

**Cornelius Stripling**

**Dentist / Photographer**

**Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library  
Denver Public Library**

**Cornelius Stripling Collection**  
**Blair-Caldwell**  
**African American Research Library**  
**2004**

**Provenance:** The collection was donated to the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library in 2004.

**Ownership:** Literary and copyrights have been assigned to the Denver Public Library.

**Call Number:** MS-ARL107

**Size:** 12 oversize items (~2.0 linear feet)

**Processed By:** Brent Wagner

**Date:** June 2004

**Biographical note**

Cornelius Silas Stripling was born on 17 August 1923. His father, Cornelius S., was a Methodist minister. His mother, Evelyn, taught home economics in the rural schools of Georgia.

Stripling attended Savannah State College and graduated in 1945 with a B.S. in Natural Science. Subsequently, he matriculated at the Harvard University School of Dentistry, where he supported himself by waiting on tables. After graduating from Dental School in 1949, Stripling entered the United States Air Force and began practicing dentistry at Frances Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Eighteen months later, he was promoted to Captain and placed in charge of the dental clinic and its thirty personnel, some of whom found it difficult to take orders from a black officer. (The Air Force had been integrated only since 1948.)

Next, his orders took him to Korea, where he was given the responsibility of caring for the dental needs of over 3,000 Air Force personnel. After 13 months in Korea, Stripling received the rank of Major, and was relocated to Bangor, Maine, at Dow Air Force Base. In Maine, the Secretary of the Air Force awarded him the Commendation Ribbon, in 1953.

### **Biographical Note (continued)**

After terminating his service with the United States Air Force, in 1953, he married Beverly Warren, of Welch, West Virginia. The couple produced two children: Anne-Marie, a Senior Director of Video Productions for Sony Music, in New York; and Anthony, a Senior Account Executive for Charles Schwab Investments, in Philadelphia. The family relocated to Denver and, for over 45 years, Stripling privately practiced dentistry. Upon retiring, in 1990, he became passionate about still-life photography. Stripling is a well-known and much-lauded fixture in Denver's photographic community.

-- Anne-Marie Stripling

### **Scope and Content**

Although a dental surgeon, the Cornelius Stripling Collection consists primarily of award-winning 35-mm still life photographs that Stripling took from the 1980s to 2002. The extreme close-up shots exemplify Stripling's mastery with a macro lens. Some of accolades he has garnered include Second Award for the "In The Eye of the Camera Photography Exhibit" (at Bemis Public Library in Littleton, Colorado) and two Awards of Merit from the New York Institute of Photography.

Textual information lacks in this collection, but there exists some representation of his professional activities as a dentist in the form of a 1953 photograph that shows Stripling operating on a soldier in Korea.

### **Container list**

Photographs	Untitled – Stripling operating in Korea	1953
	Commendation Ribbon Ceremony	ca. 1954
	James Ward and Stripling at YMCA	1958
	"I Like Strawberries" (15" x 19")	1989
	"Before the Wine" (16" x 21")	2002
	"Corn Ballerinas" (18" x 23")	2003
Plaques	Denver Photographic Society Color Print Maker of the Year	2000
	Commendation Ribbon presentation	1953