

**Guide to the
Lawrence University Buildings, Hamar Union and Memorial Union
Collection**

Collection number: LU-ARC20-03

University Archives
Seeley G. Mudd Library

Lawrence University
Appleton, Wisconsin

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Descriptive Summary of the Collection

Title

Lawrence University buildings, Hamar Union and Memorial Union collection

Inclusive dates

1925-2005

Collection number

LU-ARC20-03

Extent

0.6 linear foot (2 boxes)

Language of collection material

Collection is in English.

Repository

Lawrence University. Seeley G. Mudd Library. University Archives.
Appleton, Wisconsin 54911

Abstract

This collection is comprised of materials documenting the history of Hamar Union and Memorial Union, Lawrence University's first and second student unions. Hamar Union was used as a student union beginning in 1926 until Memorial Union became the student union when it was completed in 1951. Correspondence, newspaper clippings, programs, and photographs are included in the collection. The collection is part of the Lawrence University Buildings Collection. Materials are arranged alphabetically by subject and type of material, then in chronological order at the file level.

Important Information for Researchers

Access

Collection is open for research.

Publication rights

Property rights and copyright reside with Lawrence University. For permissions to reproduce or to publish, please contact the University Archivist.

Preferred citation

Lawrence University Buildings, Hamar Union and Memorial Union Collection. LU-ARC20-03. University Archives, Seeley G. Mudd Library, Appleton, Wisconsin.

Acquisition information

Materials on Hamar Union and Memorial Union were collected and placed in the Archives vertical file prior to 2005. The donor and source of the materials, as well as who collected them and arranged them in the vertical file is unknown. Materials on Hamar Union and Memorial Union will continue to be collected and placed in this collection by the University Archivist.

Processing history

Preliminary processing was done prior to 2005, date and processor unknown. Further processing and finding aid was done by Julia Stringfellow, 2009.

Building History

Hamar Union served as Lawrence's union from 1926-1951. It was named in honor of Olive Hamar, a Lawrence student who died of meningitis following an appendectomy in March 1925. Olive had been an active Lawrence student and had worked to raise funds and attention for Lawrence to have a hospitality house. After her death, Lawrence students continued to raise funds for a student union and in 1926, the house located where Plntz Hall is currently located became Lawrence's first student union. Hamar Union included a formal entertaining room that had a piano, a Windsor room used as a library, and a Wicker room with a victrola for dancing.

After the completion of Memorial Union, Hamar Union was used as faculty apartments until 1960 when it was razed to make room for Plntz Hall.

Memorial Union, completed in 1951, was provided by alumni, trustees, and friends of the college as a memorial to alumni who died in World Wars I and II, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War. Talk of building a new union began in 1945 and a cornerstone was laid in 1947 while Lawrence centennial activities were taking place on campus. After this event, due to building codes and rising costs, the idea of a new union was neglected and the cornerstone mellowed in the landscape. When construction began on the union in 1950, the cornerstone was relaid very quietly in the alcove of the new building.

The building was constructed of lannon stone and overlooks the Fox River. The Union cost about \$200, 000 to build, and Richard Phlipp of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was the architect. The main rooms of the Union include Riverview Lounge, a general meeting center for the Lawrence community, the Union Grill that provides food and beverages, the Viking Room, the Lawrence bar, and the coffeehouse. An outdoor terrace is located on the Union's lower floor. The hill outside the Union is been a popular sledding spot for students. The Union contained a music listening room, a trophy room, and the Olive Hamar conference room in its early years.

See also: Breunig, Charles, [A great and good work :a history of Lawrence University, 1847-1964.](#)

Raney, William Francis, [The history of Lawrence University, 1847-1925.](#)

Schumann, Marguerite E., [Creation of a campus; a chronicle of Lawrence College buildings and the men who made them..](#)

Chronology

- 1925 • March, Olive Hamar dies
- 1926 • Hamar Union opens as Lawrence's first student union.
- 1945 • Alumni begin to raise funds for Memorial Union.
- 1947 • Cornerstone is laid for the not yet built Union.
- 1950 • Cornerstone relaid in the alcove of Memorial Union.
- 1951 • June 9, Memorial Union is dedicated.
- 1960 • Hamar Union is razed to make room for Plantz Hall.
- 1960 • John Fitzgerald Kennedy visits Lawrence while running for president and gives a speech in Riverview Lounge.
- 2000? • Renovation takes place for Memorial Union
- 2005 • Memorial Union becomes a Charter Member of the Association of College Unions International.

Collection Scope and Content Summary

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Collection Arrangement

The collection is arranged alphabetically by subject and type of material, then chronologically at the file level.

Related Collections

The following collection in University Archives contains related materials:

- Lawrence University Vertical File Collection.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Hamar, Olive.
Lawrence University.
Lawrence University Buildings.
Lawrence University History.

Genres and Forms of Materials

Clippings.
Letters.
Photographic prints.

Collection Contents

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Box : Folder</u>
Hamar Union	
Articles and dedication materials, 1925-1951	1 :
Correspondence	
Between Hamar family and Lawrence, 1929-1945	1 :
Regarding work on house, 1934-1939	1 :
Photographs, circa 1926-1952	1 :
Memorial Union	
Analysis of gifts, 1950-1952	1 :
Articles	1 :
Construction of Union, 1949-1951	1 :
Dedication and opening of Union, 1951-1956	1 :
Correspondence	
Century Club gifts, 1946-1951	1 :
Construction of Union, 1943-1960	1 :
General regarding Union, 1943-1997	1 :
Gifts, 1944-1953	1 :
Lawrentians who died in wars and plaque honoring them in Union, 1947-1951	1 :
Miscellaneous materials, 1983-circa 2001	1 :
Photographs	
Construction, 1950-1951	1 :
Exterior, circa 1951-2003. 2 folders.	1 :
Interior, circa 1951-1990	1 :
Interior, Riverview Lounge, circa 1951-2000	1 :
Interior, Union Grill, circa 1951-2000	1 :
Interior, Viking Room, circa 1951-1983	2 :
Programs and correspondence regarding dedication of Union, 1950-1951	2 :
Reports	
Audit Report, August 1970	2 :
State of the Union Message, 1970-1971	2 :
Renovation plans, circa 1990	2 :
Union Grill, menus and announcements, 1984-2005	2 :
Viking Room, announcements and articles, 1960-2005	2 :