J. Lyles Alley Collection

Special Collections & Archives
James B. Duke Library
Furman University
3300 Poinsett Highway, Greenville, SC 29613
E-mail: specialcollections@furman.edu
Telephone: (864) 294-2194

Accessions: 2010-017, 2012-094, 2013-093

Creator: Alley, J. Lyles (1908-1990)

Biography:

Jesse Lyles Alley was born on July 9, 1908 in Spartanburg, South Carolina. He spent the early years of his life on a dairy farm sharecropped by his father and uncles. After his grandfather was injured in a mule wagon accident, the family moved into town. For a time following their relocation, Alley helped to support his family by selling newspapers in the street. His childhood friend and future Furman University president, Dr. Gordon Blackwell was an instrumental factor in setting the foundation for Alley’s future career at Furman. As boys, the pair built a basketball goal and, guided by the “faint glow” of a “10-watt light bulb,” learned how to shoot baskets together. Upon Alley’s graduation from Spartanburg High School, the Blackwell family helped rally the community to gather the funds necessary for him to accept his athletic scholarship at Furman and attend the university.

Late summer night practices coupled with natural athletic ability led Alley becoming a star college athlete. A testament to his athletic affinity, he graduated from Furman in 1933 as a four year letterman in track, baseball, football, and basketball, earning twelve letters in total. Alley had a successful beginning to his post-graduate athletic career. He coached the Southern Bleachery basketball team in Taylors, South Carolina during the 1930s and the undefeated Miami Senior High School football team in 1942. He served in the Navy during World War II, and, after his return, accepted a position in Furman athletics. Over a 33 year career at his alma mater, Alley served as an assistant football coach, head basketball and baseball coach, a faculty member in the Physical Education Department, and the university’s athletic director. In total, he supervised twenty seasons of basketball, and Alley retired from coaching in November 1966 as Furman’s most successful coach overseeing 245 victories.

Alley officially ended his association with Furman University athletics when he stepped down from the position of athletic director on June 1, 1975. Although he was an athlete, coach, and administrator during his time at Furman, Alley’s legacy is arguably rooted in his contributions to the university’s basketball program. When Alley received the head coaching position for the team in 1945, athletic funds for the university were low. Players sometimes travelled to and from games “in cars belonging to Alley and his friends.” However, under Coach Alley’s leadership, the team “shot” to national prominence in the 1950s. He personally recruited Frank Selvy,
Furman’s first All-American player who, in 1954, set a national collegiate record when he individually scored 100 points in single game against Newberry College. Another of Alley’s players, Darrell Floyd, soon joined in sharing the honor of designation as an All-American athlete and gained further positive attention for Furman’s athletics. In addition to the successes of individual players, Alley’s entire basketball program received widespread recognition as national scoring champions from 1953 to 1956 and his 1951-1952 team celebrated as the nation’s most improved.

After his retirement from Furman, Alley stayed busy working as an executive at a local box manufacturing company co-founded by his son. In 1984, Furman established an athletic scholarship in Coach Alley’s name. He received news of the honor at a surprise ceremony held at halftime during a Furman basketball game. His induction into the South Carolina Athletic Hall of Fame and the Furman Athletic Hall of Fame further celebrated Alley’s prestige as a coach and athlete. An end to a lifetime spent in connection with Furman and the Greenville community, Lyles Alley passed away March 16, 1990 at the age of 81.

**Provenance:** Materials in the collection were donated by Jesse "Bud" Lyles Alley, Jr. in June 2010 and October 2012.

**Extent:** 6 linear feet (16 boxes)

**Date Range:** 1929-1990

**Language:** English

**Restrictions:** None

**Abstract:** This collection contains materials from Alley's time as a coach of several sports, a professor, and athletic director at Furman.

**Arrangement:** By year and material type.

- Box 1: J. Lyles Alley Documents
- Box 2: J. Lyles Alley Basketball Related Documents
- Box 3: J. Lyles Alley Retirement and Post-retirement Events
- Box 4: J. Lyles Alley Awards and Certificates
- Box 5: Newspaper Clippings, 1920s-1940s
- Box 6: Newspaper Clippings, 1950s-1960s
- Box 7: Newspaper Clippings, 1970s-1990s
- Box 8: J. Lyles Alley Correspondences, 1940s-1980s
- Box 9: Photographs, 1920s-1940s
Box 10: Photographs, 1950s-1990s
Box 11: Spartanburg, Taylors, and Miami Senior High School Publications
Oversize Box 1
Oversize Box 2
Oversize Box 3 Scrapbooks by Mrs. J. Lyles Alley
Oversize Box 4 Plaques
Oversize Box 5 Recordings

SEE ALSO: Acc. 2014-047 Eleanor B. Hunter ’42 Collection of Lyles Alley

Inventory

Box 1: J. Lyles Alley Documents

Folder 1 - Spartanburg High School ribbon, 1929
Folder 2 - Taylors High School related documents and artifacts, 1930s
Folder 3 - Active duty military documents, 1942
Folder 4 - Active duty military documents, 1943-44
Folder 5 - Active duty military documents, 1945
Folder 6 - Separation from military service, 1945
Folder 7 - Veteran Services documents, 1940s-1950s and the 1970s
Folder 8 - Miscellaneous military documents, 1940s
Folder 9 - Military publications, 1943: J. Lyles Alley Related
Folder 10 - Military publications, 1946: Not J. Lyles Alley Related
Folder 11 - Columbia University Master of Arts diploma and grade transcript, 1949-1950
Folder 12 - Personal membership cards, 1968 and the 1980s: basketball related
Folder 13 - Personal membership cards, 1976-1977: not basketball related
Folder 14 - Bulletin of Furman University: Alumni Number, December 1947
Folder 15 - Furman basketball 1974 game program
Folder 16 - Paladin Club documents, 1981, 1997
Folder 17 - SC Athletic Hall of Fame documents, 1980s
Folder 18 - ACE Box Co. documents, 1980s
Folder 19 - Miscellaneous personal documents and artifacts
Folder 20 - Event programs (directly pertaining to J. Lyles Alley)
Folder 21 - Event programs (not directly pertaining to J. Lyles Alley)
Folder 22 - J. Lyles Alley and Furman basketball celebratory poems/songs

Box 2: J. Lyles Alley Basketball Related Documents

Folder 1 - Bulletin of Furman University: Alumni Number, April 1946
Folder 2 - Furman University Magazine, 1953-1958
Folder 3 - Insight into Greenville: The Magazine of Greenville County, February 1975
Folder 4 - Miscellaneous J. Lyles Alley and Furman basketball magazine clippings, 1950s-1960s
Folder 5 - Basketball programs (not Furman related), 1950s-1970s
Folder 6 - Non-athletic basketball programs, 1958 and 1990
Folder 7 - Furman basketball team profile, 1952-1953
Folder 8 - J. Lyles Alley and Frank Selvy radio interview transcription, 1954
Folder 9 - Furman basketball team travel documents, 1950s (date for postcard unknown)
Folder 10 - J. Lyles Alley speech about Frank Selvy, 1950s
Folder 11 - Furman basketball team statistics, 1950s
Folder 12 - Furman basketball team statistics, 1960s
Folder 13 - Miscellaneous Furman sports memorabilia, dates unknown
Folder 14 - Furman basketball scrapbooks, 1950s

Box 3: J. Lyles Alley Retirement and Post-retirement Events

Folder 1. Retirement, personal document, date unknown
Folder 2. Retirement, Furman published documents, 1975
Folder 3. Retirement speech, 1975
Folder 4. J. Lyles Alley Scholarship documents, 1984
Folder 5. Miami High School Coaches Tribute newspaper clippings and correspondences, 1987
Folder 6. Miami High School Coaches Tribute documents and photographs, 1987
Folder 7. Miami High School Coaches Tribute programs, 1987
Folder 10. Pure Gold Alley golf tournament documents, 1980s
Folder 12. Internment arrangements and eulogy, March 1990

Box 4: J. Lyles Alley Awards and Certificates

Folder 1. Military related certificates, 1940s
Folder 2. SC Athletic Hall of Fame plaque and induction documents, 1968
Folder 3. Certificates (not Furman affiliated), 1971-1972
Folder 4. Awards accepted for J. Lyles Alley (not Furman affiliated), 1990s
Folder 5. Lifetime Paladin Membership award, 1975
Folder 6. Furman Alumni Service award, 1987

Box 5: Newspaper Clippings, 1920s-1940s

Folder 1. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1920s
Folder 2. Furman athletics newspaper clippings, 1930s
Folder 3. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1930s
Folder 4. Southern Bleachery basketball tournament clippings, 1930s-1940s
Folder 5. Furman athletics newspaper clippings, 1940s
Folder 6. Miami High newspaper clippings, 1940-1942
Folder 7. Navy related newspaper clippings, 1942
Folder 8. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1940s

Box 6: Newspaper Clippings, 1950s-1960s

Folder 1. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1952
Folder 2. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1953
Folder 3. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1954
Folder 4. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1956
Folder 5. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1959
Folder 6. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1952
Folder 7. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1954
Folder 8. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1956
Folder 9. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1957
Folder 10. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1958
Folder 11. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1959
Folder 12. Miscellaneous newspaper clippings, 1950s
Folder 13. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1960
Folder 14. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1960
Folder 15. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1962
Folder 16. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1962
Folder 17. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1963
Folder 18. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1963
Folder 19. Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1964
Folder 20. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1964
Folder 21. J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1966
Folder 22. Miscellaneous newspaper clippings, 1960s

Box 7: Newspaper Clippings, 1970s-1990s

Folder 1 - Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1970
Folder 2 - Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1971
Folder 3 - Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1972
Folder 4 - Furman basketball newspaper clippings, 1975
Folder 5 - Lyles Alley Night newspaper clippings, 1975
Folder 6 - Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1975
Folder 7 - J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1978
Folder 8 - Miscellaneous newspaper clippings, 1970s
Folder 9 - J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1980
Folder 10 - J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1983
Folder 11 - Lyles Alley Scholarship newspaper clippings, 1984
Folder 12 - J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1986
Folder 13 - J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1988
Folder 14 - ACE Box Co. newspaper clippings, 1980s
Folder 15 - Miscellaneous newspaper clippings, 1980s
Folder 16 - J. Lyles Alley newspaper clippings, 1990s

Box 8: J. Lyles Alley Correspondences, 1940s-1980s
   Folder 1 - Personal correspondences, 1940s
   Folder 2 - Business correspondences, 1940s
   Folder 3 - Personal correspondences, 1950s
   Folder 4 - Congratulatory correspondences, 1950s
   Folder 5 - Business correspondences, 1950s
   Folder 6 - Personal correspondences, 1960s
   Folder 7 - Congratulatory correspondences, 1960s
   Folder 8 - Business correspondences, 1960s
   Folder 9 - Personal correspondences, 1970s
   Folder 10 - Business correspondences, 1970s
   Folder 11 - Personal correspondences, 1980s (1)
   Folder 12 - Personal correspondences, 1980s (2)
   Folder 13 - Congratulatory correspondences, 1980s
   Folder 14 - Business correspondences, 1980s
   Folder 15 - Personal correspondence, undated
**Box 9: Photographs, 1920s-1940s**

Folder 1 - Spartanburg High School athletic teams, 1920s  
Folder 2 - J. Lyles Alley at Furman University, 1930s  
Folder 3 - Southern Bleachery team, 1937  
Folder 4 - Taylors High School photographs, 1930s  
Folder 5 - J. Lyles Alley Portraits, 1930s  
Folder 6 - Miscellaneous football photographs, 1930s-1940s  
Folder 7 - Miscellaneous basketball photographs, 1930s-1940s  
Folder 8 - Miscellaneous J. Lyles Alley photographs, 1930s-1940s  
Folder 9 - Miscellaneous personal photographs, 1930s-1940s  
Folder 10 - Military service, 1940s  
Folder 11 - Miscellaneous personal photographs, 1940s  
Folder 12 - Miami Senior High School coaching, 1940s  
Folder 13 - Furman football team, 1940s  
Folder 14 - Furman basketball team, 1947  
Folder 15 - Miscellaneous Furman basketball team photographs, 1940s  
Folder 16 - J. Lyles Alley portrait, 1940s

**Box 10: Photographs, 1950s-1990s**

Folder 1 - Furman basketball team, 1953-1954  
Folder 2 - Furman basketball team trip to the Orange Bowl, 1955  
Folder 3 - All-Star basketball team, 1956  
Folder 4 - Captioned Furman basketball photographs, 1950s  
Folder 5 - Miscellaneous Furman basketball photographs, 1950s  
Folder 6 - Personal photographs, 1950s  
Folder 7 - Miscellaneous photographs, 1950s  
Folder 8 - J. Lyles Alley portrait, 1950s  
Folder 9 - Furman basketball team, 1960-1961  
Folder 10 - Furman basketball team, 1962-1963  
Folder 11 - Furman basketball team, 1964  
Folder 12 - Miscellaneous Furman basketball photographs, 1960s  
Folder 13 - Personal photographs, 1960s
Folder 14 - Miscellaneous photographs, 1960s
Folder 15 - J. Lyles Alley portraits, 1960s
Folder 16 - J. Lyles Alley captioned photographs, 1970s
Folder 17 - Miscellaneous Furman basketball photographs, 1970s
Folder 18 - Personal photographs, 1970s
Folder 19 - Lyles Alley Night, April 1975
Folder 20 - Miscellaneous photographs, 1970s
Folder 21 - J. Lyles Alley portraits, 1970s
Folder 22 - Presentation of J. Lyles Alley scholarship, 1984
Folder 23 - Pure Gold Alley golf tournament, 1986
Folder 24 - Miami High Coaches Tribute, 1987
Folder 25 - Miscellaneous photographs, 1980s
Folder 26 - Miscellaneous photographs, 1990s

**Box 11:** Spartanburg, Taylors, and Miami Senior High School Publications

Folder 1 - *The Scribbler (Christmas Number)*, 1926
Folder 2 - *The Scribbler*, 1928
Folder 3 - *The Scribbler* (with autographs), 1929
Folder 4 - *The Scribbler* (without autographs), 1929
Folder 5 - *Le Livre des Memoirs*, 1935
Folder 6 - *Les Memoirs*, 1939
Folder 7 - *The Miami*, 1941

**Oversized Box 1**

1. Miami Senior High School Scrapbook
2. Photocopied Columbia diploma
3. Furman basketball team photograph, 1952-1953
4. Dedicated and signed copy of *Tom Hartness*
5. T-shirt from Miami High Coaches Tribute, 1987
6. VHS from Miami High Coaches Tribute, 1987
Oversized Box 2

1. Furman University student handbook with recorded grades inside, 1929-1930
2. Furman University bookmark/1930 calendar
3. Furman University commencement program, 1933
4. Paperweight with photograph of J. Lyles Alley as a high school football player
5. Paperweight with J. Lyles Alley’s high school medals
6. Printing Plate of J. Lyles Alley in football uniform

Oversized Box 3 – Basketball Scrapbooks done by Mrs. Lyles Alley 1955-1957

Oversized Box 4 – Plaques

1. Poinsett Classic December 29, 1970
2. Award of Merit, National Association of Basketball Coaches of the U.S., March 30, 1975
3. Furman Alumni Association Special Award, May 15, 1975
4. Davidson College Appreciation Award on his retirement, 1975
5. Pure Gold Alley, 1982
6. Furman University Care Dealers-Coaches, Golf Tournament Champions, 1985
7. First Honorary Chairman Greater Piedmont Open Golf Tournament, Greenville Jaycees

Oversized Box 5 – Recordings

1. 33 1/3 rpm LP, WFBC “Monitor Interview,” 2/7/1957 [another copy in Furman LD1871.F72 M66 1957]
2. 78 rpm LP, WFBC, no title, undated
3. CD, Monitor Interview, February 2, 1957, Dr. Plyler and Lyles Alley interviewed by Monty DuPuy
4. CD, Lyles Alley and Frank Selvey and Bud Granger interviewed by Verner Tate, December 1952, Greenville