

**Summary Information**

**Title:** Sarah’s Hope Charitable and Educational Foundation Collection

**Collection Number:** 2021:005

**Creator:** Guessippina Bonner

**Collection Dates:** 2013

**Extent:** 1 folder

**Language:** English

**Collection Abstract:** This collection contains two books related to the history and renovation of the Dawn of Light Masonic Lodge on Leach Street in Lufkin. A historic building that is important to the community of North Lufkin, the building is now under the ownership of Sarah’s Hope Charitable and Educational Foundation, an organization formed to provide community service and to help raise funds for the restoration of the Masonic Lodge. There are two books in this collection, one that details the history of the building and provides copies of historic documents related to the building’s history. The other book focuses on Sarah’s Hope, that organization’s activities, and the erection of a historical marker at the Masonic Lodge.

**Repository:**

The History Center

102 N. Temple

Diboll, TX 75941

936-829-3543

www.thehistorycenteronline.com

**Author/Processing Information:** This collection was processed by Allison Grimes in July 2021.

**Biographical/Historical Note:** The Masonic Hall on Leach Street in Lufkin, Texas was purportedly built by Will Engram in 1900. It served as a community center and meeting place for all fraternal organizations in North Lufkin, and is the only one constructed at the turn of the 20th century that is still standing in Lufkin. African-American branches of organizations that utilized or owned the building over the years include the Odd Fellows, Dawn of Light Freemasons, American Woodmen, Order of Elks, Eastern Star, and Heroines of Jericho. The first floor of the building also housed the East Texas Undertaking Company for a short period of time. In 1971, the building fell into disrepair and in 2009 was scheduled for demolition. Will Engram’s daughter, Reverend Bettie Kennedy, helped stop demolition plans. On April 17, 2012 it was donated to Sarah’s Hope Charitable and Educational Foundation by the officers of the Dawn of Light Masonic Lodge. In 2012, the Foundation began campaigning for the renovation and restoration of the Masonic Lodge, which would then be used as a community center for residents of North Lufkin.

**Collection Scope and Content:** This collection contains a fundraising booklet for the renovation and restoration of the Leach Street Masonic Hall in Lufkin, Texas and a book of copied photographs of the activities and community service events held in the restored building. Additionally, within the fundraising book, there is a history of the building and copies of materials proving this history.

**Arrangement:** This collection is arranged and described at the folder level.

**Access and Use**

 **Access Restrictions:** None

 **Acquisition Information:** This collection was received by The History Center in July 2021.

**Custodial History:** This collection was created by Guessippina Bonner. She gave the materials to Ellen Temple, who then donated the collection to The History Center in 2021.

**Citation:** Sarah’s Hope Charitable and Educational Foundation Collection, 2013, 2021:005, The History Center, Diboll, TX

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**Collection Inventory**

Folder 1 Publications: Plans, Applications, Documentation

[Book detailing the history of the Masonic Hall on Leach Street that is now the home of Sarah’s Hope, includes copies of documents and photos related to the history; book with photos of activities at Sarah’s Hope, information on the historical marker application, and news articles]