

# Dorothy Brown “Long Sam” Collection:

## Collection Overview

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The Dorothy Brown “Long Sam” Collection contains items from her life starting in 1956 at her discovery as the living embodiment of cartoon character “Long Sam” to her wedding in the late 1960s. The collection contains documents, photographs taken by LIFE magazine, a scrapbook, college year books, and her wedding dress. The collection also contains a few miscellaneous items. The bulk of the photographs were taken by LIFE magazine and are stamped on the back with dates and other information. The scrapbook contains newspaper clippings and other documents collected by Dorothy.

## Collection Summary

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Creator:	Brown, Dorothy Mae, 1940-2023
Title:	Dorothy Brown “Long Sam” Collection
Dates:	1950s-2009, bulk 1956-1960s
Accession Number:	2023.010
Catalog Number:	090.091.0022
Extent:	1 linear foot
Language:	Eng
Access:	Open to research with some restrictions; consult LHA staff for details.
Location:	Storage
Repository:	Local History and Archives, Mooresville Public Library 304 S. Main Street, Mooresville, NC 28115
Source of Acquisition:	Gift of the Friends of Dorothy Brown
Compiled by:	Andy Poore

## Scope and Content

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The Dorothy Brown “Long Sam” collection documents her life from 1956 through the 1960s. The collection contains photographs, documents, college year books, one wedding dress, and copies of LIFE magazine and Lake Norman Magazine with articles about her. Original envelopes have been kept with items as they have original information written on them. Other documents include letters from Harvey L. Woodruff, birth certificate, diplomas, commencement programs, newspaper clippings, and various other papers. Some of the photographs include what is thought to be members of her family.

## Extent

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### Box 1: Photographs

**Abstract:** Images of Dorothy from LIFE Magazine and other sources depicting her time in New York, her graduation from college, her wedding, and various other ones.

## Box 2: Photographs and Documents

**Abstract:** Wingate College documents; photos of Charlotte house; wedding photographs, newspaper article, etc.; miscellaneous photographs of family, school, Leon (her husband), from the Mooresville Tribune, Wingate graduation, etc.; Ross Puette; Lake Norman Magazine; LIFE Magazine.

## Box 3: Artifacts

**Abstract:** The wedding dress that she wore at her marriage in original Belk department store box.

## Set 4: Books

**Abstract:** Scrapbook and college yearbooks. The scrapbook contains newspaper clippings and various other documents that Dorothy saved. The college yearbooks are from her time at Wingate College and the Women's College of the University of North Carolina (UNC-G).

## Biographical Sketch

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Dorothy Mae Brown was born in Wilkes County, N.C., in 1940, one of ten children. Her family moved to Iredell County when she was three. Dorothy dropped out of school in 7<sup>th</sup> grade to help with her younger siblings. She was discovered in 1956 by Mooresville Tribune owner, Tom McKnight, and Fletcher Davis, photographer, who saw her as the "living embodiment" of the cartoon character "Long Sam" by Al Capp. Mr. McKnight wrote a story "*The Girl in Black*" for the Mooresville Tribune. The story was picked up by Kays Gary of *The Charlotte Observer* and was syndicated nationwide. Dorothy was invited to appear on the *Ed Sullivan Show* and was featured in LIFE magazine who photographed her throughout her *Ed Sullivan Show* appearance to her graduation from Wingate College with her high school diploma. She was later asked to appear on Broadway, but she declined. She received her B.A. from The Women's College of the University of North Carolina in education. She taught school at Idlewild Elementary in Charlotte, N.C., until she married. Her husband was a sales representative for a chemical corporation in Charlotte, so Dorothy spent much of her time assisting him with entertaining clients. She kept her hand in the teaching field by tutoring children in her spare time. Dorothy passed away March 5, 2023.

## Series in Collection

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None.

## Arrangement

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The collection is currently arranged as it was donated. The collection is grouped as compiled by the donors, Friends of Dorothy Brown.

## Separated Material

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None.

## Preferred Citation

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The Dorothy Brown "Long Sam" Collection (SpC 090.091.0022). Local History and Archives, Mooresville Public Library, Mooresville, North Carolina.

# Collection Rights Statement

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LHA provides access to these materials for educational and research purposes only.

## Index Terms

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### Material Types:

Artifacts  
Black and white photographs  
Printed materials  
Legal documents

### Places:

Mooreville, North Carolina  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
New York City, New York

## Subjects

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Mooreville (N.C.)  
Mooreville Tribune  
Tom McKnight  
Marie McKnight  
Fletcher Davis  
Kays Gary

Ed Sullivan  
Ed Sullivan Show  
New York City  
Wingate College  
Women's College of the University of North Carolina

## Restrictions

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### Restrictions on Access:

- Open to all users.
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- A minimum of three business days advance notice is required.
- Only access to one box at a time is permitted.
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## Rights Statement for Archival Description

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