

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Carrie Camillo Tankard

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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>	Tankard, Carrie Camillo, 1935-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Carrie Camillo Tankard,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 22, 2005
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2005
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:26:00).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Association branch executive Carrie Camillo Tankard (1935 - ) served as vice president of the Martha's Vineyard branch of the NAACP for nearly forty years, and is the co-founder of the African American Heritage Trail on Martha's Vineyard. Tankard was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 22, 2005, in Oak Bluffs, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2005_145
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Carrie C. Tankard has been a contributor to the civic and cultural life on the island of Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts for nearly forty years. Her major work has been in civil rights, historic preservation and education, and intercultural understanding.

Born on February 18, 1935 in Newark, New Jersey, Tankard was one of seven children of Maggie and Felipe Camillo. She graduated from Newark's Southside High School in 1953. After high school, she was employed as a clerk-typist at the Internal Revenue Service in Newark for four years. She married George Tankard of Newark in 1954, and they had six children between 1955 and 1961.

At the time of the urban civil rights riots in Newark in 1967, the Tankards were living in public housing. The violence, fires and store lootings during the two-day disturbance led her family to flee Newark and they relocated on Martha's Vineyard in the fall of 1967.

While she worked as a dental assistant from 1968 – 2000, Tankard's civic and community involvements and contributions have been significant and acknowledged across the Island. For thirty-eight years she has served as vice-president of the Martha's Vineyard Branch of the NAACP, working on memberships, with youth, and chairing the branch's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Dinner. She is the co-founder of the African American Heritage Trail on Martha's Vineyard, which was established in the early 1990s.

As a lay historian she created African American educational exhibits on Black cowboys and cultural cooking and foods. She has been an active member of the Martha's Vineyard Preservation Trust. She served for five years on the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters and for two years on the board of the Martha's Vineyard Hospice. She is a former president of a Parent Teacher's Association, and she has been a volunteer tutor of English for Portuguese immigrants to the island.

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# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Carrie Camillo Tankard was conducted by Robert Hayden on June 22, 2005, in Oak Bluffs, Maryland, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Association branch executive Carrie Camillo Tankard (1935 - ) served as vice president of the Martha's Vineyard branch of the NAACP for nearly forty years, and is the co-founder of the African American Heritage Trail on Martha's Vineyard.

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# 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:

Tankard, Carrie Camillo, 1935-

Hayden, Robert (Interviewer)

Neculai Burghilea (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Tankard, Carrie Camillo, 1935---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:

Association Branch Executive

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### HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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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 Carrie Camillo Tankard, June 22, 2005. 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 Carrie Camillo Tankard, Section A2005\_145\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:52 ?

Carrie Camillo Tankard was born February 18, 1935 in Newark, New Jersey. Tankard's mother, Maggie Kornegay Camillo, was born in Virginia in 1908 to Carrie Kornegay and George Franklin Kornegay. As an adult, she moved to New York City where she met and married Tankard's father, Felipe Camillo, an amateur lightweight boxer from Chihuahua, Mexico. The couple moved to

Newark, New Jersey with Tankard's maternal grandfather, who worked as a school security guard. Tankard's mother was an air raid warden during World War II, and her father worked at the Phelps Dodge Corporation factory. Tankard was the third of her four brothers and two sisters. Her older brother Felipe died when she was two years old. Tankard grew up in a close-knit community and lived on Brunswick Street in a lodging house with five other families. She spent her days playing with her siblings and attending different churches. Because her family did not have many resources, holidays and trips to the New Jersey beaches and parks were very special.

Video Oral History Interview with Carrie Camillo Tankard, Section A2005\_145\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:07 ?

Carrie Camillo Tankard's family attended gatherings at the South Mountain Reservation in South Orange, New Jersey with the Tankard family, her future in-laws. She did not meet her husband, George Tankard, Jr., until he left the U.S. military. Tankard's first childhood memory is of her kindergarten class at Miller Street Elementary School in Newark, New Jersey. In South Side High School, Tankard took shop and printing classes and attended many events. Instead of having extracurricular activities, Tankard helped her large family by watching the younger children. Liberty Mutual Insurance Company hired Tankard as a clerk typist after she graduated from high school in 1953. In 1954, Tankard met and married her husband who worked at the General Motors factory. Tankard worked at the Internal Revenue Service. They had six children together, and in 1967 they decided to move to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts after riots broke out in Newark, New Jersey.

Video Oral History Interview with Carrie Camillo Tankard, Section A2005\_145\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:02 ?

Carrie Camillo Tankard and her family lived in the Reverend William P. Hayes Homes, which was government housing, when the 1967 Newark Riots broke out. After spending a night with the riots occurring right outside their home, Tankard and her family left for Roselle, New Jersey. By October 1967, her husband decided that the family could not stay in Newark, so they moved to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts near his parents. They lived in temporary housing for a number of months, relying on friends for help, until a house that had caught on fire was offered to them. At first, they lived without electricity or water, but soon the house was up and running. Tankard's husband started a contract painting business, and she began her professional career as a dental assistant. Tankard became involved in community and civic organizations on Martha's Vineyard, starting a local welfare rights group and her children's schools. Tankard joined the Martha's Vineyard chapter of the NAACP and became vice president in 1968.

Video Oral History Interview with Carrie Camillo Tankard, Section A2005\_145\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:11 ?

Carrie Camillo Tankard served as vice president of Martha's Vineyard's chapter of the NAACP beginning in 1968. The branch formed in 1963, and its initiatives were tied directly to the national chapter's agenda. As vice president, Tankard started the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial dinner held annually on his birthday. Past speakers at the dinner include HistoryMakers Charles Ogletree, Dr. James Comer, and The Honorable Andrew Young. Tankard also preserved documents and scrapbooks for the NAACP, and created exhibits on black history for schools and libraries. With the Martha's Vineyard branch of the NAACP, Tankard raised money for college scholarship awards and was a mediator for discrimination cases, including one involving the police chief of

Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts. Tankard co-founded the African-American Heritage Trail of Martha's Vineyard with Elaine Weintraub. The pair researched the African American history of the island and dedicated plaques to specific historical sites to form the trail.

Video Oral History Interview with Carrie Camillo Tankard, Section A2005\_145\_001\_005, TRT: 0:25:48 ?

Carrie Camillo Tankard hosted tours of the African-American Heritage Trail of Martha's Vineyard to raise money for plaques commemorating the local organization The Cottagers, Inc., Dorothy West's house, painter Lois Mailou Jones, and the Episcopal church of HistoryMaker Bishop John Burgess. Tankard's late husband, an active member of the NAACP, raised funds with his road races. Tankard has won a number of awards for her work with the Trail and her volunteer work around Martha's Vineyard. Upon moving to the island, Tankard studied car maintenance and received an automobile maintenance certificate. At the time of the interview, she enjoyed sewing, knitting and gardening in her spare time. Tankard's future plans include visiting Mexico and Africa. Tankard gives advice to young people who want to be civic leaders. She reflects upon the importance of history, her life, her hopes and concerns for the African American community, and how she would like to be remembered. She concludes by narrating her photographs.