

Before the Utah Bar Journal

by Mari Cheney

The *Utah Bar Journal* has existed in its present form since 1988. Before that, a variety of publications acted as a state bar journal to provide information to members. Because there have been so many incarnations of publications acting as the official journal of the state bar, it is sometimes difficult to locate specific articles because many of these publications are often casually referred to as the bar journal. To make things even more confusing, during the 1970s and 1980s, multiple bar publications overlapped to provide information to attorneys.

Valuable information can be found in these publications, including old court rules and commentary on newly enacted laws.

The *Utah Bar Bulletin*, 1931-1960, 1963

The *Utah Bar Bulletin* began in 1931 and discontinued publication in 1960, with the exception of a special issue in 1963. It was much smaller than the current *Utah Bar Journal*: 8-1/2 by 5-1/2 inches.

The introduction to the first volume states: “With the advent of the ‘Utah Bar Bulletin’, [sic] the Utah State Bar takes a further step in its aim to establish a unified organization of the legal profession, working for the best interests of that profession and of the public which it serves.” *An Introduction*, UTAH BAR BULL., Oct. 1931, at 1.

In 1973, in the first issue of the newly created *Utah Bar Journal*, the editor described the end of the *Bulletin*'s publication.

[The Bulletin] was laid to rest with the special issue... becoming a victim of the financial pinch which found rising costs of publication and a low fixed budget combining to bring about its demise. At that time, a special committee of the Bar recommended its discontinuance and the recommendation was accepted and adopted by the Bar Commission.

J. Robert Bullock, *Greetings to The Utah Bar Journal*, UTAH B.J. May-June 1973, at 5, 6.

The *Summation*, 1958-1973

The Summation, started by the University of Utah College of Law, began as a publication dedicated to events primarily of interest to students, faculty, and alumni of that school, but eventually became a predecessor to the *Bar Journal*, with articles written for practicing attorneys. In 1973, *The Summation* ceased publication

and the staff worked with the bar to create the first issue of the *Utah Bar Journal*.

***Utah Bar Letter* and *Utah State Bar Members Newsletter*, approximately 1961-1988**

There is some confusion about the initial publication date of the *Utah Bar Letter*. However, at least one issue exists from 1961, and by 1968 the *Utah Bar Letter* was regularly published. It ceased publication in 1988. For a brief period in 1985 – during the months of April, May, and August, the publication was called the *Utah State Bar Members Newsletter*, but reverted back to the *Utah Bar Letter* for the October 1985 issue until the final issue in January 1988.

The *Utah Barrister* and *The Barrister*, 1977-1988

The *Utah Barrister* was published in 1977 and 1978, and then published as *The Barrister* from 1980 to 1988. However, after the May 1980 issue, it is unclear whether any issues were published until mid-1986.

The Utah Barrister was created by the Young Lawyers' Section to replace a publication called the *Centerfold* (not kidding). The mission was similar to other bar publications in existence at that same time: to keep members informed through articles and editorials, as well as to announce activities and programs.

The *Utah Bar Journal*, 1973-1986, 1988-present

As stated earlier, *The Summation* ceased publication when the first issue of the *Utah Bar Journal* was published, with the idea that the *Bar Journal* would become a way for the bar to regularly communicate with its members and provide articles of interest.

From 1973 to the single volume published in 1986, the *Bar Journal* was printed in a much smaller format than today's version, similar to the *Utah Bar Bulletin*. It ceased publication for over

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a year, until the “new” *Utah Bar Journal* was published in August/September of 1988. This issue began a new numbering scheme with Volume 1, Number 1, so if you are looking for a *Bar Journal* article with just the volume and issue number as your citation, remember that the volume numbers overlap. The “old” *Bar Journal* contains volumes 1 through 14 (spanning the years 1973 to 1986). The “new” *Bar Journal* also contains volumes 1 through 14 (spanning the years 1988 to 2001). Make sure you have a date of publication or article title when looking for articles during these time periods, or you may not turn up anything in your result.

For the first issue of the “new” *Bar Journal*, the bar changed the format by adding color on the cover and enlarging the publication to an 8-1/2 by 11 inch format. It consolidated “in one publication the *Utah Bar Letter*, *Utah Bar CLE*, the old *Utah Bar Journal* and the Young Lawyers Section’s *Barrister*.” Calvin E. Thorpe, *Editor’s Note*, UTAH B.J. Aug.-Sept. 1988, at 4.

This “new” *Bar Journal* was published monthly, except for July and August, until 2000. From 2001-2004, nine issues were published yearly. In 2005, the bar adopted the current practice of publishing bi-monthly issues. While most “old” *Bar Journals* had 12 issues, many were combined into a single volume but not on a predictable basis. Some years the issues were identified by seasons (summer, winter, fall, or spring) or by the month or months those issues covered.

Randall L. Romrell, member of the *Bar Journal*’s Editorial Board, published a narrative Q & A in a 2007 issue of the *Journal*, providing information about editors of the *Bar Journal*, and described two publications that came before it. See Randall L. Romrell, *Questions You Might Ask About the History of the Utah Bar Journal*, UTAH

B.J. 75th Anniversary Special Issue 2007, at 36. Between his article and this one, hopefully the history of the *Bar Journal* is now more complete.

How You Can Help the Utah State Law Library

If you have information about the following titles, or have copies that you would like to donate, please let me know.

- *The Summation*
- *The Utah Bar Letter* (including the *Utah State Bar Members Newsletter*), or
- *The Utah Barrister* (a.k.a. *The Barrister* and before that, *Centerfold*)

Our goal is to fill gaps in our collection so that researchers can locate both the current *Utah Bar Journal* as well as all older versions at the law library. This information will be shared with the other law libraries in Utah.

Contact information:

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