

**Mississippi University for Women Archives**  
**Mary Elizabeth (Libby) Bickerstaff Payne Papers**

**1-2001-4**

**Extent:** 4 boxes

**Dates:** circa 1980s through 2010

**Name of Creator:** Payne, Mary Elizabeth

**Biography:**

Mary Elizabeth (Libby) Bickerstaff Payne was born in Gulfport, Mississippi on March 27, 1931. Upon graduation from Gulfport High School, Payne attended Mississippi State College for Women in 1951. While at M.S.C.W, she was a part of organizations, such as the Forensic Council and the Student Christian Association. Originally, Payne attended M.S.C.W for ballet but changed her major to political science. She then transferred to University of Mississippi after her two year stay at M.S.C.W. Payne graduated for Ole Miss School of Law in 1955. In that same year, she married Bobby R. Payne.

Mary Libby Payne became the first dean of the Mississippi College School of Law in 1975, serving as dean until 1978. Payne then taught at the college from 1978 to 1994. Upon retiring from teaching in 1994, Payne was then elected as the first woman charter member of the Mississippi Court of Appeals until 2001. Mary Libby Payne has received a number of awards for her achievements throughout her the years. In 1987, Payne was named Woman of the Year by the Mississippi Association for Women in Higher Education. She received the national Christian Legal Society's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002. In 2005, Payne received the Mississippi Bar's Lifetime Achievement Award. She has also received the Mississippi Women Lawyer's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010. Mary Libby Payne received the Governor's Medal of Service in 2011. In 2012, she received Mississippi Bar's Women in the Profession Trailblazer Award. Recently in 2012, the Mississippi College School of Law had established the Mary Libby Payne Lectureship Series on Christianity and the Law.

Keeping roots to MUW, Mary Libby Payne is a part of the MUW Alumni Association, class of 2015 for the board. She was also a member of the Mississippi's First Alumnae Association upon the split of the alumnae associations in 2007. Noted in this collection are two former presidents of the university, Clyda S. Rent and Claudia Limbert. Rent served as president from 1989 to 2001. Claudia Limbert served as president from 2002 to 2010. Mary Libby Payne currently lives in Pearl, Mississippi.

### **Mississippi's First Alumnae Association and MUW Alumni Association:**

Mississippi's First Alumnae Association was first founded by the class of 1889. The association's first president served her first year in 1890. This association has been providing the university with alumnae support for this institution.

In 2007, the Alumnae Association splits into two different associations: the Alumnae Association and the Alumni Association. Both associations went to the courts by 2008. In 2011, both associations joined back together creating what is now known as the MUW Alumni Association. The association now holds the claim of being the original association but the name changed from Alumnae to Alumni.

The MUW Alumni Association still supports the mission of the institution but it also promotes Alumni support, which is encouraged by recruiting students to attend the institution and making contributions, financial and otherwise.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

The Marry Elizabeth (Libby) Bickerstaff Payne Papers is arranged by year at the minimum order kept in the collection. It contains correspondence and subject files from 1980- 2010. The bulk of the years in this collection are the 1980s and the 1990s. Subjects include: minutes, correspondence, member lists, letters and emails from the Alumnae association, MUW Alumni Association, Mississippi's First Alumnae association, newspaper clippings, alumnae association split, court records and miscellaneous.

The collection also contains some of Payne's research and correspondence from 1959 to 1973, and judicial opinions from 1973-1975.

**Accruals:**

Two boxes that were kept in the Fant Library were brought to the archives in spring 2015. These boxes contain Payne's research and judicial opinions from 1971 to 1975. They are listed as "Box 1" and "Box 3" in the container list kept inside. Box 2's location is currently unknown, but probably in the library.

**Conditions Governing Access Element:**

Regarding the copyrights for the emails in this collection, the copyright regulations of that material is unclear at this time. See University's archivist for more information in regards to the use of the emails.

Until such a time as the archives' collections can be re-processed and numbered, documents from the archives should be cited by document title and date (if any), the folder's place in the box relative to the front (if applicable), the 3-digit lot number, the collection title (if known), "Mississippi University for Women Archives." When documents lack a discrete title, a brief description should be provided. If the folder and/or collection is unknown or not applicable, it can be omitted. Thus for example:

Letter from James Strobel to Gloria Atkinson, November 5, 1983. 5<sup>th</sup> folder, lot 063. The James Strobel Presidential Papers. Mississippi University for Women Archives.

Design sketch of front of MUW campus by R. H. Hunt and Associates, 1902. Lot 130.  
Mississippi University for Women Archives.

**Mary Elizabeth (Libby) Bickerstaff Payne**

<b>Box 1: Lot C492</b>	
<b>Folder Titles</b>	<b>Folder Number</b>
W- 2002 forward	1
MUW Alumnae 2007 [four folders]	2
Wreneqades 2006	3
MUW Miscellaneous 2007-2008	4
MUW Oct. 29, 2007	5
MUW Alumnae Board [four folders]	6
Newsprint from other folders	7
Newsprint from other folders	8
A Good Heritage: A Memoir of Mississippi College School of Law	9

<b>Box 2: Lot C487</b>	
<b>Folder Titles</b>	<b>Folder Number</b>
Emails about the Alumnae Foundation from members	1
Joint Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review, 2009	2
Constitution for MUW Alumnae Association Revisions 1999-2000	3
MUW Alumnae Association 2001-2002	4
MUW National Alumnae Association Board of Directors Meeting 7/17/99	5
Alumnae Board Workshop June 22, 1991	6
MUW Assessment and Projection Report 1990-1992, booklet	7
MUW Alumnae Association Board meeting minutes and committees 2002-2003 (8)	8
MUW related news 1992-1993, Misc.	9
MUW Alumnae Association Workshop Feb. 1-2, 2002	10
Eugenia Summer Art Exhibit 1992 and Budget proposal 1994	11

MUW National Board of Distinguished Women 1993	12
University of Southern Mississippi Alumni Hall of Fame, Oct. 9, 1987	13
MUW Foundation, Inc. Misc. and Ayers case	14
MUW Foundation and MUW Alumnae Board minutes, 1992-93	15
MUW Foundation, 1990-1993	16
MUW Foundation minutes, by-laws, letters and handbook, 1993	17
News clippings- Dr. Clyda Rent, early 1990s	18
MUW Miscellaneous	19
MUW 1988	20
MUW National Alumnae Association 2000	21
MUW Foundation Development Committee, 1992-93, 1999	22
MUW Board of Distinguished Women	23
MUW Miscellaneous-1996	24
MUW Foundation Development Committee-1992	25
MUW Alumnae Board Misc.-1992	26
MUW Miscellaneous-1992	27
MUW Alumnae Association-email and misc. 2001-02	28
MUW Miscellaneous-2001, 2009	29
MUW Miscellaneous- 2006, 2009	30
MUW Miscellaneous -2000	31
MUW Miscellaneous- 2002	32
Limbert v. MUW Alumnae Association	33
MUW First Alumnae Association-2010	34
Newsprint from other folders	35

<b>Box 3: Lot C482</b>	
<b>Folder Titles</b>	<b>Folder Number</b>

Humanities Meeting with Dr. Rent-1999	1
W-1999	2
MUW Misc.-Alumnae Association-1991	3
MUW Alumnae Association-1998	4
MUW Alumnae Association By-Laws	5
MUW Misc.-letters, Alumnae Association	6
Mary Libby's letters-Nation Conference of State Legislatures, 1986, 1993-94	7
MUW in the news-1993-94	8
MUW Misc. - Alumnae Association	9
MUW Misc. - Alumnae Association -1994	10
MUW Misc. - MUW Foundation, Ayers case, 1994	11
MUW Foundation financial statement, 06/30/93	12
MUW Alumna board, 1993-94	13
MUW Miscellaneous	14
Newsprint from other folders	15
W board handbook and save strategy	16

<b>Box 4: Lot C489</b>	
<b>Folder Titles</b>	<b>Folder Number</b>
MUW-1986	1
W-1987	2
MUW Misc. 1984-85- Alumnae Association	3
MUW Misc. 1985-86 [two folders]	4
MUW Misc. 1985 [two folders]	5
MUW Alumna Association 1981-86 [three folders]	6
MUW Miscellaneous	7
MUW miscellaneous	8
Women's College Coalition 1981	9

Letters and statements of support for MUW 1984-85	10
MUW: Official Mission	11
Legislative Information	12
Foster Report	13
Crawford Study	14
Board of Trustees	15
MUW: Educational Warranty Program	16
MUW: Academic Affairs	17
MUW: Five year plan	18
MUW: Financial Affairs	19
MUW: Fact Book 1983-84	20
MUW: Student Affairs	21
MUW: In the News	22
MUW: Plymouth Bluff Update	23
Student Commitment	24
MUW Inter-Alumni Council 1984-85	25
Women's Colleges Show Vigor	26
MUW Miscellaneous	27
MUW: Role in Higher Education	28
What Alums Need to Know	29
MUW Misc. –Case statement, newspaper clippings-1985	30
Articles about MUW	31
Closure of MUW info	32
MUW Material-Board meeting, news articles, etc. 1985	33
MUW Statistical Register, Merger with MSU-1985	34
Information about MUW –contact information-1984	35
1982-83 Fact Book	36
Bulletin of MUW-Fall 1980	37
MUW Misc. 1982-83- Handbook, Center for Education of the gifted and talented report	38

<b>Box 5: Lot C333</b>	
<b>Folder Titles</b>	<b>Folder Number</b>
Legislative Drafting Office 1971	1
Mrs. Mary Payne 1972	2
Research assignments 1959-1961	3
Reassessment	4
Information requests	5
16th Section Land Questions	6
Roads	7
Election Information	8
Civil Rights Sex Discrimination	9
Chamber of Commerce	10
Bar Association Study Committee 1972-1973	11
Bar Association Study Committees	12
Memos 1973 AG-Administration	13
Correspondence	14
Mississippi Forestry Commission	15
Mississippi Economic Council	16

<b>Box 6: Lot C334</b>	
<b>Folder Titles</b>	<b>Folder Number</b>
November-December 1973	1
January 1974	2
February 1974	3
March-April 1974	4
May-July 1974	5
August 1974	6
September 1974	7
October 1974	8
November 1974	9
February 1975	10
April-May 1975	11



## **Bibliography:**

Mississippi College School of Law, “A Goodly Heritage”: Mississippi Baptists and Mary Libby Payne” [http://law.mc.edu/files/8513/4644/7459/Baptist\\_Record\\_Article.pdf](http://law.mc.edu/files/8513/4644/7459/Baptist_Record_Article.pdf) [accessed May 2, 2013].

Mississippi First Alumnae Association, “About” <http://www.msfirstalumnae.com/about.asp> [accessed May 2, 2013].

Mississippi University for Women, “Alumni Association” <http://web3.muw.edu/alumni/alumni-association#news> [accessed May 2, 2013].

Pieschel, Bridget Smith (ed.). *Golden Days: Reminiscences of Alumnae, Mississippi State College for Women*, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009.

Varlerie Wells, “Mary Libby Payne”, Jackson Free Press, October 6, 2011, under “News” <http://www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2011/oct/06/mary-libby-payne/> [accessed May 2, 2013].