# MIGHTY MAC COLLECTION

**Creator:** Mighty Mac  
**Dates:** 1934-1988  
**Quantity:** 46.0+ linear feet (36 manuscript boxes, 19 flat boxes, 2 small two-drawer ‘cabinets’, 4 signs, 1 banner)  
**Acquisition:** Accession #:2008.29; Donated by: Richard & Mac Bell, July 17, 2008.  
**Identification:** A57 ; Archive Collection #57  
**Citation:** [Document Title]. The Might Mac Collection, [Box #, Folder #, Item #], Cape Ann Museum Library & Archives, Gloucester, MA.  
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**Language:** English  
**Finding Aid:** Howard Thomas, May 2010, supervisor, Stephanie Buck, Librarian/Archivist.

## Biographical Note

In 1909 Morris Bell and Max Leavitt started a business to make oiled clothing for the Gloucester fishermen. Its famous “sou’wester” led to the production of other items such as work clothes, work gloves, heavy wool and leather outerwear and even mattresses (the old excelsior stuffed cotton ticking kind) for fishing vessel bunks.
Over time the original business, set up as the Gloucester Manufacturing Company with factories at 31 Commercial Street and 21 Main Street, evolved into the Cape Ann Manufacturing Company, which eventually evolved into the Mighty-Mac Company.

In the first World War the company made ponchos, lace breeches and shelter-tent halves (affectionately called pup-tents) in addition to the famous lines of oil cloths and rugged outerwear. In the late 1920s the company introduced its “collegiate slicker” and oilskin reached its peak demand. The depression marked the beginning of the demise of the oil clothing business but fortunately the company’s outerwear business remained strong. Style development and improved fit led to strong growth in the demand for outerwear garments and Mighty-Mac became the trademark for these products.

From 1940 to 1945 the company was almost totally committed to the war program and made field jackets for the army, life jackets for the navy, and fragmentation bomb parachutes for the Army Ordinance. Research and development work on the Eisenhower jacket helped earn the coveted Army & Navy “E” award for excellence in production and quality for the company.

After World War II the Mighty-Mac trademark and its supporting symbol, the Fisherman at the Wheel, became the mark of quality and good fashion throughout the clothing industry. Sales offices were opened in the Empire State Building in New York City and the Merchandise Mart in Chicago. Salesmen were added and marketing territories were expanded. Production facilities were expanded in 1953 by acquisition of a plant in Lawrence, MA., and in 1956 by building a new Gloucester plant at Emerson Ave, near the Annisquam river.

Mighty-Mac remained a leader in style, quality and craftsmanship of its sport and spectator, summer and winter, men, women and children’s outerwear clothing for the next three decades. The company was sold to the Haddad Group, Ltd. of New York in 1985.

BIOGRAPHIES

Morris Bell and Molly Broder Bell were the parents of Richard S. Bell and Harold Bell. Morris Bell was the co-founder with Max Leavitt, in 1909, of the Gloucester Manufacturing Company. Morris Bell died in 1933.

Richard S. Bell was born in 1912. He graduated in 1934 from Wharton School of Finance, University of Pennsylvania, and joined the family clothing company. He served as President and Director until the company was sold in 1985.

Harold Bell was born in 1914. He attended the University of Maine at Orono for a year to study Forestry. He transferred to Yale University, New Haven, CN, and earned a degree in Economics in 1936. He began with the family clothing company on graduation and served as Treasurer and Director until the company was sold in 1985.
**Acquisition Note**

Gift of Richard & Mac Bell, July 17, 2008. Richard Bell was the former president of the company and the collection has been in his possession since the sale of the company in 1985. The collection was stored in a basement and garage, which has resulted in damage to part of the material.

**Scope and Content of the Collection**

The collection provides a unique insight into the evolution of a small company. Located in Gloucester, MA., Mighty-Mac started primarily as a maker of oil clothing for the fishermen back in the horse and buggy days (1909), and grew into a world-wide corporation recognized as a leader and innovator in the fashion clothing industry and the Mighty-Mac trademark became a symbol of quality, style and craftsmanship for foul-weather gear and fair-weather wear. Included in the collection is business correspondence from the 1940s through the 1980s; numerous awards; scrapbooks and catalogues; and information on trademarks. A large part of the collection includes photographs of models and product designs, mounted design sketches and advertising promotions.

We have attempted to arrange the collection in subject series and chronological order, as much as possible. The photographs will be scanned and catalogued. The scanned images are stored digitally and the original photographs and negatives are kept in archival storage.

**Series Description**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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| I | Richard Bell  
|   | Boxes 1 - 4 (1940 - 1985) |
| II | Legal and Business  
|   | Boxes 5 - 9 (1945 - 1987) |
| III | Scrapbooks  
|   | Boxes 10 - 13 (1953 - 1982) |
| IV | Photographs, film & audio tapes  
|   | Boxes 14 - 19 (nd) |
| V | Product design  
|   | Boxes 21 - 22, 39, 40, 43 - 48, 50 (nd) |
| VI | Advertising  
|   | Boxes 23 - 30, 37, 38, 41, 42, 49, 51 - 55 (1940s - 1970s) |
| VII | Miscellaneous  
|    | Boxes 31 - 36, signs & small ‘cabinets.’ (1940s - 1970s) |
Container List

Box 1
Series I  Richard Bell
  Personal & Advertising
Folder 1  Speech, sales notebook, Beauport 1961-85
Folder 2  Photographs
Folder 3  Correspondence 1973-87
Folder 4  Newspaper Ads & Articles
Folder 5  Boston Conference on Distribution, 1961
Folder 6  Advertising, 1966-71

Box 2
Series I  Richard Bell
  Personal & Business
Folder 1  Desk calendars, 1946 & 1955
Folder 2  New York Times calendar, 1982
Folder 3  History of Cape Ann Manf. Co. & Mighty-Mac
Folder 4  Calendar entries, 1940-81
Folder 5  Patents, 1982-87
Folder 6  Financial statements, 1979-80

Box 3
Series I  Richard Bell
  Personal & Awards
Folder 1  Personal papers & misc., 1951-85
Folder 2  Photographs, personal & business
Folder 3  Mounted photographs
Folder 5  Plaque, Apparel Hall of Fame
Folder 6  Plaque, 1980 U.S. Ski team
Folder 7  Plaque, Young Presidents Organization
Folder 8  Scrapbook, c.1968

Box 4
Series I  Richard Bell
  Trade Mission, 1962
Folder 1  Do It Yourself, 1962
Folder 2  London, Nov 17-24
Folder 3  Milan, Nov 27-30
Folder 4  Paris, Nov 30-Dec 9
Folder 5  Dept. Of Commerce.
Folder 6  Scrapbook, Nov 17-Dec 13
Box 5
Series II  Legal & Business
       Acquisitions & Finances
Folder 1  Merger, 1953-72
Folder 2  Cape Ann Manf. Co., 1946
Folder 3  Finances, 1945-46
Folder 4  Sales, cash & markets, 1965-69
Folder 5  Sale of Mighty-Mac, 1985
Folder 6  Scrapbook, Fashion Show, 1960

Box 6
Series II  Legal & Business
       Documents & Press Kits
Folder 1  Office supplies
Folder 2  Advertising & Insignias
Folder 3  Draft Export Marketing for Smaller Firms.

Box 7
Series II  Legal & Business
       Correspondence
Folder 1  1940s & 1950s
Folder 2  1960-65
Folder 3  1966-69
Folder 4  1970s
Folder 5  1980s

Box 8
Series II  Legal & Business
       Catalogues & Work Sheets
Folder 1  1963-70
Folder 2  1971-78
Folder 3  1979-80
Folder 4  1980-83
Folder 5  1983-85
Folder 6  1986-87

Box 9
Series II  Legal & Business
       Patents & Trademarks
Folder 1  Exercise garments, 1981-82
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Box 10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Series III</strong> Scrapbooks, 1953-64</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 1</strong> Inventory data Fall Line, 1953</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 2</strong> Salesman catalogue, 1962</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 3</strong> Photo Book Vol. 1, 1964</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 11</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Series III</strong> Scrapbooks, 1969-76</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 4</strong> Pelt Belt, 1969</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 5</strong> Season Proof Merchandising Program, 1976</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Series III</strong> Scrapbooks, 1971-82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book 6</strong> Challenger, Successful, 1971</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 7</strong> Photo file, Picnic, 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 8</strong> Tags &amp; Labels</td>
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<tr>
<th>Box 13</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Series III</strong> Scrapbooks, 1979</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 9</strong> Tags &amp; Labels</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 10</strong> Jim Lynch Store, Iron Mt., Michigan, 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Book 11</strong> Publicity pictures with captions</td>
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<th>Box 14</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Series IV</strong> Photographs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sales Promotion Models</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Folder 1</strong> Promotions</td>
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<td><strong>Folder 2</strong> Models - boys</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Folder 3</strong> Models - men</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Folder 4</strong> Models - Description &amp; price</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Folder 5</strong> Numbered product designs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Folder 6</strong> Models - Dick Bell, Claude Kilby &amp; others.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Box 15**
Series IV  Photographs
Photos & Transparencies
Folder 1  Models - female
Folder 2  Multiple shots per sheet
Folder 3  Advertising & Outings
Folder 4  Models - transparencies
Folder 5  Models - transparencies

**Box 16**
Series IV  Photographs
Photos & Transparencies
Folder 1  Advertising - small photos
Folder 2  Advertising - design
Folder 3  Advertising - models
Folder 4  Advertising - models
Folder 5  Advertising - transparencies

**Box 17**
Series IV  Photographs
Negatives & Transparencies
Folder 1  Advertising - negatives
Folder 2  Advertising - photo mock-ups
Folder 3  Advertising - photo mock-ups
Folder 4  Photos - models - youths
Folder 5  Mounted photos of designs
Folder 6  Advertising photos - color

**Box 18**
Series IV  Photographs
Advertising
Folder 1  Models
Folder 2  Models - youth
Folder 3  Models
Folder 4  Copies of Ads (9” x 12”)

**Box 19**
Series IV  Photographs
Mounted - of designs

**Box 20**
Series V  Product Design
Mounted sketches - boys
Box 21
Series V  Product Design
Mounted sketches - men

Box 22
Series V  Product Design
Mounted sketches - men & youths

Box 23
Series VI  Advertising
Sales & Esquire registration
Folder 1  Solicitation & misc.
Folder 2  Magazine - Teen & Boys Outfitters, 1967
Folder 3  Sales bulletin & misc.
Folder 4  Esquire registration, 1967
Small box containing photographs of:
  2” x 3” Product display
  4” x 5” Product display
  4” x 5” Jean Claude Killy & Ethel Kennedy
  2.25” x 2.75” negatives, aerial shots & sailing
  2.25” x 2.75” transparencies, female model
  1.5” x 4” stereo transparencies, misc.

Box 24
Series VI  Advertising
Newspapers & Magazines
Folder 1  Magazine - business
Folder 2  Newspaper ads, 1960-68
Folder 3  Newspaper ads & articles, misc.

Box 25
Series VI  Advertising
Mounted Layouts & Fashion Sketches
Folder 1  Sales material
Folder 2  Fashion sketches
Folder 3  Mounted layouts
**Box 26**
Series VI Advertising
Catalogues, brochures, photos
Folder 1 *They That Go Down to the Sea*, brochure, 4 copies
Folder 2 Photos - models & misc.
Folder 3 Newspaper ads, 1969-73
Folder 5 Catalogue & 1973 Anniversary calendar

**Box 27**
Series VI Advertising
Catalogues
Folder 1 Men’s & Women’s Wear, 1988
Folder 2 Boy’s Wear, 1976-79
Folder 3 Worksheets & economic policy, 1973
Folder 4 Retail
Folder 5 Misc.

**Box 28**
Series VI Advertising
Magazines

**Box 29**
Series VI Advertising
Press kits, catalogues, misc.
Folder 1 Press kits, 1961, 1976
Folder 2 Catalogue & misc.
Folder 3 Catalogue, worksheets & misc.
Folder 4 Mounted photos of designs

**Box 30**
Series VI Advertising
Insignias, labels & toy pistol
Folder 1 Insignia & clothing labels
Folder 2 Customer labels
Folder 3 Toy cap pistol & misc.
Box containing 8” x 10” photographs & negatives, models, Fall & Winter 1965.

**Box 31**
Series VII Miscellaneous
Tuna Tournaments, 1963-67
Folder 1 Insignias, tags & press kits, 1964
Folder 2 Preparation materials
Folder 3 Correspondence, 1977-78
Folder 4  Time standards & wage incentives
Folder 5  Job evaluation manual
Folder 5a  Employee list and labeled photographs
Folder 6  Guide to Fashion Sources
Folder 7  Work sheets
Audio tape (reel to reel) Cape Ann Tuna Tournament, 8/21/1963

**Box 32**
Series VII  Miscellaneous
Awards
Folder 1  Esquire Fashion Design Award, 1963
Folder 2  Army & Navy “E” Award - photos

**Box 33**
Series VII  Miscellaneous
Printing plates

**Box 34**
Series VII  Miscellaneous
Artic trip & Advertising
Folder 1  Schooner Bowdoin logbook, newspaper clippings, 1934
Folder 2  Arctic trip - photos
Folder 3  Advertising sales brochures, 1963-76
Folder 4  Advertising bach covers & misc.

**Box 35 (Flat)**
Series VII  Miscellaneous
Tuna Tournaments, 1963-71
Folder 1  Scrapbook, 1963
Folder 2  Press kits, 1963
Folder 3  Publicity, 1963-71
Folder 4  Cape Ann Summer Sun, Aug. 8, 1963
Folder 5  Gloucester Daily Times, Aug. 26, 1964

**Box 36 (Flat)**
Series VII  Miscellaneous
Signs & Awards
Folder 1  Ten-man series, Out O’Gloucester, 10 small signs
Folder 2  Cape Ann Sportswear
Folder 3  American Arbitration Assoc., 1965
Folder 4  National Outerwear & Sportswear Assn., 1974
Folder 5  President of “bama,” 1960-62
Box 37 (Flat)
Series VI Advertising
Folder 1 Newspaper ads & articles, 1940s
Folder 2 New York Times magazine, 1947-48
Folder 3 Magazines (2)
Folder 4 Mounted designs

Box 38 (Flat)
Series VI Advertising
Folder 1 Series - Product layouts
Folder 2 Photos - T-bar zipper - Mike Ditka
Folder 3 Sketches
Folder 4 Color photos - Ski Outfits

Box 39 (Flat)
Series V Product Design
Folder 1 Mounted layouts
Folder 2 Design sketches

Box 40 (Flat)
Series V Product Design
Folder 1 Mounted layouts
Folder 2 Design sketches
Folder 3 Campaign signs (2)
Folder 4 Group photo

Box 41 (Flat)
Series VI Advertising
Folder 1 Mounted design photos
Folder 2 Mounted design mock-ups
Folder 3 Models - photos
Folder 4 Consumer ads, 1966

Box 42 (Flat)
Series VI Advertising
Folder 1 Mounted design photos
Folder 2 Mounted design mock-ups
Folder 3 Models - photos
Folder 4 Negatives

Box 43 (Flat)
Series V Product Design
Folder 1  Mounted advertising design
Folder 2  Design sketches
Folder 3  Men’s designs, 1977-78
Folder 4  Sign - leather on wood

Box 44 (Flat)
Series V  Product Design
Mounted advertising designs - mostly youth

Box 45 (Flat)
Series V  Product Design
Folder 1  Mounted design photos
Folder 2  Mounted design mock-ups
Folder 3  Advertising design materials

Box 46 (Flat)
Series V  Product Design
Folder 1  Advertising design materials
Folder 2  Advertising design materials
Folder 3  Mounted design photos
Folder 4  Magazine advertising, 1968, 78 & 84

Box 47 (Flat)
Series V  Product Design
Folder 1  Mounted layouts
Folder 2  Design sketches

Box 48 (Flat)
Series V  Product Design
Folder 1  Mounted layouts
Folder 2  Design sketches

Box 49 (Flat)
Series VI  Advertising
Folder 1  Mounted design photos
Folder 2  Mounted layouts
Folder 3  Models - photos
Folder 4  Scrapbook - Dick Bell 1950s & 1960s

Box 50 (Flat)
Series V  Product Design
Folder 1  Mounted layouts
Folder 2  Design sketches

**Box 51 (Flat)**
Series VI  Advertising
Folder 1  Boston Daily Globe, Apr. 27, 1900 pp. 1, 2, 13, 14
Folder 2  Scrapbook - Army & Navy Production Award, 1945
Folder 3  Scrapbook - Tuna Tournament, 1964
Folder 4  Scrapbook - loose pages of ads, 1960-61

**Box 52 (Flat)**
Series VI  Advertising
Folder 1  Mounted design photos
Folder 2  Mounted design mock-ups
Folder 3  Misc. mock-ups & ads

**Box 53 (Flat)**
Series VI  Advertising
Folder 1  Mounted layouts
Folder 2  Design sketches
Folder 3  Tracing paper

**Box 54 (Tall)**
Series VI  Advertising
2 binders of 35 mm slides
  #1 Dick Bell collection 1973
Transparencies
Sailing -scenic - misc.
Aerials

**Box 55 (Tall)**
Series VI  Advertising
Binder of 35 mm slides
Sailing - Boating - Gloucester scenes
Extra Fashion
35 mm Negs & photographs of schooners & harbors
  16mm film *Paved Vacation*
Loose

Series VII  Miscellaneous
2 (2) Drawer Cabinets, 7” x 13” x 5”
  Miniature Burgee Code Flags

Plywood sign, 6’ x 2.5’
  Best Employee sign

Wood sign, 10” x 34”
  Mighty-Mac Boatware.

Wood sign, 8” x 6’
  Mighty-Mac Out O’Gloucester

Plastic sign 6” x 28”
  Mighty-Mac Outerwear

Banner
  Div. 4 Grandmarshall Mighty-Mac