

Widows Home of Dayton

MS-313

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Wright State University
Dayton, Ohio

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Introduction

The Widows Home of Dayton Collection chronicles the history of the home from its inception in 1870 through 2002. The collection was donated to Wright State by Janett S. Cavender, President of the Board of Directors of the Widows Home. The collection is 10 linear feet filling 24 hollinger boxes. The collection includes pictures, slides, deeds, daily census records, board minutes, newspaper clippings and administration records, including budgets and fund raising activities from the beginning of the home to the present. The property shall be open to the research public without restrictions except one, and that is that the names of residents of the Widows Home of Dayton and the dates of their residency will become available to researchers upon the death of the resident. Copyrights are dedicated to the public, but any publication of material from the collection should include the credit line, "From the Widows Home of Dayton Collection housed in Special Collections and Archives, Wright State University Libraries." It is divided into the following record series:

- Series I: Administration and Management
 - A. Historical Information
 - B. Legal Documents
 - C. Fundraising/Donations
 - D. Building Information
 - E. Patient Census
 - F. Committee Reports
 - G. Administrator's Reports
 - H. Monthly Board Minutes

- Series II: Financial Records
 - A. Daily Expense Reports
 - B. Monthly Expense Reports
 - C. Finance Committee Reports
 - D. Financial Statements
 - E. Budget Statements and Audits
 - F. Endowment Fund Reports

- Series III: Photographs, Slides and Scrapbooks
 - A. Photographs
 - B. Slides
 - C. Scrapbooks

HISTORY

The current Widows Home is dedicated to the memory of Nancy Trotter Bates. Mrs. Bates became the head of the Dayton Female Association, incorporated in 1844, to provide for the comfort, maintenance and proper education of destitute children. From the contributions received from Dayton citizens, a lot on Magnolia Street (where Miami Valley Hospital now stands) was purchased and a little brick building was erected. It became known as the Dayton Female Orphans' Asylum on Charity Hill. Here orphans were cared for with the help of church and public donations until a legislative act in 1866 turned the care of orphans over to the county. A new orphans' home was built on Summit Street.

The little brick house stood empty for a while, but the Civil War left another destitute group – the widows of Civil war soldiers. With that in mind, Mrs. Bates turned her attention to this new need. To legally acquire the property for the endeavors, the women reorganized as the Women's Christian Association (forerunner of today's YWCA) in 1870. Mrs. Bates died a month before the reorganization, so her daughter, Susan Winters, was asked to become president of the group.

Sometime in 1872, a legislative enactment permitted the transfer of the property with its Endowment Fund of the Women's Christian Association. The property consisted of a small brick house in a dilapidated condition, with some acreage, and a wooden structure nearby.

In 1875, the need for assistance to destitute women became so great that the brick building was repaired, the broken windows replaced, and a pump fitted into the well. Also, a decision was made to tear down the wooden structure and to construct a fence from some of the lumber. As a result of this dedication, the new Widows Home opened its doors in 1875 with acknowledgment that any widow or destitute woman of good moral character over age sixty years who had resided in Dayton five years could become a permanent "inmate" (today's resident). Thirty-four women were sheltered in 1876 with some staying several years and some staying overnight.

The need became even more apparent for the construction of a new building as the little brick house was too small. As a result, two friends came forward with \$1000 each for the construction of a new Home with the provision that the committee could secure ten \$1000 contributions. Mrs. Winters generously gave \$5000 while others added their thousands until the goal was reached.

During the year 1883, a new Victorian style, 3-story brick house with a full basement was built at the cost of \$20,000 on the current 2 ½ acre site donated by a Dayton banker, William P. Huffman.

In 1951, some sixty-eight years later, it was decided by the committee of the Home for the safety of the women that two ground floor wings be added to the original building and that the two upper floors of the same building be abandoned for living purposes. The new quarters were constructed to house thirty-one women and to contain a modern infirmary. Borrowing from the Endowment Fund and private solicitation financed this.

The building was still in the minds of the committee; the need for better facilities to care for more women was urgent. It so happened that in 1957, an unexpected bequest from a very generous businessman, William F. Neff, enabled the committee to proceed with the construction of another dormitory and fully equipped infirmary wing, a new paneled dining room, modern kitchen and solarium.

Meanwhile, in 1961, the YWCA severed its ties with the Home. Therefore, the committee elected to become incorporated as the Widows Home of Dayton, which has since operated independently.

The original brick Victorian house was razed in 1972 to make way for the last section of development. Its erection came as a result of a \$750,000 bequest from a former board member, Thelma Dreese. It includes the administration offices, two apartments, a TV room, parlor, large multipurpose room, beauty parlor and a meditation room. It also included a large porch, the one thing the ladies wanted most. Before the Victorian house was demolished, an auction was held to get rid of all the articles of furniture that had accumulated through the years, the most beautiful antiques were retained and now furnish the parlor and other various locations throughout the Home.

Because of new federal regulations in 1976, the Ohio Department of Health licensed the Widows Home of Dayton as a Home-for-the Aging (a combination nursing and rest home beds). As a nonprofit, philanthropic health care facility, a Board of Trustees operates the Widows Home, which is comprised of volunteer members. Traditionally the Home accepted only widows and destitute women; and in more recent years, needy women sixty-five years or older. The current building is 50,933 square feet, has 50 beds and always has a waiting list. The Home has been accepting men since the year 2000.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

SERIES I

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

This series of papers includes histories of the Home written at different times from the early 1900's until the 1990's. Some of the histories are dated, others are not. There are also legal documents showing the process by which a person gained admission to the home. The legal documents also include wills, birth and death certificates of early residents. Fundraising and donations were necessary to keep the Home in operation and include papers from Harvest Home, charity fundraisers and financial gifts to the home. Building information includes the code of regulations, building plans from the Widows Home and feasibility studies. There are patient census records from 1936, 1993, 1994 and 1995. The reports from the committees range in dates from 1886 to 1997. Administrator's reports range in date from 1986 until 1997. Board minutes range in date from 1891 until 1995. All of these records give the researcher a good overall view of the development of the Home since its inception in 1870, to the present day.

SERIES II FINANCIAL RECORDS

This series includes daily expense reports and activities from 1889 to 1896, and from 1915 to 1920. This gives the researcher an idea of daily life in the early days of the Home, and the generosity of the community who donated food and money. Monthly expense records date from 1932 to 1934. There are records of various funding projects from 1915 until 1929, records of the building fund monthly expenses from 1950 until 1952, and the building fund bankbook from 1959 to 1968. Finance Committee reports range in date from 1931 until 1949. Financial statements range in date 1969 until 1993. Budget and audit reports range in date from 1950 until 1996. Endowments reports range in dates from 1961 until 1998.

SERIES III PHOTOGRAPHS, SLIDES AND SCRAPBOOKS

This series contains many slides, pictures and scrapbooks containing the pictures of current and former residents. Most of the photographs and slides are of the residents celebrating various holidays, along with numerous photographs of the interior, exterior and grounds of the Home. Unfortunately, while there are dates on many of the slides and photographs, only a few of the individuals are identified. The researcher will need to know who they are looking for and what the person looked like while using this series, unless they just want general pictures for a project.

Box and File Listing

SERIES I: ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
		HISTORICAL INFORMATION	
1	1	Histories of the Widows Home	n.d.
	2	Application Agreement	1953
	3	Articles concerning Public Health Services	1920-1940
	4	Miscellaneous Correspondence	1913-1965
	5	Christmas Memories	1993
	6	Public Relations: Pamphlets and Invitations	n.d.
	7	Public Relations: Media Advertisement Requests	
	8	Public Relations: PR plans	
	9	Public Relations: Newspaper clippings	
		LEGAL DOCUMENTS	
2	1	Prudential Insurance Company of America	1911
		Dividend Announcements/Receipt Book	1947 & 1948
	2	Marriage Certificates of Herman Sheets and Bertha Emily	1913
	3	Birth Certificates	1881 & 1883
	4	Deeds	1856 – 1942
	5	Wills: A – W	
	6	Will Disbursements	1914 – 1971
	7	Final Estate Notices	1919 – 1963
	8	Cemetery Plots	n.d.
		Ledger: Legal papers for Board of Trustees	1961-1977
		Ledger: Record of residents	1975 – 1998
		FUNDRAISING/DONATIONS	
3	1	Donation and Expense record for Harvest Home	1923-1924
	2	Harvest Day Benefit Information	1932 – 1974
	3	Harvest Home Records	1981 - 1996
	4	Charity Fund Raisers Information	1931 – 1991
	5	“Gifts in Memory” given to the Widows Home	n.d.
	6	Financial Gifts given to the Widows Home	1910 – 1969
	7	Property Settlement Papers	1923 – 1971
	8	Open House Guest Book	1974 – 1992
		BUILDING INFORMATION	
4	1	Code of Regulations	1961 – 1980
	2	Widows Home Building Plans	n.d.
	3	Inspection Letters	1940-1950s
	4	Department of Public Welfare: Office of Commodity Distribution	1956-1957

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
4	5	Quality Insurance meeting	1995 – 1997
	6	Building Insurance Education	1967
	7	Research Program	1993
	8	Feasibility Study	1992
	9	Feasibility Study	1997
	10	Feasibility Plans	1992 – 2002
	11	Long Range Plans	1987 – 1992
		PATIENT CENSUS RECORDS	
5	1	Census Tracts for Montgomery County	1992
	2	Patients Census	1936
	3	Patients Census	1993
	4	Patients Census	1994
	5	Patients Census	1995
		COMMITTEE REPORTS	
6	1	“Fundamental Administration of a Private Home for the Aged” Report	1947
	2	Report of Committees	1886
	3	Committee Minutes	1948
	4	Committee Minutes	1956
	5	House Committee Reports	1992
	6	House Committee Reports	1993
	7	House Committee Reports	1994
	8	House Committee Reports	1995
	9	House Committee Reports	1996
	10	House Committee Reports	1997
	11	House Committee Reports	1998
	12	Corporate resolution	1997
	13	Interoffice Memos	1996
	14	Interoffice Memos	1997
	15	Administrative Meetings	1995
	16	Administrative Meetings	1996
	17	Management Team Meetings	1997
		ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS	
7	1	Administrator’s Reports	N. D.
	2	Administrator’s Reports	1986
	3	Administrator’s Reports	1987
	4	Administrator’s Reports	1988
	5	Administrator’s Reports	1989
	6	Administrator’s Reports	1990
	7	Administrator’s Reports	1991
	8	Administrator’s Goals & Accomplishments	1991-1992

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
7	9	Administrator's Reports	1992
	10	Administrator's Reports	1993
	11	Administrator's Reports	1994
	12	Administrator's Reports	1995
	13	Administrator's Reports	1996
	14	Administrator's Reports	1997
		MONTHLY BOARD MINUTES	
8		Ledger	1891- 1896
		Ledger	1896 – 1903
9		Ledger	1903- 1908
		Ledger	1909 – 1911
		Ledger	1912 – 1915
		Ledger	1920 – 1923
10	1	Monthly Board Minutes	1924
	2	Monthly Board Minutes	1925
	3	Monthly Board Minutes	1926
	4	Monthly Board Minutes	1927
	5	Monthly Board Minutes	1928
	6	Monthly Board Minutes	1929
	7	Monthly Board Minutes	1930
	8	Monthly Board Minutes	1931
	9	Monthly Board Minutes	1932
	10	Monthly Board Minutes	1933
	11	Monthly Board Minutes	1934
	12	Monthly Board Minutes	1935
	13	Monthly Board Minutes	1936
	14	Monthly Board Minutes	1937
	15	Monthly Board Minutes	1938
	16	Monthly Board Minutes	1939
	17	Monthly Board Minutes	1940
	18	Monthly Board Minutes	1941
	19	Monthly Board Minutes	1944
	20	Monthly Board Minutes	1945
	21	Monthly Board Minutes	1946
	22	Monthly Board Minutes	1947
	23	Monthly Board Minutes	1948
	24	Monthly Board Minutes	1949
	25	Monthly Board Minutes	1950
	26	Monthly Board Minutes	1951
	27	Monthly Board Minutes	1952
	28	Monthly Board Minutes	1953

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
10	29	Monthly Board Minutes	1954
	30	Monthly Board Minutes	1955
	31	Monthly Board Minutes	1958
11		Ledger	1960-1969
		Ledger	1970-1974
		Ledger	1975-1979
12		Ledger	1980-1985
		Ledger	1986-1988
		Ledger	1987-1992
13		Ledger	1993-1995

SERIES II: FINANCIAL RECORDS

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
		FINANCIAL RECORDS	
14	1	Monthly Expense Records	1932-1934
		Ledger: Diary of Daily Activities and expenses	1889-1896
		Ledger: Diary of Daily Activities and expenses	1915-1920
15	1	Record of Various Funding Projects	1915-1929
	2	Record of Building Fund Donations and Various Monthly Expenses	1950-1952
	3	Building Fund Bank Book	1959-1968
	4	Resolution of Appreciation for a Building Fund member	1974
		FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS	
16	1	Finance Committee Reports	1931
	2	Finance Committee Reports	1932
	3	Finance Committee Reports	1933
	4	Finance Committee Reports	1934
	5	Finance Committee Reports	1935
	6	Finance Committee Reports	1936
	7	Finance Committee Reports	1937
	8	Finance Committee Reports	1938
	9	Finance Committee Reports	1939
	10	Finance Committee Reports	1940
	11	Finance Committee Reports	1941
	12	Finance Committee Reports	1945
	13	Finance Committee Reports	1946
	14	Finance Committee Reports	1947

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
16	15	Finance Committee Reports	1948
	16	Finance Committee Reports	1949
		FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	
17	1	Financial Statements	1969-1970
	2	Financial Statements	1971-1972
	3	Financial Statements	1972-1973
	4	Financial Statements	1974-1975
	5	Financial Statements	1975-1976
	6	Financial Statements	1976-1977
	7	Financial Statements	1977-1978
	8	Financial Statements	1978-1979
	9	Financial Statements	1979-1980
	10	Financial Statements	1980-1981
	11	Financial Statements	1981-1982
	12	Financial Statements	1982-1983
	13	Financial Statements	1983-1984
	14	Financial Statements	1984-1985
	15	Financial Statements	1985-1986
	16	Financial Statements	1986-1987
	17	Financial Statements	1987-1988
	18	Financial Statements	1988-1989
	19	Financial Statements	1990
	20	Financial Statements	1991
	21	Financial Statements	1991-1992
	22	Financial Statements	1992-1993
		BUDGET STATEMENTS AND AUDIT REPORTS	
18	1	New Financial Policy	1982
	2	Capital Improvements	1985
	3	Comparative Budget Statement	1950
	4	Budget	1955
	5	Comparative Budget Statement	1957
	6	Comparative Budget Statement	1958
	7	Comparative Budget Statement and Budget Statement	1959
	8	Budget Statement	1960
	9	Comparative Budget Statement	1961
	10	Budget Statement	1962-1963
	11	Budget Statement	1985
	12	Budget Statement	1986
	13	Budget Statement	1987
	14	Budget Review Statement	1985-1988
	15	Budget Statement	1988
	16	Budget Statement	1989

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
18	17	Budget Statement	1990
	18	Budget Statement	1991
	19	Budget Statement	1992
	20	Fiscal Review Budget Statement	1992
	21	Budget Statement	1993
	22	Budget Statement	1994
	23	Budget Statement	1995
	24	Budget Proposal	1996
	25	Financial Audit Report	1962
	26	Financial Audit Report	1965
	27	Financial Audit Report	1966
	28	Financial Audit Report	1967
	29	Financial Audit Report	1968
	30	Financial Assessment Statement and Audit Report	1968-1969
	31	Financial Audit Report	1986
	32	Financial Audit Report	1987
	33	Financial Audit Report	1988
	34	Financial Audit Report	1989
	35	Financial Audit Report	1990
	36	Financial Audit Report	1991
	37	Financial Audit Report	1992
	38	Financial Audit Report	1993
	39	Financial Audit Report	1994
	40	Financial Audit Report	1995
	41	Financial Audit Report	1996
		MINUTES ENDOWMENT FUND AND ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT	
19	1	Minutes Endowment Fund	1961
	2	Minutes Endowment Fund	1962
	3	Minutes Endowment Fund	1963
	4	Minutes Endowment Fund	1964
	5	Minutes Endowment Fund	1965
	6	Minutes Endowment Fund	1966
	7	Minutes Endowment Fund	1967
	8	Minutes Endowment Fund	1968
	9	Minutes Endowment Fund	1969
	10	Minutes Endowment Fund	1970
	11	Minutes Endowment Fund	1971
	12	Minutes Endowment Fund	1972
	13	Minutes Endowment Fund	1973
	14	Minutes Endowment Fund	1974
	15	Minutes Endowment Fund	1975
	16	Minutes Endowment Fund	1976

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
19	17	Minutes Endowment Fund	1977
	18	Minutes Endowment Fund	1978
	19	Minutes Endowment Fund	1979
	20	Minutes Endowment Fund	1980
	21	Minutes Endowment Fund	1981
	22	Minutes Endowment Fund	1982
	23	Minutes Endowment Fund	1983
	24	Minutes Endowment Fund	1984
	25	Minutes Endowment Fund	1985
	26	Minutes Endowment Fund	1986
	27	Minutes Endowment Fund	1987
	28	Minutes Endowment Fund	1988
	29	Minutes Endowment Fund	1989
	30	Minutes Endowment Fund	1990
	31	Minutes Endowment Fund	1991
	32	Minutes Endowment Fund	1992
	33	Minutes Endowment Fund	1993
	34	Minutes Endowment Fund	1994
	35	Minutes Endowment Fund	1995
	36	Minutes Endowment Fund	1996
	37	Endowment Fund Report	1995
	38	Endowment Fund Storage Letter	1998
		GENERAL RECEIPT ACCOUNT	
20		Over-size Ledger	1945-1961

SERIES III: PHOTOGRAPHS, SLIDES, AND SCRAPBOOKS

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
		PHOTOGRAPHS	
21	1	Photograph of the original Widows Home	n.d.
	2	Group photograph	Late 1800s
	3	Group photograph	Late 1800s
	4	Group photograph	Late 1800s
	5	Group photograph	Late 1800s
	6	Miscellaneous photographs	1949-1963
	7	Holiday photographs	1997-1998
	8	Holiday photographs	1998
	9	Holiday photographs	1998
	10	Holiday photographs/ Building construction photographs	1998
	11	Holiday photographs	1998
	12	Holidays photographs	1998-1999
	13	Interior photographs of the Widows Home	1999

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
21	14	Holiday photographs	n.d.
	15	Holiday photographs	n.d.
	16	Miscellaneous photographs	n.d.
	17	Proof sheet: miscellaneous photographs/ Photograph of Jonathan Winters	n.d.
		PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN FROM ALBUMS/ OWNER UNKNOWN	
22	1	“Pictures tell the Story” Album	n.d.
	2	Exterior Photographs of the Widows Home	n.d.
	3	Holiday photographs/ Raphael Angel Album	1985-1999
		SLIDES	
23	1	Miscellaneous	1952-1954
	2	Miscellaneous	1955
	3	Miscellaneous	1956-1957
	4	Miscellaneous	1958
	5	Miscellaneous	1959
	6	Miscellaneous	1960
	7	Miscellaneous	1974
	8	Miscellaneous	1981-1984
	9	Miscellaneous	1988
	10	Miscellaneous	1989
	11	Miscellaneous	1991
	12	Miscellaneous	n.d.
	13	ViewFinder Slides: “Scenic Wonders”	n.d.
	14	Negatives	n.d.
		SCRAPBOOKS/OWNER UNKNOWN	
24		2 Scrapbooks filled with various items such as: newspaper clippings, photographs, memorials, and poetry.	n.d.