Collection Summary

Title: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records
Span Dates: 1965-1994
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1978-1985)
ID No.: MSS61695
Creator: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund
Extent: 43,700 items
Extent: 125 containers plus 8 oversize
Extent: 53 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm84061695

Summary: Organization founded for the purpose of erecting a national memorial honoring American veterans of the Vietnam conflict. Administrative files document the operations and technical resources required for the erection of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as well as the surrounding political controversy.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Carhart, Tom.
Century, Larry.
Clinton, Bill, 1946-
Copulos, Milton R.
Doubek, Robert W.
Hart, Frederick, 1943-
Lin, Maya Ying.
Scruggs, Jan C.
Sherwood, Carlton.
Webb, James H.

Organizations
Binswanger Glasscraft Products.
Cooper-Lecky Partnership.
Gilbane Building Company.
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.

Subjects
Memorial Day.
Vietnam Veterans Memorial (Washington, D.C.)
War memorials--Washington (D.C.)

Provenance

The records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund were donated to the Library of Congress in several installments, the first in 1984 upon completion of the memorial. Additional gifts followed, 1985-1999.
Transfers
Photographs, photographic slides, posters, blueprints, and drawings have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division; videotapes, audiotapes, and phonograph records have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress. These transfers are identified as part of the fund's records. A scale model of the memorial has been transferred to the National Park Service, the government agency responsible for the administration of the memorial, along with a large poster and banner associated with the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans.

Copyright Status
Copyright in the unpublished writings of members of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions
The records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation
Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note
The records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund span the years 1965-1994, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period between 1978 and 1985. The records document the administrative and operational history of the fund, a nonprofit, charitable organization founded for the purpose of erecting a national memorial honoring American veterans of the Vietnamese Conflict. The fund's files detail all phases of the activities associated with this undertaking, including the design, construction, financing, and promotion of the memorial. The main body of the fund's records is arranged in two series identified as Office Files and Project Director's Files, while documentation of the organization's fund-raising activities is grouped under a separate series. Material relating to the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans (10-14 November 1982), a five-day tribute to Vietnam veterans consisting of commemorative events and the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is also organized within its own series. Although the original organization of the files maintained by the fund has largely been preserved, some rearrangement was undertaken to achieve consistency and clarity.

Incorporated on 27 April 1979, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund completed its mission in the fall of 1984 with the addition of Frederick Hart's life-size sculpture to the entry plaza of the memorial grounds. Although the vision and determination of a small group of individuals led by Jan C. Scruggs, president of the fund, culminated in a public memorial honoring Americans who served in Vietnam, construction of the memorial had proved divisive, mirroring the political passions and controversies concerning the war. Both the Office Files and Project Director's Files provide the researcher with documentation of the administrative operations and technical resources which affected the building of the memorial as well as of the political controversy which surrounded its construction.

The Office Files contain general administrative records of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund arranged under the following headings: administration, expenses and contracts, fiscal, general subject file, memorial design, project construction, and public relations. The files include architectural drawings, business and financial records, and construction reports. The fund solicited designs for the memorial in open competition and received 1,421 entries in reply. On 1 May 1981, an eight-member jury announced the selection of the design submitted by Maya Ying Lin. The memorial design files contain material relating to the design competition and to Lin's selection, as well as to hearings before the Commission.
of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission, agencies whose approval of the design was necessary before construction could begin. Records concerning Frederick Hart's sculpture are filed under the same heading.

The chevron-shaped, black granite memorial represented a negative symbol to many and was characterized by Tom Carhart, a prominent critic, as "a black gash of shame and sorrow." Material documenting Carhart's criticism and that of others concerned with the controversial design, including Milton R. Copulos, H. Ross Perot, Carlton Sherwood, and James H. Webb, is contained under the memorial design heading within the Office Files. Other records concerning Sherwood, an investigative reporter whose series, "Vietnam Memorial: A Broken Promise," was televised on the local news broadcasts of WDVM-TV, Washington, D.C., 7-10 November 1983, are in the public relations files.

In 1981, the fund engaged the Cooper-Lecky Partnership, an architectural firm, to assist Maya Ying Lin in developing her design and Gilbane Building Company to manage its construction. Files located under expenses and contracts relate to these and other companies employed by the fund to build the memorial.

Verifying and inscribing the names of the war dead on the memorial's panels posed major administrative and technical problems. Binswanger Glasscraft Products was awarded the contract for inscribing the names and, with the aid of a new stenciling technique designed by independent inventor Larry Century, completed the inscriptions in three months. The Office Files series contains material relating to names and inscriptions in the project construction files, which also include a complete set of blueprints for the memorial and its surrounding area.

As project director, Robert W. Doubek, a cofounder of the fund, was also directly responsible for the design and construction of the memorial. As a result, while the Office Files are more comprehensive in scope, the records in the Files of the Project Director series more fully reflect the administrative and technical aspects of Doubek's dual responsibilities. Since the Office Files and Project Director's Files contain similar types of records, both series should be consulted to insure complete coverage of a particular topic.

The Addition series contains material arranged subsequent to the initial organization of the Fund's records. Items in the series document activities surrounding the tenth anniversary celebration of the memorial in 1992 and Memorial Day ceremonies held at the memorial in 1993. The series also contains printouts and registration labels of entrants in the memorial design competition, as well as working copies of printouts listing the veterans whose names were inscribed on the memorial.

In order to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the fund sponsored a year-long program of special events culminating on Veterans Day, 11 November 1992. As part of this program, the fund presented a series of educational seminars on various topics analyzing the effects of the Vietnam War on America. The Addition contains transcripts from most of these seminars as well as from the Veterans Day commemoration ceremony held at the memorial wall. The Addition also includes informational pamphlets and printed items promoting the anniversary events. Correspondence and miscellaneous items relating to the participation of President Bill Clinton in the Memorial Day ceremony of 1993 consists chiefly of letters from veterans reacting to the president's presence at the event.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in eight series:

- Office Files, 1979-1985
- Files of the Project Director, 1965-1984
- National Salute to Vietnam Veterans, 1979-1983
- Fund-raising, 1979-1984
- Miscellany, 1966-1985
- Card Files, circa 1980-circa 1984
- Addition, 1980-1994
- Oversize, 1980-1982
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### Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Records

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Commemorative stamp  
National Salute II  
(2 folders) |
| BOX 47    | Organization  
(2 folders)  
Press kit |
Sculpture unveiling
Correspondence
Bryyles, William, 1983-1984
Laingen, L. Bruce, 1981
Laird, Melvin R., 1981
Mathias, Charles McC., 1979-1982, undated
Miscellany, 1980-1984, undated
Richardson, Elliot L., 1981-1984, undated

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<td>Thompson, Alf R., 1981-1984</td>
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<td>Weinberger, Caspar W., 1982-1983</td>
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<td>White House, 1981-1984</td>
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<td>Dedication, 13 Nov. 1982</td>
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<td>Demonstrations, 1982-1983</td>
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<td>Edelman, Daniel J.</td>
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<td>Correspondence, 1980-1982</td>
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<td>Miscellany, 1980-1983, undated</td>
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<td>Reports, 1981, undated</td>
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<td>WETA, 1982-1983</td>
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Government
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1979-1983
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*ALA Journal*, 1982-1984
*Congressional Record*, 1982
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<td>Public service announcements, 1981</td>
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<td>Radio, 1981-1983</td>
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<td>&quot;60 Minutes,&quot; 1982</td>
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<td><em>Soldier of Fortune</em>, 1983-1984</td>
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<td>Syndicated columnists, 1981-1984</td>
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<td>Television, 1980-1984</td>
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Office Files, 1979-1985

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Washington Times, 1983, undated
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Panel unveiling, 1982
Photographs, 1982-1983, undated
Polls
Copulos, Milton R., 1982-1983, undated
Decision Making Information, 1982, undated
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**BOX 53** | Program souvenir, 1983-1984
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**BOX 54** | Printed copy, 1982
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**BOX 55** | South Boston Vietnam Memorial, Boston, Mass., 1981, undated
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Board of advisors, 1979-1980
Budget, 1980
Employment memoranda and contracts, 1980
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<td>Legal counsel, 1980, undated</td>
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<td>Organizational charts, 1979-1980</td>
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<td>Postal permits, 1979-1981</td>
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<td>Trademark search, 1980</td>
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<td>Vacation, 1980</td>
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<td>Commission of Fine Arts, meetings</td>
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<td>Design concept, 1981-1983</td>
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<td>Joint Committee on Landmarks, 1981, undated</td>
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<td>National Capital Planning Commission, meetings</td>
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<td>Predesign agency liaison, 1980-1981</td>
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<td>Request for certification, 1982</td>
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<td>Fund-raising</td>
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<td>Benefit dinner dance, 1980</td>
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<td>Program design sheets</td>
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<td>Correspondence and notes, 1979-1980</td>
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<td>Creative Mailing Consultants of America, 1980-1981</td>
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Gifts and counsel selection, 1980, undated
Operational memoranda, 1980-1981, undated
*Parade* magazine, undated
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    Turner Construction Co., 1981
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  Spreiregen, Paul A., 1981
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  Special projects, 1981
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Wall Street Journal editorial response, June 1981
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Disqualification, 1981
Form letters, 1981
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Registration of competitors, 1980-1981
Return of designs, 1981-1982
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Compliments, 1981
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Design competition manuals, 1979-1981, undated
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Binswanger Glasscraft Products, 1982, undated
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Change proposals and estimates, 1981-1983
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Granite infill, 1982
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  Comments on memorial, 1982, undated
  Construction permit, 1982
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  Gradation test, 1983
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  Notes, 1982-1983
  Post dedication inspection report, 1982
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  Electronic directory, 1982, undated
  Name locator
    Alternate name locator devices, 1982, undated
    Submittal, 1983
  Specifications for "Dots," 1983

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  Addendum no. 1, 1982
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    Fee estimates, 1982-1983, undated
    Inscriptions, MIAs, and locator, 1981, undated
  Schedules, 1981, undated

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Subcontractors and suppliers
  Bidding
    Bid comparison sheets, 1981-1982
    Bidders list, 1981-1982
Century, Larry, 1981-1982
Invitations to bid, 1981-1982
Prospective suppliers, 1981, undated
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   Binswanger Glasscraft Products, 1982
   Granite sample evaluation, 1982
Gilbane Building Co., 1982
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Landscaping, 1982, undated
Rogan Granitindustrie, 1981-1982

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   Cooper-Lecky Partnership, 1982
   Datatlantic, 1982-1983
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   Proofreading and changes, 1982, undated
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      (3 folders)
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BOX 78
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- Drescher, Hugh, film project, 1982, undated
- Fischer, Vic, reconciliation symposium, 1980
- National Day of Recognition, 23 Apr. 1981
- Seven Locks Jaycees, 1980-1982
- Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of Vietnam, 1978-1980
- Unveiling of first panel, 1982, undated
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Long Island, N.Y., chapter, undated

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   Press releases, 1979, undated
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   Staff biographies, undated
   Task group, 1979-1980, undated
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   Site selection (EDAW study), 1980
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Arranged alphabetically by subject and chronologically thereunder.

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Campsites
Delivery slips
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Host families
Parents of MIAs
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<td>Letters of congratulation, 1982-1983, undated</td>
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<td>Planning and promotion, 1981-1983</td>
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Favorite correspondents
Foundations
Friends and fund-raisers
Individual gifts ($100 and up)
Miscellany
Names and inscriptions
National fund-raisers
VIPs
Volunteers

Direct mail
Creative Mailing Consultants of America
Correspondence, 1980-1982

BOX 104
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Proposals, 1980, undated
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- Clubs, 1981-1982
- Correspondence, 1981-1982
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- Corporate Advisory Board, 1981, undated
- Corporate brochure, 1979-1981, undated
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### Foundations
- Grants received, 1981-1983
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- Proposals rejected, 1981-1982
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  - Alexandria, Va. (WPKX)
  - Bangor, Maine (WACZ)
  - Champaign, Ill. (WPGO)
- Correspondence
- Dallas/Fort Worth, Tex. (WBAP)

### Information kits
- Little Rock, Ark. (KLRA)

### Miscellany
- Radiothons not produced
- San Antonio, Tex. (WOAI)

### Special projects, 1979-1983, undated
- Benefit dinner dance
- Blue ribbon campaign
- Brass buckle
- Corcoran, Charles A.
- Correspondence
- Cypress Gardens, Fla.
- Davison, Michael S., solicitation letter
- Gifts
  - "Heart of Illinois" campaign

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- Boilermakers, 1981-1982  
- Correspondence, 1981-1982  
- Postal workers, 1981-1983  
- United Cement, Lime and Gypsum Workers, 1981, undated  
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| Box 118: Veterans organizations | - American Gold Star Mothers, 1980-1982  
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- Veterans lists, 1981-1982  
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| Box 120: Veterans of Foreign Wars | - Auxiliaries, 1981-1982 |
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**BOX 121-123 Miscellany, 1966-1985**

Correspondence, telephone message books, address book, notes and posters, poems and songs, memorabilia, printed matter, and plaques.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically thereunder.

**BOX 121**

- Address book, undated
- Memorabilia, undated
- Notes, posters, and other items, 1981-1982, undated
- Plaques, undated
  (1 folder)

**BOX 122**

- Printed matter, 1981-1983, undated
- Public letters, 1981-1985 *See also Container 101, same heading*
  (2 folders)

**BOX 123**

- Sayers, James E., correspondence, 1980-1982
- Telephone message books, 1983-1984

**BOX OV 124-OV 130 Card Files, circa 1980-circa 1984**

- Invitations to the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans and donor card files.
- The latter are arranged alphabetically by donor group.

**BOX OV 124**

- National Salute to Vietnam Veterans, ceremony invitations

**BOX OV 125**

- Fund-raising, donor card files
  - Corporations

**BOX OV 126**

- "In Memoria" contributions

**BOX OV 127**

- Unions

**BOX OV 128-OV 129**

- Veterans organizations

**BOX OV 130**

- VIP gifts

**BOX 131-132 Addition, 1980-1994**

- Correspondence, transcripts, promotional material, printouts, registration labels, printed matter, and miscellaneous items concerning ceremonial tributes and various aspects of the memorial's design.
- Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically thereunder.

**BOX 131**

- Ceremonies
  - 1992, tenth anniversary commemoration
    - Miscellany
    - Seminars, 1992
      - 3 May, "The War at Home, Two Perspectives"
      - 19 May, "The Media and the Vietnam War"
      - 12 June, "The Color of the Vietnam War"
### Container: Addition, 1980-1994

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Cooper-Lecky Partnership, 1982  
Design competition  
Entrants  
Midwest list, 1981 [See Oversize](#)  
Registration labels, 1980  
(2 folders)  
State totals, undated  
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Names listed on memorial, printouts, 1980-1982 [See Oversize](#) |
| **BOX OV 1** | **Oversize, 1980-1982**  
Oversize material consisting of printouts.  
Organized and described according to the series, boxes, and folders from which the items were removed. |
| **BOX OV 1** | Addition  
Memorial design  
Design competition  
Entrants  
Midwest list, 1981 (Container 132)  
Names listed on memorial, printouts, 1980-1982 (Container 132) |