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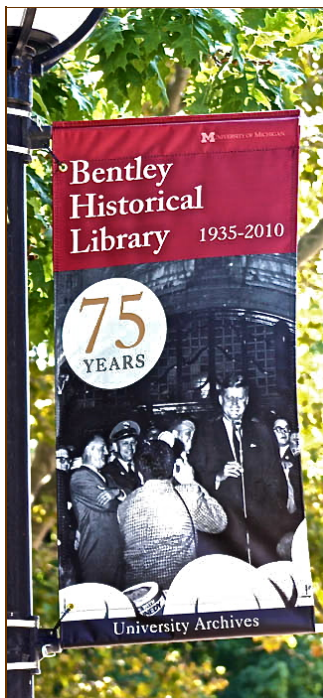


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Bentley Historical Library - 75 Years

Introduction

Introduction written by the Director of the Bentley Historical Library, Dr. Francis X. Blouin Jr.

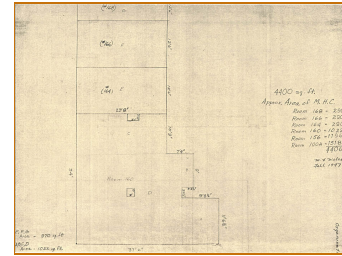
The year, 2010, marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Michigan Historical Collections the original name of what is now known as the Bentley Historical Library. This exhibit prepared by Marilyn McNitt of the Bentley Library staff nicely provides an overview of the history of what started as a small one room operation and has, over 75 years, grown to be a research institution of international importance.

On December 2, 1935, Alexander Ruthven, president of the University of Michigan, wrote to Lewis Vander Velde, professor of history, that on November 29 the Board of Regents voted to establish a Committee on University Archives to be chaired by Frank E. Robbins. The committee's purpose would be for "gathering and conserving materials important to the university's history."

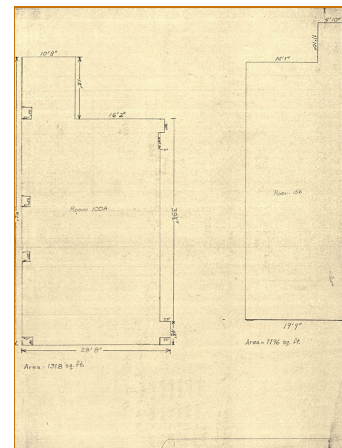
The effort was first located in a basement room at the William L. Clements Library. Prof. Vander Velde had earlier received a small grant to begin collecting material relating to the history of the state of Michigan and had been arguing for more systematic attention to the condition of the archives of the university. With this new authorization Vander Velde began gathering the historical records of the university, a collection of material that now numbers more than 20,000 linear feet of material covering activities of the University and its faculty dating to its earliest days in 1817.

Vander Velde also continued his work to build a statewide collection on the history of the state of Michigan as well. Among the collections he accessioned were materials relating to the governors of Michigan, the work of many Michigan citizens in the Philippine Islands, the work of the industrial pioneers of the state and the work of the lumber barons. Then, too, there were records of citizens whose lives were less known, including letters and diaries of pioneers, farmers, immigrants, and other citizens. The institutional framework of the state is also represented with strong holdings in the history of religious denominations, voluntary associations, trade associations, and advocacy groups. These holdings now amount to more than 25,000 linear feet.

In 1938, the Regents of the University noting the vigor of Professor Vander Velde's successful efforts, named this endeavor the "Michigan Historical Collections." Soon, Vander Velde's collecting success exhausted the small space in the Clements Library. The Collections



Map(A) of Michigan Historical Collections in the basement of the Rackham Building. From the Bentley Historical Library Records Collection, Box 2.



Map(B) of Michigan Historical Collections in the basement of the Rackham Building. From the Bentley Historical Library Records Collection, Box 2.

were then assigned a suite of offices in the basement of the newly constructed Rackham building, where they remained until the construction of the Bentley Historical Library on the North Campus in 1972, an effort led by director and professor of history, Robert M. Warner, and many friends of the library.



Jane Lemish and Julia Lathrop in the Michigan Historical Collections Reading Room in the basement of the Rackham Building.

In recent decades with the advent of new technologies, with new ways of thinking about history and the role of state-based documents as an authoritative source, and with new demands for libraries and institutes on campus to engage creatively with the larger academic purposes of the university, we have moved from designating the department as the "Michigan Historical Collections." "Now on the campus we are known simply as the "Bentley." As such, the library is a center for the study of the history of American life with an emphasis on the period from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. This emphasis is reinforced by the wide-ranging holdings of the university archives. The Bentley offers, for example, documentation on the history of science, women, immigration, labor, business, and manufacturing, along with materials revolving around intellectual history, politics, marginalized populations, science and technology, sports, military history, architectural history and more. Further, we have engaged those interested in broader questions of memory, visuality, identity, and literary context. The Bentley Historical Library has evolved into a complex collecting institution, mindful of the diverse requirements of maintaining a collection on state history that is truly representative, mindful of the complexities of documenting an extraordinarily active university, mindful of how technologies affect the nature of archival collections, mindful of the varied uses of this enormous collection, and mindful that within the research potential of its holdings and the intellectual depth of its staff, the Bentley engages a broad range of activities on the campus and well beyond.

This exhibit was created by Marilyn McNitt and was on display at the Bentley Historical Library in the Fall of 2010. It was converted to an online exhibit by Jessica Hanes in collaboration with Marilyn McNitt in the Summer of 2011.

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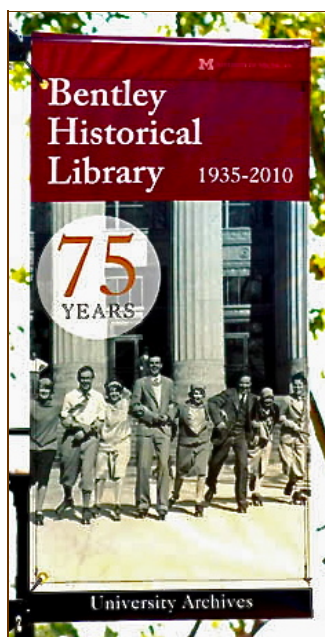


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The Bentley Legacy

Alvin Morell Bentley, III, was born on August 30, 1918, in Portland, Maine, the only child of Alvin M. Bentley, Jr. and Helen Webb Bentley. His father, having died three months after his birth in France while serving with the American Expeditionary Forces, left him heir to a large family fortune founded in the Owosso Manufacturing Company and in the early General Motors Corporation. While he spent most of his childhood outside of Michigan, he came to attend the University of Michigan, majoring in history and political science, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1940. Later that same year he married Arvilla Peterson. Together they had three children, Alvin IV, Helen, and Michael. They divorced in October 1951.

After graduation, Bentley enrolled in the university's Rackham graduate school to study history. He decided, however, that an academic career was not for him and after a semester left Michigan and enrolled in the Turner Diplomatic School in Washington, D.C., to prepare for a career in Foreign Service. Less than a year after enrolling, he joined the State Department and was posted, in January 1942, to the Welfare and Whereabouts Section of the State Department, assisting Americans to find friends and relatives dislocated by the war



Alvin Morell Bentley, III.

abroad. In March 1942 he was transferred to the United States Embassy in Mexico City as a code clerk and by May was commissioned vice consul. He stayed in Mexico through 1944 when he was posted to Bogota, Columbia. In 1947 Bentley sought a transfer to the United Nations staff, but it was denied and in April he secured an appointment as second secretary of the American Legation in Budapest, Hungary, where he remained through 1949. In Hungary he dealt with applicants for United States visas and the disaffected and endangered. It was probably at this time that Bentley's anti-communist beliefs were formed. After his Hungarian service Bentley was convinced that the countries in the Soviet bloc of influence had to be pried loose, rather than contained, which was the theory espoused by President Harry Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson. Because of this difference of opinion, Bentley resigned from Foreign Service in April 1950.

Now, thirty-two years old and still interested in public service, politics seemed the next logical step for him. Alvin Bentley returned to Michigan, opening an office in Owosso, his family's long-time seat. He wrote a newspaper column on international affairs for the area newspapers, gave speeches on his work for the State Department describing his life in Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe, and volunteered for various charitable causes. He quickly impressed the people of the area with his knowledge and ability. In January 1952 he announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination for the Eighth Michigan District. Bentley defeated Fred L. Crawford, the eighteen-year incumbent, in the primary. He easily beat his Democratic opponent in the general election. A few days later he married Arvilla Duescher of Owosso. Together they had two children, Clark and Ann.

Bentley was the youngest member of the Michigan



delegation in the Eighty-third Congress, but, nevertheless, was able to secure a coveted position on the Foreign Affairs Committee, a post he held for four terms in Congress. His career was marked by a close adherence to the Republican Party line. In



both foreign and domestic affairs he held a strong anti-communist line, opposing the recognition of China, Soviet domination of the Balkans, and supporting the investigations of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Domestically, he supported a balanced national budget and the effort to reduce the national debt. He also advocated for working women to be able to deduct child-care costs from their income taxes, pay raises for postal employees, and the expansion of social security and the broadening of the program's benefits. Bentley worked hard to communicate with his constituency. In January, before the opening of the new congressional session, he would poll the people of his district on the issues likely to come before the House. In an attempt to thoroughly communicate with his district, Bentley made frequent trips to the district, was seen and heard on weekly television and radio programs, wrote regular newspaper columns and newsletters, and was accessible through his mobile office.

On March 1, 1954 Puerto Rican nationalists entered the visitors gallery and fired a volley of shots onto the floor of the House. Alvin Bentley was the most seriously wounded of the five injured Congressmen. The thirty-calibre bullet entered his chest cavity, puncturing his lung, diaphragm, stomach, and liver. Though his injuries were critical and required three major surgeries, he was back in the House within two months.

In 1959, after four terms in the House, Bentley decided to run for the Senate. He easily won the Republican nomination, but lost to incumbent Patrick V. McNamara in the November election. In 1962 he was the Republican candidate for Michigan's at-large Congressional seat against Democrat Neil Staebler. He was narrowly defeated.

Though Bentley would never seek political office again, he served the state in many other ways. In 1961-1962 he served as a delegate to the Michigan State Constitutional Convention. Always interested in education, he was appointed to the Citizens Committee on Education in 1963 by Governor George Romney. He chaired the committee, which recommended increased funding support for public colleges and universities and created the Michigan State Board of Education.

April Meeting, 1966

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
ANN ARBOR, APRIL 15, 1966

The Regents met in the Regents' Room at 9:30 A.M.

Present, the President and Regents Matthaei, Briggs, Cudlip, Murphy, Brabiec, Goebel, and Bentley. Regent Sorenson was absent. Executive Vice-President Niehuss, Vice-Presidents Smith, Pierpont, Norman, Cutler, Stirton, Radock, and Lee, and the Secretary also were present.

The President and the Regents cordially welcomed Mr. Alvin M. Bentley, who was appointed by Governor Romney as a member of the Board of Regents on April 4, 1966, to succeed Eugene B. Power for a term expiring December 31, 1972.

Alvin Bentley completed work for and received his M.A. in history from the University of Michigan in 1963 and began work on his doctorate. In 1965 Bentley was appointed chair of the major gifts committee, raising funds in commemoration of the university's sesquicentennial.

Governor Romney appointed Bentley to fill a seat on the University of Michigan Board of Regents in 1966. The next year he endowed a chair in the history department in honor of his parents.

He died on April 10, 1969 at the age of 50. In 1971, his widow, Arvella D. Bentley, gave a generous donation to the University of Michigan's "Michigan Historical Collections", enabling it to construct a new building which was subsequently renamed the Bentley Historical Library.

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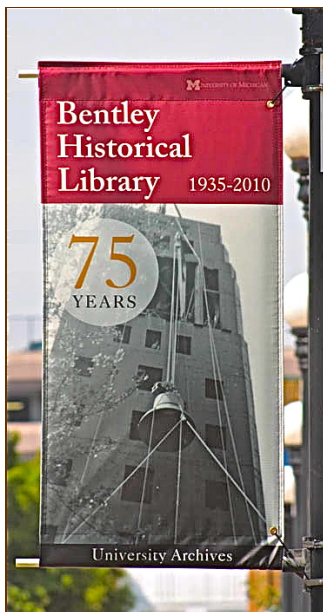


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Finding the Funding

The Bentley family has had a long association with the University of Michigan. Alvin M. Bentley III's parents Alvin Morell Bentley, Jr. and Helen Webb both graduated in 1916 with Bachelor of Art degrees from the College of Literature, Science and the Arts. Their only child was born on August 30, 1918, three months before his father's death in France during World War I. Alvin III also attended the University of Michigan, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1940. He earned a Master of Arts degree in history in 1963 and began work on a Ph.D. In 1965 he was asked to chair the major gifts committee of the University of Michigan's \$55 Million Fund commemorating the university's sesquicentennial. Governor George Romney appointed Bentley to a vacant seat on the Board of Regents in 1966. When he died on April 10, 1969 at the age of 50, Alvin Bentley had been involved with the University of Michigan for over thirty years.



Dr. Warner and others at the ground-breaking of the new library.

In 1961 Dr. Warner, assistant director of the Michigan Historical Collections (MHC), contacted Congressman Bentley about donating his personal papers to the Collections. In 1962 Bentley agreed to give his papers to the Michigan Historical Collections with the first shipment arriving in January 1966.

As Congressman Bentley was a member of the major gifts committee, Dr. Clever Bald consulted with him regarding the space needs and financing of the MHC. Bentley responded on January 28, 1966:

"I am wondering if this cost has been broken down into smaller amounts in order to attract potential donors and who might be interested in placing individual memorials within the new building itself. For example, I am thinking of the cost of each of the three levels, an assembly room, for social functions and historical conferences, staff room, sorting, room, reading room, research rooms, etc. I am not sure if the total estimated cost has been broken down to the extent I suggest but, following your suggestion of contacting persons whose papers are on deposit in the Collections, you can readily see how this approach might be utilized." (Bentley donor file)

After his death, Mrs. Alvin (Arvella D.) Bentley began looking for a memorial to honor her husband. It seemed logical that the best way to honor her husband was a contribution to the University of Michigan. Dr. Warner, who became director of the Michigan Historical Collections in 1966, was looking for funding to build a home for the Michigan Historical Collections which had outgrown its space in the basement of the Rackham Building.



Site of the future Bentley Historical Library.

Mrs. Bentley became a member of the Executive Committee of the Friends of the Michigan Historical Collections in September of 1971.

In December 1971 the Regents accepted a gift of \$500,000 from Mrs. Bentley for construction of the Michigan Historical Collections building, agreed to Mrs. Bentley's stipulation that the building be named the Alvin M. and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library, and authorized the project for construction bids. Vice-President Smith commented that "the Historical Collections has been served by a most able administrator in Robert Warner, and he was sure this splendid addition to the facilities of the



The new home of the Michigan Historical Collections, the Bentley Historical Library.

addition to the facilities of the Collections would be accompanied by an equally significant improvement in the program of the Collections." Regent Nederlander expressed the Regents' appreciation for this additional support for the University. "The Bentley family has compiled a truly impressive record of continuing support for the University, especially in the area of history, which was one of the deep interests of the late Regent Bentley."

With this generous gift, about half the sum needed to construct the building, Dr. Warner was able to approach other prominent citizens such as, G. Mennen Williams, Roscoe Bonisteel, Floyd Starr, the families of Wilbur Brucker, Arthur Vandenberg, and Prestiss Brown, as well as foundations such as the Whiting Foundation in Flint, and organizations such as the Delta Sigma Delta honorary dental fraternity and the Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of the state of Michigan about contributing to the library building fund. Their contributions are reflected in the various offices and rooms throughout the building.

The groundbreaking ceremony occurred on August 2, 1972. Construction continued for about a year. In August 1973 the shelving in the stacks began to go up. The move from the basement of Rackham Building to the new facility at 1150 Beal Avenue was completed the following May.

Mrs. Bentley continued to make substantial gifts, totaling \$275,000 from 1975 through 1980 to the library until her death on June 17, 1980.



Arvella Bentley and others at the groundbreaking of the new Bentley Historical Library.

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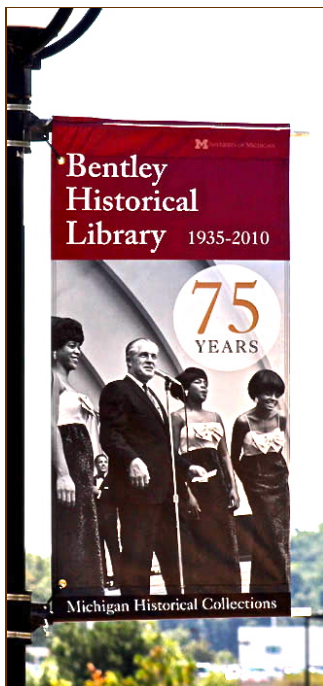


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Directors

DR. LEWIS G. VANDER VELDE, 1935 - 1960



Dr. Vander Velde, a meticulous scholar and an outstanding teacher, was also a leader in preserving Michigan's historical heritage. His best-known endeavor was the founding of the archival agency later known as the Michigan Historical Collections. The collection's purpose was to document and preserve the history of the University of Michigan and the state of Michigan.

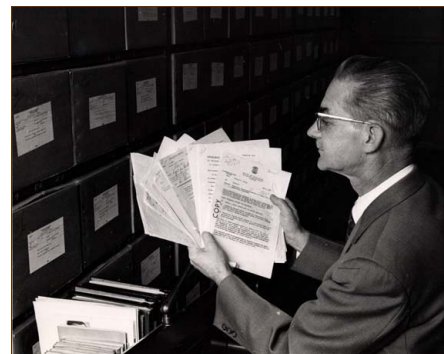
Professor Vander Velde was born in Grandville, Michigan on October 17, 1890. He enrolled in Hope College in 1908. Transferring to the University of Michigan in 1910, he earned his B.A. in 1913 and a M.A. degree in 1921. Harvard awarded him a Ph.D in 1936. In 1928, Vander Velde came to the University of Michigan as an instructor

in American history, becoming an assistant professor in 1931, and an associate professor in 1936, and a full professor in 1940. Though his specialty was American constitutional history, he introduced the study of Michigan history into the curriculum of the History Department at the University of Michigan.

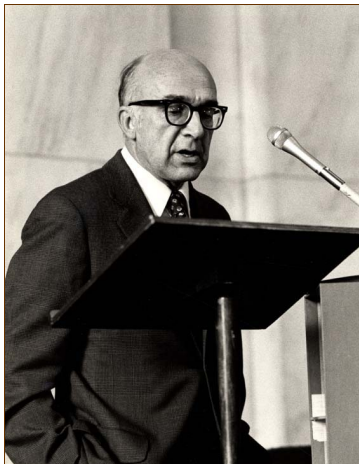
In 1935, Professor Vander Velde received a \$700 research grant to collect primary source material relating to the history of Michigan. Three years later the Regents, impressed with the growth of his endeavors, renamed this project the Michigan Historical Collections and named Vander Velde its first director, a post he held until his retirement in 1961. Under his leadership, the Michigan Historical Collections (MHC) developed a professional staff, built sound acquisition policies, and acquired materials documenting the history of the state. Dr. Vander Velde died in 1975 in Albion, Michigan.

DR. F. CLEVER BALD, 1960 - 1966

F. Clever Bald, second director of the Michigan Historical Collections, professor of history and University War Historian at the University at Michigan, was born in Baltimore, Maryland on August 12, 1897. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1920 from the University of Michigan, his Master of Arts in 1937 from Wayne University, and his Doctor of Philosophy in 1943 from the University of Michigan.



Dr. Bald joined the faculty of the University of Michigan in 1943 as an instructor in the Department of History. He became assistant director of the Michigan Historical Collections in 1947 and director in 1960 serving until his retirement in 1966. He was promoted to full professor in 1960. He authored many books, articles, and brochures on Michigan history, including *Detroit's First American Decade, 1796-1805* (1948) and *Michigan in Four Centuries* (1954). F. Clever Bald died December 12, 1970.

DR. ROBERT M. WARNER, 1966 - 1980

Archivist, historian and professor, Robert Mark Warner was born on June 28, 1927 in Montrose, Colorado. Warner completed his undergraduate work in history at Muskingum College in 1949. He continued his education at the University of Michigan, where he earned an M.A. in 1953 and a Ph.D. in 1958 in history. After completing his doctorate, Warner joined the faculty of the History Department of the University of Michigan where he taught Michigan history. In 1974 he joined the faculty of the University of Michigan School of Library Science where he developed the archival studies

program.

Warner's association with the Michigan Historical Collections (MHC) began during his early years as a graduate student, when he used the collections for his research. Eventually, he came on staff as a research assistant, field representative, and then curator of manuscripts. In 1966 Warner became director of the MHC. Dr. Warner oversaw the fundraising for and construction of the building of the Bentley Historical Library from 1966-1974.

Dr. Warner was appointed Archivist of the United States in 1980. Warner's major accomplishment as Archivist was to secure the independence of the National Archives from the General Services Administration (GSA). With the support of several key figures in Washington, the National Archives and Administration Act of 1983 was introduced in the Senate and in the House. As the bill made its way through congress, Warner worked behind the scenes, generating support and attention from such organizations as the Society of American Archivists (SAA), the American Historical Association and such notable figures as Barbara Tuchman, Alex Haley and Ed Meese. President Reagan signed the Act on October 19, 1984, creating the independent National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), effective April 1, 1985.

Warner stayed on at the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) until April 1985, after which he took up his new position as Dean of the School of Information and Library Studies (SILS) at the University of Michigan. From 1988 to 1991, Warner also served as acting director of the University of Michigan Library. He retired from the deanship in 1992, and was succeeded by Daniel Atkins. Dr. Warner died on April 24, 2007.

DR. FRANCIS X. BLOUIN, JR., 1981 - AUGUST 2013

Francis X. Blouin, Jr. was born in Boston, Massachusetts on July 29, 1946. He earned a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame in 1967, and his M.A. in 1969 and his Ph.D. in 1978 in history from the University of Minnesota. He came to the Michigan Historical Collections in 1974 as acting assistant director. In 1975 Blouin became a lecturer in the History Department, and in 1978 assistant professor in the School of Library Science. On July 1, 1981 Dr. Blouin became the director of the Bentley Historical Library. He was promoted to a full professor in both History and Library Science in July 1986.

Dr. Blouin, the longest-serving director in the history of the Michigan Historical Collections/Bentley Historical Library, has worked hard to keep the library in the forefront of the archival field. Under his direction the Bentley Historical Library is developing a program for archiving digital records, including audiovisuals, email, and websites, while continuing to work with paper



records. Under Blouin's leadership the staff of the Bentley Historical Library has been involved in exchange programs with Russia, France, China and Denmark. From 1984 to 2004 he led a project to do a complete inventory of the historical documents in the Vatican archival institutions. In 2000-2001 he led, with History Department colleague William Rosenberg, a Sawyer Seminar on Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory.

Additionally, the staff of the Bentley Historical Library are involved in state, regional, national, and international archival organizations such as the Michigan Archival Association, the Midwest Archives Conference, the Society of American Archivists, and the International Council on Archives. In addition to developing policies and programs at the Bentley Historical Library, Dr. Blouin has worked to expand the physical footprint of the library with the construction of the new wing, completed in 2004, with expanded stack space, conservation, and office space.

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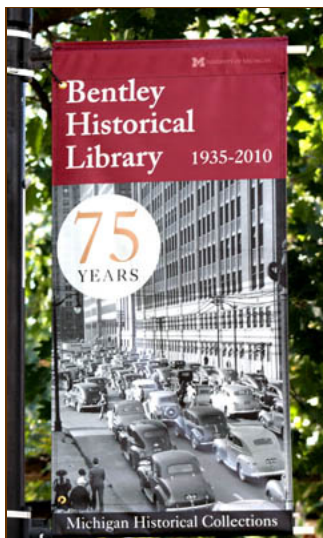


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Collection Strengths

The Bentley Historical Library has been collecting personal papers of politicians, ministers, faculty members, business people, and social organizers, as well as records of businesses, churches, organizations, and the University of Michigan for seventy-five years. Here are some examples of outstanding collections held by the library.



Members of the Bentley Historical Library staff (Kenneth Scheffel, Field Representative, Thomas Powers, Head of the Michigan Historical Collections, Francis Blouin, Director, and William Wallach, Assistant Director) with members of the Hartford Memorial Baptist Church in 1997.

AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLECTIONS

In 1985-86 the Bentley Historical Library analyzed its collection development plan and determined that more emphasis needed to be placed on the identification and accessioning of historical records from and about Michigan's African American community. The collecting plan called upon the field staff to concentrate its efforts on the Black churches in Detroit, because of these institutions' significance in their community/state/nation, not only in the area of religious development, but in education, politics, civil rights, social concerns, and community service as well. To view more collections on this topic, please consult the African Americans in Michigan [subject guide](#).¹³



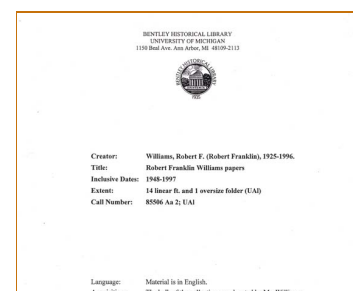
Sally Bund, Assistant Archivist for architectural records, examines one of the thousands of architectural drawings held by the library.

ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

The Bentley Historical Library includes in its holdings many collections of architectural drawings by nationally and internationally-known architects. These architects include George Brigham, Gunnar Birkerts, Albert Kahn, Robert Metcalf, William Muschenheim, and Pond and Pond to name but a few. A particular strength in the Bentley Library holdings is mid-century modern architecture. Please consult the Architects, Architecture, and Landscape Design [subject guide](#)¹³ for more information.

CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

The Bentley Historical Library holds many collections documenting the Civil Rights Movement. The personal papers of Robert F. Williams is one of the most used collections in the library. Williams was an African American civil rights activist and black militant leader in Monroe County North Carolina, who came



to advocate armed self-defense in response to the violence ignited by his non-violent campaign to integrate Monroe County's public service facilities. In 1961 he moved to Cuba where Premier Fidel Castro offered him political asylum. He became one of the most outspoken critics of the United States and called African Americans to arm themselves for the battle ahead. To communicate his ideas, Williams published *The Crusader*, a black militant journal, and also broadcast a program called "Radio Free Dixie." After five years in Cuba, Williams became disenchanted with Castro's views of blacks in America. He left Cuba and traveled to the People's Republic of China where he established residency. As a friend of Mao Tse Tung and Chou En Lai, Williams redoubled his criticism of the treatment of blacks in America. In 1966, Williams moved toward black separatism. He was elected president of the Detroit-based Republic for New Africa, which called for a separate state for African Americans within the United States. Williams reached the full development of his ideology: moving from a proponent of passive resistance as a NAACP leader, to a black militant, to a black self-determinist. In 1969, Williams ended his self-imposed exile and settled in Baldwin, Michigan. In 1970-71 he served as a research associate in the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan. Drawing from his experience in China, Williams advised political scientist Allen Whiting who in turn advised Henry Kissinger shortly before Kissinger's first trip to China.

For other Civil Rights related collections please consult the Civil Rights Activists and Organizations in the African Americans [subject guide](#).

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS MATERIAL

The Bentley Historical Library has one of the largest collections of Philippine Island materials outside of the Philippine Islands. Every year scholars from all over the world come to study these papers. The bibliography *Balita mula Maynila* was written by Thomas Powers, Curator of the Michigan Historical Collections. The [Walter M. Marquardt finding aid](#) represents one of the many Philippine Island related collections at the library found in the American-Philippine relations [subject guide](#).

POLITICS

The Bentley Historical Library has a long history of collecting the personal papers of Michigan's public servants whether they served in the local, state, national or international sphere.

In March 1964 Ruth Bordin, Curator of Manuscripts, traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with various Michigan Congressional representatives to discuss donating their papers to the Bentley Historical Library. This trip report describes her conversation with Congressman Gerald R. Ford who by this time had already represented the 5th Michigan Congressional District for seven terms.

In his March 17, 1965 letter, Ford agreed to deposit his papers at the University of Michigan. (Donor File, Bentley Historical Library)

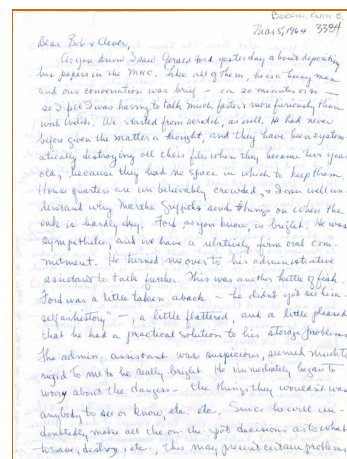
The Gerald Ford papers came to the Bentley Historical Library in annual accretions until Ford's nomination to become Vice President after Spiro Agnew left office in 1973. When Richard M.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
accession periodically.
 Robert Williams requested that his collection only be open to graduate students of the University of Michigan. The Bentley subsequently permitted the microfilm of the papers. The microfilm is open without restriction.
 Photographs located in box 14 and overhead slides (UAG); videotapes located in box 14.
 Audio cassettes located in box 13.
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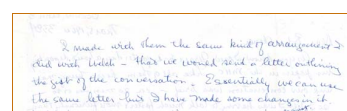
Photograph of the paper version of the Robert F. Williams Finding Aid. [Click here](#) to view the online finding aid.



Balita mula Maynila (Maynila Bibliography) written by Tom Powers.



Bordin Report, page 1.



Nixon resigned the presidency on August 9, 1974, Gerald Ford became the 38th President of the United States. After his defeat in the 1976 election, plans were developed for his Presidential Library and Museum. Because of his familiarity with the Bentley Library, his friendship with the Bentley Library's director, Robert M. Warner, and the fond memories of his time spent as a student at the University of Michigan, building his Presidential library in Ann Arbor was a logical step. The papers from the Executive Office began arriving in Ann Arbor on January 21, 1977, and were housed at the Gerald Ford Presidential Papers Project, in a warehouse near Michigan Stadium, until the library building was completed. President Ford, Dr. Warner, university officials and Ford supporters worked together to design an attractive and functional presidential library, which was dedicated in April 1981.

To honor his home Congressional district, President Ford decided to construct his museum in the city of Grand Rapids. This is the only Presidential Library and Museum designed in this way. In fact, Congress passed a bill, *Amendment to the Presidential Libraries Act (1986)*, to prevent such a split from ever happening again as well as limiting the size of the library/museum complex.

For other collections documenting politics consult the politics and government [subject guide](#).

SOCIAL ACTIVISTS

The John and Leni Sinclair papers came to the library in 1979. The initial accession, covering the period 1957-1979, contained textual material, sound recordings, and photographs relating to all phases of their careers, including participation in the Artists' Workshop in Detroit, the Rainbow Multi-Media Corporation, the White Panther Party and its offshoot, the Rainbow Peoples Party. There were also materials concerning the legalization of marijuana, radical politics, prison reform and rock and jazz music.

The Sinclair papers provide a rich and unique source for the study of America's radical movement in the 1960s and 1970s including a remarkable series of correspondence containing letters from Abbie Hoffman, Allen Ginsberg, Timothy Leary, and Jerry Rubin. These papers detail the cultural, political and business activities of a man whose energy and charisma made him a local and national leader of the counter-culture. The collection also documents the support and creativity of Leni, his wife and partner, who as writer, photographer, and publicist helped to showcase the lifestyle that he symbolized.

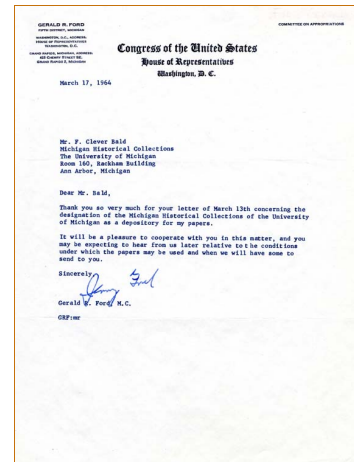
For more information on activism on the University of Michigan campus please visit the Decade of Dissent [on-line exhibit](#).

which just understands that you can't put a history of that upon that defense full information. The rest of all over these people are this way. Maybe the cover. If I had enough time to look to him. I don't think I'd be too prejudiced with other things. So I have made some changes in the letter. Making a list along the option of completely closing the papers. And adding a phrase making it very clear that materials should be removed & closed. Not just destroyed. There are also some comments on the letter. This is more. I think than the first proposition. If you have any questions, and have any second thoughts, I don't think a phrase could be used to answer. Ah, yes, all these already forward files, and we might have got them.

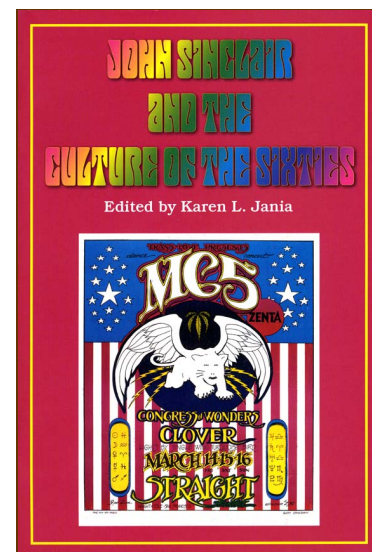
Now I should get on with your chapter, Bob.

Thank you, Clever, for your kind letter of Feb. I hope you've had a marvelous time in Detroit. Spring isn't coming to Washington yet quickly but there have been a few signs. The last couple of days before the Senate Bill didn't get underway. Well, so long as look at the letter. But remember we probably didn't.

Bordin Report, page 2.



Congressman Ford's letter to Michigan Historical Collections.



Sinclair Papers Publication.

TRANSPORTATION IN MICHIGAN

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was formed in 1846 and expanded rapidly in the 1860s and 1870s, eventually controlling over 800 corporations. The New York Central Railroad Company was organized in 1853 and merged with the Hudson River Railroad in 1869 to form the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad; in 1914 the name was again changed to the New York Central Railroad Company.



From the top clockwise: Christine Weidemann, Assistant Archivist, Diane Hatfield, Administrative Secretary, Lee Barnett from the State of Michigan Archives, and Greg Degowski, Archivist for the Blue Water Michigan Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, picking up the records from an old railway car in July of 1986.

The Penn Central Transportation Company was formed in 1968 through the merger of the Pennsylvania and New York Central Railroads. The company did not prosper and went bankrupt in 1970. It was reorganized in 1971 with the help of the Federal Government and the creation of the National Railroad and Passenger Corporation (AMTRAK) which assumed long distance passenger service and in 1976 with the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) which took over the viable parts of Penn Central and five other bankrupt rail lines. Penn Central was reorganized as the Penn Central Corporation in 1978; it liquidated most of its rail subsidiaries and property and became a general holding company with subsidiaries in energy, electronics, equipment, manufacture, and real estate. The Penn Central records were stored in railroad cars and were divided between the Bentley Historical Library, the State Archives, and the Durand Union Station which was selected by the Michigan legislature to serve as the home of the Michigan Railroad History Museum. The Penn Central records are a valuable resource for information on Michigan railways.

For more information on the railroad holdings see the railroad [subject guide](#).

UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS



The University of Michigan football team riding in the 1902 Tournament of Roses parade.

The records of the University of Michigan Athletic Department document the participation of the University of Michigan Athletic teams in intercollegiate competition from 1864 to the present. These records include over 210 linear feet and 14 outsize boxes of media guides, including game programs and other print material, press releases, team and individual statistics, photographs, approximately 1500 reels of film and videotape, development and fundraising material, and a variety of accounts, audits and other administrative records.

For more information on the University of Michigan Athletic

Department, please consult the athletics history [webpage](#).

Pictured above is the University of Michigan football team riding in the 1902 Tournament of Roses parade.

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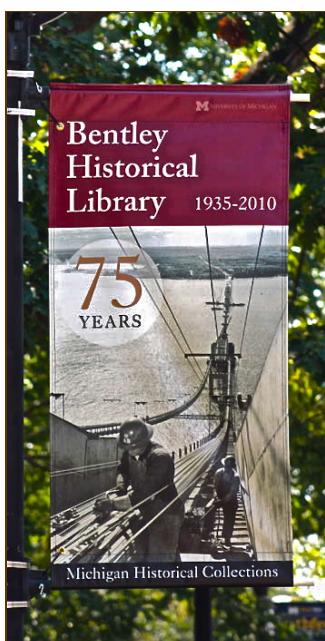


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Outreach

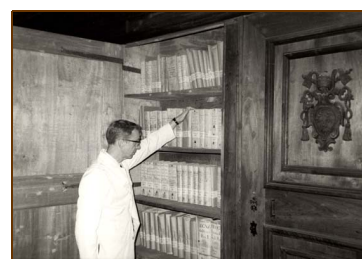
VATICAN ARCHIVES

The Bentley Historical Library proposed a project to apply modern archival principles and techniques to the description of the Vatican Archives in Rome. Francis Blouin, Thomas Powers, and Leonard Coombs completed a successful pilot project in 1987-88. The library approached the Getty Grant Program and the National Endowment for the Humanities for funding of a one-year project to begin in 1989. This funding allowed the Bentley Historical Library to staff the project in both Rome and Ann Arbor, to survey the archival holdings of the Vatican, and to prepare descriptions of the various record series for entry into the Research Library Information Network (RLIN), a nationwide bibliographic database. The existence of a modern system of access and the presence of descriptive records in RLIN allows scholars to find materials for their research more easily.

(The Bentley Historical Library Annual report, 1988-89, pp. 2-3 in Bentley Historical Library publications, Box 1.)



Elizabeth Yakel in the Vatican Archives.



Tom Powers in the Vatican Archives.

CHINESE EXCHANGE

In 1982 the Bentley hosted a delegation of five archivists from China.

In 1999 an agreement of cooperation between the Foreign Affairs Office of the State Archives Administration of China and the Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan was co-signed, establishing a long-term relationship of archival cooperation and exchange. The first group of Chinese archivists visited the Bentley, under this agreement, in 1999. Since that time a total of six delegations have come to the Bentley Library to study American archival methods.

In 2000 the first Bentley delegation traveled to China. Most of the Bentley Library professional staff have visited



Fran Blouin and archivists during visit to Beijing.



Fran Blouin and Nancy Bartlett with archivists during visit to Beijing.

China as part of this exchange to learn more about the Chinese archival methods.

THE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ON MODERN ARCHIVES

For fifteen years (1983-1997), the Bentley Historical Library administered a summer research fellowship program focused on problems relating to the archival management and scholarly use of modern documentation. The Research Fellowship Program for Study of Modern Archives was established with funds received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Additionally, the library received funding from the Earhart Foundation of Ann Arbor, two supplemental grants from the Mellon Foundation, and two grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities' Division of Preservation and Access.

Throughout its existence, the fellowship program fostered systematic research that allowed individuals and small teams to conduct independent research on a wide range of topics in archival administration.

The program provided funding for almost 100 individual fellows and research team members, who published 69 articles, monographs and reports. The research fellows significantly enriched the extant body of archival literature relating to problems in the selection, use, understanding and administration of contemporary records.

Four fellows received the prestigious Posner Award from the Society of American Archivists, awarded to the author of the best article of the year in the society's journal, *The American Archivist*. The overall quality of the published products is suggested not only by award-winning articles, but also by the frequency of citation to the fellows' articles, monographs and reports. Approximately one half of the articles published in *The American Archivist* between 1985 and 1997 contained at least one footnote and oftentimes several for publications written by Bentley fellows.



From left to right: Fran Blouin, Director; the first four Mellon Fellows; and Bill Wallach, Assistant Director.

The range of topics taken on by the fellows was both broad and impressive, including the principle of provenance, functional access to archival holdings, new tools for the appraisal of university records and business records, the architecture for archival automated systems, the significance and utility of administrative histories for archivists and historians, an inquiry into the nature and appraisal of records in the health care industry, an analysis of the impact of *glasnost* on Soviet archives, documentation strategies and collection analyses, the concepts of uniqueness and preservation, and description and reference in an automated environment. Near the end of the fellowship program, this last area was the focus of a team project that developed the structure and conventions of Encoded Archival Description. EAD revolutionized the ways in which researchers could obtain information about archival holdings while searching remote databases from their home institutions.

Collectively, the Bentley's Research Fellows helped spur advanced research in a number of areas that challenged and informed their colleagues.

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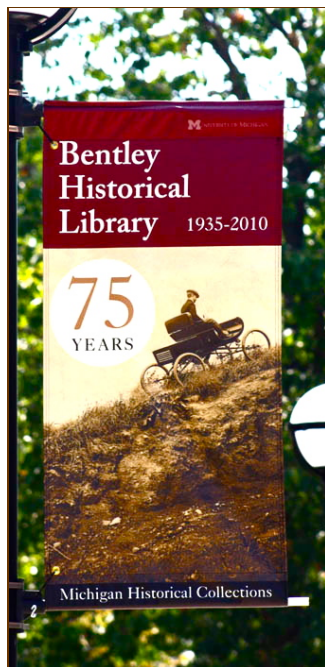


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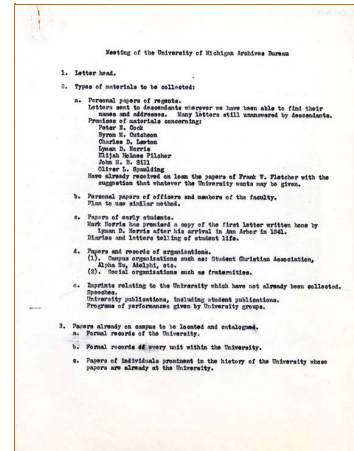
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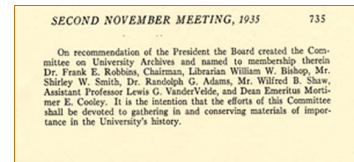


A Timeline Highlighting Some of the Activities at the Bentley Historical Library

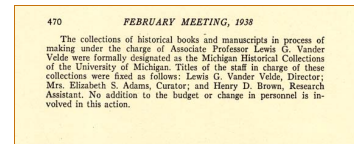
- Spring 1935**-Dr. Lewis Vander Velde receives a \$700 grant from the Faculty Research Fund to initiate a program of collecting research materials for the study of the history of Michigan.
- Late summer of 1935**-Committee on University Archives is formed with Lewis G. VanderVelde as its head. Establishes research assistantship for the collection, preservation, and study of materials pertaining to the history of the state's most important non-governmental institution, the University of Michigan.
- February 1938**-Regents officially designate the materials gathered at the Michigan Historical Collections of the University of Michigan. Dr. VanderVelde is designated as director.
- June 1938**-The Michigan Historical Collections are given quarters in the newly opened Rackham Building.
- July 1960**-Dr. VandeVelde retires. F. Clever Bald becomes director.
- August 1966**-Dr. Bald retires. Robert M. Warner is named director.
- September 1971**-Arvella D. Bentley is appointed to the Executive Committee of the Friends of the Michigan Historical Collections.
- December 1971**-Regents accept a gift of \$500,000 from Mrs. Alvin M. Bentley for construction of the Michigan Historical Collections building, and agree to Mrs. Bentley's



Agenda from a meeting of the University of Michigan Archives Bureau.



Proceedings of the Board of Regents, 1935.



Proceedings of the Board of Regents, 1938.



Michigan Historical Collections Reading Room in the Rackham building.

stipulation that the building be named the Alvin M. and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library.

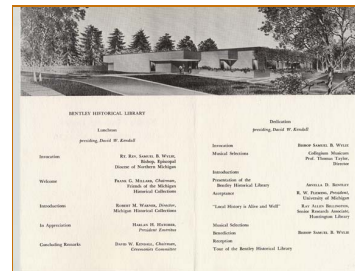
- **July 1972**-Contract is awarded to the R.T. Mitchell Construction Company.
- **August 2, 1972**-Groundbreaking ceremony.
- **September 1972**-Whiting Foundation of Flint donates \$20,000 for the Alvin M. Bentley and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library fund.
- **January 1973**-Mr. and Mrs. G. Mennen Williams of Grosse Pointe Farms give \$3,500 for the Michigan Historical Collections Building fund.
- **October 1973**-J. Fairbairn Smith of Lathrup Village donates Philip Morris Incorporated common stock for the Bentley Historical Library fund.
- **January 1974**-Grand Lodge F and A M of Michigan of Grand Rapids donates \$25,000 for the Alvin M. and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library fund.
- **April 1974**-Whiting Foundation of Flint donates \$20,000 for the Alvin M. and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library fund.
- **May 1974**-Staff move the holdings from basement of the Rackham Building to the new Bentley Historical Library on North Campus.
- **March 1975**-Supreme Chapter Delta Sigma Delta of Richmond, Virginia donates \$5,000 for the Alvin M. Bentley and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library fund.
- **March 1975** Mrs. Arvella D. Bentley of Owosso donates \$100,000 for the Alvin M. Bentley and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library fund.
- **March 1976-1977**-Mrs. Arvella D. Bentley of Owosso donates \$175,000 for the Alvin M. Bentley and Arvella D. Bentley Historical Library fund.
- **April 1977**-The Bonisteel Foundation of East Grand Rapids gives Bendix Corporation common stock, Hoover Ball and Bearing



The site of the future Bentley Historical Library.



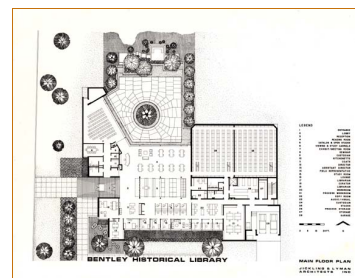
Mrs. Bentley and others watch as Dr. Warner breaks ground on the site of the new home of the Michigan Historical Collections.



Interior of the Dedication Program.



Construction of the 'stacks' of the Bentley.



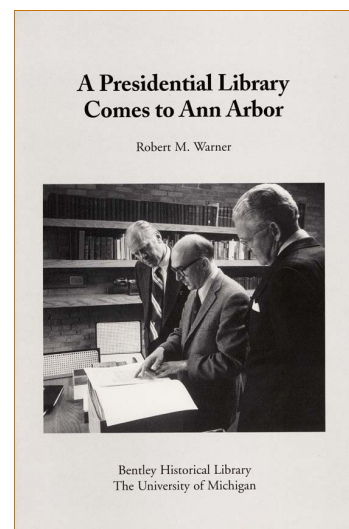
Floor plan of the Bentley Historical Library.

recover lost and bearing common stock, and a cash gift for the Bentley Historical Library fund.

- **1979**-John and Leni Sinclair donate their personal papers including textual documents, sound recordings and photographs to the Bentley Historical Library.
- **July 1980**-Dr. Robert M. Warner becomes Archivist of the United States.
- **June 17, 1980**-Mrs. Bentley dies.
- **April 1981**-Gerald R. Ford Library opens on the North Campus of the University of Michigan.
- **May 1981**-Dr. Francis X. Blouin, Jr. is named director of the Bentley Historical Library.
- **1982**-The Bentley Historical Library hosts a delegation of five archivists from China.
- **1983-1997**-Research Fellowship Program for Study of Modern Archives is established with funds received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation with additional funding from the Earhart Foundation of Ann Arbor and the National Endowment for the Humanities Division of Preservation and Access. Throughout its existence, the fellowship program fosters systematic research that allows individuals and small teams to conduct independent research on a wide range of topics in archival administration.
- **Spring 1986**-Professor Blouin travels to the Vatican to discuss the possibility of testing the applicability of the methods used by the Bentley Historical Library for the modernization of the access system at the Vatican Archives.
- **1987-88**-Successful pilot project undertaken by Francis Blouin, Thomas Powers, and Leonard Coombs results in funding for a one-year project to begin in the Fall 1989.
- **Spring 1989**-The University of Michigan, principally the Bentley Historical Library and the School of Information and Library Studies, hosts Second European Conference on Archives.
- **1989-90**-Bentley Historical Library microfilms the records of the Second Baptist Church, the oldest Black church in Michigan.



The 'new' Bentley Historical Library.



First group of Mellon Fellows, 1983.



Fran Blouin and Len Coombs in the Vatican Archives.



Second European Conference on Archives.

- **March 1990**-Bentley Historical Library awards first fellowships to researchers to support travel to the library and help underwrite research-related expenses in the use of the library's collections.
- **1990**-Bentley Historical Library and the University of Michigan Athletic Department partner in pilot project to arrange and provide access to Athletic Department records. Gregory Kinney becomes permanent Athletic Department Archivist in 1992.

- **August 1991**-Ann Gilliland joins the University Archives and Records Program (UARP) staff to work as principal investigator on a one-year National Historic Preservation and Records Commission-funded grant to study electronic conferencing on campus with Greg Kinney as co-investigator. Conferencing has become an important part of university classes, faculty and staff communication, and staff interaction. The project is designed to appraise the historical value of specific conferences and develop procedures for their transfer to the archives including privacy protection of the participants and development of access to the archived conferences.



Greg Kinney and Ann Gilliland Swetland discuss digital records.

- **Spring, 1992**-The Executive Committee of the library recommends that the name of the library be changed officially from the Michigan Historical Collections to the Bentley Historical Library.
- **May 1992**-Bentley Historical Library formally launches an exchange with the Russian State University for the Humanities (RSUH) in Moscow.
- **1992-93**-Work at the Vatican Archives enters its second phase with data collected during the first phase entered into the database of the Research Libraries Group (RLG) in Stanford, California. This information is now available through Research Library Information Network (RLIN) throughout the nation.
- **Summers 1992 in Paris and 1993 in Ann Arbor**-Joint Seminar with the Ecole Des Chartes to explore the methodology of the traditional study of diplomatics and its relevance for the electronic age.

- **1993-1994**-With support from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Lilly Endowment, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, additional description and analysis of the most complex record series in the Vatican Archives is developed.



Staff prepare a record for the Vatican Archives.

- **1995**-Researchers begin to use the **Michigan Research Library Network (MIRLYN)** in the reading room with two terminals available.
- **1995**-Transfer of 250 linear feet of necrology record files from the Alumni Records Office to the Bentley Historical Library takes place. Karen Jania and Stacy Strumpher arrange and describe the records.
- **1995-96**-Conference on electronic records research and development is held at the Bentley Historical Library.



- 1997-**The Bentley Historical Library and the University of Michigan School of Information work with the staff of South Africa's University of Fort Hare, alma mater of many prominent South African leaders such as Nelson Mandela, on a project involving the University of Fort Hare's important archival collections from several liberation movements. Members of the Bentley Historical Library staff, including Brian Williams and William Wallach, assess the current condition of the historical archives and develop strategies to provide intellectual access and long-term preservation.

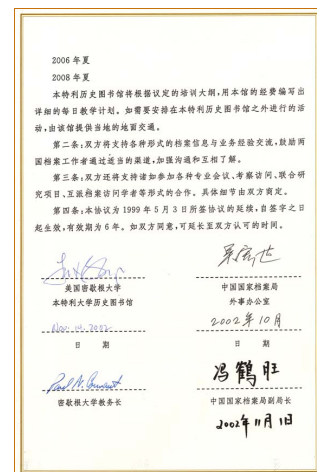
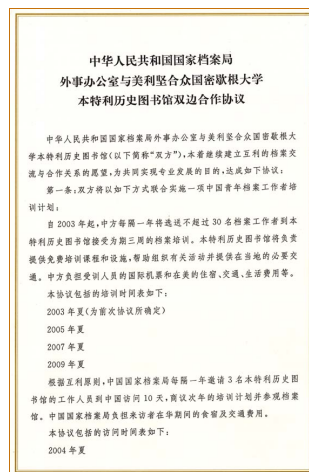


Stacy Strumpher and Karen Jania with the Necrology files, 1997.

OBITUARY FILE	
Name	McMullen, Jesse James
Date of Death	Nov. 30, 1945
Degree	D.D.S. 1893
Alumni Records Office The University of Michigan	
NOTE: All material such as letters, newspaper clippings, etc. relating to deaths, should be filed in this envelope.	
Form 5275	

A Necrology File (a file of information collected by the Office of Alumni Records on all University alumni). Click to search the [Necrology File Index](#).

- 1998-**Oxford University Press publishes *Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See*.
- 1999-**An Agreement on Cooperation Between the Foreign Affairs Office of the State Archives Administration of China and the Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan is co-signed establishing a long-term relationship of archival cooperation and exchange.



2000-The first Bentley delegation, Fran Blouin, leader; Tom Powers, and Bill Wallach, travel to China.

- 2003-**Oxford University Press publishes the supplement to the original Vatican guide entitled *Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See. Supplement #1, The Archives of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: Including the Archives of the Former Congregation of the Holy Office and the Archives of the Former Congregation for Forbidden Books*. ([Click here](#) to view the online catalog record.)

- March 2003-**Albert Kahn Associates (AKA) donates the papers of Albert Kahn to the Bentley Historical Library to ensure the conservation and accessibility of these papers. This gift preserves the legacy of Kahn, whose factory designs influenced the development of industrial architecture throughout the world and whose commercial, residential and institutional buildings define the character of Detroit and the University of Michigan today.



New addition to the Bentley.



- **June 2003-January 2005-** Expansion of the Bentley Historical Library, including renovation of the reading room, and construction of new stack and office space, and a new conservation lab. The dedication was held on October 1, 2004.
- **2010-** The Bentley Historical Library celebrates 75 years.



Renovation of the reading room. (To view more photos of the renovation, construction of the new addition, and the dedication ceremony, [click here.](#))

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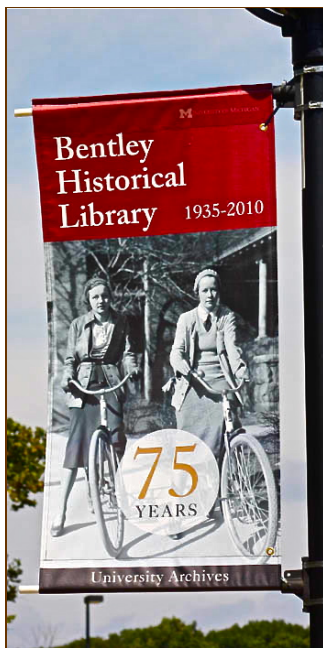
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A Day in the Life of an Archivist

Today the Bentley Historical Library is made up of three divisions--the Michigan Historical Collections (MHC) which documents Michigan and Michigan's people, the University Archives and Records Program (UARP) which serves as the University of Michigan archives, and Reference and Access Services, which assists reading room researchers and remote researchers in answering their questions.

First, the staff members of MHC and UARP bring the papers, records, photographs, maps, audiovisual material, architectural drawings, etc. into the building, arrange them in a usable order (if necessary), re-folder and re-box them in acid-free folders and boxes (if necessary), describe the material in a finding aid, and create a catalog record for MIRLYN - (Michigan Research Library Network).

The Reference and Access Services staff not only help researchers with their research strategies, teach them to use the various research tools, i.e. MIRLYN, finding aids, subject guides and indexes, and digital publications, but also provide orientations to classes and groups throughout the campus, community, and state to help familiarize them with the resources of the library. The photographs below show staff and former staff performing some of these tasks.



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