

**Benjamin Claude Inabinet Collection**  
**A Register – 1951-1983**

- Creator:** Benjamin Claude Inabinet
- Collection Number:** Mss 272
- Title:** Benjamin Claude Inabinet Collection
- Abstract:** This material collected by Benjamin Claude Inabinet, Clemson Football All-American, founder of Defender Industries, and notable Clemson Football Booster, gives insight into Clemson student athletics, business success, and alumni fundraising.
- Quantity:** 1 folder containing contracts, correspondence, articles and testimony -- 1 folder containing photocopies of scrapbook material -- 1 oversized folder containing 14 items -- 1 scrapbook -- miscellaneous artifacts/memorabilia

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains football contracts, correspondence, articles, photographs, certificates, artifacts/memorabilia, and posters. There are contracts from both the Baltimore Colts and Hamilton Tiger-Cats along with related correspondence, a Clemson World article from 1981 highlighting Inabinet's business successes, and a scrapbook with news clippings and some photographs that follow Inabinet's football career from high school through the pros (1951-1973). Among the 14 oversized items are Inabinet's Clemson Textile Manufacturing degree (1956), a signed photograph of Richard Nixon, a photo of the Holiday Inn in Clemson with a sign that reads: "Sympathy for Inabinet Family", a photograph depicting Jerry Butler's winning touchdown catch vs. South Carolina-November 19, 1977 that is signed by both Jerry Butler and Charlie Pell, and posters depicting Inabinet in football action scenes. Among the artifacts/memorabilia can be found plaques and recognitions, as well as Inabinet's # 44 jersey from the North vs. South High School All-Star Game and his # 55 North vs. South College All-Star Game jersey. Also included is a football signed by the 1976 Clemson football team.

**Additional Collection Information**

Cite as: [description of item such as "Scrapbook Photocopies, 1951-1973"] box number, folder number, Mss 272, Benjamin Claude Inabinet Collection, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, SC

**Biographical Note**

Benjamin Claude Inabinet was born in Columbia, South Carolina in 1934. He was the son of Benjamin Claude Inabinet, Sr. and Sarah Abrams Inabinet. He attended Dreher high school in Columbia, South Carolina.

Inabinet excelled in high school athletics, especially football, where he achieved All-State status as an offensive lineman. During his senior season in 1951, Inabinet led his team to an undefeated season and State AA Championship and was selected to play in both the high school Shrine Bowl and North vs. South All-Star Game. He was offered scholarships to play for all of the major football schools in South Carolina as well as several out of state schools such as Auburn, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Alabama, and the Naval Academy. Inabinet chose Clemson, playing for Frank Howard from 1953-1955. Standing nearly 6 feet 7 inches tall and weighing over 260 pounds, Inabinet was believed to be the largest football player ever to attend Clemson at that time. As a senior Inabinet earned honorable mention All-American recognition as an offensive lineman. He was selected to play in the North vs. South College football All-Star Game that was held at the Orange Bowl in Miami, Florida on December 26, 1955. Inabinet received a degree in Textile Management from Clemson in 1956. Inabinet was a fourth round draft choice of the Baltimore Colts, but opted to sign with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats of the Canadian League. Inabinet's career was cut short by chronic shoulder injuries.

Following his abbreviated professional football career, Inabinet turned to the world of business. In 1958, he founded Defender Industries, which by 1981 had become one of the largest, full service industrial maintenance firms in the U.S., employing over 7,000 people in 23 states with annual sales of 30 million dollars. Some of Defender Industries clients at the time included Du Pont, J.P. Stevens, DOW Chemical, Milliken & Co., Kelly Springfield, and General Tire. In addition, Inabinet was the head of Resort Data Streams, Links Golf & Racquet Club, and the Beach House & Racquet Club – all in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Inabinet also owned the Bounty Restaurant in Columbia, South Carolina.

Benjamin Claude Inabinet was an active community leader. He was a member of the Clemson Alumni Association, Chairman of the Richland County IPTAY Club, President of the Greater Columbia Clemson Club (which he founded in 1958), member of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, Board member of the Columbia YMCA, United Community Service, and Touchdown Club. In addition, Inabinet was involved politically. He served on Strom Thurmond's campaign staff as finance chairman, and assisted the campaigns of Governor James B. Edwards and Congressman Albert Watson.

Inabinet married the former Kathryn Caughman. They had three children: Kathy, Dixie, and Benjamin Claude Inabinet III. Benjamin Claude Inabinet died on August 7, 1983.

**Collection Item Indexed Terms**

Inabinet, Benjamin Claude 1934-1983  
Clemson University—Football  
Football Players—United States

**Administrative Information:**

Donated by Kitty Inabinet on November 11, 1983. The original accession number for this collection was 83-66.

**Processing Information:**

This collection was processed by Carl Redd in 2004.

## **Detailed Description**

Box	Folder	Folder Title
1	1	Football Contracts, Correspondence, Articles and Testimonies, 1956-1983
	2	Scrapbook Photocopies 1951-1973

## **Separation List**

### **Oversized Folder:**

1. Photo of B.C. with Omar Shrine Hat.
2. Clemson BS diploma in Textile Manufacturing, 1957.
3. Invitation to Nixon Inauguration, 1973.
4. Signed photograph of Nixon.
5. Certificate of Appreciation from Mid-State Community Pre-Release Center, 1969.
6. Certificate of Nomination, Ten Outstanding Men Awards, 1963.
7. *A Tribute to My Friend, B.C. Inabinet* by Bishop James.
8. Photo of Holiday Inn in Clemson with sign that reads: "Sympathy for Inabinet Family."
9. Photo depicting Jerry Butler's winning touchdown catch vs. South Carolina- November 19, 1977. Signed by Charlie Pell and Jerry Butler.
10. Clemson Alumni Association honors B.C. Inabinet with title of Honorary Alumni Professor, 1981.
11. Certificate acknowledging acceptance into 32 degree of Freemasons, 1962.
12. Notification from Clemson President Bill Atchley that Inabinet has been named "Ambassador In Charge of Special Projects" for Clemson University, 1981.
13. Poster board b&w photo of Inabinet football action shot.
14. Poster board ink color painting of Inabinet football action shot.

### **Original Scrapbook:**

News clippings and photographs that follow Inabinet's football career from high school through the pros (1951-1973).

### **Inventory of Artifacts/Memorabilia:**

1. Football signed by the 1976 Clemson football team and coaches.
2. IPTAY Life Member reward of merit, 1980.
3. IPTAY Scholarship Donor plaque, 1983.
4. IPTAY Scholarship Donor plaque, 1973.
5. Paperweight: "*more spirit than stone...*"
6. Paperweight: *Worst Condition After Ten Years, 1980*.
7. Yellow football jersey, #44 (North vs. South High School All-Star Game).
8. White football jersey #55 (North vs. South College All-Star Game).
9. Orange jersey # 44 (Clemson practice jersey?).
10. USC Honorary Gamecock plaque, 1980.
11. Columbia Clemson Club Man of the Year Clock, 1963.
12. North/South All-Star patch.