



Special Collections and University Archives

**Manuscript Group 65
Bernice Gera Collection**

**For Scholarly Use Only
Last Modified October 13, 2014**

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Bernice Gera Collection, Manuscript Group 65
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Special Collection and University Archives
1 box, .5 linear feet

Biographical Note



Bernice Shiner Gera (June 15, 1931-September 23, 1992) was born in Ernest, Indiana County, Pennsylvania. Gera loved baseball growing up, but did not pursue a career in it until she was in thirties. She went onto become the first woman ever to umpire a professional baseball game. She graduated from the six-week Florida Baseball Umpire School in West Palm Beach in 1967. She was initially rejected by the National Association of Baseball Leagues (NABL), but Gera won a discrimination lawsuit on January 13, 1972. Bernice Gera gained national attention on June 24, 1972, when she became the first female professional umpire in the United States. She umpired the first game of a double header in the New York – Pennsylvania Professional Baseball Class A League, between the Geneva Rangers and the Auburn Phillies. Because of her poor treatment by the players and the fans, Gera resigned between games.

Some of the more memorable games Gera umpired included the National Baseball Congress Tournament in Wichita, Kansas and the Semi-Pro Invitational Tournament in Bridgeton, New Jersey. Although she stopped umpiring, Bernice Gera stayed in professional baseball. From 1974 to 1979 she worked in Community Relations and Promotions for the New York Mets. She moved to Florida in 1979. She passed away at the Memorial Hospital West in Pembroke Pines, Florida during the summer of 1992.

Scope and Content

The Bernice Gera papers are housed in one archival box. This collection includes newspaper articles chronicling her life from childhood to major leagues, and culminating with her induction into Indiana County's Hall of Fame. Also included is a tape made by Gera about her life and one of her baseball cards.

Provenance

This collection was donated by Bernice Gera.

Restrictions

None, this collection is open to the public.

Processed

Date unknown; records arranged and inventory written by Special Collections Staff.
Spring 2001; records rearranged and inventory rewritten by Special Collections Staff.
Reorganized and processed by Harrison Wick in 2008.

Container List

Box 1 (20 folders)

1. Audio Cassette Tape Recording of Bernice Gera's Life Story
2. Baseball Card : Induction to Indiana Co. Hall of Fame
3. Newspaper Articles (September 14, 1961-November 3, 1966)
4. Newspaper Articles (March 12, 1967-June 13, 1967)
5. Newspaper Articles (June 13, 1967-September 3, 1967)
6. Newspaper Articles (September 6, 1967-May 1, 1968)
7. Newspaper Articles (May 1, 1969-October 15, 1969)
8. Newspaper Articles (October 1, 1969-October 15, 1969)
9. Newspaper Articles (August 17, 1969-January 13, 1970)
10. Newspaper Articles (February 19, 1970-April 11, 1970)
11. Newspaper Articles (February 12, 1971-April 29, 1971)
12. Newspaper Articles (April 25, 1971-September 9, 1971)
13. Newspaper Articles (January 8, 1972-January 28, 1972)
14. Newspaper Articles (April 13, 1972-June 21, 1972)
15. Newspaper Articles (June 25, 1972-June 29, 1972)
16. Newspaper Articles (September 7, 1972-August 29, 1976)
17. Newspaper Articles (January 6, 1977-December 28, 1981)
18. Newspaper Articles (January 16, 1982-May 23, 1988)
19. Newspaper Articles (August 8, 1988-June 15, 1991)
20. Newspaper Articles (Master Copies)