

**BELLEMONT HOTEL COLLECTION**

Mss. 5219

Inventory

Compiled by  
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Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections  
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library  
Louisiana State University Libraries  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

2021

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**SUMMARY**

<b>Size</b>	1.5 linear feet
<b>Geographic Locations</b>	Baton Rouge, Louisiana
<b>Inclusive Dates</b>	1973-1992
<b>Bulk Dates</b>	1980-1992
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The Bellemont Motor Hotel was a plantation-style hotel and convention center on Airline Highway in Baton Rouge, LA. The hotel was built in 1946 by developer A. C. Lewis and his partner, Jamar Adcock. The collection consists of hotel office files with information on advertising, rates and listings, guest services, staff and employees, invoices and service agreements, hotel inventories, promotional plans, and other documents relating to the hotel's operation.</p>
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<b>Copyright</b>	For those materials not in the public domain, copyright is retained by the descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. Copyright law.
<b>Related Collections</b>	None.
<b>Citation</b>	Bellemont Hotel Collection, Mss. 5219, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries Special Collections, Baton Rouge, La.
<b>Stack Location(s)</b>	UU:58-59, OS:B

## **BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

The Bellemont Motor Hotel was a plantation-style hotel and convention center on Airline Highway in Baton Rouge, LA. The hotel was built in 1946 by developer A. C. Lewis and his partner, Jamar Adcock. At the time the hotel was built, Airline Highway was a major traffic artery through Baton Rouge, and a place for social occasions as well as an elegant hotel for visitors. Casts and crews of films shot on location stayed at the Bellemont – some of which include Clark Gable, Cary Grant, Steve McQueen, Orson Welles, John Wayne, Paul Newman, Faye Dunaway, Jane Fonda, and Richard Pryor. Visiting football teams that came to play Louisiana State University stayed at the Bellemont and swam in the swimming pool.

The hotel had the city's first hotel swimming pool, a custom-built chandelier from Czechoslovakia, and intricate murals.

The demolition of the hotel was a significant loss to the Baton Rouge community. Though it was not considered old by building standards, many people in Baton Rouge grew up with the hotel and many attended functions there, such as high school proms and weddings. As cited in *Country Roads Magazine* (June 2012), an ad in the 1953 *Morning Advocate* included "150 luxurious rooms and 150 tile baths" and amenities included "telephones in every room, Simmons Beautyrest mattresses, refrigerated air conditioning and sterilized water glasses" at a cost of \$2.50 per night.

The Great Hall was the focal point of the hotel, a huge structure that was built in 1984.

The pride and joy of the hotel was the Pan American Suite, renting for \$150 a night which overlooked a huge mural with colorful tiles. According to Howard McBride, general manager of the hotel from 1962-1978 (cited in *Country Roads Magazine*, June 2012), when Steve McQueen stayed there, he rode his motorcycle into the suite and dripped oil on the carpet.

In 2005, the hotel was used as headquarters for emergency personnel following Hurricane Katrina and later the parking lot was used for FEMA trailers. The last visitor of the hotel was in 2006. The convention center remained open for a few more years and afterward was home to squatters. Joseph Calloway purchased the hotel, the Great Hall, and the eighteen acres it stands on in 2009, but nothing was ever done to the property.

With the construction of Interstate 10 and the bridge across the Mississippi River in the 1960s, traffic was diverted from Airline Highway, which reduced the number of visitors and contributed to the decline of the Bellemont Hotel, and finally the demolition of the hotel in 2012.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The material in the Bellemont Hotel Collection was collected from the Bellemont Hotel in Baton Rouge, Louisiana before its demolition in 2012. The files were kept in the order in which they were acquired, which is alphabetically. They contain information on advertising, rates and listings, guest services, staff and employees, invoices and service agreements, hotel inventories, promotional plans, and other typical office files.

Included among the office files is a file labeled "Band Information," which contains an audiocassette of the song, "Catfish Town" performed by a 15-piece band called Sentimental Journey (March 24, 1985).

There are no personnel files of employees, though there is some correspondence from guests relaying either good customer service or complaints. These letters list the names and addresses of the letter writers, but no other personal information.

There is some general information on the addition of The Great Hall, which occurred in 1984, including some architectural drawings (OS:B). There is also a photograph of the Great Hall Rotunda from 1985 in box 2, folder 22.

**INDEX TERMS**

**Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found throughout the entire collection.**

**Architectural drawings (visual works)**

**Audiocassettes.**

**Baton Rouge (La.)--Social life and customs--20<sup>th</sup> century.**

**Bellefont Hotel (Baton Rouge, La.)**

**Financial records.**

**Hotels--Louisiana--Baton Rouge.**

**Letters (correspondence)**

**Photographic prints.**

CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
	UU:58	1	1	Advertising: Channel 2, Channel 9, and Channel 33 TV Spots (1985)
			2	Advertising: Fairwood Country Club Men's Golf Association (July 1987)
			3	Advertising: Miscellaneous (1982-1991, undated)
			4-5	Advertising: Travel Guides (1983-1990)
			6	Amenities Brochure (undated)
			7-9	AAA [American Automobile Association] (1984-July 1990)
			10	American of Martinsville (September 1983-October 1985)
			11	American Red Cross (July 1989)
			12	AT&T Long Distance (1985-1990)
			13	Audio: Invoices (October 1983-July 1984)
			14	Audio: Proposals and Contracts (March 1982-November 1985)
			15	A.E.I. [Audio Environments Incorporated] (1984-1986)
			16	Audio Visual Systems (January 1986)
			17	Band Information (1985)
			18	Barter Exchange (August 1985-November 1986)
			19	Baton Rouge High 30-year Class Reunion (August 1987)
			20	Baton Rouge Information (1979-1985)
			21	Baton Rouge Magazine (1986)
			22	Baton Rouge Symphony (1984-1986)
			23	Beepers: Information (General) (1985-1986)
			24-25	Bellemont Hotel Inventory and Replacement Cost Report (undated)
			26	Bellemont Leases - Edgar (November 1985-November 1988)
			27	Bellemont Marketing Plan for 1985 (1985)
			28	Bellemont Office Park (undated)
			29	Bellemont Package for 1984 (AAA and Mobil) (May 1984)
			30	Benefits: Employee (1984-1987)
			31	Bookings Guidelines and Policies (April 1983)
			32	CableVision (December 1985)
			33	Capitol Pipe and Supply (June 16, 1983)
			34	Chamber of Commerce (July 1985-October 1987)
			35	Chamber of Commerce: Political Action (January 1988)
			36	Closed Circuit TV Systems (January 1985)
			37	Complaints (October 1986-October 1988)
			38	Complimentary Rooms (November 1985-May 1987)
			39	Contracts: AAA Pagers (August 1978-August 1989)
			40	Contracts: Advertising (January 1982-September 1989)
			41	Contracts: Airwick (September 1983-January 1988)
			42	Contracts: AutoChlor System (March 1973-December 1987)
			43-44	Correspondence (February 1984-March 1989)
			45	Culinary Arts Institute of Louisiana (February 1988)
			46	Dictaphone Contract (Cancellation) (March 1986)

<u>Stack</u>				
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>	
<b>UU:58</b>	1	47	Discover Information (January 1987)	
		48	Easel Information (October 1985)	
		49	Elevators: Great Hall (July 1984-July 1991)	
		50	Emergency Procedures Manual (undated)	
<b>UU:59</b>	2	1	Employee Handbook (October 1985)	
		2	Employees: Benefits Plus/Retirement Info (February 1984)	
		51	Employees: Duties/Rules (June 1985)	
		52	Entre Nous: Just Between Us [Newsletter] (April 1983-May 1986)	
		53	EOC Meetings (undated)	
		54	Film Commission (October 1986)	
		55	Flags: General Information (March 1982-November 1984)	
		56	Food and Beverage (April 1988-July 1988)	
		57	French/Foreign Information (October 1982-July 1989)	
		58	Front Office Manual & Job Description (April 1983)	
		59	Government: General Information (May 1986-July 1989)	
		60	Great Hall (November 1984-January 1987)	
		61	Great Hall: Fire Alarm Maintenance Contract (May 1984)	
		1	Great Hall: Lease (November 1987)	
		2	Guest Directory (undated)	
		3	Guest Services (undated)	
		4-6	Halloween Party (October 1988)	
		7-8	Homisco-Telephone Charge System (July 1986-July 1989)	
		9	Housekeeping-Grounds, Maintenance, Etc. (July 1985)	
		10	Inventory FFE (undated)	
		11-12	Maintenance Contract: Typewriters (May 1984-February 1988)	
		1	Photograph: Great Hall Rotunda (1985)	
		2	Projects Pending (January 1984-February 1987)	
		3	1	Public Relations (October 1983-March 1985)
			2	Public Relations Plan for the Bellemont Hotel (March 1985)
			3-5	Special Events (1982-1992)
		<b>OS:B</b>	--	1