
Guide to the Michael L. Belangie Papers

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Collection number: M0924

Department of Special Collections and University Archives
Stanford University Libraries
Stanford, California

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Descriptive Summary

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Biography

Born in Butte Montana, on June 29, 1907, Michael Louis Belangie was the eldest of three children. His father was of French-Canadian origin, and spent his working life as a miner. The tall, thin, dark, and conservative, "Mike," as he came to be known, typified the "American Dream," rising from humble origins to success, comfort, and recognition in the community in which he chose to make his home, Menlo Park, California.

The young Belangie was a "go-getter" from the beginning. He graduated from Butte High School and went to work for the Montana Power Company as lineman, and later as hydroelectric station operator. Then he entered the University of Montana in Missoula. But after two years there, he left school. The Depression was sweeping the country. Belangie quickly landed a job as timekeeper and draughtsman for the U.S. Forest Service. This first taste of civil service started him on a career path that he followed for the rest of his life.

From 1939 to 1943, Belangie worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, reaching the position of Regional Field Supervisor, working in the San Francisco office. His work lasted throughout the early critical years of World War II, when food rationing became a reality in the United States.

Belangie volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1943, and was assigned to the 115th Combat Engineers Battalion in the Pacific Theatre, seeing duty in the Philippines, New Guinea, New Britain, and the Admiralty Islands. As a tech sergeant, he helped to establish and administer Engineer Supply Depots, and supervised operation of supply lines to elements of the 40th Infantry Division in forward areas. He was awarded the Bronze Star for his Army service.

Discharged from the Army in 1945, Belangie joined his wife of ten years, Mary (Maree), in San Francisco, California, and went to work briefly for the Federal Housing Administration.

In late 1945 he purchased Menlo Textiles, a national purveyor of custom-loomed fabrics in Menlo Park, California, some thirty miles south of San Francisco. He and Mary moved to Menlo Park, where he operated the weaving company for the next 18 years. He was drawn to it, as he told a local newspaper, "because it was a creative enterprise-something I could do with my hands." Belangie's artistic streak extended to fabric designs as well as pen and ink landscape sketches.

During his tenure at Menlo Textiles and his sideline enterprise of selling real estate, he frequently had a reason to call into Menlo City Hall, and he began to volunteer for various committees. Soon, Belangie was appointed to the Menlo Regional Planning Committee Executive Council, the City and County Parks Committee, and the Master Plan Revisions Committee. He also became a member of the Menlo Historical Society, was an early advocate of the Menlo Public Library, and was instrumental in forming Menlo Park's Arts Commission.

His public service efforts led him to run for the Menlo Park City Council in 1950, an election that he won. He also became Mayor in 1954-55. In 1955, he resigned his Council seat owing to the press of business, but he was persuaded to join the Council again in 1957, when he was appointed to fill the vacancy left by the death of a councilman. Belangie remained a Councilman, being elected over and over again until 1971, when he again resigned, this time to become Executive Vice President of the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce.

Belangie had a simple formula for public service: "With my fellow councilmen, I felt our first job, as representatives of the people, was to be responsible, and responsive, to furthering the amenities for living, working, and leisure." On the City Council he helped to design Menlo Park's innovative professional-administrative zoning policies, which enabled the city to expand commercial areas without eroding the city's basic residential character, policies that have been emulated by cities all over America. Another major contribution was his work to keep Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International) in Menlo Park.

A lifelong golfer, Belangie also assisted in the design and planning of the Menlo Park Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club, and served a term as the Club's Executive Secretary and General Manager.

But what he is remembered most fondly for is "the Fountain." The Fountain, a replica of a fountain in Rome called "Neptune's Family," had been cast in the 1860s to grace the grounds of Thurlow Lodge in Menlo Park, the home of W. E. Barron. It survived a destructive fire in 1872, when the home was owned by Milton Latham. Later, the property, including the mansion, gatehouse, and fountain, were purchased by Timothy Hopkins, nephew of Mark Hopkins. When Menlo Park moved its Administrative Complex onto this land in the late 1960s, two relics of its former grandeur remained: the gatehouse, and the broken and rusty fountain, greatly in need of restoration.

The gatehouse was restored without much fuss, but Neptune's Family remained in ruins. Belangie, struck by its beauty, vowed to save it from the breakers and see it restored, and for a number of years it sat forlornly in his backyard. Finally, his efforts to persuade the City that the Fountain's historic value was such that the metal sculpture should be restored were successful. The sparkling fountain, with its plumbing repaired, and basking in a new coat of paint, was placed beneath an old oak tree near the gatehouse, and is still burbling away today (2000).

Mike Belangie, however, did not live to see the Fountain restored. He died in 1974 at the age of 69. But ten years later, the Fountain's restoration was completed by the City, and in a ceremony held on July 4, 1984, its restoration was celebrated, with a plaque placed at the base of Neptune's Family, dedicating it to Mike Belangie.

Scope and Content

The Michael Louis (and Mary) Belangie Collection is extensive (9 linear feet). It is divided as follows: Boxes 1, 2, 8 (oversize), and 9 (oversize photo album) contain files pertaining principally to Belangie's personal life. Boxes 3 through 7 contain principally material that, although about the Belangies, represents "life as it was" in Menlo Park, California, 1945-1980. These files contain such material as costs of operating a household, automotive records and costs, appliance and other advertisements, insurance records, stock transactions and investments, medical records and costs, and yearly income taxes.

Series 1. Personal files

Subseries 1. Michael L. Belangie

Box 1, Folder 1	Birth certificate (2 copies, 1 clip) See also box 8, folder 11941, 1962
Box 1, Folder 2	Diploma, Butte High School5/29/1921
Box 1, Folder 3	Personal data (army discharge, resumes, notification of death, etc.)1945-1974
Box 1, Folder 4	Wallet & i.d. cards1936-1974
Box 1, Folder 5	Selective service correspondence, army discharge942-1945
Box 1, Folder 6	War experience (letter, 4 clips, telegram)1942, 1945
Box 1, Folder 7	USDA (2 clips)1940-1941
Box 1, Folder 8	As Menlo Park City Councilman (correspondence, clips, certificate of election) See also box 8, folder 31952-1974
Box 1, Folder 9	Chamber of Commerce (correspondence, clips, membership roster) See also box 8, folder 5 1949-1976
Box 1, Folder 10	The Town Club (correspondence, membership rosters, newsletters)1972-1974
Box 1, Folder 11	"The Fountain" (correspondence, publicity, clips) See also box 8, folder 81978-1984
Box 1, Folder 12	Personal correspondence1946-1974
Box 1, Folder 13	USDA correspondence1942-1946
Box 1, Folder 14	Correspondence to/from relatives1952-1984
Box 1, Folder 15	Business correspondence1953-1973
Box 1, Folder 16	Gratitude & congratulatory correspondence1938-1961
Box 1, Folder 17	Souvenir menu, UALFeb. 1950
Box 1, Folder 18	"Train Collectors Quarterly"Apr. 1954
Box 1, Folder 19	Kistler coat of armsnd
Box 1, Folder 20	Disability claim & correspondence1970-1972
Box 1, Folder 21	Legal matters1975
Box 1, Folder 22	"Little House" Menlo Senior Center1954
Box 1, Folder 23	Loan application1957
Box 1, Folder 24	Assets1974
Box 1, Folder 25	Final illness medical statements1971-1974
Box 1, Folder 26	Death certificate, correspondence, obituaries1974

Subseries 2. Mary Belangie

Box 1, Folder 27	Civil service records1946-1964
Box 1, Folder 28	Correspondence1943-1983
Box 1, Folder 29	Will (copy)1957
Box 1, Folder 30	Drivers license, driving certificate, ticket1950, 1980s
Box 1, Folder 31	Palo Alto Women's Club1969
Box 1, Folder 32	Recipesnd
Box 1, Folder 33	Directions to peoples' housesnd
Box 1, Folder 34	Sears charge accountnd
Box 1, Folder 35	Transfer of Oldsmobile to brother1974-1975
Box 1, Folder 36	Miscellaneous notesnd

Series 2. Menlo Textiles

Box 1, Folder 37	Menlo Textiles brochure1960
Box 1, Folder 38	Menlo Textiles partnership agreement, bank acct1947-1960
Box 1, Folder 39	Photos (9)[1950s?]
Box 1, Folder 40	35 mm slides1950s
Box 1, Folder 41	Publicity 1951
Box 1, Folder 42	Income tax returns1948, 1956-60
Box 1, Folder 43	Sale of corporation1961 ff

Series 3. Subject files

Subseries 1. Belangie family subject files

Box 1, Folder 44	Appliance warranties & instructions1960s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 45	Automobile insurance and loan1955-1980
Box 1, Folder 46	Automotive maintenance1960s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 47	Calif. Senior citizen property tax assistance1972-1980
Box 1, Folder 48	Calif. Water Service statements1967-1974
Box 1, Folder 49	Personal health (news clips)1970s
Box 1, Folder 50	DMV registration, handbooks, test, etc1950s-1980s
Box 1, Folder 51	House improvements & techniques1950s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 52	Real estate matters1960s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 53	School facilities, reading list1940 & 1972
Box 1, Folder 54	Miscellaneous pamphlets1948-1955
Box 1, Folder 55	Medicare brochures[1960s-1970s]
Box 1, Folder 56	Medicare benefits claims & notes1970s

Subseries 2. Sharon Heights subject files

Box 1, Folder 57	Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club bylaws, etc.1961, 1973
Box 1, Folder 58	Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club, steering committee & board of directors meetings1961-1962
Box 1, Folder 59	Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club, general manager records1961-1962
Box 1, Folder 60	Sharon Heights Magazine "Duffer" & brochures1961-1962
Box 1, Folder 61	Golf instruction clippings1970s

Subseries 3. Menlo Park & vicinity subject files

Box 2, Folder 1	"San Mateo County, its Story"1967
Box 2, Folder 2	"Trees of Menlo Park"1972
Box 2, Folder 3	"Menlo Park Centennial, 1874-1974" See also box 8, folder 171974
Box 2, Folder 4	"Menlough Park"1970s
Box 2, Folder 5	"Menlo Park Today"1966
Box 2, Folder 6	"Menlo Park Today"1967
Box 2, Folder 7	"Menlo Park Today"1968
Box 2, Folder 8	"Menlo Park Today"1969
Box 2, Folder 9	"Menlo Park Today"1970
Box 2, Folder 10	"Menlo Park Today"1970-1971
Box 2, Folder 11	"Menlo Park Today"1971
Box 2, Folder 12	"Menlo Park Today"1974-1975
Box 2, Folder 13	"Menlo Park Today"1976
Box 2, Folder 14	"Menlo Park Comprehensive Plan, 2000" See also box 8, folders 19 and 231974
Box 2, Folder 15	"Menlo Park Comprehensive Plan, 2000"1974
Box 2, Folder 16	Menlo Park official government stationery1970s
Box 2, Folder 17	"Oak Meadows of Atherton"1976
Box 2, Folder 18	"Atherton Lands"1979

Series 4. Miscellaneous books

Box 2, Folder 19	"Artisans & Technicians" (in French)[1960?]
Box 2, Folder 20	AAA "Southwestern Tour Book"1964
Box 2, Folder 21	"1001 New Decorating Ideas"[1950?]

Series 5. Personal finance files

Box 2, Folder 22	Investing (clippings)1960s
Box 2, Folder 23	Investment records1955-1983
Box 2, Folder 24	Investment records1982-1986

Box 2, Folder 25	Stock dividends (notes)1959-1982
Box 2, Folder 26	Stock transactions, AVCO1960-1980
Box 2, Folder 27	Stock transactions, U.S. Steel1950-1960
Box 2, Folder 28	Stock transactions, Host International1966-1982
Box 2, Folder 29	Stock transactions, Itek, Camelot1967-1983
Box 2, Folder 30	Stock transactions, Mitchum, Jones & Templeton1962-1973
Box 2, Folder 31	Stock transactions, Tenneco1963, 1970s
Box 2, Folder 32	Stock transactions, Lundborg1953-1970
Box 2, Folder 33	Stock transactions, Capital Preservation1981-1983
Box 2, Folder 34	Stock transactions, Morgan Stanley1958-1978
Box 2, Folder 35	Stock transactions, Dean Witter1985-1986
Box 2, Folder 36	Stock transactions, Miscellaneous1946, 1970s
Box 2, Folder 37	Bank statements, Bank of America1982-1984
Box 2, Folder 38	Bank statements, Wells Fargo1978-1987
Box 2, Folder 39	Bank statements, Wells Fargo (cont'd)1978-1987
Box 2, Folder 40	Bank statements, First Interstate1985-1988
Box 2, Folder 41	Bank statements, Great Western1984-1988
Box 2, Folder 42	Pass books, Wells Fargo1944-1968
Box 2, Folder 43	Pass books, Northern Cal., UCB, BofA1944-1980
Box 2, Folder 44	Check registers, Wells Fargo1951-1972
Box 2, Folder 45	Check registers, various1955-1987
Box 3, Folder 1	Taxes, news clippingsnd
Box 3, Folder 2	Tax information1983-1984
Box 3, Folder 3	Income tax returns & receipts1939-1947
Box 3, Folder 4	Income tax returns & receipts1945-1951
Box 3, Folder 5	Income tax returns & receipts1955
Box 3, Folder 6	Income tax returns & receipts1956
Box 3, Folder 7	Income tax returns & receipts1958
Box 3, Folder 8	Income tax returns & receipts1959
Box 3, Folder 9	Income tax returns & receipts1961
Box 3, Folder 10	Income tax returns & receipts1962
Box 3, Folder 11	Income tax returns & receipts1963
Box 3, Folder 12	Income tax returns & receipts1964
Box 3, Folder 13	Income tax returns & receipts1965
Box 3, Folder 14	Income tax returns & receipts1966
Box 3, Folder 15	Income tax returns & receipts1967
Box 3, Folder 16	Income tax returns & receipts1968
Box 3, Folder 17	Income tax returns & receipts1969
Box 3, Folder 18	Income tax returns & receipts1970
Box 3, Folder 19	Income tax returns & receipts1971
Box 3, Folder 20	Income tax returns & receipts1972
Box 3, Folder 21	Income tax returns & receipts1973
Box 3, Folder 22	Income tax returns & receipts1974
Box 3, Folder 23	Income tax returns & receipts1975
Box 3, Folder 24	Income tax returns & receipts1976
Box 3, Folder 25	Income tax returns & receipts1977
Box 3, Folder 26	Income tax returns & receipts1978
Box 3, Folder 27	Income tax returns & receipts1979
Box 3, Folder 28	Income tax returns & receipts1980
Box 3, Folder 29	Income tax returns & receipts1981
Box 3, Folder 30	Income tax returns & receipts1982
Box 3, Folder 31	Income tax returns & receipts1983
Box 3, Folder 32	Income tax returns & receipts1984
Box 4, Folder 1	Income tax returns & receipts1985
Box 4, Folder 2	Income tax returns & receipts1986
Box 4, Folder 3	Income tax returns & receipts1987
Box 4, Folder 4	Income tax returns & receipts1988
Box 4, Folder 5	Income tax returns & receipts1989

Box 4, Folder 6	Income tax returns & receipts1990
Box 4, Folder 7	Income tax returns & receipts1992
Box 4, Folder 8	Income tax returns & receipts1993
Box 4, Folder 9	Income tax returns & receipts1995
Box 4, Folder 10	San Mateo County taxes1965-1992

Series 6. Insurance files

Box 4, Folder 11	Veterans' Benefits1951-1974
Box 4, Folder 12	Medical records1939, 1961-69
Box 4, Folder 13	Medical records1972-1976
Box 4, Folder 14	Medical records1977-1985
Box 4, Folder 15	Menlo Clinic Medical Reports1964-1988
Box 4, Folder 16	Aetna Insurance (Chamber of Commerce)1971
Box 4, Folder 17	Medical insurance, Bay Pacific1987
Box 4, Folder 18	Medical insurance, Blue Shield1946-1974
Box 4, Folder 19	Medical insurance, Blue Shield1946-1974
Box 4, Folder 20	Medical insurance, Blue Shield1975-1985
Box 4, Folder 21	Medical insurance, Kaiser1985
Box 4, Folder 22	Medical insurance, Insurance Company of America1958-1972
Box 4, Folder 23	Life insurance, Prudential1938-1964
Box 4, Folder 24	Life insurance, Metropolitan (M.L. Belangie)1944-1974
Box 4, Folder 25	Life insurance, (Mary Belangie)1938-1976
Box 4, Folder 26	Life insurance, Veterans Administration1951-1974
Box 4, Folder 27	Accident insurance (Menlo Park City)1970
Box 5, Folder 1	Homeowners' insurance1957-1988
Box 5, Folder 2	Automobile insurance1957-1988
Box 5, Folder 3	Personal property insurance1967-1987

Series 7. Magazines (some include Menlo Textiles advertising)

Box 5, Folder 4	Architectural Digest, December1979
Box 5, Folder 5	Architectural Digest, March 1980
Box 5, Folder 6	Architectural Digest, Mar/Apr1985
Box 6, Folder 1	Architectural Digest, Vol XII, # 1nd
Box 6, Folder 2	Architectural Digest, Vol XII, # 2nd
Box 6, Folder 3	Architectural Digest, Vol XIII, # 2nd
Box 6, Folder 4	Architectural Digest, Vol. XIII, # 3nd
Box 6, Folder 5	Architectural Digest, Vol ?nd
Box 6, Folder 6	House & Garden, April1949
Box 6, Folder 7	America's Fabrics. MacMillan, NY1947
Box 7, Folder 1	Shaping America's Products. Reinhold Pub.Corp., NY1956
Box 7, Folder 2	haping America's Products. Reinhold Pub.Corp., NY. Duplicate copy

Series 8. Oversize materials

Subseries 1. Miscellaneous

Box 8, Folder 1	M.L. Belangie, birth cert., marriage license1935, 1941
Box 8, Folder 2	M.L. Belangie, publicity photos (22 & 1 clipping)1913-[1970?]
Box 8, Folder 3	M.L. Belangie, Menlo Park City Councilman (2 clips). See also box 1, folder 81962, 1971

Subseries 2. Clippings

Box 8, Folder 4	George Liddle (Willow Expressway)1971
Box 8, Folder 5	M.L. Belangie, Chamber of Commerce1971
Box 8, Folder 6	M.L. Belangie as artist1976
Box 8, Folder 7	"I stole my greatest story,"1958

Subseries 2. Clippings

Box 8, Folder 8	Belangie & "The Fountain" See also box 1, folder 111984
Box 8, Folder 9	Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club. See also box 1, folders 57-601950s-1960s
Box 8, Folder 10	Golden Acorn Awards, Menlo Park1970s
Box 8, Folder 11	Menlo Park Civic Center1970
Box 8, Folder 12	Fountain, Lindenwood, Flood Estatend
Box 8, Folder 13	Menlo Park, Sherwood Hall, Hopkins Estatend
Box 8, Folder 14	Menlo Park City government1960s
Box 8, Folder 15	Alza Company1970
Box 8, Folder 16	Medicare & Social Security1960-1970
Box 8, Folder 17	Menlo Park Centennial. See also box 2, folder 31974

Subseries 3. Maps

Box 8, Folder 18	San Francisco1973
Box 8, Folder 19	Menlo Park, general plan1966
Box 8, Folder 20	Menlo Park1973-1974
Box 8, Folder 21	Menlo Parknd
Box 8, Folder 22	Menlo Park1988
Box 8, Folder 23	Menlo Park, "Toward 2000". See also box 2, folders 14 & 151974
Box 8, Folder 24	"How to find a library" : news article1971

Subseries 4. Scrapbook

Box 9	Oversize scrapbook/photo album1930s-1974
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