

The Mabel Hampton Tapes

February 25, 1999

These tapes were made in the years 1976-1988 approximately. For the majority of the tapes, the setting was the home of Joan Nestle, Deborah Edel and the Lesbian Herstory Archives which was also the home of Mabel Hampton from 1986-1989, the time of her death. After Lillian Foster's death in 1978, Ms. Hampton frequently stayed at the archives, having her own key and using it as a base for her work in the community and her many trips to Atlantic City. In 1987, Ms. Hampton moved in with Lee Hudson and Joan Nestle and the archives, having grown too ill to keep her apartment in the Bronx. The tape with Lillian Foster was made in 1976 at the Bronx home of Ms. Hampton and Ms. Foster.

Several more tapes exist and are housed at the archives that have not been transcribed and several other tapes have been made by other people and are in their possession. There are also several video tapes of Ms. Hampton and many snapshots. The Lesbian Herstory Archives is the home of the Mabel Hampton Special Collection. (LHEF, Inc., POB 1258, NYNY10116, ph 718-768-3953, fax 718-768-4663. Joan Nestle can be reached directly at 212-873-3765 or e-mail Joannestle@aol.com) A complete bibliography of the archives' holdings of the life of Mabel Hampton is in process.)

The tapes were transcribed by Sara Atatimur, a blind woman who was an activist in both the lesbian community and the disabled community. She was a student at Rutgers when she was killed in a traffic accident in 1989. The Open Meadows Foundation made the transcriptions possible with a grant of 1200.00 in 1986.

I started making these tapes in the mid 70s when I knew very little about oral history formal procedures. Thus at times I ask stupid questions, am too intrusive and too abrupt in beginnings and endings. But these tapes are also the story of our relationship with all its complexities.

Please give credit to this resource in the following way: The Mabel Hampton Special Collection/Lesbian Herstory Archives/Lesbian Herstory Educational Foundation, Inc.

Joan Nestle