

The Murray Bowen Archives Project

Project Update, January, 2015



For ten years...I was sort of known for having been on the scene since "Family" began but no one really recognized how my work was different from all the others. Within me I have known all the time that my work is on the trail of a completely new theory...
Murray Bowen, 1970 Letter, Williamsburg Collection

Dear Friends,

My father, Dr. Murray Bowen, knew he was "on the trail" of a new and different way of seeing human relationships and functioning. He knew that differentiation of self was on the side of evolution. He knew his theory was not finished, and expected it would be many decades before it began to be broadly accepted. And so he gave his theory to the world. The depth and breadth of this gift is extraordinary. It is the mission of *The Murray Bowen Archives Project of Leaders for Tomorrow (LFT)*

to make his gift open and accessible to the world.

Shortly before Dr. Bowen's death in 1990, it was agreed that the National Library of Medicine (NLM) would be the repository for all of his work. The collection, as a whole, is prodigious, ranging from video and audio tapes, to clinical notes, to drafts and submitted versions of papers, to professional and personal letters. There is potential to expand the collection further, through the Oral History Project and connections to work Dr. Bowen did in other settings. Yet, as exciting as the collection and its possible expansion is, the most important reason for the archival collection is to foster and disseminate scholarship. There is much still to be learned from Dr. Bowen's work.

The purpose of this *Project Update* is to inform you about the current status and long-term goals of *The Murray Bowen Archives Project*. This includes details about the primary collections: the Professional Collection (currently at NLM), the Williamsburg Collection (being processed in Williamsburg, VA) and the Oral History Project, as well as information on the website and database development, communication, and finances.

Significant progress was made in 2014. Up until now, work has been conducted by Board members on a volunteer basis. In December, the Board took the momentous step of appointing The Rev. Dr. Carol P. Jeunnette as our new Executive Director, a step that signals a new era in how LFT will carry out its mission of giving Bowen Theory to the world. She will be paid half-time to develop programs, coordinate projects, and conduct the important day-to-day business all non-profits face.

LFT needs your support and your resources, both financial and practical, to enable LFT to assist the National Library Medicine in opening The Murray Bowen Archives to the world. The Board of LFT and I are grateful to all who have made this work possible thus far, and to all whose continuing support will allow our work to move forward.

Sincerely,
Joanne Bowen
President, Leaders for Tomorrow

2014 NEWS

Carol Jeunnette, Executive Director

In December, 2014, the LFT board voted to appoint the Rev. Dr. Carol P. Jeunnette as its first Executive Director. Moving forward with this restructuring of LFT is a momentous step in achieving our mission of giving Bowen Theory to the world.

As a pastor and licensed counselor, Carol brings an exceptional background and experience to her position. First introduced to Bowen theory in 1996 by Rabbi Edwin Friedman, she has been a student of Bowen theory ever since, including a 5-years in the Bowen Center's Special Post-Graduate Program.

Since her introduction to LFT and *The Murray Bowen Archives Project* early in 2013, Carol has helped with the Williamsburg Collection and served as an editor of LFT's first *Project Update* issued in March, 2014. Glimpses of the "Treasure Trove" convinced Carol of the importance of the Archives Project on multiple levels.

As she describes it,

“1) The Archives allow insight into a theory that is rooted, tested and developed in the complex, messy realities of life. Seeing the contexts from which concepts grew brings them to life – allowing greater depth, breadth and understanding.

2) Dr. Bowen was a *real* person who developed the theory as he tried to live it in the midst of a *real* family, *real* work situations, with *real* patients and clients. The letters of the Williamsburg Collection record this reality.

3) Dr. Bowen knew it would take decades for this theory to be recognized and accepted. As that happens, the availability of this larger body of work is increasingly important—as an historical record and an aid to deeper understanding and ongoing development of the theory.

4) Many who have spent time in the Williamsburg Collection have commented that reading through boxes seems to settle anxiety and promote clear-headedness – it is something about being in the presence of one working on differentiation, even if that presence comes through the written word.

And fifth, (definitely not last), in an increasingly complex, anxious, and reactive world, Bowen theory offers a way of thinking that shapes a way of being that is on the side of life. Opening the Murray Bowen Archives is one way of increasing exposure and accessibility to what truly can be a gift to the world.”

Carol and her husband, John, plan to relocate to Williamsburg during the summer or fall of 2015. In the meantime, she works from her home in New Hampshire.

Contact Carol at

caroljeunnette@murraybowenarchives.org

www.murraybowenarchives.org

Websites are crucial forms of communication. We are pleased to announce that www.murraybowenarchives.org is back in business, *while* it is in the process of being redesigned. During the past few months, a talented website team has been assembled, including: Project leader Barbara LeBlanc, a communications and marketing specialist and long-time participant in the New England Seminar on Bowen Theory; Jean Harrison, a graphic designer and recently retired Chief of the Division of Visitor Services of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Greg Brown, a free-lance website designer/content specialist specializing in historical and scholarly web sites; and Patricia Comella, Vice President of LFT and a long-time student of Bowen theory across a broad range of applications, who has been involved in the project from inception to the present.

Over the next few months, you will notice changes in the logo, structure, and content. The overall goal is to develop a dynamic website that is able to communicate well to those already committed to The Murray Bowen Archives Project, and to those who are newly introduced to this work. During the transitions necessary to reach this overall goal, every effort will be made to maintain the basic information and usability of the site.

**Now OPEN to Researchers:
The Bowen Professional Collection
at The National Library of
Medicine**

Although the majority of Dr. Bowen's professional papers and many audio and video tapes were transferred to NLM by 2010, the process of making the collection accessible is quite lengthy and complex. To this point, archivists have taken the initial steps needed to preserve the collection, and have created short finding aids for each of the boxes. Catherine Rakow has segregated sensitive personal and professional documents which, for confidentiality purposes, are sealed until 2052.

The NLM collection continues to grow. Additional videotapes and documents recently were relocated from the Bowen Center. Once the Williamsburg Collection is processed and scanned, it will be transferred.



Materials prepared to be transferred from the Bowen Center to NLM.

In August, Bowen Center and LFT representatives Joanne Bowen, Priscilla Friesen and Pat Comella met with Rebecca Warlow of NLM to identify and clarify parameters of the work needed to reopen the collection. As a result, this past fall, the Murray Bowen Collection in the History of Medicine Division of the National Library of Medicine was reopened to researchers! Although the larger goal of opening the collection (physically and digitally) to the public is years in the future, having this collection accessible to researchers is a significant step, and offers new opportunities to Bowen scholars.

Because the collection is still unprocessed and contains sensitive information, researchers are required to apply for and receive approval from the History of Medicine Division of the NLM. Details are available from Carol Jeunette (caroljeunette@murraybowenarchives.org), and on the website: www.murraybowenarchives.org. For general visitor information for NLM, please visit www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/about/visitus.html and www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/informationfor/scholars.html.

The Murray Bowen Collection is stored offsite and must be transferred to the library in Bethesda. Once approval has been received, allow 30 days for your requested materials to be transferred to NLM.

Volunteers: Thank You!

With few exceptions, the work of LFT and *The Murray Bowen Archives Project* is done by volunteers. Hours, days, weeks, and months of knowledge, wisdom, time and energy have been donated. Thanks to all who have contributed in so many ways! Special thanks go to team leaders: Catherine Rakow (Work-In processing), Anne G. Curran (Work-In logistics), Barbara LeBlanc (website), and Andrea Schara (Oral History Project).

**Leaders for Tomorrow Board
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The Williamsburg Collection

While cleaning out the Bowen family home in 2011, the Bowen siblings and in-laws made a discovery that almost doubled the scope of *The Murray Bowen Archives Project*. The discovery, now known as the “Treasure Trove,” includes boxes and boxes of letters, records, notes, and papers dating from the 1930’s to the 1950’s. The Treasure Trove, along with the contents of Dr. Bowen’s home office not previously moved to NLM, were transferred to a climate-controlled storage locker in Williamsburg, VA, and now are known as the Williamsburg Collection. With this discovery, the primary focus of LFT shifted from the collection at NLM to processing and preparing the newly found documents for transfer to NLM.

We are pleased to announce that the *initial* processing of the Williamsburg Collection is almost finished! During the four Work-Ins in 2014, organized and supervised by Catherine Rakow, the following tasks were done by volunteers and family members:

- Personal letters and materials were identified and removed.
- Following archival standards, letters were removed from envelopes, staples were removed, and plastic paper clips replaced with metal ones.
- Essential metadata were recorded (date, author and recipients of letters; brief notes on significant topics).

The collection of photographs undergoing scanning and processing at the Bowen Center has been relocated to Williamsburg. Work completed prior to the move is now the basis for a metadata repository - nicknamed “MetaMurray” - that will expand to include the entire Williamsburg Collection.

We anticipate the initial processing of the Treasure Trove will be complete by mid-2015. At that point, primary focus will shift to scanning and entering information into MetaMurray. Photographs, title pages of books from Dr. Bowen’s home library,

significant papers, notes and letters will be included in this phase of the project. Scanning documents will assist in disseminating knowledge and enhancing the research capabilities of these media. The long-term goal is to support searches across different media.



Williamsburg Collection Storage Locker

Fundraising Read-In/Work-In

Opening *The Murray Bowen Archives* to the world is an immense project. Many of the goals along the way are clear, such as processing, scanning, and digitizing the collections to make them searchable and accessible online. In addition, there are dreams: fellowships for researchers, and a “Living Archive” for research.

Bringing these goals and dreams to reality will require significant resources from those who are convinced of the importance and robustness of Bowen theory in all aspects of life. This coming year, we anticipate building on a plan developed by Walter Smith by inviting a small group of current donors to meet in Williamsburg to assist in developing strategies to raise funds. Reading of letters and documents from the Williamsburg Collection will be interspersed with discussion and planning. If you are interested in participating, please contact Carol Jeunnette, Executive Director or Joanne Bowen, President (jbowen27@gmail.com).

The Oral History Project

Traces of the development of theory are scattered throughout Dr. Bowen's formal and informal writings: in personal and professional letters, in early drafts of papers, in clinical and informal notes, in doodled drawings, and presentations. This documentation, from Dr. Bowen's own hands and in his own words, is invaluable to deeper understanding of the theory and its development, as well as to its future evolution.

Beyond this documentation are additional sources of learning and understanding: people with whom Dr. Bowen worked during the years he was developing and advancing his theory. The goal of the Oral History Project, led by Andrea Schara, is to gather information on the life and times of Murray Bowen. It focuses on how he influenced and interacted with others and ways in which he explicated his theoretical ideas in everyday life. To date, over 60 interviews have been conducted with people who knew Dr. Bowen.

Conducting and recording interviews are significant steps, but they are just the beginning of the project. Interviews next need to be transcribed and indexed in order to make them usable. LFT has hired Ellen Chapman, a talented Ph.D. candidate in anthropology at the College of William and Mary, to transcribe the interviews. Using ELAN, an annotation software, transcriptions that include ELAN files are produced in both Word and pdf versions. ELAN files allow specific text to be linked to specific audio/video frames. With these tools, researchers can search for specific words or passages in a given interview, copy exchanges verbatim, identify which segments of the interview are most relevant to their work, and thereby use the Bowen Archive Transcriptions for a variety of scholarly work. By transcribing these interviews and providing them in ELAN as well as other formats, the accessibility of the recordings to researchers as well as the efficiency and reliability of a variety of analyses and projects have been increased.

Significant progress has been made with the Oral History Project in 2014. The 37 interviews transcribed this year include a variety of intriguing information regarding personal and professional relationships with Dr. Bowen. There are examples of his thinking and personality, descriptions of how individuals came to the profession, as well as a variety of different opinions and analyses of Bowen's enduring impact. As well, strides have been taken toward developing an integrated index that will allow researchers to identify quickly which interviews might be of use to them in their work.

At this point, 25 interviews are left to transcribe. We will continue work on these transcriptions in 2015, complete new interviews as necessary, and produce a comprehensive index that will link the interviews with related topics and themes. Interviews for which we have signed releases will be transcribed and become part of a growing ELAN database of searchable interviews.

2014 Financial Overview

Beginning Balance:	\$ 83,381.38
Income:	40,936.17
Expenses:	<u>23,198.82</u>
Ending Balance:	\$ 97,393.73

2015 Anticipated Expenses

Williamsburg Collection

Processing:	\$ 3,500.00
Scanning:	3,500.00
Oral History:	10,000.00
Administrative (staff, office):	60,000.00
Website:	4,000.00
Travel/Fundraising:	<u>10,000.00</u>
Total Anticipated Expenses:	\$ 91,000.00

2015 Goals

- Continue development and implementation of fundraising strategies
- Launch redesigned website
- Continue work on infrastructure, including opening of a dedicated office/workspace in Williamsburg
- Complete initial processing of Williamsburg Collection
- Continue scanning of photographs; begin scanning of documents
- Pilot and begin use of “MetaMurray” database
- Complete transcription of Oral History Project interviews
- Develop strategies to promote research and scholarship using the Bowen archives

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This past year has been one of significant growth. I want to thank our donors and volunteers for their generous contributions, and to thank Board Member Walter Smith, who resigned this year, for the important contribution he made to help define our mission, vision, and fundraising strategy.

We have made significant progress on our 2014 goals. Transcriptions of oral histories are well underway, a search function is under development, and those whose interviews have been transcribed will soon receive a Word version of their interview. We have assembled a talented team of professionals to work on our website, and upgrades are underway. Processing of Murray Bowen’s family papers, currently housed in Williamsburg, has made great progress. I understand, and I am gratified to see the growing interest and desire to have access to these powerfully written communications, but there is more work to do. We need your support to make these papers available to the world.

In addition, through Catherine Rakow’s dedication and effort, the professional paper collection housed at the National Library of Medicine is now open to researchers. Bowen professionals can, at long last, have access to Murray Bowen’s professional writings and correspondence. Like Bowen’s family correspondence, this collection is a treasure trove, compelling and powerfully written. I encourage those wanting access to contact our website for detailed instructions. Lastly, our Board’s momentous decision to hire an Executive Director is a calculated risk. Our anticipated expenses for 2015 are considerably higher, yet it has become clear that this is necessary if we are to attain our goals. I am pleased and confident that, with your continued support, this step will enable LFT to fulfill its mission of giving Murray Bowen’s Archives to the world.

Thanks again to our volunteers and donors who have helped bring us this far. I hope you will again consider donating to support our quest to make Murray Bowen’s archives available to the world.

Sincerely

*Joanne Bowen, Ph.D.
President, Leaders for Tomorrow*