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Guide to the Kenneth M. Bilby Oral History Collection on Foundations of Jamaican Popular Music

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CENTER FOR BLACK MUSIC RESEARCH COLLECTION

The Kenneth M. Bilby Oral History Collection on Foundations of Jamaican Popular Music, 1993-2008

EXTENT

9 boxes, 4.25 linear feet

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Sound recordings and accompanying logs of oral history interviews conducted by Dr. Kenneth M. Bilby from 1993 to 2008 with studio musicians and arrangers active in the creation of Jamaican popular music during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

PROCESSING INFORMATION

The collection was digitized in 2011 with funding from the GRAMMY Foundation and its finding aid was created in 2015 by Laurie Lee Moses.

SCOPE & CONTENT/COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The Kenneth M. Bilby oral history collection on foundations of Jamaican music consists of 155 audiocassettes containing 194 hours of in-depth interviews with over 100 Jamaican studio musicians, arrangers, and vocalists. The interviews feature the individuals who created the genres of ska, rocksteady, and reggae during the 1960s and 1970s, and reveal in great detail how these new forms actually emerged, and what their creators thought about the creative process. Those who actually created these sounds—the studio musicians of Kingston during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s—have been largely bypassed in the writing of the history of these musics. Yet it is precisely in the memories of these pioneers, most of whom have yet to receive the credit they deserve, that the deeper cultural significance and more personal meanings of this history reside.

The bulk of this collection was assembled during 2004–2005 as part of an oral history project on Jamaican music funded by a Guggenheim fellowship. The interviews were designed to elicit not only factual information (e.g., who composed and played on what, and when and where), but also, a culturally informed sense of the social contexts in which they played, arranged, and recorded music, as well as an experiential account of what this music meant to them personally. Among the interviewees are a number of GRAMMY award recipients and several “stars” such as Toots Hibbert, Prince Buster, and Sly and Robbie, but the collection also includes most of the leading studio guitarists, bass players, keyboardists, drummers, and percussionists during the periods when critical stylistic shifts took place. For example, five of the six session guitarists most responsible for the transition from rocksteady to reggae-style guitar are represented in this collection—Ronny Bop, Hux Brown, Dougie Bryan, Alva Lewis, and Ernie Ranglin. The interviews are unique in that they were conducted by Bilby himself, a

trained ethnographer and ethnomusicologist whose professional involvement with Jamaican culture spans more than 35 years. Bilby's expertise in both the rural grassroots music and urban popular music of Jamaica put him in a unique position to carry out the ethnographically informed interviews of studio musicians.

ARRANGEMENT

The collection is arranged by the last name of the narrator/interviewee.

RELATED MATERIALS

External:

[The Kenneth M. Bilby Jamaican Maroon Collection](#), Library of Congress, American Folklife Center.

ACQUISITION SOURCE

Received from Dr. Kenneth M. Bilby in 2010. Additional interviews (digital files) were received in 2011.

SUBJECT HEADINGS

Ska (Music); Popular music—Jamaica; Reggae music—Jamaica; Reggae music--Jamaica--History and criticism; Bilby, Kenneth M., 1953-

ACCESS STATEMENT

The collection is open for on-site research use.

RIGHTS STATEMENT

These materials cannot be copied or distributed without the permission of Kenneth M. Bilby.

PREFERRED CITATION

The Kenneth M. Bilby Oral History Collection on Foundations of Jamaican Popular Music, Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

**KENNETH M. BILBY ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION ON FOUNDATIONS OF
JAMAICAN POPULAR MUSIC INVENTORY**

Interviewee and Box List:

INTERVIEWS OF JAMAICAN STUDIO MUSICIANS and SINGERS	Interview Location	Interview Date(s)	Use Copy: Box# / Disc #
LEGEND: (D) = Deceased (+) = cites jazz as a strong influence/interest, and/or has played in specifically “jazz” contexts (*) = passed through Alpha School in Kingston			Interview is on both side A and side B, except as noted, i.e. Austin interview consists of 2 discs: #010A, & #010B
Ace, Richard (keyboardist) <i>aka Richards, Evan Lloyd</i>	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	2005	Box 1 / #001 (part 2), Box 2 / #026B (part 1)
Adams, Glen (keyboardist, singer)	Brooklyn, New York	2006	Box 1 / #002, #003
Aitken, Bobby (guitarist, singer)	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	2005	Box 1 / #004, #005
Anderson, Gladstone “Gladdy” (keyboardist, singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2008	Box 1 / #006, #007
Anderson, Keith <i>see Andy, Bob</i>			
Andy, Bob (singer) <i>aka Anderson, Keith</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 1 / #008, #009A
Austin, Peter (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 1 / #010
Baba Job <i>see Brother Job</i>			
Barrett, Aston “Family Man” (bassist)	Poughkeepsie, New York	1999	Box 1 / #011
Beckford, Stanley (D) (singer)	Riverdale, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2002	Box 1 / #012
Bedasse, Alerth (singer) (D)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 1 / #013, #014, Box 2 / #015
Bennett, Headley (*) (+) (saxophonist) <i>aka Deadly Headley</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 2 / #016
Bongo Herman (drummer, percussionist) <i>aka Davis, Herman Constantine</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 2 / #017

Bradshaw, Sonny (+) (trumpeter, bandleader)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 2 / #018, #019
Brooks, Cedric Im (*) (+) (saxophonist, flute, drummer)	New York, New York	2003	Box 2 / #022A, #022B, #023, #024
NOTE: Walter Gavitt Ferguson	on last 15 minutes of #022, side A; 2004	<i>Not part of this collection</i>	Box 2 / #022A
Brother Jack (drummer, percussionist) <i>aka Hewitt, Albert / Pa Jack</i>	Temple Hills, Maryland	2005	Box 2 / #025, #026A
Brother Job (D) (drummer) <i>aka Baba Job or Bro. Job</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2002	Box 2 / #020, #021
Brother Joe (drummer, percussionist) <i>aka MacDonald, Eric or Bongo Joe</i>	Red Hills, St. Andrew, Jamaica	2005	Box 2 / #027
Brown, Joel "Bunny" (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 2 / #028, Box 3 / #029
Brown, Linford "Hux" (guitarist)	Oakland, California	2006	Box 3 / #030, #031
Browne, Cleveland <i>see Clevie or Steely and Clevie</i>			
Bryan, Radcliffe "Dougie" (+) (guitarist)	Portmore, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2005	Box 3 / #032, #033
Bull, Jah – <i>see Jah Bull</i>			
"Bunny" (singer) <i>see also Robinson, Arthur</i>	Rae Town, Kingston, Jamaica	2005 – joint interview with Skully (aka Simms, Noel)	Box 3 / #034, #035A (#035B is blank)
Burth, Christopher <i>see Sky Juice</i>			
Callender, Filberto "Fil" (drummer, guitarist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 3 / #036, #037, #038A (#038B is blank)
Cameron, Charles <i>see Organaire, Charlie</i>			
Campbell, Cecil <i>see Prince Buster</i>			
Carter, Reggie <i>see Lewis, Alva</i>			
Carty, Sam (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 3 / #039
Charlie Organaire <i>see Organaire, Charlie</i>			
Chin, Tony (guitarist) <i>aka Chin, Albert Valentine</i>	Chicago, Illinois	2007	Box 3 / #040
Chung, Michael "Mikey" (guitarist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 3 / #041, #042A (#042B is blank)
Clarke, Claudelle (singer)	Chicago, Illinois	2007	Box 4 / #043
Clarke, George <i>see Little Bop</i>			

Clayton, Samuel (orator, MRR leader)	New York, New York	2000	Box 4 / #044A
Clevie (drummer, keyboardist, producer) <i>see ALSO Steely and Clevie aka Browne, Cleveland</i>	Kingston, Jamaica;	2005 – joint interview with Steely	Box 11 / #146, #147
Cole, <i>Wilburn</i> “Stranger” (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2008	Box 4 / #045, #046A_Disc1 & Disc2 (#046B is blank)
Collins, Ansel (keyboardist)	Portmore, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2005	Box 4 / #047, #048
Cooper, Grub (drummer)	Chicago, Illinois	2003	Box 4 / #049
Count Owen (singer) <i>aka Emmanuel, Owen</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	1999	Box 4 / #050
Cowan, Tommy (singer, producer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 4 / #051, #052
Davis, Herman Constantine <i>see Bongo Herman</i>			
Davis, Ronnie (singer)	Savanna-la-Mar, Westmoreland, Jamaica	2005 – joint interview with Roy Smith	Box 4 / #053
Davis, <i>Carlton</i> “Santa” (drummer)	Washington, DC	2006	Box 4 / #054, #055
Deadly Headley <i>see Bennett, Headley</i>			
Dillon, Leonard (singer) <i>aka Jack Sparrow or The Ethiopian</i>	Port Antonio, Portland, Jamaica	2005	Box 5 / #056
Dizzy Johnny <i>see Moore, Johnny</i>			
Donaldson, Eric (singer)	Kent Village, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2002	Box 5 / #057
Douglas, Paul (drummer)	Pembroke Pines, Florida	2005	Box 5 / #058, #059
Dowe, Brent (D) (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 5 / #060, #061
Dudley, George (singer) <i>aka “Bunny”</i>	Rae Town, Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 5 / #062
Dunbar, <i>Lowell</i> “Sly” (drummer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2002	Box 5 / #063
Ellis, Bobby (+) (trumpeter)	Portmore, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2005	Box 5 / #064, #065
Emmanuel, Owen <i>see Count Owen</i>			
Ethiopian, The <i>see Dillon, Leonard</i>			

Fulwood, <i>George</i> “Fully” (bassist)	San Clemente, California	2006	Box 5 / #066, #067, #068A (#068B is blank)
Gardiner, Boris (bassist, singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 5 / #069, Box 6 / #070
Gayle, <i>Leroy</i> “Otis” (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 6 / #071A (#071B is blank)
Gordon, Joseph <i>see Lord Tanamo</i>			
Grennan, Winston (+) (D) (drummer)	Bearsville, New York	1998; with Tony King, also present	Box 6 / #072, #073
Haines, Jerome (or Haynes) <i>see Jah Jerry</i>			
Harriott, Derrick (singer, producer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2004	Box 6 / #074
Haughton, Alvin (percussionist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 6 / #075
Haughton, Ras <i>see Ras Haughton</i>			
Henry, George <i>see Ras Michael</i>			
Hewitt, Albert <i>see Brother Jack</i>			
Hibbert, <i>Frederick</i> “Toots” (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 6 / #076
Hill, Joseph (D) (singer)	Woodstock, New York and Poughkeepsie, New York	2000 / 2003	Box 6 / #077A (#077B is blank), #078
Hinds, Justin (D) (singer)	Brattleboro, Vermont	1999	Box 6 / #079
Jack Sparrow <i>see Dillon, Leonard</i>			
Jackson, <i>Clifton</i> “Jackie” (bassist)	Montego Bay, Jamaica	2005	Box 6 / #080, #081
Jah Bull –(toaster, deejay)	Kingston, Jamaica	2002 – joint interview with Ras Haughton	Box 6 / #082
Jah Jerry (+) (D) (guitarist) <i>aka Haines, Jerome</i> (Haynes)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 6 / #083A (#083B is blank), Box 7 / #084
Job, Baba (D) <i>see Brother Job</i>			
Johnson, Wycliffe <i>see Steely</i>			
Jones, <i>Desmond</i> “Desi” (+) (drummer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 7 / #085
King, Tony (percussionist) <i>aka Georgie</i>	Centerville, New York	1998	Box 7 / #086, #087
Knibb, Lloyd (drummer)	Hull, Massachusetts	2000	Box 7 / #088
Lara, Kenneth <i>see Lord Laro</i>			

Lewis, Alva (guitarist) <i>aka Reggie Carter</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 7 / #089
Little Bop, (drummer) <i>aka Little Bap / Clarke, George</i>	New York, New York	2000	Box 4 / #044B
Lovindeer, Lloyd (singer, deejay)	Washington, D.C.	1993	Box 7 / #093
Lord Laro (singer, guitarist) <i>aka Lara, Kenneth</i>	Rose Hall, Jamaica	2002	Box 7 / #090, #091
Lord Tanamo (singer) <i>aka Gordon, Joseph</i>	New York, New York	1998	Box 7 / #092
Lyn, Robert "Robbie" (keyboardist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 7 / #094, #095
MacDonald, Eric <i>see Brother Joe aka Bongo Joe</i>			
MacDonald, Larry (+) (drummer, percussionist)	New York, New York	2005	Box 7 / #096, #097
Manning, Donald (singer)	Miami Gardens, Florida	2005	Box 8 / #098
Marshall, Larry (singer)	Miami, Florida	2005	Box 8 / #099, #100
<i>NOTE: Matthews, George</i>	<i>2000; #141, side A and part of side B</i>	<i>Not part of this collection</i>	<i>Box 11 / #141A, #141B</i>
Max Romeo <i>see Romeo, Max</i>			
<i>NOTE: McBeth</i>	<i>2005; #116, side A</i>	<i>Not part of this collection</i>	<i>Box 9 / #116A</i>
McLean, Bertram "Ranchie" (bassist, guitarist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2008	Box 8 / #101, #102, #103
Mikey Boo (drummer) <i>aka Richards, Michael</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 8 / #104, #105
Moore, Johnny (*) (+) (D) (trumpeter) <i>aka Dizzy Johnny</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 8 / #106
Morgan, Derrick (singer, producer)	Freetown, Clarendon, Jamaica	2008	Box 8 / #107, #108, #109
Morgan, Vincent "Vin" (keyboardist) <i>aka Morgie</i>	Linstead, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2005	Box 1 / #009B, Box 8 / #110
Mutabaruka (dub poet)	Vienna, Austria	2001	Box 8 / #111
Myton, Cedric (singer) <i>aka Cedric Congos</i>	Old Harbour Bay, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2005	Box 9 / #112
Nambo (+) (trombonist) <i>aka Robinson, Ronald</i>	Mannings Hill, St. Andrew, Jamaica	2005	Box 9 / #113, #114
Nelson, Wesley (singer)	Hessen Castle, St. Ann, Jamaica	2005	Box 9 / #115, #116B
Organaire, Charlie (harmonica, singer) <i>aka Cameron, Charles</i>	Chicago, Illinois	2003	Box 9 / #117, #118
Parker, Ken (singer)	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	2005	Box 9 / #119, #120

Parks, Lloyd (bassist, singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 11 / #151B
Patterson, <i>Alvin</i> "Seeco" (percussionist, drummer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 9 / #121, #122A (side B is blank)
Pinkney, Dwight (guitarist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 9 / #123
Prince Buster (singer, producer) <i>aka Campbell, Cecil</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 9 / #124, #125
Ranglin, Ernest (+) (guitarist)	Tower Hill, St. Mary, Jamaica	2005	Box 10 / #126, #127
Ranny Bop <i>aka Ronny Bop</i> <i>see Ronnie Bop</i>			
Ras Haughton (dub poet)	Kingston, Jamaica	2002 – joint interview with Jah Bull	Box 6 / #082
Ras Michael (drummer, singer) <i>aka Henry, George</i>	Los Angeles, California	2006	Box 10 / #128, #129
Richard Ace <i>see Ace, Richard</i> <i>aka Richards, Evan Lloyd</i>			
Richards, Evan Lloyd <i>see Ace, Richard</i>			
Richards, Michael <i>see Mikey Boo</i>			
Riley, Winston (singer, producer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 10 / #130
Robbie <i>see Shakespeare, Robbie</i>			
Robinson, Arthur "Bunny" <i>see Bunny</i>			
Robinson, Jackie (singer)	Pembroke Pines, Florida	2005	Box 10 / #131, #132, #133
Robinson, Ronald <i>see Nambo</i>			
Romeo, Max (singer) <i>aka Smith, Maxwell</i>	Palm, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2005	Box 10 / #134, #135
Ronnie Bop (guitarist) <i>aka Williams, Ranford or Ranny Bop</i>	Poughkeepsie, New York	1999	Box 10 / #136
Shakespeare, <i>Robert</i> "Robbie" (bassist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2008	Box 10 / #137
Sibbles, Leroy (singer, bassist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 10 / #138, #139
Sibley, Dudley (singer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 11 / #140
Simms, Noel <i>see Skully</i>			
Skully (drummer, percussionist, singer) <i>aka Simms, Noel or Mr. Foundation</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2000 / 2005 – joint interview with Bunny	Box 11 / #141B, #142, #143, #144 and Box 3 / #034, #035 (joint interview)

Sky Juice (percussionist, drummer) <i>aka Burth, Christopher</i>	Bull Bay, St. Thomas, Jamaica	2005	Box 11 / #145
“Sly” <i>see Dunbar, Lowell “Sly”</i>			
Smith, Maxwell <i>see Romeo, Max</i>			
Smith, Roy “Spar” (bassist)	Savanna-la-Mar, Westmoreland, Jamaica	2005 – joint interview with Ronnie Davis	Box 4 / #053
Sparrow, Jack <i>see Dillon, Leonard</i>			
Steely (D) (keyboardist, producer) <i>aka Johnson, Wycliffe</i>	Kingston, Jamaica	2005 – joint interview with Clevie	Box 11 / #146, #147
Stewart, Neville “Tinga” (singer)	Miami, Florida	2005	Box 11 / #148
Stranger Cole <i>see Cole, Wilburn “Stranger”</i>			
Taitt, Lynn (guitarist)	Bois Briand, Québec, Canada	2001	Box 11 / #149, #150
Thompson, Uzziah “Sticky” (percussionist, drummer)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 11 / #151A
Walker, Earl “Bagga” (bassist)	Kingston, Jamaica	2005	Box 11 / #152
Wallace, Leroy “Horsemouth” (*) (drummer)	Kitson Town, St. Catherine, Jamaica	2005	Box 11 / #153, and Box 12 / #154, #155
Williams, Ranford <i>see Ronnie Bop aka Ranny Bop</i>			

Interviews added to the collection in 2011.

Alcapone, Dennis (Toaster, producer)	May 11, 2010; Bloomsbury, London, UK	Box 12 / #156_1, #156_2, #156_3&4
Bovell, Dennis (guitar, bass, producer)	June 6, 2010	Box 12 / #157_1, #157_2, #157_3, #157_4&5
Crosby, Gary (bass)	May 22, 2010	Box 12 / #158_1, #158_2, #158_3, #158_4, #158_5
Douglas, Val (bass)	December 15, 2010	Box 12 / #159_1, #159_2&3, #159_4-1, #159_4-2, #159_5
Ewart, Douglas (reeds)	May 11, 2011	Box 12 / #160_1, #160_2&3, #160_4&5, #160_6
Francis, Winston (singer)	VOEBUFE	Box 12 / #161_1, #161_2, #161_3 / Box 13 / #161_4&5
Gray, Owen	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #162_1, #162_2, #162_3
Little Roy	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #163_1, #163_2, #163_3
Robinson, Lloyd	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #164_1, #164_2, #164_3, #164_4
Rodrigues, Rico	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #165_1, #165_2&3, #165_4, #165_5, #165_6
Rose, Michael "Bammie"	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #166_1, #166_2, #166_3
Rowe, Kenrick	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #167_1, #167_2, #167_3
Seaton, BB	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #168_1, #168_2&3, #168_4&5, #168_6
Thornton, Eddie "Tan Tan"	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #169_1, #169_2, #169_3, #169_4&5, #169_6
Wilson, Ron	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #170_1, #170_2, #170_3
Wright, Otis	VOEBUFE	Box 13 / #171_1, #171_2, #171_3-1, #171_3-2