Gerald R. Ford Foundation *Newsletter*

Fall 1989

Wyatt Stewart New Foundation Member

The eighth annual meeting of the Gerald R. Ford Foundation was held on June 5, 1989, at the Capitol Hill Club in Washington, D.C. Among the items of business conducted was the election of **Wyatt A. Stewart, III** to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Stewart is president of Wyatt Stewart and Associates, Inc. and director of finance and administration for the National Republican Congressional Committee.

The Board also paid tribute to retiring treasurer Harold Davidson, who will remain a trustee.

In other business, the trustees adopted an annual budget, heard reports on upcoming Library and Museum programs, and reviewed the recently completed federal budget project, the Ford journalism prizes, the research grants program, and the William E. Simon lecture series.

Wyatt A. Stewart III

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Photo by Diane Stebbins.

U.S. Attorney General Richard Thornburgh delivering remarks at the dinner following the Gerald R. Ford Foundation annual meeting.

David Broder: The Constitutional Presidency

"Can a president act within the Constitution and still be effective?" **David Broder**, Pulitzer Prize winning political columnist and associate editor of *The Washington Post*, answered that question during a public address at the Ford Museum on April 24.

A constitutional presidency is not necessarily effective, Broder concluded, but constitutional limits do not doom presidents to fail. Presidential leadership suffers more directly when voters elect one party to the White House and a second to control Congress. Divided government can lead to stalemated policy and constant skirmishing.

George Bush seems determined to avoid that fate, according to Broder. Unlike some of his recent predecessors, for example, Bush will act within the Constitution partly because so many of his staff are veterans of the Ford administration—men and women who have not forgotten the lessons of Watergate.

The new president has sought to accommodate congressional Democrats, too, though he risks ceding some of his presidential authority in the bargain. Broder also discussed the president's power as "communicator in chief," contrasting Bush's and Ronald Reagan's approaches to the media. Success in the White House, the columnist observed, depends ultimately on the president's capacity to persuade, not to order. The presidency, after all, is as much a political as a constitutional office.

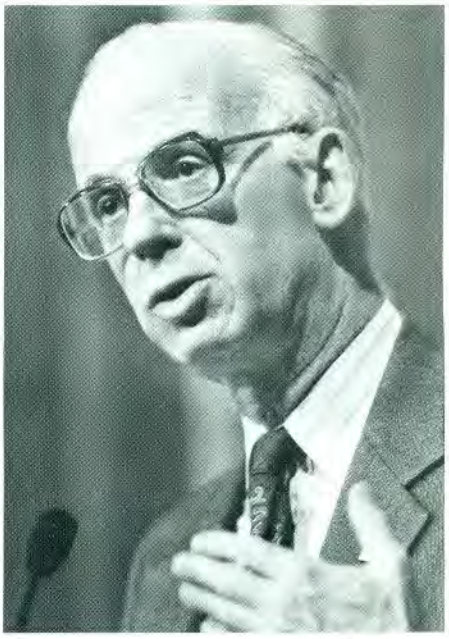

Photo by The Grand Rapids Press ©

David Broder speaking at the Ford Museum.

Ford Library Volunteer Program

Soon after the Ford Library opened to the public in 1981, a small but dedicated group of volunteers began to help the staff. And they have continued to provide valued assistance. These individuals work from four to ten hours each per week conducting tours for visitors, arranging and reboxing manuscript collections, and completing other special assignments. Although the Library usually has only four or five volunteers at a time, over the years they have contributed over 8,600 hours of work.

The Ford Library recruits most of its volunteers through the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). Some of these dedicated individuals also assist other local institutions through such activities as cataloging books for a prison library or delivering meals to shut-ins. Several have been retired librarians interested in learning about the related field of archives.

The volunteer program has not only proven beneficial to the Library, but it also provides an interesting volunteer experience. As Library volunteer **Kathy Peters** observes, "I thoroughly enjoy talking with the visitors from all over the United States and even foreign countries. In addition, the processing of Mrs. Ford's correspondence has permitted me to be of assistance to the Ford Library staff while learning so much about one of our most interesting First Ladies."

Library volunteers Eugene Holtman, Isabelle Brauer, Ruth Davis, and Kathy Peters (front l. to r.) accept tokens of appreciation from archivist Leesa Tobin (back).

Research Grants in 1988-89

Twelve people won Gerald R. Ford Foundation research grants during the 1988-89 academic year. Several used the Library's collections over the summer.

Mary Brennan (Ohio State University) is studying the development of political conservatism in the 1960s. "Too many 1960s histories treat conservatism as 'mere background noise'," she says using William MacNeill's phrase, "resulting in a slanted view which obscures the origins of contemporary conservatism." Most of Brennan's research sources have been heavily conservative, for example the papers of Barry Goldwater and William F. Buckley. During her visit to the Library she used the Ford papers to learn more about the perspective of a leading Republican moderate. **Bruce Murphy** (Penn State University), another grant recipient, also consulted the Ford congressional papers for his research on the effort to impeach Justice William O. Douglas.

Foreign affairs can be a frustrating area for research because so much remains security classified. Some otherwise acceptable grant proposals have been denied because the pertinent material cannot yet be made available. Three applicants, however, identified topics supported by substantial open files. **Roger Smith** (Harvard University) examined nuclear non-proliferation policy. **John Cable** (Oxford University) plans to study American economic diplomacy toward the Soviet Union and China, 1969-76. **John Dominguez** (University of Wisconsin-Whitewater) will assess "the international economic policy of floating exchange rates and its impact on the U.S. economy." Professor Dominguez, a former Federal Reserve official, will use the papers donated by Federal Reserve Chairman Arthur Burns.

Two very different ethnic experiences are the subjects of research by **Kenneth O'Reilly** (University of Alaska) and **Alexander Kitroeff** (Social Science Research Council). Kitroeff used the presidential-congressional tussle over arms aid to Turkey as a window on the emergence of the Greek-American community as a political force. O'Reilly deals with busing and the Voting Rights Extension Act, among other issues, to explore the Ford segment of a larger work on "the presidency and the politics of race."

Three grants supported research on domestic policy issues. **James Stever** (University of Cincinnati) investigated presidential management of intergovernmental relations during his 5-day visit to the Library and was impressed by the "innovativeness" evidenced in the files of Domestic Council staff member Stephen McConahey. In the Eisenhower papers Stever had seen young Nelson Rockefeller's advice on intergovernmental relations, lending a special dimension to related materials in the Ford papers.

Also in domestic policy, **Aimee Frank** (City University of New York) researched "Welfare, Work and Poverty: Public Policy Since the New Deal." **George Felkenes** (Claremont Graduate School) examined crime control and criminal justice proposals of the Ford administration.

Robert Shogan *(Los Angeles Times)* received a grant for a section of his forthcoming book *The Keys to Presidential Leadership*, and **Mark Rozell** (Mary Washington College) already has examined press and communications files for his study of the national press and the Ford presidency. Author of a well-received volume on the press and the Carter presidency, Rozell is especially interested in "the post-Watergate context of press evaluations of presidents."

Rozell will be hard to match for quickness in showing the first fruits of a research visit. A few weeks after his visit he participated in an American Political Science Association roundtable on presidential-press relations.

All-American football players Paul Hornung (University of Notre Dame) and Ron Kramer (University of Michigan), along with Foundation President Marty Allen, view an exhibit of Gerald Ford's football memorabilia at a reception at the Ford Library. The event was for members of the official families of both universities and was hosted by the University of Michigan's Athletic Department the night before the Notre Dame-Michigan football game.

Hoffman and Halloran Win Journalism Prizes

David Hoffman, White House reporter for *The Washington Post*, and **Richard Halloran**, military correspondent for *The New York Times*, received the second annual journalism prizes sponsored by the Gerald R. Ford Foundation. The $5000 awards, presented by Gerald R. Ford in April in a nationally broadcast ceremony at the National Press Club, recognize journalists whose high standards for accuracy and substance help foster a better public understanding of the presidency and national defense issues.

In selecting Hoffman for the Gerald R. Ford Prize for Distinguished Reporting on the Presidency during 1988, a panel of judges cited his original and insightful coverage of then Vice President George Bush. "David Hoffman's reporting opened a window to George Bush as a person and his relations with the people around him that helped us understand what his presidency would be like," the judges concluded. His work reflected thoroughness, diligence, knowledge, and a "knack for avoiding the obvious."

A second panel, in choosing Halloran for the Gerald R. Ford Prize for Distinguished reporting on National Defense, noted the broad range of his work. During 1988, for example, his stories covered technology and weapon system development, the human and doctrinal aspects of battle command, and political-military interaction in Washington and in the field, among other topics.

The panel also cited Halloran's emphasis on people and "how fundamental attitudes of different individuals and groups in the armed forces shape their responses to military problems and opportunities."

Both winners agreed to allow us to turn the tables and ask them a few questions relating to their areas of expertise.

Questions for David Hoffman

Q. Was covering the White House a long-time goal of yours?

Covering the White House was not a long-time goal, but covering politics and government was. I covered local government and politics first in Delaware, and then covered Congress. My first real taste of covering a presidency came in 1980 when I covered Ronald Reagan's campaign that year. I didn't know for most of the year that he was going to win, much less that I would spend many years afterward covering his presidency.

"What most interests me is the way the office changes the president."

David Hoffman

Q. How has this experience helped you?

I think it's good to get a taste of many different disciplines before you try and tackle a campaign and a presidency. I was fortunate that I had a chance to study some economics in 1981 and later put that training to use in the 1981-82 recession; the lessons remain useful for many, many years. Likewise, contacts made in Congress and in local politics are invaluable.

Q. What is it about the presidency that continues to hold your interest?

What most interests me is the way the office changes the president. I think every day brings a new way to more thoroughly understand a president, his character, his judgement, his methods of operating and making decisions. But this information is not always evident, and the challenge for me is to try to find it.

"You can't become a prisoner of what you know—you must always be looking for new trends, impulses, events."

Q. How do you do that?
My basic approach is, first, to try and understand everything I can about the president's past—his life, his campaigns, his instincts, his friends and adversaries. Then I build on that by studying his reactions, initiatives, rhetoric, habits, decisions. Even though you struggle to assemble a big library of your own information about a president, you must never assume you know it all, or that you can predict behavior by past actions. Yes, many decisions are predictable extensions of previous behavior. But you can't become a prisoner of what you know—you must always be looking for new trends, impulses, events.

Q. Your award was based on your 1988 coverage of George Bush. How is covering a presidential candidate different from reporting on a president in the White House?
A campaign is different in many ways. It is a mission, for both the correspondent and the candidate. The correspondent's job is to give his readers a penetrating, cumulative portrait of the candidate. The candidate's mission is to attempt to put his own stamp on that portrait.

Q. Do these missions compete?
Often, the two come into conflict. The candidate may say, "I will wage a war against drug abuse." The correspondent must not only report on the pledge but tell the reader whether the candidate has ever tried or succeeded at such a task—and how it was done. It is essentially a set of evaluations, sometimes through the lens of the candidate, sometimes through the lens of the correspondent. This competition can be quite energetic and often is influenced by the unexpected—a global crisis, another candidate's attack, another correspondent's report, and so on. All is directed toward a date certain—the election. And it is carried out constantly on the move, in airports and hotels and coffee shops.

"The correspondent's job is to give his readers a penetrating, cumulative portrait of the candidate. The candidate's mission is to attempt to put his own stamp on that portrait."

Q. Does the task change when the candidate becomes president?
Yes. The canvas becomes more stationary, but also many times larger. The president moves from abstract proposals to actual decisions. The correspondent asks the same kinds of questions, but the scope must be far broader. My own experience is that on balance the correspondent gets a closer look at the candidate during the campaign, and once in the White House a protective wall is thrown up. Much of the evidence needed to paint a good picture of a president's activities has to gleaned from other sources—aides, visitors, friends, cabinet members, outside specialists, diplomats.

Q. Can you compare and contrast the press handling styles of Ronald Reagan and George Bush.?
Reagan sought to go "over the heads" of the national press, giving speeches and offering only a minimal time for questions. As both candidate and president, he wanted his words and messages delivered direct to American living rooms, and he preferred a scripted broadcast, whether a speech to a campaign rally, from the Oval Office or to a Joint Session of Congress. Great battles over policy were fought during his presidency essentially over paragraphs in a prepared speech, because it was Reagan's way of providing direction to the country.

Q. And what is Bush's approach?
Bush has been different. He has borrowed Reagan's direct-appeal tactic when it suited his purposes, such as during last fall's campaign, when he deliberately avoided serious questioning from the press and stuck to his speeches. But he is more skilled at impromptu give-and-take. In some periods—such as during the early months of his presidency—he has frequently engaged in this kind of back-and-forth.

"Americans will have to look beyond Bush's words to get answers about his policies."

Q. What effect do these differences have on the American public's understanding of current issues?
Reagan governed in many ways through the use of rhetoric. His words were parsed for clues to this thinking. Bush talks a lot, but often deliberately masks his decisions or views. For example, in a recent interview, he was asked about the hostage crisis and Israel's taking of Sheik Obeid, and questioner noted there were many different views. "That's exactly right. I want to avoid taking one," Bush said. Americans will have to look beyond Bush's words to get answers about his policies.

Questions for Richard Halloran

Q. How did you become a specialist in defense reporting?

I came by military reporting rather naturally, I think. My father was a naval officer, my mother an "Army brat" whose father was a West Pointer. I served in the paratroops in the mid-1950s, then did military reporting off and on as a newspaper correspondent in Asia during the 1960s and 1970s. When the Pentagon job in Washington Bureau came open in 1979, the bureau chief then, Bill Kovach, and I thought it would be a natural fit. Later, we agreed that much more reporting from the field was needed to tell readers what the services were doing to train and care for our sons and daughters and whether they were spending our money wisely or not.

Q. How is working with military sources different from working with civilian sources?

At the risk of offending civilian sources, working with military sources is easier, for one reason: Military people either tell the truth, or tell you they won't tell you what you want to know, because it is part of the military ethic that officers don't lie. In ten years on the beat, I have been lied to only three times. Military people tend to be more direct, more down to earth, more interested in finding workable solutions to problems. That's not always true of generals and admirals who have spent too much time in Washington, but it's generally true of the colonels and captains and senior non-commissioned officers in the real world.

"Military people either tell the truth, or tell you they won't tell you what you want to know . . ."

Q. Have you ever discovered a real "scoop" that you couldn't print for national security reasons?

Yes. Most who work in the arena of national security have held back stories or particular details because printing them would have jeopardized lives. The press rarely gets credit for this because, obviously, no one can talk about those instances. We withheld, for example, the military identity of certain hostages aboard the TWA airliner in Beirut in 1985 for fear that disclosing them would endanger their lives. I am a submarine buff and have withheld certain operational and technical details that might jeopardize lives or operations—and would most likely bore the readers anyway.

"In ten years on the beat, I have been lied to only three times."

Q. Have you ever printed a story over the objections of the Defense Department?

Yes, countless times. Some of the Pentagon's objections have been merely protocol or politically motivated—we had a story before they were ready to announce it. Sometimes they objected because the information was classified—we went ahead because, in our judgement, the classification was unwarranted. At other times, they were unhappy because the story was unfavorable to the department. As an admiral once said: "It's not a question of national security, it's that when you write about us, you make us look bad."

Richard Halloran

Q. How would you size up President Eisenhower's intuition in warning of the possible abuses of the "military-industrial complex"?

As I wrote several years ago in a book *To Arm a Nation*, President Eisenhower was right, but for the wrong reason. "The greatest threat from the military-industrial complex today is not to the workings of constitutional democracy," I said then, and still believe. "Rather, it is that the divided complex is neither effective nor efficient nor economical and thus does not provide well for the common defense."

". . . the troops deserve the support of the Congress and the public . . ."

Q. What do you think will eventually happen to the Stealth bomber?

One thing a correspondent in Washington learns, no matter what his or her beat, is never to make predictions because they have an uncanny way of being overtaken by events. I will say that the Reagan and Bush administrations, the Defense Department and the Air Force have done a poor job of presenting a case for the bomber to the American people.

Q. What other defense issues are likely to claim our interest in the next year or so?

The cost of defense and the fight among the armed services for their shares of the military budget will continue to dominate the news. An issue just bubbling up again is the failure of allies to carry a fair share of the burden for the common defense and the continued deployment of American forces abroad. Among those who are concerned about national defense is a growing debate over the emphasis on nuclear weapons to the neglect of conventional and special forces, such as Rangers and Green Berets and anti-terrorist forces. Much more attention will be paid to attempts to reach agreements with the Soviet Union on nuclear and conventional arms reductions.

Q. What is the most important feature of current U.S. defense policy that the American public ought to understand?

Undoubtedly, the most important feature on the military scene today is not a question of policy but of people. The young people who enlist today are first-rate—mostly high school graduates, well-motivated and free of drugs and other signs of indiscipline. Their battalion, squadron and ship commanders, for the most part, are well-schooled and caring leaders. All in all, the troops deserve the support of the Congress and the public, not only because they serve well but to avoid an erosion of the volunteer force and a return to the draft.

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Research at the Library

The Ford Library's location on the University of Michigan campus, within a short commute of several other distinguished Michigan colleges and universities, provides students and faculty with a unique opportunity to study the presidency and a variety of topics in recent American history. During the last six months, the Library has continued to serve undergraduate and graduate students as individual researchers and as part of classes in journalism, archives administration, history, and the American presidency.

This spring, Library archivists worked closely with a University of Michigan journalism professor to develop an exercise in which 110 students were asked to use the Library's document and audiovisual resources to research a proposed documentary on the Nixon-Ford transition. Selecting one of ten dates early in the Ford administration, students answered the question, "What was it like to be Gerald Ford on that day?" The response was excellent. While Watergate and the events of 1974 seem recent to many of us, these students gained insight into events which, for most of them, took place before they entered kindergarten.

Students enrolled in an Eastern Michigan University workshop this spring used the Library to study Michigan history. For five days students searched the collections for primary source material appropriate for high school teaching packets. Topics included Ford's Michigan campaign during the 1976 presidential election, PBB contamination, and Representative Ford's views on the Vietnam War.

European Archives Conference delegates and observers touring the Ford Library.

Second European Conference on Archives

On May 10 the Gerald R. Ford Library hosted a dinner for the delegates to the Second European Conference on Archives. The dinner was underwritten by the Gerald R. Ford Foundation. The conference, held under the auspices of the International Council on Archives, gathered archivists from more than thirty European and North American countries to discuss the divergences and convergences of archival traditions.

Keynote papers on archival traditions were given by Francis X. Blouin, director of the Bentley Historical Library at The University of Michigan, and J. P. Sigmond, director of the Dutch National Archives School in the Hague. Jean Favier, director general of the Archives of France spoke on the future of archives. All delegates were asked to prepare short position papers profiling the archives of their country. The conference proceedings will be published by the National Archives and Records Administration.

Ford Library Site for Archival Outreach

Under a new policy established by Archivist of the United States Don Wilson to expand the mission of the National Archives, a group of Archives records has been transferred temporarily from Washington, D.C. to the Ford Library. The records are federal government surveys of consumer purchases, 1935-36, which show the cost of living for a "typical" American family over a one-year period.

Using computers at the Ford Library, staff from the **Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research** converts survey data from a select sample of the more than 700,000 family interviews into machine-readable format.

"The survey has information on money spent for knickers and wool Union suits."

Lengthy expenditure questionnaires cover over 3000 separate items per family, describing medical care, housing, food, clothing, recreation, education, and transportation. Under clothing, for example, the survey has information on money spent for knickers and wool Union suits. The surveys are "singularly important for the detailed view they provide of the characteristics and living conditions of large numbers of ordinary American citizens," according to project director Jerome Clubb. "They constitute a uniquely important source for the study of American social history."

The ICPSR, based at The University of Michigan, is an international archive and dissemination service for computer-readable social science data.

ICPSR data entry personnel Changyu Yang and Philip Wright receiving instructions from project supervisor Peter Granda.

New Staff Members Welcomed

Archivists **Jennifer Sternaman** and **Geir Gundersen** recently joined the Library staff.

Sternaman came to the Library in May, the same month in which she received her M.L.S. degree from The University of Michigan. She had worked for a year at the Bentley Historical Library, and is also a graduate of Michigan State University. Gundersen transferred to the Library from the National Archives in Washington. A native of Norway, he has degrees from Jamestown College and North Dakota State University, and also did graduate work at the University of Oslo International Summer School.

Jim Kratsas, newly appointed curator of the Gerald R. Ford Museum, shares his views about exhibitry and the role of presidential museums.

Kratsas on Museums

Why do people come to museums? Primarily, they come for entertainment and recreation. With this in mind, an institution's exhibits need to be lively and entertaining, as well as educational. The key is to educate quietly; the visitor should not be lectured or bored by lengthy labels.

Today's audience is technologically sophisticated. Television and movies have created patrons who have no patience with static exhibits. Exhibit technology must keep pace. No longer may a museum plop a few objects on display and expect the public to flock to its doors. Videos and sound (and other methods that appeal to the senses) help a museum compete with the booming entertainment industry. They are also effective as educational tools—a picture *is* worth a thousand words.

Content, likewise, must not be static. Presidential libraries and museums are too often perceived by the public as being one-dimensional —dealing only with a specific presidential administration. That's an unfortunate perception. Presidential libraries are local extensions of the National Archives and should be integral parts of their respective communities. We should provide cultural services, through lectures, film series, exhibits, and other programming. We must expand our exhibits beyond presidential themes, giving our audience the best we have to offer.

The Ford Museum is blessed with a very attractive facility. It has the spatial resources to host traveling exhibitions from the Smithsonian and other museums. Temporary exhibits, art shows, photographic exhibits and similar attractions encourage return visitors.

Exhibits are only part of the work. Programs, such as lectures, workshops or children's activities, should act with the exhibits, bringing people in to experience something new.

The goal is to cultivate a loyal audience by many and varied methods. The Gerald R. Ford Museum should do all things possible to create and serve that audience.

Jim Kratsas, museum curator.

"No longer may a museum plop a few objects on display and expect the public to flock to its doors."

COMING EVENTS

Through November 30: "A Time to Heal: Gerald R. Ford Becomes President" exhibit. Museum.

December: Home for the Holidays display of Christmas memorabilia from the Fords' White House years. Open House **December 14,** 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Museum.

December 9 & 10: Decorate the President's Christmas Tree workshops for children ages 6-11. Museum. Free (Advance registration required).

January 11-February 15: 8th Annual Political Film Series, six consecutive Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. Museum.

February 6-April 16: "Thomas Nast Cartoons: The Art of Politics" exhibit, organized by the Museum of Our National Heritage. Museum.

A Time to Heal: Gerald R. Ford Becomes President

"For the past eight months, ever since I had become Vice President, I had been hoping against hope that Watergate would go away, that Nixon would prove his innocence of involvement in the affair, that the basic civility of our political process would return. Now those hopes were evaporating fast."

—Gerald R. Ford, *A Time to Heal*

With these words, Museum visitors begin exploring a new feature exhibition recalling the events of a summer 15 years ago, which led to Gerald Ford's swift succession to the presidency. "A Time to Heal: Gerald R. Ford Becomes President" draws on the Library's collection to bring the events of August 8-12, 1974, the transition of presidential power, to life.

Visitors linger over the exhibition. There is no glitter, yet people are drawn to the simple pages of history: reading Richard Nixon's final speech and one sentence resignation letter to Henry Kissinger, studying memos suggesting what the new president should do, pointing to individual events on a page of the President's Daily Diary, seeing photographs of the fast-paced meetings and strategy sessions, and quietly recalling the events of a decade and a half ago.

"People are drawn to the simple pages of history."

Two views of the "A Time to Heal" exhibit.

Photo by Diane Stebbins.

To recognize his special service to the Gerald R. Ford Foundation, President Ford presented William E. Simon with the group's Achievement Award at the annual meeting.

The Gerald R. Ford Foundation Newsletter
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