

McLean County Museum of History

Joe Dowell Collection

Processed by
Jim Hall
Fall 2017

Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1961 - 2016
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also Phonograph and Audio Collection; Book in Library: <i>Ephraim, The Alligator Bait and Other True Stories</i> (808.8 Dowell 2006)

Brief History

Joseph Harry Dowell (1940-2016) was born January 23, 1940 in Bloomington, Indiana. Joe began writing songs at the age of thirteen and began writing in earnest when he was eighteen. In 1941 he moved with his family to Bloomington, Illinois, where his father Harry worked as a Boy Scouts executive. Joe attended the University of Illinois in Champaign and received a degree in journalism. While at the university, Joe was auditioned by the Wilburn Brothers in Nashville and through this introduction became a recording artist for Smash Records. Joe's recording of his song, "Wooden Heart" became Smash Records' second major hit, topping the charts. Joe's relationship with Smash Records ended in the summer of 1963 and he began writing and performing image ballads (commercial jingles) for radio and television. This career lasted for many years and Joe also continued to release recordings of his songs including inspirational music. His final national single release was in 1966, a Vietnam war protest song titled, "If I Could Find Out What Is Wrong."

Scope

The collection includes biographical information, discography, recollections of his sister, Susie Dowell Emery, CD of "Image Ballads", jingles written for area businesses, collection of lyrics written by Joe for area businesses (no recordings available), publicity photos and flyers, DVD of Joe singing and talking, autographed photo, newspaper articles and advertisements,

Box and Folder Inventory

Folder 1: General

- 1.1 Obituary, *Pantagraph*, 6 February, 2016
- 1.2 Brief biography by Greg Adams, Bloomington, Indiana
- 1.3 Discography by Richard Weize
- 1.4 Recollections of Joe Dowell's sister, Susie Dowell Emery
- 1.5 Autographed photograph and note sent to Clarence Freed, Lexington, Illinois, October, 2002

Folder 2: CD and DVD

- 2.1 ~~CD of Joe Dowell's recording of "Image Ballads", jingles written for area businesses~~
- 2.2 ~~DVD of Joe Dowell singing and talking~~
Please see the Phonograph & Audio Collection and CD/DVDs.

Folder 3: Lyrics of "Image Ballads", jingles written for area businesses (no recording available)

- 3.1 Peoples Bank
- 3.2 Biasis Drugstore Folk Song, Ballad of Merle's Drugstore
- 3.3 The Ballad of the Original Smith Printing Co.
- 3.4 State Stop Buffet Ballad, Hubbard's Cubord Song (#1), Hubbard's Cubord Song (#2), The Ballad of the Tally Ho

- 3.5 Ballad of the Woolen Mill Store, His and Her Ballad for the Woolen Mill Store

Folder 3: Lyrics of “Image Ballads”, jingles written for area businesses (no recording available (cont.))

- 3.6 Ballad of Hickory Farms, Hickory Farms Ballad
- 3.7 Randall’s Ballad, Ballad of the Hy Vee, Casey’s Market Basket
- 3.8 Casey’s Market Basket (cont.), William Davies Carveze, William Davies Bacon
- 3.9 Davies Perfection Brand Meat, Great Big Difference in Davies Meats, Davies Perfection Brand Weiners
- 3.10 Golden Rule Appliance Center
- 3.11 The Ballad of the United Fund

Folder 4: Newspaper articles and Advertisements

- 4.1 “Bloomington Singer Sets Recording Date,” May 14, 1961.
- 4.2 “Joe Dowell To Record 1st Album,” July 23, 1961, “Dowell’s Recording In Top 10,” August 6, 1961, “Dowell on ‘Most Promising’ List,” December 31, 1961.
- 4.3 Advertisement. “Joe Dowell Sings”, September 5, 1963.
- 4.4 “Joe Dowell Singing Folk Song Jingles,” July 9, 1964.
- 4.5 “Joe Dowell Strains Song From Polluted Streams,” April 3, 1966.
- 4.6 “Toothpaste Approach to ‘Sell’ Religion—Dowell,” January 15, 1967.
- 4.7 “Joe Dowell does a radio series,” November 27, 1980
- 4.8 “The little German folk tune that could,” February 11, 2016

Folder 5: Publicity and Concert Flyers

- 5.1 Flyer for Joe Dowell in Concert, El Paso Depot, El Paso, Illinois
- 5.2 Advertisement for “Wooden Heart,” Smash Records, Joe Dowell
- 5.3 Advertisement Joe Dowell’s inspirational recording of “Called To Be Free,” in Amplify, Division of Radio and Television, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
- 5.4 Advertisement for radio appearances by Joe Dowell, sponsored by Third National Bank
- 5.5 Flyer for Joe Dowell’s radio and television commercials for ICB Bank
- 5.6 Flyer for 103 FM Caravan of Stars 10, Freed Hardeman’s Loyd Auditorium, Henderson, Tennessee, Saturday, November 18, 2005
- 5.7 Membership card for Joe Dowell Fan Club, unused & undated.

Folder 6: Recommendation Letters and Certificates

- 6.1 Letter from John C. T. Alexander, Industrial Valley Bank and Trust Company, December 9, 1966
- 6.2 Letter from Richard Chapin, Stuart Broadcasting Company, August 26, 1965
- 6.3 Certificate from Ohio Citizens Trust Company, May 15, 1968
- 6.4 Letter from Gordon E. Heffern, The Goodyear Bank, November 4, 1968
- 6.5 Letter from Lester G Spencer, WKBV, Central Broadcasting Corporation, November 7, 1968
- 6.6 Letter from Armstrong Furniture, December 12, 1965
- 6.7 Letters from Thomas L. Kimball, February 11, 1966 and Russ J. Neugebauer, February 16, 1966

Folder 6: Recommendation Letters and Certificates (cont.)

6.8 Letter from Richard Lenahan, First National Bank of Normal, September 2, 1965