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Coll. 554
James D. Kendall (1935-1970)
Collection

By
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Biography

James D. Kendall was born on January 28, 1905 to Barbara Thom and Abraham Kendall in Brooklyn, N.Y. During his career, he served the Trenton Police Department's Second Precinct (located at 878 S. Broad Street) for 35 years (1935-1970). Following his retirement in 1970, Kendall remained in the area, living at his home on Wickom Avenue in Hamilton Township, until his death in 1975.

Kendall was appointed to the Trenton Police Department's Second Precinct on July 1, 1935. When he joined the department, his position was listed as "patrolman," and he served in this position for almost 18 years, when he sought a promotion to Sergeant. Due to his satisfactory performance, as well as his written and verbal test scores during the application process, Kendall was promoted to Sergeant on May 1, 1953. Following his promotion, he was recognized as a potential candidate for the position of Lieutenant. After formally requesting the job on July 19, 1959, he was officially named Lieutenant of the Second Precinct and served in this position for over 10 years until his retirement in 1970. During his time in the police department, his work was regarded highly, and he was known for his punctuality, professionalism, and dedication to law enforcement.

Kendall passed away five years after his retirement on December 26, 1975. He is buried in Riverview Cemetery.

Scope and Contents

This collection is comprised of two document boxes, containing documents and resources from Lt. Kendall's time on the force. Twelve of the 16 folders have been organized from loose documents, while the rest had already been organized prior to donation. These folders can be found at the back of Box 2, starting with the folder labeled "Filed in Rotation." All of this material was presented together from the Ewing Township Historic Preservation Society. The majority of this collection regards official police business, including arrest reports, witness statements, and interdepartmental communications. In addition to some personal documents and official police records, there are also photos of Lt. Kendall in uniform along with photos of men in the police department.

This collection includes 11 series: 1: Arrest Records (1 folder); Series 2: Police Reports/Witness Statements (3 folders); Series 3: Public Statements (2 folders); Series 4: Correspondence (1 folder); Series 5: Rules and Regulations (2 folders); Series 6: Police Notes (1 folder); Series 7: D.P. Maps (1 folder); Series 8: Local PBA No. 11 (1 folder); Series 9: Images (1 folder); Series 10: Personal Papers (1 folder, one book); Series 11: Miscellaneous Documents (4 folders).

Series Description

Series 1: Arrest Records

This series contains one folder of official police records stating the date, time, location, and reason for an arrest made by the Trenton Police department. The records are sorted by type, with traffic/moving violations being presented together, followed by all non-traffic related charges. The oldest of these documents is dated 1935.

Series 2: Police Reports/Witness Statements

This series contains three folders containing written records of police investigations between an officer (usually Kendall) and a suspect and/or witness to a crime. Each record contains much the same format, starting with the officer asking basic questions such as name, age, address, and marital status. Each document contains detailed information on the nature of what occurred, and why the person present is being questioned. Something to take note of is that many suspects in these documents quickly admit to their crimes once questioned. The records in this series are arranged in chronological order, from 1946-1960.

Series 3: Public Statements

This series contains two folders containing documents that include statements made by Lt. Kendall during his time at the department. Some of these are official public statements made to address incidents occurring in the local area, whereas others are between Kendall and others in the department. Unlike some of the contents found in the correspondence series, these

Series Description (cont.)

Series 3: Public Statements

communications were all available to the public at the time, which is why they are grouped into this section. The two folders in this series are separated by date, from 1938-1968.

Series 4: Correspondence

This series contains copies of communications between Lt. Kendall and other men working at the Trenton Police Department. Most represent official police business, with several regarding officers not showing up to their post. In addition, this series also includes communications made between Kendall and others in his personal life.

Series 5: Rules and Regulations

Folder one in this series contains information on different city laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and more from The City of Trenton. These documents were used for educational purposes, more specifically to educate members of the police force on the laws they would be enforcing. Folder two contains rules, regulations, and need-to-know information for the members of law enforcement themselves. Examples include “The ABC’s of Pistols” which was a handbook used by Trenton police officers to better understand how and how not to use their weapons. Of note is the brown index with Kendall’s name, which contains descriptions of each type of crime and how the suspect should be charged, giving a detailed account of what was deemed a crime during this time period.

Series 6: Police Notes

This series contains notes, documents, and other content directly related to police business. This includes patrol areas, search warrant papers, and information on crime scene photography. Unlike the Police Reports/Witness Statements series, much of what is in this series stands alone, and does not have similar documents with it.

Series 7: D.P. Maps

This series contains various clippings and papers with images of maps on them. These maps seem to represent different areas of Trenton, likely divided according to patrol areas. While this is the most likely scenario, no data or key was provided with these documents, and as such, no definitive meaning has been determined.

Series 8: Local PBA No. 11 (1948, 1951, 1952)

This series contains three program booklets from a local PBA fundraising performance entitled “Anything May Happen.” This was a performance put on by the Police Benevolent Association Local No. 11 in Trenton, of which Kendall was a trustee and member. These booklets include photos of all members, as well as information on the show. Something of note in this series are

Series Description (cont.)

Series 8: Local PBA No. 11 (1948, 1951, 1952)

the hundreds of advertisements in the booklets all representing local businesses serving the Trenton Area during this time.

Series 9: Images

This series contains a number of images, the majority of which do not have any context, with the notable exception of the newspaper. Several of these photos appear to be from the same event, likely hosted by either the Police Department's Second Precinct, or the PBA.

Series 10: Personal Papers

This series contains the personal papers of Lt. James Kendall. In the first folder, is correspondences either written to or by Kendall, along with Kendall's death certificate and obituary. Of note is a political donation letter written by Kendall to George C. Wallace, Governor of Alabama and candidate for president. The second folder contains the contents of a scrapbook.

Series 11: Miscellaneous Documents

This series contains folders that were already sorted and labelled. They have been placed in new folders but retain their original folder and order. Some of these documents are designated as "private reports" while others are simply additional police documents that did not correspond to those in the arrest reports, witness statements, or police notes. There is also a folder about Tilly Abramovitz.

Container List

Box / Folder / Title

| | |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1 / 1 | Arrest Records |
| 1 / 2 | Police Reports/Witness Statements (1946-1953) |
| 1 / 3 | Police Reports/Witness Statements (1953-1956) |
| 1 / 4 | Police Reports/Witness Statements (1956-1960) |
| 1 / 5 | Public Statements (1938-1953) |
| 1 / 6 | Public Statements (1954-1968) |
| 1 / 7 | Correspondence |
| 1 / 8 | Rules and Regulations (Police) |
| 1 / 9 | Rules and Regulation (City) |
| 1 / 10 | Police Notes |
| 1 / 11 | D.P. Maps |
| 2 / 1 | PBA Local No. 11 |
| 2 / 2 | Images |
| 2 / 3 | Personal Papers |

Container List (cont.)

Box / Folder / Title

| | |
|-------|----------------------------------------|
| 2 / 4 | Personal Papers (scrapbook contents) |
| 2 / 5 | Reports (1945), Vice Squad |
| 2 / 6 | Private Reports (1946) Vice Squad Only |
| 2 / 7 | Private Reports (1947) Vice Squad Only |
| 2 / 8 | Misc. Outstanding Cases |
| 2 / 9 | Abramovitz, Tilly |

Restrictions: none

Provenance: 2023.017