



The Wittliff Collections

Southwestern Writers Collection

Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection

A Guide to the Aubra Nooncaster Collection

1938-1992

Collection 122

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Aubra Nooncaster
Title:	The Aubra Nooncaster Collection
Dates:	1938-1992 [bulk dates 1980-1990]
Abstract:	The Aubra Nooncaster Papers span 1938-1992, and document the writings of coach, poet, and mentor to Larry L. King, Aubra Nooncaster. The collection is arranged into four series: Correspondence, Writings about Coach Nooncaster, Nooncaster's Writings, and Larry L. King. The bulk of the collection is correspondence from Larry L. King to Nooncaster. The collection also includes published poems and unpublished drafts of poems written by Nooncaster
Identification:	Collection 122
Extent:	2 boxes, 1 linear foot
Language:	English
Repository:	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

Biographical Sketch

Aubra Nooncaster graduated Sul Ross State College with a Master's in English in 1940. Upon returning from service in World War II, he was hired as head basketball and assistant football coach at Midland High School in Texas where he taught for two years. At Midland, Coach Nooncaster was also given an English class to teach that his football players took in anticipation of an easy A. One of these students was Larry L. King, the playwright and author best known for *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. Nooncaster would become a great influence on Larry L. King's writing career. As early as 1974, King began a lifelong correspondence with Coach Nooncaster.

In 1947, Aubra Nooncaster began to teach at Pampa Independent School District in Pampa, Texas, where he stayed until his retirement in 1978. During his career as a teacher he pursued an enduring love of poetry, ultimately publishing four books of poems: *Listen for a Poem*, *Selected Poems: 1959-1988*, *Amid the Glow of Suns*, and *Interim Days: A Book of Poems*.

His community, peers, and former students loved and admired Aubra Nooncaster. Many of his former students reconnected with him after reading Larry L. King's article about his time with Nooncaster entitled "A Coach I Can't Forget." The article was published in *Parade*, a newspaper insert that ran nationwide, on July 17, 1983.

Scope and Content Note

The collection of coach and poet, Aubra Nooncaster, spans 1938-1992; however, the bulk of the collection dates from 1980-1990. It is arranged into four series: Correspondence, Writings about Coach Nooncaster, Writings by Nooncaster, and Larry L. King. The correspondence to Nooncaster (excluding Larry L. King's letters) have been sorted alphabetically. Some letters have the original envelopes with them. Much of the correspondence references Larry L. King's article in *Parade* titled, "A Coach I Can't Forget" about Mr. King's time in Coach Nooncaster's class.

Published articles and reviews concerning Coach Nooncaster are in their own series. Nooncaster has published four works: *Listen for a Poem*, *Selected Poems: 1959-1988*, *Amid the Glow of Suns*, and *Interim Days: A Book of Poems*, and the collection contains many of drafts of his poetry.

The final series contains papers relating to Larry L. King, including correspondence and articles. The letters from King are arranged chronologically from 1974-1992. A few letters from Nooncaster King have been sorted into their own folder. In addition to correspondence, the collection includes articles written by King and writings about King. The writings about King mostly concern *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* as well as his two plays "The Night Hank Williams Died" and "The Kingfisher." And finally, this series includes two photographs of King, possibly from 1971. One depicts King in front of a dilapidated house, and the second is of King with an unidentified man and children.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Open for research

Preferred Citation

The Aubra Nooncaster Papers, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

Acquisition Information

Gift of Frances Nooncaster, 1993

Processing Information

Processed Shannon McPhillips & Lauren Wyatt, 2015

Notes to Researchers

The Wittliff Collection houses the complete Larry L. King Papers.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Correspondence, 1959-1991 [bulk: 1980-1990]

Box Folder

1 1 Correspondence A-H

Some of the individuals who wrote multiple letters are Evelyn (Wemple) Allen, Bob Allford, Allen Bobroff, Eula Burkes, and Barbara Hodges

1 2 Correspondence I-Z

Includes two photos from Nolan and Billie Jones, and one photo from Mildred Wilson. Some of the individuals who wrote multiple letters are Larry Jarritt, Don Laughlin, Stephen Oates, Helen Payne, and Margaret Howell Tayloe

1 3 Call list

Series II: Writings about Coach Nooncaster, 1959-1988

1 4 Writings about Nooncaster

Newspaper clippings
Speech about Nooncaster as teacher
Interview by son John Nooncaster about Great Depression and New Deal,
Book review of *Interim Days*,
Parade July 17, 1983 article, "A Coach I Can't Forget" by Larry L. King
Article, "*Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* author, Larry King, visits an old
Pampa buddy" by Julia Clark (3 copies)
Article, "Players Reflect on Coaches" by Carlton Stowers

1 5 One Published Caricature of Nooncaster

Series III: Writings by Nooncaster, 1938-1988

Box Folder

1 6 Poetry

“About a Couple of Birds Making a Nest”
“Barrier”
“Cathedral Peak”
“A Dialogue”
“Early Rancher”
“ECC. 1”
“A Glass Darkly” (2 drafts)
“God’s Way”
“The Inchoate”
“In Heaven” (2 copies)
“Laying By”
“Love in Whitman’s Poetry” (term theme)
“Love’s Dimensions”
“Love’s Scope”
“Nassau Bound” (2 copies)
“New Year 1978”
“Perhaps”
“Recapture”
“Replanting”
“Reunion”
“The Revival of Uncle Buck” (2 drafts)
“Rivers” (Second poem “To Any Librarian”) (2 copies)
“Rivers”
“To Any Librarian”
“Ten Days of April” (Sheet music)
“The Trailway Tales”
“Two Men of Ur”
“What Fortune” (Second Poem “New Age” and Third Poem “Same Wine,
Same Bottle”)
“When I am Dead” (Second Poem “Old Men” and Third Poem
“Rapprochement”)
“A Work”

1 7 Untitled Writings

1 8 Articles by Nooncaster

Athletic Journal April 1960: “The Double Wing T versus the 5-4-2”
Athletic Journal May 1960: “The Double Wing T versus the Tight Tackle
Six” (2 copies)

Series III: Writings by Nooncaster

Box Folder

- Articles by Nooncaster, continued
- 1 8 *The Crossroads Anthology*: Grand Prize poem “June Blow-out”
Scholastic Coach May 1960: “Offensive Trends in Texas H.S. Football”
- 1 9 Teachings

Definition of Poetry (teaching aid)
Teaching aid with Nooncaster’s notes
- 1 10 Notes

Script notes
Scratch paper
Football plays
- 1 11-12 Notebooks: teaching plans and football plays

Series IV: Awards, 1974-1975

- 1 13 “Narrative” Poem Awards presented by Showcase for Poets. *Poet Lore: A National Quarterly of World Poetry*: 1974 First Prize for Nooncaster’s poem “Bucolics” Check from Poet Lore Division of Literary Publication Foundation, Inc. to Nooncaster for \$25.00

Series V: Larry L. King, 1974- 1992

- Correspondence, 1974-1992
- 2 1 1974-1983: Includes articles that were sent to Nooncaster, 2 postcards of King about *Best Little Whorehouse of Texas*
- 2 2 1984-1985: Includes picture of Aubra Nooncaster
- 2 3 1986-1987: Includes a book review
- 2 4 1988-1989: Includes a program from “The Night Hank Williams Died,”
- 2 5 1990-1992
- 2 6 Letters from Nooncaster to King

Series V: Larry L. King, continued

Box Folder

2 7 Articles by King (excluding articles about Nooncaster), 1982-1991

Washington Post December 25, 1982: "Reflections of Christmas Past"
Washington Post January 20, 1983: "The True Story of the Redskins"
Washington Post- Magazine February 13, 1983: "Hurtin' Good"
Parade May 8, 1983: "Am I too Old to be a Father?"
Parade February 19, 1984: "How the Army brought blacks and whites together 'We've Been Ordered to Make This Thing Work?'"
Dallas Times Herald: Collection of Reagan/ GOP articles August 1984
Parade September 9, 1984: "Where Winners Take All"
Parade June 30, 1985: "An author returns to his youth 'This Is My Home'"
TV Guide December 14, 1985: "Texas Mancho? Texas Beauties? Noble Alamo Martyrs? They're All Myths, Pardner!"
New York Times April 10, 1988: "Peril of Playwright Getting In on the Act"
Parade November 5, 1989: "What, Me Sixty?!!"
The Dallas Morning News December 22, 1991: "Playwright holds on to his Texas roots"
Texas Monthly undated: second part of an article on LBJ

2 8 Writings about King, 1979-1991

Amarillo Sunday News- Globe January 28, 1979: Untitled Larry King article, continuation of the article
The Washington Star November 3, 1980: "A Legend Full of Surprises" by Boris Weintraub
Dallas Times Herald August 26, 1981: "'Statehouse' takes a peek at Texas politics" by Dan Hulbert
The Washington Times May 22, 1987: "Doers Profile; Larry L. King" author unknown
Austin American- Statesman November 6, 1987: "Serving heaping helpings of humor: Popular Texan share thoughts to aid theater" by Kevin Phinney
Austin American- Statesman November 7, 1987: "Names of literary greats become fixtures in Austin" by John Kelso
The Washington Times February 4, 1988: "The best little playwright from Texas" by Hap Erstein
The Washington Times February 5, 1988: "Larry King proves authors can, too, act" by Lisa McCormack

Series V: Larry L. King, continued

Box Folder

Articles About King, continued

- 2 8 *The Washington Post* February 8, 1988: “‘Hank Williams’: Tex Wrecks” by David Richards
WETA-TV February 8, 1988: Comments of “The Night Hank Williams Died” that was said on “Critics Roundtable”
The Washington Times February 9, 1988: “More mature King brings Texas humor to Washington stage” by Hap Earnstein
WRC-TV (NBC) February 9, 1988 :Summary of Review of “The Night Hank Williams Died”
The Washington Post February 12, 1988: Article about the “The Night Hank Williams Died” unknown author
Washington City Paper February 12-18, 1988: Review for “The Night Hank Williams Died” by Bob Mondello and Chris Mrozowski
Washington City Paper February 19-25, 1988: Review of “The Night Hank Williams Died” author unknown
Washington Tribune February 22, 1988: Review of “The Night Hank Williams Died” author unknown (note to Coach Nooncaster)
The Washington Times February 23, 1988: “Diapers, day care and dear older dads” by Leslie Webb
Dallas Morning News February 25, 1988: “In his own words: Playwright Larry L. King turns actor in ‘The Night Hank Williams Died’” by Inez Russell (2 copies)
Austin American- Statesman March 21, 1988: “Producers turn backs on Texas playwright” by Robert M. Andrews
USA Today March 21, 1988: “Play’s the thing for other Larry King” author unknown
Texas Books in Review Fall, 1990: “Kings Drama Offers Genial Comedy, Biting Satire” by Kenneth W. Davis
Bundle of New York articles March 25- April 3 1991, about Larry L. King’s play “The Kingfish”
“Closing of bawdy house makes Texan a playwright” by Jay Sharbutt, undated

2 9 Photographs of Larry L. King, undated

King in front of a dilapidated house
King with unidentified man and two children