

RECORDS

**Physical description:**

2 audio tapes (TCA-0145. TTA-0145)  
63 photographs and negatives

**Date:**

15 May 1991

**Provenance:**

Photographs made by Paul Wells, director of the Center for Popular Music. Analog audio cassette tape (TCA-0145) made on-site by Center audio archivist Bruce Nemerov. Analog reel to reel tape (TTA-0145) made in the Center audio lab by Nemerov.

**Biographical sketch:**

While performing on the Grand Ole Opry from 1925 to 1941 DeFord Bailey (b. 1899-1982), achieved nation-wide fame as the Harmonica Wizard. His "lively adaptations of old songs--many of them blues tunes--made him a real crowd-pleaser and in 1928 he performed almost twice often as the next regular performer. . . . He built up a repertory with which he was identified such as 'Pan American Blues', 'The Fox Chase', . . . and 'John Henry'." (Bill Malone, Stars of Country Music, p. 341-342)

**Scope and content:**

Audio tapes (TCA-0145, TTA-0145) and 63 black and white contact print photographs and negatives of the dedication of an historic marker, erected on highway 70 near the Wilson/Smith county line by the Tennessee Historical Commission, in honor of Deford Bailey. Participants in the ceremony, which took place 15 May 1991, included Center director Paul Wells, Charles Wolfe (Tennessee Folklore Society), Linda Wynn (Tennessee Historical Commission), Bailey biographer David Morton, harmonica player William Howse, and members of the Bailey family including Deford Bailey Jr., Dezoral Bailey Thomas, and Christine Bailey Craig.

An audio log of the event by archivist Bruce Nemerov follows. Photograph logs made by photographer Paul Wells are filed with the photographs.

**Location:**

The audio tapes are filed first by media type, then by log number with other audio visual manuscripts. The photographs are filed in the biographical photograph file under Bailey, DeFord.

**Related materials:**

Clippings about the dedication of the marker are filed in the subject vertical files under: Middle Tennessee State University. Center for Popular Music .