

A Guide to the J. Russell Bailey, Records, 1935-1986

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1935-1986

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Descriptive Summary

Accession Number

38513

Language

English

Creator

J. Russell Bailey

Physical Characteristics

5.7 cu. ft.

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Barbara B. McBride, Northfield, IL, 9 October 2001.

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Biographical Information

J. Russell Bailey (1905-1998) was born in Southampton, New York, on October 19, 1905. He studied architecture at the University of Michigan and at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. At Cranbrook, the young architect studied in the first class taught by architect Eliel Saarinen. Bailey's designs for the development of Mantaup Point, Long Island, New York, from that time period were published in the *Architectural Record* in 1933. Needing to associate himself with a more established architect because of the on-going economic depression, Bailey joined the firm of Arthur H. Newman from 1933 until just prior to World War II. It was at that time that he joined the Architectural Section of the United States Coast Guard. There, he first ventured into library design with his work on the United States Coast Guard Library in New London, Connecticut.

After military service, Bailey was asked to join manufacturer and architect Angus Snead McDonald in a venture that included designing library buildings. McDonald was head of the well-known Snead and Company firm which manufactured multi-tiered bookshelves for libraries around the world. Modular designs for library buildings were coming into vogue and McDonald and his company had a great impact on their use. In 1946, Bailey resigned from Snead and Company to form his own practice in Orange, Virginia.

Under McDonald's supervision, Bailey had become proponent of modular design in library planning. Throughout his career, he consulted on or designed a significant number of university, college, private, and public library buildings utilizing this design theory. J. Russell Bailey's commissions include Yale University, University of Virginia, University of Maryland, Medical College of Virginia, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Beloit College, and University of Georgia, to mention a few. As his office became more prolific, Bailey took on a partner, Judson M. Gardner, and the firm became known as Bailey and Gardner, Architects. Eventually, the firm was renamed Bailey Gardner and Gillum Architects.

J. Russell Bailey died at his home in Orange, Virginia, on May 28, 1998, at the age of 92.

Scope and Content

This accession consists of the surviving office and project files of J. Russell Bailey, principal in the architectural firm of Bailey and Gardner and well-known library building designer. The collection includes correspondence, memoranda, clippings, photographs, facsimiles, drawings, sketches, and renderings. Series have been designated for Office Records and Project Records. All project-specific materials are included in Series II: Project Records. All general materials, such as clippings not related to a specific project, are housed in Series I: Office Files. This arrangement was imposed by the records' creator(s) and maintained by the processing archivist.

Series I: Office Files, 1935-1986, contains mainly general correspondence, publicity materials, and writings and speeches by J. Russell Bailey. Biographical data on Bailey can also be found in this series.

Series II: Project Files, 1938-1981, consists of project-specific correspondence, publicity and construction photographs, publications, drawings, renderings, sketches, notes, and memoranda. The projects are arranged alphabetically by name. No differentiation has been made between the architect's consulting projects and those in which he was sole or collaborative designer.

Arrangement

Arranged by series number and alphabetically by folder title there under.

Contents List

Series I: Office Files 1935-1986

Arrangement

Arrangement: Alphabetical by folder title.

Biographical Data, n.d.,

Box 1

Folder 1

Correspondence, General, 1946-1949,

Box 1

Folder 2

Correspondence, General, 1950-1951,

Box 1

Folder 3

Correspondence, General, 1952-1955, n.d.,

Box 1

Folder 4

Correspondence, General, 1985-1986,

Box 1

Folder 5

Photographs, J. Russell Bailey, ca. 1960-1969,

Box 1

Folder 6

Publicity Materials, 1947-1976,

Box 1

Folder 7

Speeches and Writings, J. Russell Bailey, 1935-1962,

Box 1

Folder 8

Speeches and Writings, J. Russell Bailey, 1963-1969, n.d.,

Box 1

Folder 9

Miscellaneous, n.d.,

Box 1

Folder 10

Series II: Project Files, 1938-1981

Arrangement

Arrangement: Alphabetical by folder title.

Alexandria Public Library, Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch (VA), ca. 1969,

Box 2

Folder 1

Allegheny College (PA), 1976,

Box 2

Folder 2

Alliance Chapel (PA), 1963,

Box 2

Folder 3

Appalachian State University (NC), n.d.,

Box 2

Folder 4

Arlington Public Library, Central Branch (VA), 1961-1969,

Box 2

Folder 5

Arlington Public Library, Central Branch (VA), ca. 1961,

Box 8

Folder 1

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Arlington Public Library, Cherrydale Branch (VA), 1962,

Box 2

Folder 6

Arlington Public Library, Glencarlyn Branch (VA), n.d.,

Box 2

Folder 7

Arlington Public Library, Shirlington Branch, 1962-1963,

Box 2

Folder 8

Arlington Public Library, Westover Branch (VA), 1963,

Box 2

Folder 9

Austin Seminary (TX), 1968,

Box 2

Folder 10

Beloit College (WI), 1958-1963,

Box 2

Folder 11

Berkeley Divinity School (CT), 1955,

Box 2

Folder 12

Botetourt-Rockbridge Regional Library (VA), 1967,

Box 2

Folder 13

Bridgewater College (VA), 1964,

Box 2

Folder 14

Carter, Claiborne B. (VA), 1947,

Box 8

Folder 2

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

The Citadel, n.d.,

Box 2

Folder 15

Concordia College (IL), ca. 1960,

Box 2

Folder 16

Converse College (SC), n.d.,

Box 8

Folder 3

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Covington-Alleghany Library (VA), 1961,

Box 2

Folder 17

Danville Public Library (VA), n.d.,

Box 2

Folder 18

Davidson College (NC), 1974,

Box 2

Folder 19

DePauw University (IN), 1957,

Box 2

Folder 20

Eastern Mennonite College (VA), 1961-1971,

Box 2

Folder 21

Elkhart Public Library (IN), n.d.,

Box 2

Folder 22

Emory University (GA), 1956-1961,

Box 2

Folder 23

Emory and Henry College (VA), 1966,

Box 2

Folder 24

Falls Church Library (VA), 1950-1955,

Box 3

Folder 1

Falls Church Library (VA), 1956,

Box 3

Folder 2

Falls Church Library (VA), 1957,

Box 3

Folder 3

Falls Church Library (VA), 1958, n.d.,

Box 3

Folder 4

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Headquarters (VA), ca. 1962,

Box 3

Folder 5

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Headquarters (VA), ca. 1962,

Box 8

Folder 4

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Richard Byrd Branch (VA), ca. 1965,

Box 3

Folder 6

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Thomas Jefferson Branch (VA), 1962,

Box 3

Folder 7

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Dolly Madison Branch (VA), 1966-1967,

Box 3

Folder 8

Fairfax Co. Public Library, George Mason Branch (VA), ca. 1966,

Box 3

Folder 9

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Sherwood Reference Center (VA), 1970-1971,

Box 3

Folder 10

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Martha Washington Branch (VA), 1969-1970,

Box 3

Folder 11

Fairfax Co. Public Library, Woodrow Wilson Branch (VA), 1967,

Box 3

Folder 12

Goldsboro-Wayne Co. Public Library (NC), 1976,

Box 4

Folder 1

Gordonsville Community Hospital (VA), 1948-1951,

Box 4

Folder 2

Gordonsville Community Hospital (VA), 1952-1953,

Box 4

Folder 3

Gordonsville Motor Court (VA), 1947-1948,

Box 4

Folder 4

Institute of Textile Technology (VA), 1938-1949,

Box 4

Folder 5

Institute of Textile Technology (VA), 1953-1954,

Box 4

Folder 6

Institute of Textile Technology (VA), 1955, n.d.,

Box 4

Folder 7

Institute of Textile Technology (VA), 1947,

Map-case 4-G-8

Drawer 3

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Jefferson-Madison Public Library, Gordon Ave. Branch (VA), 1966,

Box 4

Folder 8

Kentucky Flooring (VA), ca. 1946,

Box 4

Folder 9

Kentucky Flooring (VA), 1946,

Box 8

Folder 5

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Kenyon College (OH), n.d.,

Box 4

Folder 10

Louisa Baptist Church (VA), 1954,

Box 4

Folder 11

Louisa High School (VA), 1958-1959,

Box 4

Folder 12

Madison Co. Courthouse (VA), 1952,

Box 4

Folder 13

Madison Co. Courthouse (VA), 1952,

Map-case 4-G-8

Drawer 3

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Marshall Terrace (VA), 1948-1952,

Box 4

Folder 14

Mary Baldwin College (VA), n.d.

Box 4

Folder 15

Mercer University (GA), 1965,

Box 4

Folder 16

Mississippi State University (MS), 1971,

Box 4

Folder 17

NAHB-Forum House Design Competition, n.d.,

Map-case 4-G-8

Drawer 3

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Orange Baptist Church (VA), n.d.,

Box 8

Folder 6

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Orange Co. Historical Society (VA), 1975-1977,

Box 4

Folder 18

Orange Co. Historical Society (VA), 1976,

Box 8

Folder 7

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Orange Co. Nursing Home (VA), 1980-1981,

Box 5

Folder 1

Orange Co. Nursing Home (VA), 1980-1981,

Map-case 4-G-8

Drawer 3

Orange Co. Public Library (VA), n.d.,

Box 5

Folder 2

Orange Presbyterian Church (VA), 1969-1972,

Box 5

Folder 3

Parkersburg and Wood Cos. Public Libraries (WV), 1976,

Box 5

Folder 4

Presbyterian Colleges (SC), n.d.,

Box 5

Folder 5

The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary (a.k.a. Virginia Theological Seminary)(VA), 1952-1954,

Box 5

Folder 6

The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary (a.k.a. Virginia Theological Seminary)(VA), 1955,

Box 5

Folder 7

The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary (a.k.a. Virginia Theological Seminary)(VA), Jan. 1956 - Jly. 1956,

Box 5

Folder 8

The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary (a.k.a. Virginia Theological Seminary)(VA), Aug. 1956 - Jan. 1957,

Box 5

Folder 9

The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary (a.k.a. Virginia Theological Seminary)(VA), n.d.,

Box 5

Folder 10

The Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary (a.k.a. Virginia Theological Seminary) (VA), 1955,

Box 8

Folder 8

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Randolph-Macon College (VA), 1962-1963,

Box 6

Folder 1

Randolph-Macon Women's College (VA), 1966,

Box 6

Folder 2

Randolph-Macon Women's College (VA), 1967,

Box 6

Folder 3

Richmond Public Library (VA), ca. 1965,

Box 6

Folder 4

Roberts Wesleyan College (NY), 1962-1965,

Box 6

Folder 5

Robeson Co. Public Library (NC), 1969,

Box 6

Folder 6

South Boston Public Library (VA), 1980,

Box 6

Folder 7

South Carolina State Library (SC), 1965,

Box 6

Folder 8

Snead and Co. Houses, n.d.,

Box 8

Folder 9

Sweetbriar College (VA), 1964-1977,

Box 6

Folder 9

Thomas Nelson Community College (VA), 1971-1973,

Box 6

Folder 10

Union Theological Seminary (VA), 1966-1967,

Box 6

Folder 11

Union Theological Seminary (VA), 1969,

Box 8

Folder 10

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

University of North Carolina (NC), n.d.,

Box 6

Folder 12

University of North Dakota (ND), 1961,

Box 6

Folder 13

University of Richmond, Boatwright Library (VA), 1976-1977,

Box 6

Folder 14

University of Richmond, Boatwright Library (VA), 1976-1977,

Box 6

Folder 15

University of Richmond, Chapel (VA), 1977-1979,

Box 7

Folder 1

University of Virginia, Alderman Library (VA), 1969-1973,

Box 7

Folder 2

University of Virginia, Alderman Library (VA), 1976-1977,

Map-case 4-G-8

Drawer 3

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

University of Virginia, Health Sciences Library (VA), 1976-1977

Box 7

Folder 3

Unidentified Drawings, n.d.,

Map-case 4-G-8

Drawer 3

Scope and Content

OVERSIZE materials.

Unidentified Recreation Building, n.d.,

Box 8

Folder 11

Arrangement

OVERSIZE materials.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VA), 1949-1956,

Box 7

Folder 4

Washington College (MD), 1967-1970,

Box 7

Folder 5

Washington College (MD), 1967-1981,

Box 7

Folder 6

Waynesboro Public Library (VA), 1969,

Box 7

Folder 7

Wesleyan Campus (GA), 1958,

Box 7

Folder 8

Westminster Theological Seminary (PA), 1963,

Box 7

Folder 9

Woodberry Forest (VA), 1947-1951,

Box 7

Folder 10