

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ARCHIVES

Guide to the Records of

**BETHESDA PUBLIC LIBRARY
1927-1997**

Record Group 11: Public Libraries

March 19, 2004

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Updated 2018

Montgomery County Archives
Montgomery County Records Center
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ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

In 1939 a Bethesda Public Library Association was formed and obtained authority from the Maryland state legislature to levy a four cents per hundred dollar property tax on residents of the Bethesda fire tax district. The new Bethesda Library which was opened in February 1940, with 3,000 books, in the basement of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. As the library grew, a search for a new building began and land was purchased on Moorland Lane near Arlington Road in 1950. In 1952 the Montgomery County Library system was established.

County assurances to maintain and enhance the library made it possible for the Bethesda library to join the county system in early 1952, turning over its books and its \$62,000 treasury to help pay for the new building which opened in November 1952.

As Bethesda continued to grow, the Moorland Lane building proved inadequate—the parking lot had only 19 spaces. In 1976 the present building was opened; it was renovated in 1992 and again in 2003. In fiscal year 1993, the library circulated 628,000 items and answered 230,000 questions. Electronic resources provide financial, scientific, educational & academic databases used by all segments of the community.

EXTENT

1.33 cubic feet: 1 records box, 1 letter-size Hollinger box.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The records of the Bethesda Public Library comprise correspondence, memoranda, meeting minutes, surveys, reports, statements, circulation records, memorabilia, photographs, and newspaper clippings from 1927 to 1997. It also includes a paper by John Baker, titled “The Development of a County-wide Library System in Montgomery County, Maryland” and a dissertation by Margaret Blinkhorn, “A History of the Bethesda, Maryland Public Library.” The collection documents the Bethesda library from its early roots, sponsored by the Newcomb Club, through several moves and renovations up to 1997.

The collection is arranged alphabetically by subject and then chronologically by date within each subject.

Records in this series located within Audiovisual Record Group 19 are:

- Bethesda Public Library, n.d.
- Bethesda Public Library, 1974
- Bethesda Public Library, 1975
- Bethesda Public Library, 1975
- Bethesda Public Library, 1976
- Bethesda Public Library, 1992
- Bethesda Public Library, August 1992
- Bethesda Public Library, 1992 or 1993
- Bethesda Public Library, 1992 or 1993

- Bethesda Public Library, 1993

Records in this series located within Flat File 19 are:

- Newspaper Scrapbook 1938-1947

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS

This collection is open for research.

LANGUAGE

English.

PROVENANCE

The records were transferred to the Archives from the Bethesda Public Library in Accession #2001-06, originally 5 cubic feet.

USING THESE RECORDS

To request records listed in this finding aid, the following information should be given to the archivist:

Record Group 11, **Records of the Bethesda Public Library**, Series Number and Name, Box Number and Folder Title(s).

The preferred citation for materials from these records is:

Montgomery County Archives; Gaithersburg, Maryland. Record Group 11: Public Libraries.
Records Title: Records of the Bethesda Public Library.

PROCESSING PROCEDURES

General processing procedures consisted of discarding duplicates, unnecessary binders, and routine transmittals. Oversized documents and photographs were removed from the original location in their assigned series and placed in separate containers. Separation sheets were inserted in the original location within the folder to indicate the new location of any records placed elsewhere.

Preservation copying of newspaper clippings was performed whenever feasible. Records in folders were arranged, unless otherwise indicated, in forward chronological order, with undated records appearing at the end of the folder.

PROCESSING STAFF/FINDING AID AUTHOR

MCA staff.

BOX INVENTORY

Box 1

Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, 1947-1949
Advisory Committee Memoranda, 1949
Advisory Committee Statements, 1965-1977
Advisory Council Correspondence, 1947-1949
Annual Reports, 1947-1949
Annual Reports Book Stock, 1963-1980
Annual Reports of the Librarian, 1945-1965
Association By-laws, 1945
Board of Trustees Minutes Book, Part 1, November 1938 - April 1940
Board of Trustees Minutes Book, Part 2, May 1940 - April 1947
Board of Trustees Minutes Book, Part 3, May 1947 - December 1951
Board of Trustees Minutes Book, Part 4, January 1952 - May 1963
Business Advisory Committee, 1986-1988
Committee on Library Building Fund Drive, 1947-1949
County Circulation Records, 1985
County Circulation Records, 1986
County Circulation Records, 1987
County Circulation Records, 1988
County Circulation Records, 1989
County Circulation Records, 1990
County Circulation Records, 1991
County Circulation Records, 1992
County Circulation Records, 1993
County Circulation Records, 1994
County Circulation Records, 1995, January 1996, December 1997
Delegate Advisory Council, 1948
Fenstermaker Files/Archives, 1974-1977
John Baker Paper, August 1976
Margaret Blinkhorn Thesis, May 1963
Monthly Library Reports, 1989
Monthly Library Reports, 1990
Monthly Library Reports, 1991

Box 2

Monthly Library Reports, 1992
Monthly Library Reports, 1993-1994
Monthly Library Reports, 1995
Monthly Library Reports, 1996-1997
New Library Building Land Use/Acquisition, 1956-1973
Newspaper Clippings, 1940-1971

(Box 2, Cont.)

Newspaper Clippings, 1947-1965
Newspaper Clippings, 1948-1961
Newspaper Clippings, 1948-1962
Newspaper Clippings, 1950-1951
Newspaper Clippings, 1950-1963
Newspaper Clippings, 1952, 1961
Newspaper Clippings, 1952-1963
Newspaper Clippings, 8 June 1954
Newspaper Clippings, 1973-1976
Newspaper Clippings & Memorabilia, 1927-1976
Newspaper Clippings & Memorabilia, 1931-1976
Newspaper Scrapbook, 1938-1947
Photograph Collection, n.d.
Photograph Collection, 1974
Photograph Collection, 1975
Photograph Collection, 1976
Photograph Collection, 1992
Photograph Collection, August 1992
Photograph Collection, 1992 or 1993
Photograph Collection, 1992 or 1993
Photograph Collection, 1993
Problems of Expansion Program, 18 May 1947