

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

Number 38 Winter 2011

Office of the City Clerk
Legislative Department

Message from the City Archivist

A bad economy has not affected the amount or complexity of research in City records. If anything, use has increased; and that is, of course, what we hope for.

I am sure I have written in these pages before that access to and use of records is the most important function (in our view) of a government archives. For me, archives work is about fostering civic education, public virtue, and the common good. And providing access to the records people need is a means to those ends.

The Seattle Municipal Archives recently completed a two-year grant-funded project to process 1858 linear feet of City records. The funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) allowed us to hire a professional archivist whose sole responsibility for two years was the arrangement and description of public records. Adding in the work of regular staff and a core of volunteers, we processed 2223 linear feet—nearly twenty percent above our proposed figure.

Beyond our ability to report impressive metrics to NHPRC, the success of the project has two very important benefits. First, it substantially reduced a burdensome work backlog. But second and more important, it has quickly made a huge array of records available to researchers.

To be sure, these records were all covered by public records law and were available to anyone who wanted to use them. However, prior to our processing project, it was difficult for the public (and for us) to know what evidence and information was contained in records that were in our unprocessed backlog.

As soon as we completed work on specific records and made our catalog records, indexes, and inventories publicly available, researchers were on our doorstep. To paraphrase W.P. Kinsella, "If you process it, they will come."

Space doesn't allow a full accounting of who used and is using these newly "daylighted" records. As I reported to NHPRC, the array of use during the project ran from middle school students conducting History Day research on Pike Place Market to City attorneys and the EPA working on Superfund site cleanup issues; from planners working on neighborhood trees policy to a construction company researching construction methods used at a site undergoing redevelopment; from a graduate student studying Japanese hotels and boarding houses before World War II to City employees doing vector waste research.

NHPRC calls the funding we received a basic processing grant. I prefer to think of it as an access to records grant. Whatever one calls it, I can report that the grant has made our reference work much busier—which is just the way we like it.

--Scott Cline, City Archivist

New Digital Document Library: Gay Rights in the 1970s

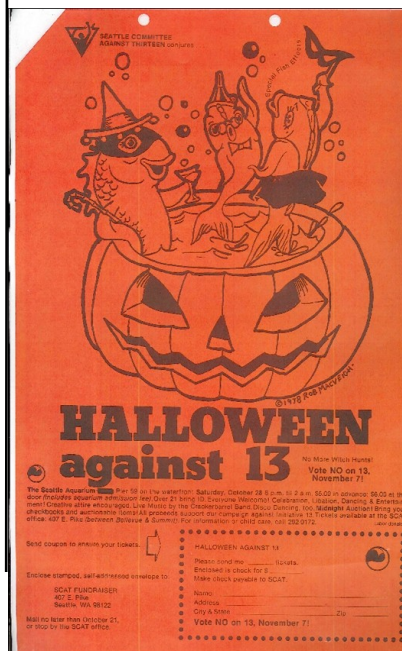
Gay rights issues repeatedly found their way onto the municipal agenda in the 1970s. In 1973, a revision of the city's Fair Employment Practices Ordinance was introduced, prohibiting job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation; it passed in September, 8 to 1. A revision of the open housing ordinance passed in 1975, making it illegal for landlords and home sellers to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

The first Gay Pride parade was in 1977, and Mayor Uhlman declared June 25 to July 1 to be Gay Pride Week in Seattle.

Anti-gay activists challenged the legislative gains by putting Initiative 13 on the ballot in 1978, giving voters the opportunity to remove 'sexual orientation' from both the employment and the housing legislation. It was defeated on November 7, 1978 by 63 per cent to 37.

To explore primary sources supporting this topic, visit the Digital Document Library:

<http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives/Exhibits/GayRights/>



This DDL was due to the efforts of volunteer Jonathan King; an online exhibit is to follow!

Flyer for anti-Initiative 13
Mayor Royger Legal Subject Files,
Records Series 5274-03, Box: 6/6
Seattle Municipal Archives

Sources Cited

Twin Cities Public Television is using an image of the Aqua Theater in one of their productions.

A US history textbook publisher, Flat World Knowledge, Inc., is using three images of WTO in a forthcoming publication.



WTO Protest
March on Pine
Street, November
29, 1999

Item 19991129.01,
ImageBank, Seattle
Municipal Archives

Photos :

Human Rights Day and New Images

The City's Celebration of Human Rights Day, December 10, is documented through photographs. Human Rights Day honors the United Nations' adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Human Rights Day, 2000, Dome Room, Arctic Building
Items 108891 (above) and 108971 (below), Seattle Municipal Archives



(Photos cont.)

Author Sherman Alexie and
audience at 2003
Human Rights Day event

Item 146061 (right) and
Item 146054 (bottom),
Seattle Municipal Archives



Over 400 new images were added to the



photograph database. Included are fire stations 21, 30 and 38, as well as the painting of Jose Rizal Bridge and the Chester Morse Lake Outlet Channel Deepening. Included among the images received recently from City Light are of ones of

osprey nesting on the mast of a NOAA ship which City Light helped relocate. (Item 166053, Seattle Municipal Archives)

Newly Processed Collections

Several recently processed records relate to civil rights in Seattle. The records illustrate the City's work concerning fair employment, open housing, equity in contracting, and police-community relations. Some record groups were recently processed; others recently increased in size because of the addition of recently transferred records.

Office for Civil Rights Director's Records, Record Series 3800-01 (1978-1999, 1.2 cubic feet) and **Subject Files, Record Series 3800-02** (1989-2000, 1 cubic foot)

Records of the predecessor Human Rights Department's Director are included in the Director's Files, which contain correspondence, draft legislation, briefs and newspaper clippings. The Subject Files relate to projects of the Office for Civil Rights including state welfare reforms such as the WorkFirst Program.

Newly Processed (cont.)

Office for Civil Rights Human Rights Commission Meeting Materials, Record Series 3810-03

(1997-2000, 0.6 cubic foot) and **Subject Files, Record Series 3810-04** (1997-2000, 0.6 cubic foot)

Both record series reflect the work of the Commission. Meeting materials include agendas, minutes, correspondence, case reports and articles distributed to Commission members as meeting packets. The Subject Files concern issues addressed by the Commission, including equity in contracting and police-community relationships.

Office for Civil Rights Commission for Sexual Minorities Minutes, Record Series 3830-01

(1997-1998, 0.2 cubic foot) and **Subject Files, Record Series 3830-02** (1997-1999, 0.4 cubic foot)

Both of these small record series relate to the activities of the Commission including domestic violence, pride week, hate crimes and community relations. The Subject Files also include records relating to domestic partnership and the selection of a new Fire Chief.

Seattle Commission for Lesbians and Gays Minutes, Record Series 8405-03

(1990-1996, 0.4 cubic foot)

Agendas and minutes of the Commission. Issues addressed include domestic partnership, pride week and hate crimes.

Office for Women's Rights Subject Files, Record Series 8401-01

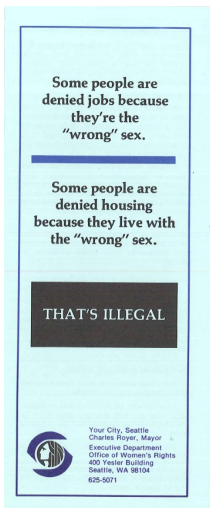
(1971-1996, 9.2 cubic feet)

Correspondence, memoranda, briefings, surveys, reports, research materials and legislation relating to projects of the Office and issues of concern. Topics include non-traditional careers for women, women and minority business enterprises, affirmative action, sex discrimination, domestic violence, chemical and alcohol dependency and juvenile prostitution.

Office for Women's Rights Departmental Publications, Record Series 8401-05

(1980-1999, 0.2 cubic foot)

Newsletters and brochures published by the Office for Women's Rights, the Seattle Women's Commission, and the Seattle Commission for Lesbians and Gays.



Newly Processed (cont.)



Update

Seattle Commission for Lesbians and Gays April 1991

Survey of Lesbian and Gay Community
by Susannah Elkin

A report entitled "Survey of the Seattle Area Lesbian and Gay Community: Identity and Issues," sponsored by the Seattle Commission for Lesbians and Gays and co-sponsored by the City of Seattle's Office for Women's Rights and the Lesbian Resource Center, marks a historic moment for the Seattle area lesbian and gay community. The survey represents the first attempt to compile a comprehensive profile of this community and to document the continuing problems people face because of others' perceptions of their sexual orientation.

SCLG Workplan
by Anne Bergstedt

Commissioners met in February to develop a workplan for the coming year. Drawing from community input, information gathered by Office for Women's Rights, and the individual interests and energies of Commissioners, the SCLG developed a set of goals and a plan of activities and projects for 1991. What emerged from this planning process is not a rigid document, but one which provides structure and focus to Commission activities.

One of the main goals of the Commission in 1991 is to expand our outreach activities, building on our success in 1990 in developing coalitions and

Additional records of the Human Rights Commission, both Minutes and Subject Files, (Record Series 3810-01 and 3810-02) are located at University of Washington Special Collections. The records date from 1958 to 1968 and together measure 48 cubic feet. Materials include correspondence, minutes, studies, newsletters and reference material relating to the activities of the Human Rights Commission prior to creation of the Human Rights Department.

92 Years Ago: The Anti-Japanese League

In 1919, the Anti-Japanese League wrote to City Council requesting ordinances be passed regarding housing and vending. Included was the suggestion that licenses, including vendor licenses, business licenses and transportation licenses, only be granted to citizens of the United States. The League wrote on October 24, 1919: "Seattle will probably be a Japanese instead of an American City. At the present time they have practically driven the white ranchers out of the valley between here and Tacoma. They are now attempting to break into Kitsap County. A walk down into the Public Market is enough to convince anybody of the inroads they have made in the produce business....Half of the hotels and rooming houses are under Japanese Control." The petition was heard by

Seattle, Washington,
October 24, 1919.

To the Honorable City Council of the City of Seattle:

Gentlemen:

The undersigned President and Secretary of the Anti-Japanese League, acting on behalf of said League, respectfully submit to your Honorable body, that the situation in the City of Seattle with reference to the increase of the Japanese population is such that unless radical steps are taken, people now living will see the day when the Pacific Coast will be a Mongolian instead of a White Man's Country. There are at the present time in the City of Seattle about 12,000 Japanese, they are increasing in a ratio of about five times as great as the white population---the birth

the Judiciary and Departmental efficiency committee, which recommended the petition be placed on file. No action was taken. CF 75079, Office of the City Clerk Comptroller Files, Records Series 1802-01, Seattle Municipal Archives

Flickr News

Recently on Flickr, we posted an 1894 application for a plumber's license in the city of Seattle. A staff member came across it while looking for something else, and thought people might be interested to see what this kind of document looked like in an earlier era. The license was for an F.E. Rautman, who testified to his age, residency, and training.

Not long after the image was posted, a user wrote the following comment:

"PRICELESS. My Grandfather's Uncle I believe... Paul F. W. Neupert (my Grandfather) purchased Mr. Rautman's Plumbing and Heating business in the forties, if memory serves me. Address was 115 Jackson Street. A family business, and very much a part of Seattle's history. This is the first time I've ever viewed this document. My son sent me to this web site to look at old Pioneer Square Pergola, and I came across this incredible find. With gratitude to Seattle Municipal Archives."

We always enjoy hearing about people's personal connections to the items in our collections!

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/6277315476/>

License No. 1166
Issued Sept. 17, 1894

APPLICATION FOR PLUMBER'S LICENSE.

To the HEALTH OFFICER OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE:
In accordance with Ordinance 2281, of the City of Seattle,

I, F. E. Rautman
residing at No. 1321 3rd Street
in the City of Seattle, hereby apply for License to carry on the business
of Plumbing in the City of Seattle, and submit the following statement:

That I am 26 years of age.
That I have resided in the City of Seattle for a period of 4 years.
That I served an apprenticeship of 3 years with
M. E. Goldman in the
City of Brookline, Mass.

That I worked as journeyman 11 years with
S. Rowell, Oakbrook, Mass.

And I agree to comply with all laws, rules and ordinances that are or
may be established by the said City.

F. E. Rautman

This Application is

Geo. H. Spaulding
J. H. K. K. K.
J. H. Malan
Examiners.

Application for plumber's license, 1894

Item 992222, General Files, Record Series 1802-04, Seattle Municipal Archives

Check us out on [Flickr](#) and add your own knowledge and memories!

<http://www.flickr.com/seattlemunicipalarchives/>

New "Seattle Voices" Audio: Gay Rights

The newest addition to the "Seattle Voices" audio exhibit space is an excerpt from testimony given in 1972 by gay rights leader Tim Mayhew in support of changing open housing legislation to include sexual orientation and marital status.

Listen to it here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives/Exhibits/voices.htm>

Kudos to our Volunteers and Interns!

As we bid good-bye to Amanda Allpress, a student at San Jose State's library program, and Alexander Kwok, an undergraduate from Seattle University, we welcome Lydia Vernon, a first-year student in the iSchool at the University of Washington. She will be working with digital audio, photographs, and textual records. Welcome, Lydia!

Did you know...

The Seattle Municipal Archives has over 140,000 photographs, both scanned negatives and born digital, available online for searching and downloading?

One of the most popular images on the Seattle Municipal Archives Flickr site for September to December 2011 was of the Space Needle during construction. It is a recently scanned negative from the Seattle City Light collection.



Space Needle Under Construction, 1961

Item 165665, City Light Photographic Negatives, Seattle Municipal Archives
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/6153567816/>

Upcoming Events

Jan 31, 2012 AKCHO Monthly Meeting,
9:30 AM at the Museum of Flight

Seattle Municipal Archives

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