

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

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Message from the City Archivist

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) sponsors an annual contest entitled *I Found It In the Archives*. Selected institutions around the country hold contests in which participants submit essays or video about amazing records they have found in the respective archives. The local winners' entries are then submitted to SAA, published on the SAA website, and online voting takes place. This year 8,400 people voted for their favorite.

From the archives' perspective, this contest is a way to promote who we are and what we do; to build awareness of the archives' role in society; to promote our collections. From the participants' perspective, it is about discovery—discovery of the stuff of personal and family history, of remarkable or surprising events, of heroic or even shameful actions.

As stewards of historical records, Archivists are used to researchers telling us of their successes and surprises in the archives. What we generally don't hear about are the finds in personal and family archives, or more accurately personal and family basements and attics, shoeboxes and file cabinets.

Several years ago when my aunt was downsizing from her home to a retirement facility—she was in her upper 90s—she gave me a box that contained some letters, certificates, and a flag. The letters were from my uncle Bob, the youngest of six siblings, to my grandparents during his service in World War II. The letters were redacted by military censors.

The correspondence from bases in the United States included blacked out text when he referred to his impending assignment in Europe. The letters from Europe were redacted to eliminate mention of where he was when he wrote and where his unit was soon going.

The letters end in November 1944 during the Battle of Hurtgen Forest. They were followed in due course by the standard military notification to my grandparents that their son had been killed in action. This was followed by a formal letter from Secretary of War Henry Stimson expressing condolences and honoring my uncle for giving what Lincoln called "the last full measure of devotion."

The flag, which draped his casket, came in 1947 after Robert Cline's body was disinterred from a graveyard in Belgium, returned to the United States, and included in a parade of honor through the streets of New York.

I knew little of my uncle before this. I knew he was an accomplished roller-skater, that he dated my mother before she married his brother, and that he was killed in the war. I also knew that I was named for him (though I've never gone by the name Robert).

These letters and artifacts humanized my uncle for me. And it allowed me to imagine, in some small way, how his death must have impacted my grandparents.

There recently has been an increasing amount of archival literature about personal archives. Virtually everyone, some day, must deal with old family records—cleaning them out, trying to figure out what is important, how to

preserve them, etc. All highly personal decisions.

From my first days in this profession, I have counseled people to pass along their stories and their records from generation to generation. Yet, I think a lot about how to balance the competing concerns of not wanting to burden my children with my collected stuff and wanting to pass along the stories and records that shape personal identity.

There is no easy answer to this conundrum. I can only hope that we all engage this process in a meaningful way. In the meantime, what have you found in your personal archives?
--Scott Cline, City Archivist

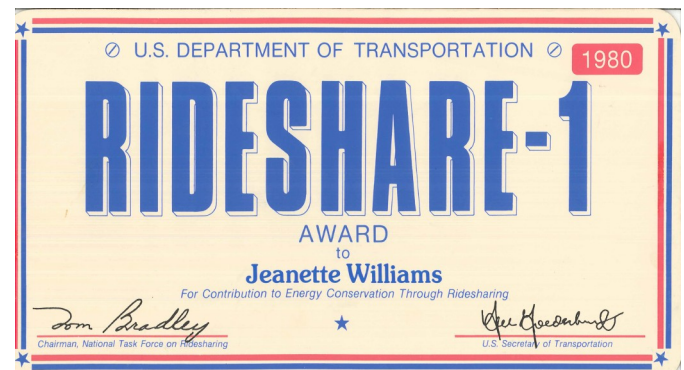
Additions to Jeanette Williams Papers

New accessions added recently to the Jeanette Williams Records (Record Series 4693-02) resulted in one new record series, Personal and Political Records, and substantial additions to the Subject Files and Speeches and Statements series.

Williams chaired six committees during her tenure on City Council, including Human Resources and Judiciary (1970-1977); Transportation (1978-1981 and 1988-1989); Labor (1982-1983); City Operations (1984-1985); Parks and Public Grounds (1986-1987), and Intergovernmental Relations (1986-1989).

The Personal and Political Records (4693-10) dates from 1960 to 2003 and includes records documenting Williams' work in Democratic politics, as well as materials from her various City Council campaigns. Also included are news clippings, correspondence, and ephemera.

The Speeches and Statements series (4693-03) dates from 1970 to 1989 and includes speeches, prepared statements, and articles prepared for community meetings, hearings, conferences and publications. Subjects include regional transportation planning, aging, women's rights, access to government, community development and human resources planning.



U.S. Dept. of Transportation Award, 1980

Box 1, Folder 2, Jeanette Williams Personal and Political Records (Record Series 4693-10), Seattle Municipal Archives.

(Williams cont.)

Researchers are encouraged to use the Documents database in conjunction with the Jeanette Williams Records. Documents on topics such as the Martha Washington/Kubota Garden site, Discovery Park, and I-90 complement Williams' papers. Records of other Councilmembers serving concurrently, such as Paul Kraabel, Michael Hildt, and Norm Rice, will be useful to researchers as well.

Photos

Among the more than 700 new born-digital images dating from 2009 to 2012 added to the Photograph Index in May are photo of local artists who performed at [Thursday afternoon concerts at City Hall](#).



Tall Boys String Band, performing at City Hall as part of Seattle Presents, August 5, 2009
Item 166218, Seattle Municipal Archives

Other new images include the swearing-in ceremony of new Council President Sally Clark and the inauguration of incumbent Councilmembers Jean Godden, Bruce Harrell, Tom Rasmussen, and Tim Burgess. See the Photo Index for [swearing-in ceremony photos and other recent Council activities](#).

Images from Seattle Public Utilities show the varied work of the City's utility department: [Lower Tolt River Floodplain Reconnection Project](#), [Fremont Bridge Approach Replacement Project](#), and the [South West Myrtle water tank seismic upgrades](#).

Newly cataloged and scanned historical images include Seattle City Light photographs of commercial and other uses of electricity, as well as employee scenes.



King County Jail Kitchen, April 1957
Item 67967, Seattle Municipal Archives

(Photos cont.)



Clark's Village Chef Restaurant, University Village, 1960.
Item 66941, Seattle Municipal Archives



IBM machines in use at City Light, May 5, 1954.
Item 78663, Seattle Municipal Archives

SMA at Northwest Archivists

Volunteer Jonathan King presented his work on the Digital Document Library addition "Gay Rights in the 1970s" with a poster session at Northwest Archivists. Conference attendees were engaged and interested! Thanks to Jonathan for his excellent work.



Jonathan King at NWA's poster session in Salem, Oregon.

Seattle History in Family History

Recently, two separate queries from families wanting to know more about their relatives enabled glimpses into the past.

The director of the library at Berry College in Georgia called the Archives to ask if we could help her identify the individuals in a photograph for a patron of hers. She thought the photograph dated from around 1920 and the only name she had was



written on the photograph: Sam Freeman. After some searching, we found a Thomas Freeman listed in the 1920 Seattle Directory as Assistant Poundmaster. The Royal Hotel, seen in the background, was located at 401 5th Avenue. The personnel card for Thomas Freeman stated he was hired as Assistant Dog Catcher on September 4, 1911, by the Seattle Police Department; the appointment changed to Assistant Poundmaster in July 1914 and Poundmaster in 1919. He resigned July 1920.

Another patron contacted us to get more



information about a family coffee business in Pike Place Market. The photograph clearly shows the business "The Coffee Shop," and the patron pointed out "Stall 18" on the sign. She told us it opened in November 1916 with Robert Day and Robert Gwilym as owners. Although she did not locate any additional information, we learned about Seattle's early coffee business.

Sources Cited

Images from Seattle Municipal Archives were used and cited recently in:

- An exhibit on Seattle's landscape architecture at the AIA design gallery includes Halprin sketches of Freeway Park from a Parks Department record series. The exhibit runs until June 24.

101 Years Ago

Buying groceries on the outskirts of town in 1911? Need your shoes repaired? You might have ended up here. The current address is approximately 710 N 65th St. The 1911 City Directory shows the owner as Steve Abromoff.



Small Grocery in the Phinney Ridge Neighborhood, 1911.
(Lot 32, Block 7, Craven's Division of Green Lake Addition)
Item 51745, Seattle Municipal Archives

27 Years Ago

In 1985 the Seattle Commission for Lesbians and Gays was established as the Mayor's Lesbian/Gay Task Force. In 1989, the Task Force became a full city commission with 15 volunteer members. Absorbed into the new Office of Civil Rights in 1987, its name was changed to the Seattle Commission for Sexual Minorities. The Commission advises the Mayor, City Council and other City departments on issues of concern to sexual minorities. It also recommends policies and legislation in matters affecting the sexual minority community.

Although Gay Pride Week celebrations began in 1974, the first Gay Pride Parade was held in 1977, the first year it received official City endorsement.



Gay Pride Parade,
June 27, 1993.
Box 3, Folder 9, Seattle Commission for Lesbian and Gays Subject Files, Record Series 8405-04, Seattle Municipal Archives.

Flickr News

Our Flickr commenters continue to add to our knowledge about SMA's photos. We recently posted a photo that was associated with a clerk file requesting rezoning of a piece of land near 49th Street and Stone Way. We assumed that the photo, showing an A&W restaurant, was taken at that location and cataloged it as such. Eagle-eyed commenters looked at other photos associated with the file, studied the angle of the street in the photo, and determined that the A&W in the photo was not in Wallingford after all. Further sleuthing on their part determined that the restaurant was on Empire Way (now Martin Luther King Jr. Way). We always appreciate the help in making our cataloging as accurate and complete as possible!



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/7118897417/in/photostream>

The most popular Flickr image for March through May:



Lincoln Park Playfield, now known as Cal Anderson Park, 1909
Item 76255, *Seattle Municipal Archives*

Check us out on [Flickr](#) and add your own knowledge and memories!
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/>

Volunteers and Interns

We congratulate Jonathan King on his graduation from the iSchool at the University of Washington! He will work part-time at University of Washington Special Collections and continue to volunteer at SMA.

Lydia Vernon secured a paid internship at the National Transportation Library in Washington D.C. for the summer; we hope she returns to SMA in the fall.

New volunteers include Jesten Ray, Karthik Sangiah, Jill Seidenstein, and Ellie McDonnell. All come with considerable talents. Welcome!

Did you know...

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

Century 21 Anniversary

Celebrations continue for the 50th anniversary of Seattle's World's Fair. See www.seattlecenter.com/thenextfifty/ for a full listing of events.

Monorail under construction on Fifth Avenue, 1961
Item 64802, *Seattle Municipal Archives*



Upcoming Events

- June 16 - History Café - 7 pm
Roy Street Coffee and Tea, 700 Broadway Ave E
"Now and Then" with Paul Dorpat

Seattle Municipal Archives

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