



State of the Archives Report

Welcome to TMBAP's "State of the Archives" Report, where we will document progress that was made this past year towards making the Murray Bowen Archives accessible to the world. This past year also included important nodal events that will impact TMBAP's mission going forward, and we have included a summary of these events in this communication as well.

First, we are pleased to report that the following projects were completed in 2023:

Cataloguing the Bowen Center Library, where the contents of the Bowen Center's library were documented. This project included the creation of a research tool that will enable researchers to search within the books and journals in the library without having to physically open the book.

"Phase II" of the Andrea Schara Photograph Collection has been digitized. This second batch of photographs was discovered by Andrea Schara last year, and they have now been added to her overall collection. We're currently in the process of making this collection searchable.

Metadata Pilot Project – Phase I. This past year, TMBAP began building a searchable list of "key terms" related to Bowen theory and concepts that will facilitate more robust searches of Archive materials. Phase I of this project focused on a small collection of professional correspondence housed in Williamsburg. Learnings from this pilot will then be used to develop additional metadata search terms for other parts of the Archives Collection.

TMBAP's 2023 Webinar was held on Dr. Bowen's birthday, Jan 31st. The event was free for those who attended but was still a major fundraising success thanks to our generous sponsors, Allison Whitney, John Cammack, and Bill and Linda Dwyer. We thank them all again for ensuring that the work of the Archives Project continues. Please plan to join us for our 2024 Webinar, taking place on January 31, 2024, at 7 PM ET. This event will again be free to all!



The Bowen Center Separation Project successfully separated Dr. Bowen's personal Intellectual Property that he and Mrs. Bowen brought to the Bowen Center for educational purposes from other materials housed at the Bowen Center. These materials are now incorporated into Dr. Bowen's professional papers in Williamsburg.

Williamsburg Assessment Project successfully completed separating Dr. Bowen's professional records from his military records, objects, and family papers and created a system to store and retrieve materials. Boxes were numbered, contents recorded in Excel, and then stored in designated spaces in a climate-controlled facility.

Planning efforts are now underway to restore and preserve Dr. Bowen's medical bag and the chalkboard he used at his home office.

In addition to the above progress, **we successfully initiated a response to the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) decision to deaccession all clinical papers and videotapes** from the L. Murray Bowen collection. Until now, TMBAP had functioned with the long-term expectation that the archives would be housed and accessible at the NLM. Obviously, the NLM's decision alters that expectation for these clinical records. We will further discuss the impact of the NLM's decision below, and the implications for how TMBAP plans to move forward over the following months.

NLM's decision to deaccession all clinical papers and videotapes from the L. Murray Bowen collection.

On September 5th, 2023, NLM informed the Bowen Family and the Bowen Center that they were deaccessioning all clinical papers and videotapes from the L. Murray Bowen collection. This means 27 boxes of clinical records and 515 clinical tapes are now officially removed from their listed holdings. NLM has decided to no longer accept clinical collections or any collection of human subject research. This policy is a response to the ever-increasing privacy concerns stemming from societal pressures and governmental guidelines around privacy such as HIPAA. This did not come as a complete surprise, as archive libraries throughout the country are dealing with difficulties surrounding digitizing personal collections. Fortunately, TMBAP was already engaged in resolving liability questions surrounding human subject information, and efforts to digitize Bowen's personal correspondence were already underway. TMBAP is engaging legal advice on how to address privacy and liability concerns so that these materials can be open to researchers.



Why we view this development as good news:

This decision by the NLM to return the collection does pose additional challenges that we must address. However, we also believe this shift opens up opportunities for expediting access to the archival materials.

NLM has returned Dr. Bowen's clinical records to the Bowen family and the clinical tapes to the Bowen Center and Bowen Family. In collaboration with TMBAP, we can now proceed with developing a redaction system that addresses privacy concerns, and deal with preservation and digitization.

During the last three months of 2023, TMBAP either addressed or initiated the following actions:

- Physically transferring the clinical papers and tapes from NLM.
- Storing the clinical papers in a climate-controlled space in Williamsburg.
- Locating the best intermediate storage to preserve and protect the fragile clinical tapes,
- Completing an assessment to document what tapes have been returned to the Bowen family and to the Bowen Center.

In the coming months, our work will include:

Consulting attorneys with expertise in both privacy and archive environments.

TMBAP will develop a system of addressing privacy through redaction, which will allow the essence of Dr. Bowen's work to be available while protecting third parties.

Researching ways in which other libraries and archives are approaching privacy and liability concerns regarding "human subject" content and clinical data. A potential outcome of these efforts could be that TMBAP develops a "template" that other archive collections might emulate to make these types of collections more readily available to the public.

Developing a processing and digitization plan for archival items —namely, utilizing technology to cost-effectively address privacy and redaction requirements.



Collaborating with and financially contributing to other institutions across the Bowen Network to assist them with preserving and processing their archival materials.

Revising TMBAP's strategic plans and priorities in light of the NLM's decision. We must balance the short-term goal of expediting access to the archives with the longer-term goals of processing the collection with care and forethought that will also serve future generations.

From its founding, TMBAP has maintained a can-do spirit. We are pleased to see how the organization is responding to recent events with responsibility, creativity, and a sense of opportunity.

The developments this past year have opened up unprecedented opportunities to accelerate progress toward TMBAP's vision. Now, more than ever, your support of our work and our Mission matters. Thank you for playing your part in helping us respond to these exciting challenges.