

**Institution:** Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College Chicago

**Collection Title:** Richard E. Stamz papers

**Date Span:** 1919–2010

**Extent:** 27 linear feet

**Processors:** Processed by CLIR funded Black Metropolis Research Consortium “Color Curtain Processing Project.” By T.J. Szafranski and Dominique Fuqua, November 13, 2012

**Restrictions:** None, open for research.

**Related Collections:** Sue Cassidy Clark papers, CBMR.

The collection was donated in 2010 by his daughter, Phyllis Stamz.

**Abstract:**

Richard E. Stamz (1906–2007) was a broadcast pioneer and active member of Chicago’s Englewood community. His 1950s radio show on WGES, “Open the Door, Richard,” helped promote and popularize urban black musical genres such as soul, blues, and gospel, and it was a prominent outlet for advertisers to reach African American audiences. The Richard E. Stamz papers span from 1919–2010 and include material from his broadcasting career, his involvement in the Englewood community, and his personal life.

**Biographical Note:**

Richard E. Stamz (1906–2007) was a broadcast pioneer and active member of Chicago’s Englewood community. His 1950s radio show on WGES, “Open the Door, Richard,” helped promote and popularize urban black musical genres such as soul, blues, and gospel, and it was a prominent outlet for advertisers to reach African American audiences. Stamz was born in Memphis, Tennessee on April 10, 1906. He attended LeMoyne-Owen school (now LeMoyne-Owen College) before moving to Chicago in the early 1920s. Stamz’s involvement with the broadcasting industry started in the 1940s when he began driving a sound truck, a travelling billboard equipped with loudspeakers, which played records to accompany advertisements. Stamz began working for WGES 1390 in 1949 as a sound engineer, and he used his sound truck to help Jack L. Cooper broadcast Negro League baseball games. In 1955, Stamz’s radio show, “Open The Door, Richard,” premiered. Stamz dubbed himself the “Crown Prince of Soul,” and he became known for his colorful and boisterous personality. Stamz’s popularity as a disc jockey led to a television show, and on January 21, 1956 “Richard’s Open Door” premiered on WBKB TV-7 Chicago. “Richard’s Open Door” was a thirty minute variety show that featured interviews, dance numbers, and news reports; the show lasted thirteen episodes. Stamz left WGES in 1962 after it was sold and became WYNR. Following his broadcast career, Stamz worked in sales and promotion at WVON and Columbia Recording Company, and started his own record label and artist management company.

Throughout his life in Chicago, Stamz was heavily involved in the Englewood community. He was director of the Englewood Crime Prevention Project, Co-chairman of the 7<sup>th</sup> District Steering Committee, and a member of the Citizens Participation Advocacy

Program, the Alliance of Shaping a Safer City, and the United Block Clubs.

**Cited Sources:**

Roberts, Patrick A., and Richard E. Stamz. *Give 'Em Soul, Richard!: Race, Radio, & Rhythm & Blues in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The Richard E. Stamz papers span from 1919–2010 and include material from his radio and television broadcasting career, his involvement in the Englewood community, and his personal life. Material includes promotional flyers, news clippings, correspondence, photographs, and sound recordings. The papers are arranged into four series, “Professional Career,” “Community Involvement,” “Personal,” and “Audio.” Researchers interested in 1950s radio, early Chicago soul music and the rise of independent record labels, and the Englewood community will find this collection useful.

**Access Headings:**

Stamz, Richard E.

WGES

African American disk jockeys

Englewood, Illinois

Soul Music

**Container List:**

**Series I: Professional Career, 1935–2006**

This series contains material from Richard Stamz’s professional career, including his time driving a sound truck, his radio and television broadcast career, and his spinoff businesses. This series is arranged into three subseries, “Sound Truck,” “Radio and Television,” and “Spinoff Businesses.”

**Subseries 1: Sound Truck, 1935–1955**

Richard Stamz began driving a sound truck in the early 1940s. Material in this series includes financial documents and photographs.

Box	Folder	Title	Date
1	1	Sound Truck Documentation	1935–1955
	2	Sound Truck Photographs	Undated

**Subseries 2: Radio and Television, 1932–2006**

“Radio and Television” contains documents relating to Stamz’s time as a radio disk jockey and television host. It includes scripts, correspondence, flyers, advertisements, photographs, and other material promoting his show and its sponsors. Material is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

<i>Subseries 2: Radio and Television, 1932–2006</i>			
Box 1	Folder 3	Advertising Industry Information	1955–2001
	4	Advertising Industry information	Undated
1	5	Chicago Cable Commission	Undated
	6-8	Correspondence	1942–2004
	9-10	Flyers, ephemera	1956–2006
2	11	Flyers, ephemera	Undated
	12	Music Network & Community, Contact Information and Business Cards	Undated
	13	Music Network & Community, Funeral Programs and Obituaries	1984–2004
	14	Music Network & Community, Event Programs	1990–1999
	15	Music Network & Community, Clippings	1956–1976
	16	Music Network & Community, Clippings	1991–1995
	17	Music Network & Community, Clippings	1996–2002
27	18-20	Music Network & Community, Clippings – oversized	1932, 1956
3	21-22	Photographs – Ad Salesman	Undated
	23-24	Photographs – Promotional photos of Richard Stamz	Undated
	25-26	Photographs – Shows and Events	Undated
	27-28	Photographs – Musical Artists	Undated
27	29	Photograph – 7-Up Promotional – oversized	Undated
3	30	Playlists / Distributors promotional sheets	1961–1976
4	31	Print advertisements	Undated
N/A	32	Print advertisement – oversized	1956
27	33-35	Print advertisements – oversized	Undated
4	36	Professional Organizations	1957–1965
	37	Program Log	Dec, 1960
27	38	Program Plan – American Tribute to Gospel	Undated
4	39	Promotional material from Stations	Undated
	40-41	Radio and TV Scripts	1955–1994
	42-43	Research clippings	1979–1991
28	N/A	Scrapbook	1955–1958
29	N/A	Research compiled by Patrick Roberts for Stamz’s biography	1956–1962
4	44	Signed Soul Certificates	1962
	45	Soul Certificates,	Undated
	46	Soul Pills	Undated
N/A	N/A	VeeJay Account Ledgers – oversized	1964–1966
	47	WGES	1959

### **Subseries 3: Spinoff Businesses, 1959–2006**

In addition to his broadcast career, Stamz was active in other music related ventures. He started his own record labels and artist management company, and he established Antagi Services to sell his records, books, and other memorabilia. Antagi Services was also the business Stamz used to promote himself for speaking engagements as a music historian and lecturer.

Box	Folder	<i>Subseries 3: Spinoff Businesses, 1959–2006</i>	
5	48	Antagi/Music Historian	1984–1993
	49	Antagi/Music Historian	1994–2006
	50-52	Antagi/Music Historian	Undated
	53	Artist Management, Contracts and Publishing	Undated
6	54	Artist Management, Music Publishing	1961–1997
	55	Artist Management, Music Publishing, James Wheeler	Undated
	56	Artist Management, Music Publishing, Michael Shipp	Undated
	57	Ethnic Productions	1959-1972
	58	Ethnic Productions	Undated
	59-61	Record Label	1961–2006

### **Series II: Community Involvement, 1934–2006**

As a longtime resident of Englewood, a south side Chicago neighborhood, Richard Stamz was an active participant in many community groups and organizations including the 7<sup>th</sup> District Police Steering Committee, 7<sup>th</sup> District Youth Corps, United Block Clubs of Englewood, and the Englewood Crime Prevention Project. This series contains material from these and other community organizations, as well as general material regarding Chicago and Englewood. It includes a manuscript and copies of *Chicago's Englewood Neighborhood At the Junction* (2002), a visual history book written by Stamz and Maria Lettuere Roberts. Material in this series is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Box	Folder		
7	62-67	7 <sup>th</sup> District Steering Committee – Neighborhood Relations	1975–2006
	68-69	16 <sup>th</sup> Ward – Meeting Minutes, Flyers, Events	1947–2006
	70	35-R-Mo Klub	1950
	71-72	41 <sup>st</sup> Precinct, Young Democrats Club	1947–1950
	73	Acorn TIF	2001
	74	Administrative Aide to Peggy Smith Martin	1968–1974
	75	African American History Month, Lansing, MI	1993
	76-77	Black Conservative Party	1962–2001
	78	Black History Month Committee	1992

	79	CAPS Community Group (7 <sup>th</sup> District)	2001
	80	Chicago Church Lists	Undated
Box	Folder	<i>Series II: Community Involvement, 1934–2006</i>	
	81-82	Chicago Commons Association	1982
8	83	Chicago Crime Commission	1996
	84	Chicago Park District	1990–1999
	85	Chicago Park District Police Benevolent Association	1958
	86-87	Chicago Police	1977–2006
	88-90	Chicago – Political	1947–2003
	91	Circuit Court of Cook County	1975
	92	Citizens Information Service of Illinois	1978
	93	City Blocks Program	1990–1999
	94	City of Chicago – Empowerment Zone	1999
	95	Coalition of Concerned Women in the War on Crime	1977–1978
	96	Demonstration Against Governor Walker	Undated
	97	Englewood Accountability Committee	1978
	98	Action Coalition of Englewood	1999
	99	Englewood Appreciation Committee	1977
	100	Better Englewood Council	1939
	101	Englewood Citizen's Evaluation Committee	1978–1996
	102	Englewood Citizens Protective Association	1946
	103	Englewood Clergy Association	1977
	104	Englewood Community Development Corporation	1985, 2001
	105	Englewood Community Notes	1949–1950, 1974–2006
9	106	Concerned Citizens of Englewood	1973–1975, 2001
	107	Englewood Conservation Committee	1981
	108	Englewood Crime Prevention Project	1974–1975
	109	Englewood Elder of Excellence Plaque	2005
	110	Englewood – Funeral Programs	1970–2006
	111	Englewood History– <i>Chicago's Englewood Neighborhood At the Junction</i> Manuscript	2002
	112	Englewood History – <i>Chicago's Englewood Neighborhood At the Junction</i> Book	2002
	113-115	Englewood History	1962–2004
10	116	Englewood History – High School	1935
	117	Englewood History – Maps	Undated
	118	Imagine Englewood	2000–2002
	119	Englewood Neighborhood Redevelopment Project	2001
	120	New Englewood Historical Society	1979, 2004
30	N/A	New Englewood Village Historical Society Birthday Plaque	2005
10	121	New Life in Englewood – Community Week Celebration	1977

	122	Englewood Police Youth Corps	1975–1985
	123	Englewood Summerfest	1979
Box	Folder	<i>Series II: Community Involvement, 1934–2006</i>	
	124	United Block Clubs of Englewood	1977
	125	Englewood Urban Progress Center	1977
	126	West Englewood United Organization	1985
	127	Events	1976–2003
	128	Fact Finding Committee	1947
	129	Hallowed Ground	2001
	130	Illinois Department of Commerce Affairs	1986
	131	ISEA (Illinois Senior Citizens)	Undated
27	132	Lawnsdale Community Newspaper Clipping	1958
10	133	Near Southside Community Organization	Undated
	134	Paris High School Yearbook, “The Arena”	1934
	135	People’s Coalition	1979
	136	Pride Community Center, Inc.	1977
27	137	Precinct 41 Register of Voters	1939
10	138	Regular Democratic Precinct	1947
	139	Sack Realty Company	1946
44	N/A	Scrapbook – Englewood and Memphis	
11	140	Senior Citizen Caucus	1997
	141	Senior Citizens Hall of Fame	2002
	142	St. Jude Star of Prosperity	1992
	143	United American Progress Association	1990, 2005
	144	Victim/Witness Advocacy Program	Undated
	145	Young Democrats	1948–1951

### **Series III: Personal, 1919–2010**

This series contains biographical information and personal material. The biographical material includes the autobiography Stamz wrote with Patrick Roberts, *Give ‘Em Soul, Richard: Race Radio and Rhythm and Blues in Chicago* (2010), which was published after Stamz’s death, and various articles and publicity about Stamz.

[PROCESSING NOTE: some of this material has been moved to Series I.]

The personal material includes correspondence, obituaries, datebooks, handwritten notes, newspaper clippings, publications, and research on various subjects, persons, and hobbies. “Personal” is arranged alphabetically based on the subject matter.

Box	Folder		
11	146	AARP Golden Life Award	1993–1999
N/A	N/A	Account Ledger – oversized	1990–2000
	147	Advertising Information	1991–1993
	148	Amos and Andy	1952

	149	Antique Books	1990–1998
Box	Folder	<i>Series III: Personal, 1919–2010</i>	
	150-152	Antique Buying	1958–2001
	153	Appearances and Events	1952-2005
	154	Art	1980–1994
12	155	Autobiography (with Patrick Roberts) – <i>Give ‘Em Soul, Richard: Race Radio and Rhythm and Blues in Chicago</i> [See Series I]	2010
	156		1972–1993
		Awards	
	157	Bills and Receipts	1970–1999
	158-162	Biographical	1956–2005
28	163	Biographical – oversized	Undated
12	164	Birth Certificate	1942
	165	Black Heritage Digest – Letter from Dion Stamz	1987–1989
	166	Block Clubs	Undated
	167	Blues Postcards	1989
	168	BMI	1958–1993
13	169	Business	1959–2001
	170	Business Cards	Undated
	171	Calendars	1981–1991
28	172	Calendar – oversized	2005
13	173	Cartoons	1942–1945
	174	Center for Black Music Research Exhibit	2010
	175	Chess Recording Studio	1990
	176	Chicago Historical Society	1963–2002
	177	Chicago Politics	1974–2000
	178-179	Clippings	1919–2003
14	180-182	Clippings	1919–2003
27	183-187	Clippings – oversized	1938–1999
30	188	Clippings – Scrapbook	1937–1942
30	189	Clippings – Scrapbook	Undated
14	190	Collaboration with Patrick Roberts	2000–2001
	191	Columbia College	1981–2001
	192	Community Art Assistance Program	1993
	193	Cooper, Jack L.	1991–1992
	194	Copyrights and Registrations	1975–1984
	195	Corporate Sponsors	1991–1992
	196-199	Correspondence	1943–2004
45	N/A	Correspondence and Cylinders (Fragile)	
15	200-204	Correspondence	1943–2004

16	205-207	Correspondence and stamps	1934–2004
Box	Folder	<i>Series III: Personal, 1919–2010</i>	
16	208-212	Datebook	1973, 1977, 1983, 1985, 1990–1994
17	213	Dixon, Willie	1963–1981
	214	Dogs	1982
28	215	Drivers Test	1976
17	216	Dunewood, Kandi (Poetry)	Undated
	217	Education and Resources	Circa 1970
	218	Employment History	
	219-220	Event Programs	1948, 1979– 2001
18	221	Family Record	Circa 1940
	222	Financial	1968-1980
	223-225	Fishing	Undated
28	226	Fishing Scrapbook	Undated
18	227	Forms	Undated
	228	George, Marsha, W	1995–2000
	229	George Stamz Auto Accidental Clipping	Undated
	230	Guest speaker for speech class	Undated
	231	Health and Life	Undated
	232	Heat and Gas	Undated
	233	Hold That Tiger / Tiger Rag	Undated
19	234	Insurance	Undated
N/A	235	James Brown Poster - oversized	Undated
	236	Jerry Springer Show Appearance	Undated
	237	Jokes	Undated
	238	King Jr., Martin Luther	1981
	239	Knight, Ken	1962
	240	Manuals and Warranties	Undated
	241	<i>Medicare [RESTRICTED]</i>	1989–1991
31	N/A	Michigan State Senate Special Tribute Certificate	1992
19	242	Military Photo	Undated
	243	Murphy, Rev. Mike	1993–1997
	244	National Association of Radio Announcers (N.A.R.A.) [see Series I]	1963
	245-246	Norm and Richard Spaulding	Undated
20	247-250	Notes and Notebook	Undated
	251-253	Obituaries	1979–2000
21	254-260	Photographs	Undated

22	261	Photographs	Undated
Box	Folder	<i>Series III: Personal, 1919–2010</i>	
46	N/A	Plaques	Undated
22	262	Poetry	Undated
	263	Property Records	1947, 1954
	264	Proposals	1990–1996
	265-267	Publications [see Series I for broadcast industry or music-related publications]	1943–2004
23	268-273	Publications	1943–2004
24	274-278	Publications	1943–2004
31	279-284	Publications – oversized	Undated
25	285	Racism and Discrimination	1978–2003
	286	Record Collecting	1998
27	287	Record Jackets and Holders	Undated
25	288	Registrations, Copyrights, Patents	1974–1981
	289-290	Religious	1992–2004
	291-293	Research – History	1954–2004
26	294-296	Research – Music	1966–2001
	297	Research – Radio	1956–1997
	298	Research – Radio	1956–1997
	299-300	Rhino Records	1992–1998
	301	Roberts, Erskine “Ernie”	2002–2003
	302	Robeson, Paul	1996–1998
43	303	Royalty Payments and Publishing Contracts [see Series I]	1991–1996
	304	The Science of Universal Subjective Creative Law, Dempsey Nelson, Jr.	1980
	305	Sheet Music	Undated
31	306	Sheet Music – oversized	Undated
43	307	Sparks, Joseph	1972–1978
	308	Till, Emmett	1985–1995
31	309	Topsy, Tiny [see Series I]	Undated
43	310	WC Handy	Undated
	311	Website	1995–1996
	312	Williams, Gilbert	1996–1997
	313	World War II Ration Card	1944
	314	Writings	Undated

### **Series IV: Audio, Undated**

This series contains audio recordings in a variety of formats, including analog discs, CDs, 8-track tapes, audiocassette tapes, and reel-to-reel tapes. There are studio recordings from Stamz small record labels, Foxy and Paso. Other recordings are a mix of radio broadcasts and Stamz's personal music collection. Most individual items have not yet been fully identified and documented.

Box	Folder	
32	N/A	(34) 7" Reels. Partial inventory compiled by Richard Sherman
33	N/A	(32) 7" Reels
34	N/A	(8) 7" Reels
35	N/A	(2) 10" Reels, (8) 7" Reels, (1) 5" Reel, (1) 4" Reel
36	N/A	(1) 10" Reel

Box	Folder	<i>Series IV: Audio, undated</i>
37	N/A	(7) 10" Reels
38	N/A	(8) 5" Reels, (1) 4" Reels, (2) 8-track tapes, (4) CDs, (2) DVDs
39	N/A	(20) Cassettes
40	N/A	(19) Cassettes
41	N/A	(7) Cassettes
42	N/A	(22) Analog Discs