

# Oakland University Archives

## Annual Report 2007-2008

### Highlights:

- **Oakland University Archives enjoys its new home in KL 129. Especially the expanded work area.**
- **Provost Obear's Papers processed and organized for use.**
- **Archives website revised and new sites and finding aids added.**
- **Outreach — Charter Class, Ken Morris memorial, Cranbrook exhibit**

### Staffing:

Barb Somerville continued doing an excellent job as the full time archives assistant until her retirement in December 2008. Her position remained unfilled for the rest of the year.

### Facilities

This was the first full year in our new facility and the new shelving, the storage and most especially, the new spacious work area are proving quite acceptable. Shelves are filling up faster than expected which is a worry.

One major concern that has arisen in this new space is the lack of humidity and temperature control for the fragile papers (old photocopies and onionskin copies of documents are particularly worrisome.) The goal is 35% relative humidity and below 72° F. and the conditions in KL 129 are significantly higher than these desired figures. Even worse is the fact that there have been additional water intrusions that resulted from leaks elsewhere in the building (and that have not been fixed as far as I know). The one in January 2008 was particularly bothersome and stinky in that dirty sewer water covered most of the floor in the new work room before it was contained and finally cleaned up. (see appended photos) Black mold has appeared on the north wall. There is also the danger from the sprinkler system and the water pipes through the ceiling and above the boxes in the KL 129 stacks.

The Faculty Collection books and dissertations remain in KL 100 in the wood locking bookcases. Unfortunately it appears that individuals are forcing the doors open in order to view the items; not only does this break the door hardware, but also compromises the security of these Special Collections. Of greatest concern are the dissertations since they are by nature 'rare' in that only two copies are in existence, e.g. one in the Circulating collection and one in the OU Thesis Collection. In fact almost 30 of the circulating dissertations have been stolen or lost so that the corresponding title in the Thesis Collection is truly unique. While Oakland has been talking for many years about participating in the UMI Proquest Dissertation storage program, only a few of OU's dissertations have actually been submitted and none in recent years. Space to shelve these collections is also a problem, i.e., we are running out of shelves, and the collections

need frequent shifting to accommodate new titles. From 2005 to June 2008 we have added 179 dissertations and with the growth of graduate programs on campus, that number will probably increase. At some point a decision to add bookcases will need to be made or one of the collections currently show-cased will need to be moved to another area.

## General Projects

I continued re-boxing existing collections into standard archival boxes from their original boxes, making progress on the boxes containing library, grants and student affairs files. None are yet finished and will be continued as time permits. I did complete the reboxing and organization of the 17 boxes sent over by Communications and Marketing. Also the boxes of slides and negatives and proof sheets that had been temporarily stored in the KL 100 office have been moved to Archives and reboxed; however, they still need to be properly labeled, repackaged and stored for optimal preservation.

Plans for moving the overflow Meadow Brook Theatre boxes from storage to KL 100/ Archives are underway. This area will continue to be used for older collections that are not going to grow. These collections include the Meadow Brook Theatre Collection, the Academy of Dramatic Arts files, the Meadow Brook Summer Music Academy records, The Meadow Brook Music Festival, the Glyndebourne Picnic and Friends of the Library files, Slavic Folk Ensemble, and Women of Oakland.

## Digitization projects and web sites

The [Archives web site](#) was reorganized and revamped to make it easier to use and more helpful.

### [Meadowbrook Seminars.](#)

Key documents relating to the 1957 Meadow Brook Seminars were digitized and made available via a new web page. These included summaries of the Seminars, lists of participants, and commentary.

OU Magazine: The *OU Magazine* project of creating an annotated and searchable table of contents was expanded from the original span of 1982-1998 to include 1982-2008. Digitized versions of the magazine exist on the archives web site only until 1998 since later issues are available on the OU alumni web site.

Official Papers: A web site for the [O'Dowd files](#), in process last year, was completed.

Work then began on the [Obear](#) provostial files. These files had been moved to the work area and some preliminary sorting had been done. It turned out that additional boxes of Obear papers from old Archives would turn up (having been mislabeled) and complicate process. These boxes were challenging in that their organization was quite different from the presidential files already processed. Different secretaries, different methods of arranging materials. The presidential files came over arranged by subject; Obear's files were arranged roughly by year, sometimes by semester. The decision was made to impose a subject organization on the files which meant that every file folder had to be

refiled under a subject heading and multiple files then organized in chronological order. This was a massive project and took a great deal of time. The website inventory remains in process.

### [Slavic Folk Ensemble](#)

Materials from the Slavic Folk Ensemble were gathered, sorted, and organized for use. This project was jump-started by a visit from a former student and member of the Slavic Folk Ensemble. He had a boxful of memorabilia from their activities and performances and allowed us copy all the unique items in his boxes, items which nicely supplemented the materials already in Archives. A web page consisting of the inventory was created. One of his VHS tapes was converted to DVD so the possibility now exists of having a short online video of one of their performances.

### [Meadow Brook Theatre Collection](#)

The materials (12 bankers boxes), consisting of play programs, publicity packets, newspaper reviews, photographs and other supplementary material that had come over last year and simply been stored in various sites in KL 100, were re-boxed and organized by season. This collection will get integrated into the 60 some boxes of previously processed materials (notebooks, scripts and stage directions) currently in storage. A [preliminary inventory web page](#) has been created as a finding aid for these materials.

### [OU Newsletters:](#)

The inventory of the newspapers and newsletters in archives was expanded and continuously updated as new titles and added issues are found.

<http://library.oakland.edu/information/departments/archives/Newsletters/Newsletters.htm>

One of the first student newspapers, the, [Outcry](#), was scanned and all the issues posted to the web. This publication from the early 1960's provides a charming glimpse of what students at that time thought newsworthy.

### [OU Buildings](#)

(Still in process—waiting for either student or clerical assistance to complete this project) Last year, under the guidance of Robert Slater, Trista Reno worked on a web page providing a photographic chronology of all the buildings on the Oakland University campus. She was able to complete the project up to the mid 90's. Once we get photographs of the more recent buildings on campus, the page will be updated and posted to the Archives web site and linked with the existing Building History site, which also needs updating.

### [Other:](#)

In addition, existing sites such as the Minutes of Board of Trustees, the University Senate, the *OU Journal* and *In the Company of Writers* Author Title Indexes, are updated as needed.

## Ongoing Projects

### Updates

This involves keeping up with adding publications, print and electronic, to the Archives files. Current items being updated regularly and filed include the student newspaper, the brochure and flier file, emails from the Administration (President, Provost, other), the E-news @ OU, Friday announcements, news items from the OU web site and from local newspapers.

### D-Space

As more and more campus information is available in digital format only, decisions need to be made about what to capture and preserve and who is responsible for creating and maintaining the files. Not to mention providing access to them via some sort of indexing venue. This new storage area is in its infancy and has only a few items from archives but the possibility exists for so much more to be included, especially the electronic newsletters that are proliferating on campus.

### Library Historical Files

Archives has accumulated over the years an inordinate number of boxes containing library files. L. Hildebrand has continued reviewing, sorting, filing and weeding the materials in these boxes.

## Statistics

While the number of patrons using the collection was down this year, the number of hours spent retrieving materials for them or doing research seemed higher, probably because I was doing it and not Barb. Alas, I didn't keep track of time as well as Barb had done. A number of the requests were for photos and this pointed out the need for a more detailed subject index to the photo and negative collections since finding the photos was incredibly time consuming. Of special note, Michael Westphal, for his senior history project, spent hours and hours going through materials as he put together a history and commentary on the OU newspapers of the 1960's, including campus protests, the nude poetry reading, censorship issues and general attitudes toward student publications. He left for future archive users a copy of his paper. Archives was also able to supply materials for the Charter Class reunion, for the Ken Morris memorial, for a Cranbrook exhibit as well as numerous students needed OU building information.

## In Conclusion

Much remains to be done but some progress has been made over the past few years. One of the most important accomplishments for me is the fact that, for the most part, when I pick up an item in my hand, there is actually a place for it to go and a place where it can be found when needed. A folder, a box, a drawer, doesn't matter. The goal of a place for everything and everything in its place is slowly coming to fruition in the University Archives.

Submitted by

Linda L. Hildebrand---July 31 2008

Sewage in the University Archives.

