Nations Development Programme's Office of Public Affairs and led numerous trips of journalists to countries including Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, and South Africa, among others.

Aubespain's lifelong mission was to diversify newspaper staff and involve more people of color in the production of the news, which is reflected in his involvement with numerous professional organizations and mentorship programs. Aubespain was a longtime member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), and was involved in the Chips Quinn Scholars program and Multicultural Journalism Workshop, among other organizations.

In 2011, Mervin Aubespain, Kenneth Clay, and Dr. J. Blaine Hudson published their co-authored book *Two Centuries of Black Louisville: A Photographic History* after years of work on the project.

Aubespín has received numerous awards and accolades, including the Ida B. Wells Award in 1990 for “for exemplary leadership in providing minorities employment opportunities in journalism,” and the 1991 Distinguished Service to Journalism Award by the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communications. He is a member of the Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame.

Aubespín is married to Deborah Cahill Aubespín. He has a daughter from a previous marriage, Eleska Aubespín and a stepdaughter, Sarah Spearing.

Mervin Aubespín (1937-) Photograph Collection, 1937-2013

Folder List

Box 1

Family and Personal photographs

- Folder 1: Aubespín baby photographs, 1937-1939
- Folder 2: Aubespín family photographs, c. 1940-1975
- Folder 3: Aubespín family photographs, c. 1940-1990
- Folder 4: Aubespín family photographs, c.1980-2010
- Folder 5: Aubespín with friends and family, 1954-1960
- Folder 6: Performance by Duke Ellington (?) and Ray Nance, c. 1955
- Folder 7: Tuskegee Institute photographs, 1956-1957
- Folder 8: Miss Exposition contest, 1961
- Folder 9: Military service at Fort Hood, 1963-1965
- Folder 10: Selma to Montgomery March, 1965
- Folder 11: Aubespín with Joe Hammond and unidentified man at Joe's Palm Room, 1968
- Folder 12: Aubespín with Bill Clinton, Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, and other famous individuals, c.1970-1997
- Folder 13: Headshots and portraits, 1973-2000
- Folder 14: Fishing trips, c. 1980-2010
- Folder 15: Fishing trips continued, 1982-2006
- Folder 16: Aubespín and unknown people at Churchill Downs, 1985
- Folder 17: Aubespín with President Bill Clinton photographs and negatives, 1994
- Folder 18: Group photograph at Legacies Old School Music Festival and other unidentified event, 2009
- Folder 19: Aubespín with Greg Fischer, 2010
- Folder 20: Holiday party photographs, undated
- Folder 21: Aubespín with Ed Hamilton, undated
- Folder 22: Aubespín with Al and Tipper Gore, undated
- Folder 23: Aubespín with Seymour Topping, undated
- Folder 24: Robert Douglas, Kenneth Clay, Mervin Aubespín, and Ed Hamilton, undated
- Folder 25: Aubespín at dinner with unidentified group holding African art, undated
- Folder 26: Unidentified people, 2000-2006

Miscellaneous

- Folder 27: Black musicians with descriptions and recollections, undated
- Folder 28: Jazz musicians slides, 1974
- Folder 29: Signed photo of Wendell Scott to Blanche, undated

Courier-Journal related

- Folder 30: Aubespín at drafting table, c. 1965

Folder 31: Photographs related to assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and riots in Louisville, 1968
Folder 32: Courier-Journal Press photographs, ca. 1930-1990
Folder 33: Aubespain and unidentified men likely at the Courier-Journal, 1973
Folder 34: Unidentified party potentially Courier-Journal related, 1985-1990
Folder 35: Aubespain and David Hawpe, 1989
Folder 36: Aubespain with Courier-Journal news interns, c. 1995
Folder 37: Courier-Journal retirement party, 2002
Folder 38: Western Middle School newspaper project, 2004
Folder 39: Unidentified cultural diversity event likely in Courier-Journal lobby, undated
Folder 40: Aubespain giving talk on diversity to staff at the Courier-Journal, undated
Folder 41: Aubespain, unidentified woman, and Muhammed Ali likely at the Courier-Journal, undated
Folder 42: Unidentified man lecturing (possibly at Columbia) photographs by Edward C. Davis III, undated
Folder 43: Aubespain with an unidentified group (possibly Courier-Journal interns), undated
Folder 44: David Hawpe headshot, undated

National Association of Black Journalists

Folder 45: NABJ Conventions, 1981-1987
Folder 46: NABJ Conventions continued, 1981-1987
Folder 47: NABJ Atlanta Convention, 1984-1985
Folder 48: NABJ Baltimore Convention, 1985
Folder 49: NABJ/ASNE Historically Black College Short Course Hampton University, 1991
Folder 50: NABJ/ASNE Flying Short course, undated
Folder 51: Aubespain with unidentified man at the NABJ offices, undated

Mentorship and Miscellaneous Projects

Folder 52: Louisville Association of Black Communicators group photograph, undated
Folder 53: Trips to Jackson State, Tennessee State, 1989
Folder 54: Rainbow Institute photographs 1992-1995
Folder 55: Aubespain with group of young adults at the Bristol restaurant, undated
Folder 56: Aubespain at an unidentified speaking engagements, undated

Awards

Folder 57: Ida B. Wells award ceremony, 1990
Folder 58: Mervin R. Aubespain award (Association of Black College Journalism and Mass Communication Programs), 1991
Folder 59: Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame/Joe Creason Lecture, 1995
Folder 60: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Award, 2010

Box 2

International Travel & Work with the United Nations:

Folder 61: Aubespín with Bradford Morse, Director of the Officer for Emergency Operations in Africa, 1985
Folder 62: Travel to Burkina Faso, Mozambique, and other material, 1996-1997
Folder 63: Travel to Guatemala, 1997
Folder 64: Aubespín with Nelson Mandela and Djibril Diallo, 1997
Folder 65: Travel to Senegal for Seminar on Covering Poverty with Birame Diallo, 1997
Folder 66: Photographs related to work with the United Nations (Fesman Launch, Int'l Day for the Eradication of Poverty), 1997
Folder 67: Travel to Mali, 1997-1999
Folder 68: Aubespín with Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General in New York, 2002
Folder 69: Photo of Zambia market and letter from Madelyn Jennings, 2002
Folder 70: National Dance Company Goree Island Performance slide, undated
Folder 71: Travel abroad possibly in Timbuktu, undated
Folder 72: Aubespín and Tom Morgan at the U.N. meeting of the Task Force on AIDS in Africa, undated
Folder 73: Aubespín likely at Goree Island, undated

Art Related

Folder 74: Edward C. Davis III, 1972
Folder 75: Ed Hamilton in his studio, 1974
Folder 76: Unidentified man (possibly Edward C. Davis III) c. 1975
Folder 77: Aubespín and unknown group at a party, 1975
Folder 78: Theodore Clayton (junk metal sculptor) with sculptures photographed by Aubespín, c. 1975
Folder 79: Photograph of drawing by Aubespín, 1975
Folder 80: Aubespín at work on a painting, undated
Folder 81: Photographs of Aubespín, art clippings, and other material, undated

Two Centuries of Black Louisville

Folder 82: Two Centuries of Black Louisville book signings, c. 2010
Folder 83: Mayor Greg Fischer and authors of Two Centuries of Black Louisville at Celebrating the Legacy of Black Louisville Event, c. 2010
Folder 84: Various photographs of Black Louisville (likely related to Two Centuries of Black Louisville), undated

Oversized materials

Folder 85: NABJ conventions photographs, 1981-1987
Folder 86: Aubespín portrait photograph, 1988
Folder 87: Travel abroad likely Timbuktu, undated
Folder 88: Aubespín with Nelson Mandela and Djibril Diallo, 1997
Folder 89: Aubespín with Al and Tipper Gore (signed photograph), undated

Digital materials

These files are restricted to in-house viewing.

O:\DIGITAL COLLECTIONS – Reference Room Access\020PC11 – Mervin Aubespain
Photographs

Folder 90: Two Centuries of Black Louisville Book Signings, and Christmas Party ca. 2011-2013, CD-Rs

Celebrating the Legacy of Black Louisville Event photographs by Edward C. Davis III, May 1, 2011

Photographs depict the authors of *Two Centuries of Black Louisville: A Photographic History* speaking to a crowd and historical interpretations by actors. Mayor Greg Fischer is also pictured.

Birthday Party photographs by Edward C. Davis III, December 27, 2013

Photographs of what appears to be a birthday party for Sarah Spearing.

Two Centuries of Black Louisville Book Signing photographs by Edward C. Davis III, May 22, 2011

Photographs of the three authors signing books and speaking. In addition to the three authors, Greg Fischer, Elmer Lucille Allen, and other prominent Louisvillians appear in some photographs.

Two Centuries of Black Louisville Book Signing photographs by Edward C. Davis III, May 29, 2011

Photographs of the three authors signing books. In addition to the authors, Edward C. Davis III, and author Rick Bell are also pictured.

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Subject Headings

African American arts.
African American authors.
African Americans – Kentucky – Louisville.
Aubespın, Mervin, 1937-
Belafonte, Harry, 1927-
Bell, Rick
Civil rights movements – United States.
Clay, Kenneth H., 1939-
Courier-journal (Louisville, Ky.)
Davis, Edward C., III 1950-
Douglas, Robert L.
Ellington, Duke, 1899-1974
Hamilton, Ed, 1947-
Hawpe, David V., 1943-
Hudson, James Blaine, III, 1949-2013
Jackson, Jesse, 1941-
Journalism – Kentucky – Louisville.
Louisville Art Workshop (Louisville, Ky.)
Louisville (Ky.)
Mandela, Nelson, 1918-2013
Mass media and minorities.
Minorities in journalism.
Nance, Ray, 1913-1976
National Association of Black Journalists.
Newspaper employees.
Selma to Montgomery Rights March (1965 : Selma, Ala.)
Topping, Seymour, 1921-2020
Tuskegee Institute.
Two Centuries of Black Louisville (2011)
United Nations Development Programme.