Guide to the Papers of

Greyhound Bus Tragedy

Prepared by Dana Chandler and Cheryl Ferguson, 2009

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**Tuskegee University National Center of Bioethics**

**Archives and Museums**

**Tuskegee, AL 36088**

A joint project of Tuskegee University National Center of Bioethics, Archives and Museums and History Department, Auburn University, Alabama

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**Collection Summary**

**Creator:** Tuskegee University

**Title:** Guide to the Papers of Greyhound Bus Tragedy

**Dates:** 1923-82

**Quantity:** 1.46 cubic feet

**Identification:**

**Abstract:** The Sunshine Skyway Bridge Disaster May 9, 1980. On the morning of May 9th, 1980 at 07:38, during a violent rain squall producing high winds and almost zero visibility, the 17,000 ton freighter Summit Venture hit one of the bridge’s support columns, causing part of the bridge to collapse with 35 fatalities.

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**Administrative Information**

**Preferred Citation**

Papers of Greyhound Bus Tragedy

**Acquisition Information**

Records were received in a box labeled “Files.” Items were not in any order and it is unknown who compiled them.

**Processing Information**

In processing the collection, original folders were replaced with acid-free folders. Folders were labeled, either following the original labeling, or in the case of missing or incorrect labels were assigned folder titles. Folder titles assigned by the processors are indicated in the inventory enclosed in square brackets. All metal fasteners were removed.

**Index Terms**

The papers are indexed under the following headings in the Tuskegee University Library’s online catalog. Researchers seeking materials about related subjects, persons, organizations or places should search the catalog using these headings.

**Subjects:**

 Bridges—Florida

**Biography**

On May 9th, 1980 at 07:38 a violent storm over the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, located at the mouth of Tampa Bay in Florida, was causing treacherous driving conditions. In the waters below, John Lerro, a Tampa harbor pilot at the helm of the 17,000 ton freighter Summit Venture, lost control of his vessel in the heavy seas, and it rammed the bridge's concrete support columns. The blow ripped a 1,200-foot gap in the western span, which carried southbound traffic. The bus and seven other vehicles plunged 150 feet into Tampa Bay. Some fell when the roadbed detached. Others, with their drivers all but blinded by the pouring rain, drove off the precipice. Thirty Five people lost their lives of which 25 were on a Greyhound bus which contained passengers returning from Tuskegee University.

**Scope and Contents**

 Contains newspaper articles, plaques and sympathy cards.

**Arrangement**

The papers are arranged into one series.

**Restrictions**

**Restrictions on Access**

There are no restrictions on access to these papers.

**Restrictions on Use**

Researchers are responsible for addressing copyright issues on materials not in the public domain.

**Inventory**

**Box Folder**

1 1 Newspaper Clippings

1 2 Newspaper Clipping

1 3 Newspaper Clipping

1 4 Chapel Memorial Services Program

1 5 In Appreciation Cards

1 6 In Memory of Plaque