

Collection #
P 0804

**PAN AMERICAN GAMES OPENING CEREMONIES
PHOTOGRAPHS
8 AUGUST 1987**

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Processed by

Barbara Quigley
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 folder color photographs; 1 folder 35mm color negatives

COLLECTION DATES: 8 August 1987

PROVENANCE: Gift from Dorothy (Dottie) L. Powell of Indianapolis, 2019

RESTRICTIONS: Any materials listed as being in Cold Storage must be requested at least 4 hours in advance.

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2019.0299

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Pan American Games were held in Indianapolis on 7–23 August 1987. The Pan American Games are the second-largest multisport event in the world, after the Olympics. At the 1987 Games, 4,453 athletes from thirty-eight nations competed in thirty sports.

The opening ceremonies for the 1987 Games were held on 8 August at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. George H. W. Bush, then vice president, arrived to officially open the ceremonies. Crowd estimates range from the official 69,518 capacity of the Speedway to 80,000. During the march of athletes, baseball pitcher Jim Abbott, then of the University of Michigan, carried the flag for the United States. In the final leg of the torch relay, basketball player Oscar Robertson (who had played for Crispus Attucks High School in Indianapolis) passed the flame to gymnast Kristie Phillips, who handed it off to sprinter Wilma Rudolph, who lit the cauldron.

Walt Disney World Productions put on a show titled “The Magic That is America,” which was said to be the largest outdoor live entertainment show ever staged in the United States. The show featured balloons, parachutes, fireworks, military fighter jets, roller skaters, and singer Sandi Patty. There were more than 6,500 volunteer performers with an additional 23,000 people who volunteered in other capacities.

Sources:

Dwyre, Bill. “The 1987 Pan American Games: Bush League Problems at Gate: Crowd Control Fiasco Mars Opening in Indianapolis.” In *Los Angeles Times*, 9 August 1987
<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1987-08-09-sp-425-story.html>
Accessed 30 June 2020.

Wright, Delores J. “Pan American Games.” In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, edited by Bodenhamer, David J. and Robert G. Barrows. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994: 1074–75. General Collection: F534 .I55 E4 1994

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of twenty-one color snapshots taken on 8 August 1987 of the Pan American Games opening ceremonies at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The photographs show balloons, crowds, decorations, parachuters, and performers. The 35mm color negatives are also included in the collection.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Twenty-one color snapshots of the 1987 Pan American Games opening festivities, showing balloons, crowds, decorations, parachuters, and performers.

Seven strips of color 35mm negatives of the photographs listed above.

CONTAINER

Cold Storage:
Photographs, Folder 1 of 1

Cold Storage:
35mm Color Negatives,
Folder 1 of 1