

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lloyd Wheeler

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Wheeler, Lloyd, 1907-2005
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler,
<b>Dates:</b>	July 23, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:01:44).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Insurance executive Lloyd Wheeler (1907 - 2005 ) had a sixty-eight year career with Liberty Supreme, which culminated with his appointment as CEO in 1980. Wheeler was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 23, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_111
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Lloyd Wheeler is the benefactor of a tremendous family history. As a child, his grandfather, Llyod G. Wheeler, the first African American lawyer in Chicago, took him to visit one of his close friends, Booker T. Washington, in Tuskegee, Alabama. His great grandfather was Chicago businessman John Jones. Jones, during his time, was one of the wealthiest African Americans in the City of Chicago. Lloyd Wheeler was born on August 26, 1907, in St. Joseph, Missouri. During his early childhood, Wheeler's mother, Madge, stayed home with the five Wheeler children while his father, Hiram, worked as a teacher. His family later moved to Urbana, Illinois, where he attended Lincoln Grade School and Urbana High School.

Following graduation, Wheeler attended the University of Illinois in Chicago where he received his B.S. in accounting in 1932. He spent his summer vacations from high school and college working in Chicago at the Liberty Supreme Life Insurance Company. The company, which was black owned and operated, primarily served the Chicago black community from its Bronzeville neighborhood headquarters. Wheeler began his career with Liberty Supreme in 1923 as a mail boy. Wheeler's sixty-eight year career with Liberty Supreme culminated with his appointment in 1980 as CEO. Wheeler served eleven and half years as CEO, retiring in 1991. His tenure at the company was interrupted for a short time by service in the United States military during World War II.

Wheeler was a member of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, the Chicago Assembly and the Original 40 Club. Wheeler passed away on April 30, 2005.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Lloyd Wheeler was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 23, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Insurance executive Lloyd Wheeler (1907 - 2005 ) had a sixty-eight year career with Liberty Supreme, which culminated with his appointment as CEO in 1980.

## Restrictions

### Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

### Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Wheeler, Lloyd, 1907-2005

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Wheeler, Lloyd, 1907-2005--Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Insurance Executive

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# HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

### Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler, July 23, 2002. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

- Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler, Section A2002\_111\_001\_001, TRT: 0:31:12 ?  
Insurance executive Lloyd Wheeler describes his family background, including sharing memories of his great-grandparents, who were born in slavery. Wheeler also talks about his siblings, his parents, and his grandparents.
- Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler, Section A2002\_111\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:33 ?  
Insurance executive Lloyd Wheeler relates the history of his ancestors on his father's side of the family, providing insight into the lives of African Americans in the 19th Century. Wheeler talks about how his family moved several times while he was in infant, eventually settling in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois. Wheeler describes his childhood and schooling there.
- Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler, Section A2002\_111\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:41 ?  
Insurance executive Lloyd Wheeler discusses the death of his father and how it affected his family. He also describes his experiences attending Hyde Park High School and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Wheeler explains how he got his first job working at Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company, and

details his role in his first years at the company.

Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler, Section A2002\_111\_001\_004, TRT: 0:31:15 ?

Insurance executive Lloyd Wheeler discusses growth and success during his time at Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company, as well as talking about the functions of the board of directors after he was elected president of the board in 1979. Wheeler explains the importance of life insurance businesses to the black community, comparing it to funeral home business.

Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler, Section A2002\_111\_001\_005, TRT: 0:28:05 ?

Insurance executive Lloyd Wheeler discusses the state of housing and real estate in Chicago during the mid-20th Century, detailing the institutional racism that segregated blacks to certain areas of the South Side. Wheeler then describes the factors that led to the closing of Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company. Wheeler reflects on his career, crediting his mother and with Supreme Liberty for making him the person he is.

Video Oral History Interview with Lloyd Wheeler, Section A2002\_111\_001\_006, TRT: 0:30:58 ?