

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

Number 13 Fall 2003

Office of the City Clerk
Legislative Department

New Archives Facility in City Hall

The Seattle Municipal Archives completed its move into the new City Hall over the summer. The new building provides the Archives with a wonderful research area for City employees and the public, a greatly improved records and photographs processing area, and nearly 2.5 times more storage capacity. Two refrigerated rooms and expansion space will be added during the second phase of the City Hall construction project slated to begin in the Fall of 2003.

A community open house was held on September 5 to celebrate the new building. Members of the community toured the building, viewing the new public research area in the Archives, City Council chambers, and the Mayor's office. The Clerk's office walls are filled with historical photographs from the Municipal Archives depicting public works projects and City employees. The Mayor's office features an Historical Conference Room with a photographic exhibit of images from the Museum of History and Industry.

Seattle Archives Week to be Celebrated with October 8 Event

The City of Seattle is sponsoring a Seattle Archives Week event on Wednesday October 8. Ten archival institutions throughout the city will participate in an archives expo, from 9 to 3, with displays about their holdings. Staff will also be available to answer questions. The event will take place in the Bertha Knight Landes Room on the first floor of the new City Hall.

Visitors will be able to tour the Archives facility, including the research area, the processing area, and the basement vault. An exhibit on the history of Seattle's City Halls will also be on display.

Two speakers will be featured. Artist Beliz Brother will speak at 11 am about her use of Seattle archival repositories in creating artwork for City Hall. Paralegal Jo Bruskotter will speak about the use of archival sources in legal research at 1 pm.

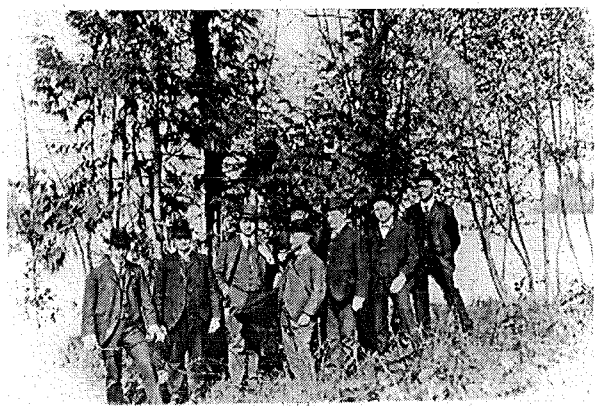
Other participating repositories include :

King County Archives
National Archives—Pacific Alaska Region
University of Washington—Manuscripts, Special Collections and University Archives
Seattle School District Archives
Washington State Archives—Puget Sound Region
Museum of History and Industry
Diocese of Olympia—The Episcopal Church in Western Washington Archives
Sisters of Providence
Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle Archives

The entrance to the new City Hall is on the west side of Fifth Avenue between James and Cherry. The Bertha Knight Landes room is to your left as you enter the building.

100 Years Ago

On October 19, 1903 the Report of the Olmsted Brothers was adopted by City Council, outlining a comprehensive system of parks and parkways. The centennial anniversary of the Olmsted report was celebrated fully this year, through events sponsored by Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks, the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, and many other local organizations.



Park Commissioners and others on the shore of Lake Washington. May 1, 1903. Park Commissioner E. F. Blaine is on the far left. John C. Olmsted is hidden in the middle. Photographer: Olmsted, Associates Inc. Item 31004

On the day this photograph was taken, John Olmsted wrote, "Visited various city officials, the

Mayor among them; then took car to Leschi Park, and walked from there south along the shore of Lake Washington to Firlock Club, where we had lunch. Took various photographs on the way, to show character of banks." (*Records of the Olmsted Associates, Job 2690, Reel 95, Library of Congress Microfilm*)

The 1903 Olmsted Report stated "In designing a system of parks and parkways the primary aim should be to secure and preserve for the use of the people as much as possible of these advantages of water and mountain views and of woodlands, well distributed and conveniently located." (*"Report of Olmsted Brothers" in First Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Don Sherwood Parks History Collection, Box 1, Folder 5*)

A letter from the Olmsted Brothers dated July 2, 1903 to E. F. Blaine, President of the Park Commission, stated "The work has interested us very much and we have derived a great deal of pleasure, not only from our intercourse with the Commission and city officials, but from an examination of the extraordinarily beautiful landscape and the delightful woods." (*Don Sherwood Parks History Collection, Box 53, Folder 2*)

New Accession: Transit Newsletters

The Archives recently received a donation of Seattle Transit System publications. The employee newsletter "Transit Talk" dates from 1942 to 1947. Illustrated with photographs, it is useful for information on City employees and issues during World War II.



"Transit News" dates from 1957-1972 and, in addition to many employee photographs, contains articles on safety, transportation issues, and vehicles. The October 1958 issue features an article on a "carveyor" proposed for the Century 21 or 1962 World's Fair. The Carveyor system, presented by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, would have an endless moving belt on a 16-foot high column support structure. Non-powered cars would be carried by the conveyor belt from Westlake to the fairgrounds. Both publications can also be found at the Seattle Public Library.

Audiotape Preservation Pilot Project

The Seattle Municipal Archives recently completed a pilot project on preservation and access for audio tape. Reel to reel and cassette audio tapes dating from 1963 to 1978 were migrated to an updated, standard analog format for preservation; and copies made on high quality, digital audio compact disc for access.

The pilot project provided the Archives with cost estimates, information on the condition of existing tapes, and recommendations on file format standards for future digital audio projects. Based on this information the Archives will be able to develop a migration plan for the hundreds of audio tapes in its holdings.

The tapes used in the pilot project include City Council committee meetings on police intelligence gathering, Seattle's growth policies, Westlake Park/Mall deliberations, and the creation of the animal shelter. Also included are public hearings on open housing and the Pike Place Urban Renewal Project. The digital audio will be available for researchers in early 2004.

Scott Cline Elected to Academy of Certified Archivists Leadership

City Archivist, Scott Cline was recently elected vice-president/president-elect of the Academy of Certified Archivists (ACA), the national certifying board of the archives profession.

The mission of the ACA is to promote the fundamental standards of professional practice; define the knowledge and abilities necessary to be certified; and to promote mastery of archival principles. In carrying out this mission, the Academy develops, maintains, and monitors the national certifying examination for archivists.

Scott began his term as vice-president in August following the ACA's annual meeting in Los Angeles. In that capacity, he serves on the committee which reviews all potential examination questions, writes new questions for the item bank, and assists in the selection of questions for the 2004 examination.

Scott will assume the presidency of the Academy in August 2004. Following his term as president, he will serve one year as Regent for Nominations, working with the Nominations Committee to develop a slate of candidates for the 2006 ACA election.

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