

# A Guide to the Bernice Jones Smith Photograph Album, circa 1930s SC 0367

Bernice Jones Smith photograph album  
circa 1930s



## Title Statement

A Guide to the Bernice Jones Smith Photograph Album, circa 1930s SC 0367

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

SC 0367

### Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/739

### Unit Date

circa 1930s

### Language

English

### Abstract

A photograph album compiled by Bernice Jones Smith of Staunton, Virginia comprising black-and-white photographs of members of Staunton's African-American community, likely friends and family of Bernice.

**Creator**

Smith, Bernice Jones, 1915-1994

**source**

Tim Abbott Americana

**Extent**

0.1 cubic feet 1 folder

**Repository**

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

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**Acquisition Information**

Purchased from Tim Abbott Americana in December 2023.

**Processing Information**

Loose paper items including Lucy Brooks Jones's obituary were placed in a sub-folder with the photograph album.

**Preferred Citation**

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Bernice Jones Smith Photograph Album, circa 1930s, SC 0367, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

## Biographical / Historical

Bernice Jones (1915-1994) was a Black woman from Staunton, Virginia and the daughter of Henry and Lucy Brooks Jones. As a youth, she attended Fairview School, a segregated school in Staunton. In 1943, she married William C. Smith (1915-1967), a Black singer and actor from Nyack, New York. The 1950 census confirms Nyack as their permanent residence where they lived with Smith's parents. Bernice was employed as a government worker in Staunton and New York.

## Scope and Contents

A photograph album compiled by Bernice Jones Smith of Staunton, Virginia comprising 66 black-and-white photographs of members of Staunton's African-American community, likely friends and family of Bernice.

The first page of the album is inscribed with Bernice's name, address, and date. The front cover of the album is embossed "Bernice Jones." While the album is dated May 28, 1933, the photographs are undated. It is presumed that the bulk of the photographs date to approximately the 1930s though some are likely earlier and later.

The album includes candid and posed group and individual photographs, adults and children, people swimming in a river or lake and in bathing suits, and formal portraits. The bulk of the photographs were taken outdoors. Two photographs feature a young woman wearing graduation regalia. Only a few of the photographs are captioned or identified.

Loose paper items include Lucy Brooks Jones's obituary, receipts for a Mary S. Miller, and a newspaper clipping poem dedicated to Dr. R.C. Pannell.

## Keywords

Photograph albums

Photographs

African Americans -- Virginia -- Staunton -- 20th century

## Bibliography

Find a Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/164489886/bernice-smith>: accessed 05 January 2024), memorial page for Bernice Jones Smith (31 Aug 1915–17 Jun 1994), Find a Grave Memorial ID 164489886, citing Oak Hill Cemetery, Nyack, Rockland County, New York, USA; Maintained by Barb Walker (contributor 47034601).

Laten Ervin Bechtel, *"That's Just the Way it Was": A Chronological and Documentary History of African-American Schools in Staunton and Augusta County* (Staunton, VA: Lot's Wife Publishing, 2010), 328.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **Bernice Jones Smith photograph album**

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/29334

**Unit Date** circa 1930s

**Mixed Materials [1000897624]** 1 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)