



# The Wittliff Collections

## Guide to the Bob White Papers 1970–1990

Collection SWWC-070

### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	White, Bob (Fiddler)
<b>Title:</b>	Guide to the Bob White Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1970–1990
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Bob White Collection contains letters, articles, clippings, personal effects, promotional materials, souvenirs, and personal correspondence documenting his career as a fiddle player. The collection spans the years 1970 to 1990 and reflects Bob White's musical talent -- including accolades and awards he received throughout his musical career.
<b>Identification:</b>	SWWC-070
<b>Extent:</b>	8 Linear Feet, 5 boxes (5 archival boxes, 5 framed items, and 2 artifacts)
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Repository:</b>	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

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## Biographical Sketch

Western Swing fiddler, Robert Bernard White was born in Cedro Wooley, Washington on June 12, 1920 to Edward and Dolores White. Mr. White's music career began with violin lessons at the age of seven, and he subsequently studied at the Los Angeles Conservatory of music with Lawrence Singer. White was playing professionally by the time he was twelve with groups in Los Angeles and Palm Springs, California.

While in his twenties, White traveled with Frank Thompson and the Brazos Boys Band as featured fiddler and did some acting on Band Stand and other TV shows. He later joined western swing pioneer Bob Wills and The Texas Playboys, with whom he played and recorded the memorable "For the Last Time" album, which lists him as "unidentified player fiddler."

In 1960, White played background music for the TV shows Bonanza and The Beverly Hillbillies and played with stars such as Mel Tillis, Dottie West and Marty Robbins, Bill Cosby, Willie Nelson, Barbara Mandrell, Kenny Rogers, and Roy Clark. By 1970, Mr. White toured extensively as featured violinist/fiddle player with Ray Price, and met and married his wife Helen. White's talent agent and manager, Helen was also good friends with Laura Lee McBride, vocalist with Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys.

White moved to Houston, Texas and formed the River Road Boys, which featured White and good friend Clyde Brewer as fiddlers. After eight years and six albums, White left the River Road Boys and joined the National #2 Company, "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," (1978-1982) where he was featured fiddle player for four years. The company toured extensively and played one year in Las Vegas at the Desert Inn Crystal room. After the movie, White returned to Magnolia, Texas, where he continued to perform locally and teach.

A versatile musician comfortable with playing western swing, jazz, ballad, Dixieland, classical, and folk, White also wrote the song Fiddle Boogie and was recording artists for BMI, Capitol, Delta and Stoneway Labels.

After battling a long illness, White died on September 16, 1991 in Colorado Springs.

## Scope and Contents

The Bob White Collection contains letters, articles, clippings, personal effects, promotional materials, souvenirs, and personal correspondence documenting his career as a fiddle player. The collection spans the years 1970 to 1990 and reflects Bob White's musical talent -- including accolades and awards he received throughout his musical career.

The collection is arranged into seven series according to document type: Personal Documents, Correspondence, Music Career, Printed Materials (1974-1990), Clippings by Date (1975-1990), Photographs, and Oversized Items. The first two series, Personal Documents and Correspondence, contain biographies, obituaries, family birth certificates, awards, music contracts and personal letters to and from White's family, friends, and business associates. Most of these items document White's musical career and personal life as well as his wife's involvement in the music business as talent agent/manager.

The third series, Music Career, documents White's music career with Bob Willis and the Texas Playboys, The River Road Boys, The Brazos Valley Band, and The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas.

Series four and five, Printed Materials and Clippings, form a substantial part of the collection, consisting of programs, articles, clippings, and promotional flyers documenting White's career and his interests in other Country Western and Swing musicians.

The sixth series, Photographs, is extensive and includes photographs of Bob White as a child as well as negatives and black and white images of White playing fiddle as soloist and band member, casual snapshots of friends and family as well as other country music artists.

The last series is Oversized Items and includes framed memorabilia, clothing, and accessories worn by Bob White during his career. Of interest is a performance costume worn by Laura Lee McBride and a photo collage of White and other artists with whom he performed.

# **Administrative Information**

## **Physical Location**

Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice is required for use: <https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/makearesearchappointment.html>.

## **Conditions Governing Access**

Collection is open for research.

## **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Al Dressen

## **Preferred Citation**

Bob White Papers, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University.

## **Conditions Governing Use**

Materials from the Wittliff Collections are made available for use in research, teaching, and private study. The user assumes responsibility for determining copyright status, obtaining permission to publish, and abiding by U.S. copyright laws. <https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/visit/policies/publication.html>

## **Controlled Access Headings**

- Bluegrass music
- Country music
- Fiddling

## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Personal Documents, 1950 - 1990

Box	Folder
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1	1	Personal Documents, 1950 - 1990
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The Personal Documents series is a compilation of family birth certificates, photocopied accolades, business cards, financial statements, contracts and several biographies and obituary announcements. Included in this series is a short medical explanation of White's illness, Helen White's handwritten notes, and White's hospital tags. Worthy of note is the American Federation of Musicians contract with White's signature.

### Series II: Correspondence, 1984 - 1991

#### Letters to Bob and Helen White, 1985 - 1991

1	2	Letters to Bob and Helen White, 1985 - 1991
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Steve Blackman, Edward M. Cramer (BMI), Carol and Tamara Dal, David W. Davis, Terry Day, Steve Douglas (Texas Opry), Billy Fayd, Dean Fishburn (H and H Music Co.), Sandi Freeman, Irene Helsinger, Vivien Spicer Johnson, Lew Mancini (American Federation of Musicians), Nancy Mashburn (Capro), Laura Lee McBride, Dale McBride, Lorene Moore, Paul I. Pacher, Cyndy and Jerry Parnell, Stephanie Phillips (Universal Pictures), President Ronald Reagan, Ernie Reed, Jorge Luis Rodrigues, Ray Sczepanik (Texas Top Hands Band), Bob Smith (Jack Morton Productions), Charlie Strait, Randy and Julie Turner, Andrw Watt, Glen White (Bob Wills Roundup), and Lee Zhito (Who's Who in America)

#### Letters from Bob and Helen White, 1984 - 1986

1	3	Letters from Bob and Helen White, 1984 - 1986
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Mae Axton, Hal Durham, Dr. Bruce Nelson, Mr. Ratterre (Phoenix Symphony), President Ronald Reagan, Mary Roberts, Larry Scott (Interstate Roadshow), Helen K. White, and unaddressed

#### Correspondence by Others, 1984 - 1987

1	4	Correspondence by Others, 1984 - 1987
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Gener Barnett, Barry Doss, Ezzio Dubbini, Frank Fanelli (to Ron White), George W. Heath

## Series III: Music Career, 1940s-1980s

### Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, 1940s-1970s

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, 1940s-1970s   |
|   |   | Contains clippings and memorabilia of the years that Bob White played with Bob Wills. |

### River Road Boys and the Brazos Valley Boys, 1970s-1980s

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 2 | 2 | River Road Boys and the Brazos Valley Boys, 1970s-1980s  |
|   |   | Contains various materials relating to Bob White playing with the River Road Boys and the Brazos Valley Band. Of interest are the accolades he received for his years of fiddle playing. |

### The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, 1978 - 1982

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|---|---|--|
| 2 | 3 | The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, 1978 - 1982   |
|   |   | Contains playbills and materials relating to Bob White's performance in the traveling production of The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas. |

## Series IV: Printed Material, 1974 - 1990

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | 1 | Ephemera and Printed Flyers for Music Bands and Shows |
| 3 | 2 | Printed Materials: Music Related Magazines            |
| 3 | 3 | Printed Industry Related Handbooks and Playbills      |
| 3 | 4 | Ephemera: Postcards, Maps, and Bumper Stickers        |
| 3 | 4 | Ephemera: Personal Magazines                          |

## Series V: Clippings, 1975 - 1990

- |   |   |                                  |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 4 | 1 | Newspaper clippings, 1975 - 1990 |
| 4 | 2 | Newspaper clippings, undated     |

## Series VI: Photographs

- |   |   |                              |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| 5 | 1 | Bob White                    |
| 5 | 2 | Family and Friends Snapshots |
| 5 | 3 | Industry Photographs         |

## Series VII: Artifacts

Item 001	The Former Bob Wills Texas Playboys Reunion, Pawhuska OK, signed by Playboys, w/plaque "Bob White Get Well Soon, The Texas Playboys.", September 7-8, 1990
Item 002	Photo Collage in plastic frame "Violin Outfits, Violin & Fiddle Lessons by Bob White" photos of White and various artists
Item 003	"Bob White Benefit" Sunday", August 19, 1990
Item 004	Texas Opry Jamboree poster
Item 006	Laura Lee McBride performance costume: long sleeve off-white shirt and matching skirt with rhinestones and embroidered musical notes.
Item 006	Bob White's baseball cap with numerous hat pins