

Bronzeville Historical Society



(312) 428-8033

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Institution: Bronzeville Historical Society

Collection Title: James S. Parker Collection

Date Span: 1940's to 1999

Extent: __ linear feet (TBD)

Provenance: Accessioned from the University of Illinois at Chicago – James S. Parker Collection

Processors: Spread sheet Processed by James S. Parker

Restrictions: Duplications and use within educational projects permitted. Commercial use by written authorization only. The research is for the preservation of and protection of African American history and culture of Chicago for scholarship and family research in generations to come.

Abstract:



[James S. Parker Collection 1900-2003](#)

Bronzeville Historical Society Life Time member James S. Parker contributed greatly to the Society's holdings. Mr. Parker provided a searchable Bronzeville property database listing more than 300 specific homes and streetscapes in alphabetical order. The database is formatted on Excel with photograph icons to aid researchers. Mr. Parker donated more than 1,500 images detailing Bronzeville community buildings and streetscapes from the 1950's to 1999. Mr. Parker has also supported Bronzeville Historical Society by advocating for our continued presence at the Stephen A. Douglas Tomb State Historic Site.

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The donated printed photographs are selected images extracted from the James S. Parker Collection (1900-2003) and the Chicago Photographic Collection (ca. 1890-1970) at University of Illinois at Chicago. In 1999, photographs of more than 300 addresses were taken by James S. Parker as comparison to those taken prior to 1960.

Excerpt from University of Illinois at Chicago website.

http://collections.carli.illinois.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/uic_pic

The James S. Parker Collection comprises nearly 1,000,000 photographic negatives and prints that extensively record Chicago's built environment. Parker owned the firm Copelin Commercial Photographers (originally founded in 1856) where he first started as a partner in the 1960s, then as sole owner. Under Parker, who was also in charge of managing legal photography for the city of Chicago, the strength of the collection is in documenting Chicago from the 1930s through the 1970s, including a wide range of photographs of parks, bridges, intersections, private houses and public buildings. Neighborhoods are documented over time, showing the effects of local economies and urban policy.

The Chicago Photographic Collection, purchased by the Library in 1989, depicts nearly all of Chicago's neighborhoods over several decades, serving as a significant temporal and pictorial documentation of the many changes in Chicago's urban landscape, built environment, and industrial economy, especially during the mid 20th century. While this collection is concentrated on the Chicago metropolitan area, the evolution of its neighborhoods throughout the 20th century attract researchers interested not just in Chicago history, but in how the urban planning and policy decisions made here have bearing on the growth and change in many other American cities.

The collection at University of Illinois at Chicago is made available through the generous support of a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Inquiries regarding Bronzeville addresses can be sent to bronzvillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com. Photos and descriptions in our data base define mostly the boundaries between 18th Street on the North, 51st Street on the South, State Street on the West and Lake Park Blvd. on the East.

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The collection is organized into two series. The first series is organized in ring binders by street numbers and addresses. Photographs with dates and annotations are in alphabetical order. The second series is an Excel worksheet that provides footnotes on addresses and properties near notable events and residences in the Bronzeville community. The photographs are in Black and White. Before and after photographs show how policy, economic conditions, and urban renewal influenced the changing demographics of the Douglas, Grand Boulevard and Near South communities of Chicago. Very few photographs are dated after 1999.

Biographical/ Historical Note

James S. Parker was born April 24, 1940. Parker worked as a political aide to Congressman Frank Annunzio from 1972 to 1992. Mr. Parker became an official photographer for City of Chicago in 1964. He took many photographs of Mayor Richard J. Daley (1902-1976). Parker continued as a photographer in the business his father co-owned. Copelin Photographers was established in 1856. Copelin Photographers was located at 309 West Madison in Chicago, IL.

Contact: Sherry Williams bronzevillehistoricalsociety@gmail.com (312) 428-8033

Access Headings:

Container List:

| Box | Folder | Title | Date |
|-----------------|--------|---|---------------|
| James S. Parker | | James S. Parker Collection 2015 | |
| Series I : | | | |
| 1 | 1 | Ring Binder | various dates |
| 1 | 2 | Ring Binder | |
| 1 | 3 | Ring Binder | |
| 1 | 4 | Ring Binder | |
| Series II: | 1 | Excel sheets- database of addresses and photographs | |