

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Biographical Sketch ..... 2

Scope and Content ..... 3

Series Notes ..... 4

Series I: Correspondence ..... 5

Series II: Civic Affiliations ..... 5

Series III: Miscellaneous ..... 5

Series IV: Photographs ..... 6

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lucile Bluford has been called the “Matriarch” and the “Conscience” of Kansas City. Miss Bluford, as she was always known, was a pioneer, a crusader for equal rights for African Americans and women, but above all she was a journalist, dedicated to getting the news out.

Lucile Harris Bluford was born July 1, 1911, in Salisbury, North Carolina. Her father, John Henry Bluford, was an educator, and the family moved to Kansas City in 1921 where he taught science at Lincoln High School for 30 years. At Lincoln High School she discovered her life’s vocation working on the school newspaper and the yearbook as well as at the *Kansas City Call* after school. She graduated from Lincoln in 1928 as class valedictorian and enrolled in the University of Kansas School of Journalism, graduating with honors in 1932. After working for a summer for *The Daily World* in Atlanta, Georgia, she returned to the city she loved to take a position as a reporter for the *Kansas City American*. She soon moved to its rival paper, *The Call*, at the invitation of Chester A. Franklin. She stayed at *The Call* for the rest of her career, advancing from cub reporter to city editor, then to managing editor and finally editor, owner, and publisher.

In 1939 Miss Bluford applied to the University of Missouri to do graduate work in journalism. She was denied admission because of her race. Displaying the fighting spirit that was to characterize her whole life, she filed suit against the University in a case that ultimately went to the Missouri Supreme Court. Although she lost her case, it resulted in the establishment of a School of Journalism at Lincoln University under the “separate but equal” doctrine. She finally received a degree from the University of Missouri in 1989 in the form of an honorary doctorate.

In her career of 69 years with *The Call*, Lucile Bluford made the weekly newspaper a potent force for fighting discrimination and advancing the cause of African Americans in Kansas City. Never shy, she once scolded the Rev. Jesse Jackson in front of 8,000 people in Municipal Auditorium. She served on the national board of the NAACP and was active in numerous civic and community organizations. She was honored by a host of institutions, culminating in being named Kansas Citian of the Year in 2002. Kansas City Public Library dedicated its Lucile H. Bluford Branch after her in 1988.

Lucile Bluford died June 13, 2003.

Source:

Beveridge, Mary. “Lucile H. Bluford: Journalist, 1911-2003.” *Missouri Valley Special Collections*. Kansas City Public Library, 2004. Web. 13 Nov. 2012.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Lucile H. Bluford Collection was transferred from a local regional historical society in 2010. Although only two linear feet in volume, it is rich in potential for anyone researching not only Lucile Bluford herself, but subjects such as Kansas City social issues, as well as Civil Rights. Bluford's numerous community activities are documented in several studies and reports. Utilizing her status as owner and editor of the *Kansas City Call*, she reached out to fight social injustice for the African-American population. There are 35 photographs in the collection, which depict historical moments during the struggle for civil rights. On September 22, 1969, there were demonstrations across the country labeled as Black Monday. Organized by a black community action group, they demanded more jobs in construction. There is also a group of unidentified photos with scenes from a black college football event, possibly from the 1940s in Alabama.

Related collection: Brian Thurn Collection – Series IV: Lucile Bluford.

## **SERIES NOTES**

### **Series I: Correspondence**

Correspondence is located in box 1, folders 1 – 20. This series has been sorted by subject matter or organization. Within each folder letters are sorted in descending date order. There are greeting cards, notecards and postcards as well.

### **Series II: Civic Affiliations**

This series is found in box 1, folders 21 – 26 and is divided by entity. It contains references to city and community activism.

### **Series III: Miscellaneous**

Series III is located in box 1, folders 27 – 38. It contains a variety of material which does not fit into a specific series. There are financial reports for the *Kansas City Call*; programs; flyers; various publications; speeches news clippings; ephemera and memorabilia, including an award plaque for Lucile Bluford for her numerous achievements as editor of the *Kansas City Call*.

### **Series IV: Photographs**

Series IV is located in box 2 and contains 35 photographs.

**Box Folder Description**

## CONTAINER LIST

### SERIES I: CORRESPONDENCE

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	1	General Correspondence, 1941 – 1977
	2	Bluford vs. University of Missouri, 1940 – 1942
	3	Bluford vs. University of Missouri, (Lincoln University), 1941
	4	The Kansas City Call: Article Submissions; Letters to the Editor; Purchase of the Call, 1940 – 1981
	5	Telegrams to C.E. Chapman and family, 1957
	6	Civic Affiliations, 1967 – 1982
	7	Civil Rights Organizations, 1941 – 1980
	8	Letters to C.A Franklin, editor of the <i>Kansas City Call</i> . 1941
	9	Kansas City, MO School District, 1967 – 1971
	10	Police Brutality, 1941 – 1982
	11	Regional Health & Welfare Council, 1967
	12	Various Health Organizations, 1967 - 1972
	13	Various Religious Organizations, 1973 – 1979
	14	University of Kansas Black Alumni, 1978 - 1979
	15	Ted Watson, Theatrical Correspondent for the Kansas City Call, 1940
	16	Other Publications: The <i>Crisis</i> ; <i>City Magazine</i> . 1978 - 1980
	17	Invitations, 1968 – 1980
	18	Thank You cards/notes, 1972 – 1977
	19	Christmas Cards, 1963 – 1979
	20	Misc. Holiday; Postcards, 1945 – 1979

### SERIES II: CIVIC AFFILIATIONS

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	21	City of Kansas City, MO: Ordinance Summaries; Resolutions, 1968 – 1970
	22	Model Cities: A Monthly Report, February, 1971
	23	Kansas City Commission on Human Relations, 1962
	24	Kansas City Community Studies, <i>Hard to Place Children</i> : Part 1 – Negro Children; Foster Care, May, 1955
	25	Children's Mercy Hospital Project, Annual Report, 1973 – 1974
	26	Greater Kansas City Liaison Committee Meeting; Missouri Regional Medical Program; Kansas Regional Medical Program, 1969

### SERIES III: MISCELLANEOUS

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	27	<i>Kansas City Call</i> Financial Reports, 1948 - 1972
	28	Programs; Memorial Services, 1941 – 1976
	29	Handouts; flyers; leaflets, etc.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
		[Audio Cassette: City Council Finance Committee, 6/25/75] <b>box 2</b>
1	30	<u>Publications:</u> - <i>Progress in Industrial Relations and Personnel Administration</i> , 1954-55 - <i>Negros in Missouri</i> , 1960 - <i>Awake! (Your Freedom to Choose Medical Treatment Endangered!)</i> , 1967 - <i>Your Home Planner</i> , August, 1956 - <i>United Nations Conference on International Organization</i> , Telephone Directory
	31	<u>Misc. Dialogue</u> - Lucile Bluford: notes on Israel Trip - Councilman Thomas Bradley: Speech to University of Missouri - Virna M. Canson, NAACP: Remarks at National Convention - Honorable Howard A. Glickstein: Civil Rights Oversight - Speech on Employment, speaker unknown, lacking card 1
	32	Spiral Notebook and other random notes
	33	News clippings and press releases
	34	Address and Appointment Books (one each)
	35	Possible subject matter for news articles
	36	Misc.: Paystub; Insurance policy; article by G.S. Bluford; Special Mortgage Report, 10/1/78
	37	Ephemera/Memorabilia: ID Cards; NAACP Membership; business cards; pledge cards; NAACP buttons; stationary
	38	Fellowship House Association Award for Outstanding Service to the Kansas City Community as Editor of the Call Newspaper; Board Member NAACP; Board Member and Treasurer The Crisis Magazine, 5/23/81

#### **SERIES IV: PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photos from this collection can be accessed online at:

<http://dl.mospace.umsystem.edu/umkc/islandora/object/umkc:bluford>