

New at UMMA: LIFE Magazine 1947 Homecoming Photographs
August 25–November 18, 2018

Introductory Text

In October 1947, just two years after the end of World War II, the popular weekly news magazine *LIFE* sent staff photographers Lisa Larsen (1925–1958) and Ralph Morse (1917–2014) to cover homecoming weekend at the University of Michigan. The subsequent article, “Michigan Homecoming,” which brought national attention to UM’s athletic program, featured a seven-page spread with photographs of the campus during a much-anticipated football game between the number-one ranked Michigan Wolverines and the University of Minnesota’s Golden Gophers. Over 85,000 people filled the stadium on October 25 to watch Michigan reclaim the Little Brown Jug, a coveted trophy bestowed upon the winner of the Michigan v. Minnesota game since 1909.

This installation provides a unique opportunity to view twenty-one photographs of that weekend, many of which were not published in the article. Presented alongside an issue of the magazine from the archives of U-M’s Bentley Historical Library, these photographs of fervent fans, strolling couples, alumni making their annual pilgrimage, and the game itself reveal *LIFE*’s interest in showing a giddy post-war public enjoying a return to American pastimes.

These photographs were generously gifted to UMMA by John Harvith (AB '69, JD '73) and Susan Edwards Harvith (MMP '73).

About the donors

John Harvith (AB '69, JD '73) and Susan Edwards Harvith (MMP '73) began collecting photography during their graduate school years at the University of Michigan. Inspired by exhibitions of photographs at UMMA, they wanted to learn as much as possible about the photographers that shaped the history of medium. John remembers:

“I was working at U-M Information Services and writing music criticism for *The Ann Arbor News* when one day the U–M news writers were told that old news files were being culled and they could take whatever they wanted from the out-of-date materials on top of the filing cabinets. I walked over, leafed through the piles, and saw old *LIFE* magazine photographs among them; as a photography historian was immediately struck with their quality and decided on the spot to preserve them by adding them to our collection.”

Stats for 1947 Michigan Wolverines:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1947_Michigan_Wolverines_football_team

Nov. 2, 1947 issue of *LIFE* Magazine

https://books.google.com/books?id=rIEEAAAAMBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_su_mmary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false