

Howard Rovelstad Biography



Photos from the EHS Maroon and Special Collections and University Archives at the University of Maryland Libraries

Howard Rovelstad - Class of 1931 - b. March 5, 1913
d. July 16, 2004 From the EHS Yearbook, *The Maroon*: “Howie”, General Course; Mirror Staff 3-4; Student Council 3-4; E. H. S. Players; Mask and Bauble; HiY; Spanish and Latin Club.

Howard Rovelstad was the head librarian at the University of Maryland and he succeeded Carl Hintz as Director of Libraries in 1946. Under his guidance, the informal collections held in the engineering and

chemistry departments became formal libraries. The Engineering and Physical Sciences Library opened in 1949 and was enlarged in 1968. The Chemistry Library opened in 1953, and, in 1975, it was moved to its present location and renamed the Charles E. White Library. Rovelstad also increased library service to students in other ways. For example, during the 1950s, the library sponsored a bookmobile which delivered books to off-campus students enrolled in the College of Special and Continuing Studies (which later became the University of Maryland University College).

In fact, much of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s were devoted to expanding library facilities and services. In 1958, McKeldin Library opened to replace Shoemaker Hall as the main library. To increase service to undergraduate students, Hornbake Library opened in the 1972-73 school year. On Hornbake Library's fourth floor was the Nonprint Media Center, the first section of the libraries devoted solely to audio-visual materials. The Architecture Library also opened in 1973, and the Art Library, another branch library opened in 1979.

Rovelstad received Emeriti status and was succeeded by H. Joanne Harrar in 1975. As you see above, and from his photos, Rovelstad was the director during one of the greatest periods of expansion for our libraries. He oversaw McKeldin's construction -- our largest building by far -- and the addition of our first non-print library.

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Howard Rovelstad's obituary from the Washington Post on August 1, 2004.

Howard Rovelstad, 91, the retired director of libraries at the University of Maryland, died of congestive heart disease July 16 at his home in Catonsville, MD.

Mr. Rovelstad was a career librarian since 1940, when he earned a fifth-year degree in library science from Columbia University and moved to the University of Maryland. Except for a three-year absence while he served in the Army during World War II, Mr. Rovelstad worked at Maryland, moving from order librarian to reference librarian to director of the university's libraries in 1946. He retired in 1975.

Born in Elgin, IL, he received bachelor's and master's degrees in English from the University of Illinois. He was a member of the Association of Research Libraries, the American Library Association and the International Federation of Library Associations.

He was a member of Hope Lutheran Church in College Park.

Survivors include his wife of 34 years, Mathilde Rovelstad of Catonsville, and a daughter, Brenda Rovelstad Wilson of Edgewater. He is also listed in Who's Who in America - 1970-71

He was a member of Hope Lutheran Church in College Park.

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