

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

Number 46 Winter 2013

Office of the City Clerk
Legislative Department

Message from the City Archivist

I recently heard a speaker, reflecting on his life of 92 years, recount seven “moments in time” that shaped his personal and professional development. These moments had the timeless quality of influencing who he had become through time and who he is today. He challenged the audience to engage in the same exercise.

This “seven-moments” challenge is, at least for me, more difficult than I expected (they cannot relate to family members or family milestones). I can come up with a long list of events and experiences, but then analyzing them to determine what is truly transformational and settling on seven is the problem.

It occurred to me that this exercise could also be compartmentalized to areas of one’s life. For instance, what seven moments shape your thinking and development in your work life? This rethinking of the exercise provided an opportunity to reflect on my 32 years as an archivist. I came up with seven transformational moments; for space considerations, I offer in brief just four. While the moments are unique to my experiences, the impacts are no doubt common to others.

1. In the early 1980s, I worked with a lovely donor to ensure that her husband’s papers would be preserved. Her husband, a rabbi for 47 years, had passed away four years before; she still wept every time we spoke of him. It was then I realized what Linda Long later stated so eloquently: “... the archivist is the keeper of someone’s life.” That is a responsibility to take most seriously.

2. During that same period, I had occasion to work with Lou Rosenthal, one of the founders of the Cleveland Council on Anti-Semitism and a national leader in the movement to free Soviet Jewry. I came to understand that his fierce commitment to the ideals of freedom and justice demanded that the archival record reflect that work as truthfully as possible...and, perhaps with the same fierceness.

3. In the mid-1990s, very shortly after we created our first rudimentary website, a researcher from Oakland came to us with printouts from our then small online database and spent the week reviewing records related to police-community relations. It was then we committed ourselves to a particular value—providing as much information on our website as resources would allow.

4. In recent years, I’ve been re-reading articles by Canadian archivist Hugh Taylor. Taylor was perhaps the most creative thinker among all archivists. He stretched the imagination to cajole one to consider archives in a global, environmental, and spiritual context.

His work has profoundly influenced my own thinking and writing about archives.

The beauty of this exercise is that our moments are not static; we are still evolving and it is possible some of my moments will be supplanted. This is as it should be. The profession and those who practice it continue to change, to evolve within a world that does not stand still.

--Scott Cline, City Archivist

25 Years Ago: Curbside Recycling Begins

On February 1, 1988, the City started weekly curbside recycling. The closure in 1987 of the last city-operated landfill, Kent Highlands, encouraged the City to find ways to decrease the amount of solid waste going to landfills. With curbside recycling, Mayor Royer hoped to decrease the amount of solid waste 40% by 1997. Predictions were that the City would divert more than 170,000 tons of material from the waste stream annually.



“Watch Your Waste” by the Solid Waste Utility was first used in 1985 as a billboard and bus placard to encourage recycling.
Item 171439, Seattle Municipal Archives

Before the City began weekly curbside recycling in 1988, private businesses offered recycling services. One such business was Total Recycling (previously Fremont Recycling), run by Armen Stepanian. Stepanian also headed up a successful 1977 pilot project funded by the State Department of Ecology through the City’s Department of Human Resources.

City efforts for waste reduction began earlier in 1978 when a resolution passed by City Council established a solid waste management program. The resolution focused on landfills, recycling, energy recovery and yard waste composting as part of its strategy. A waste reduction education curriculum in schools, the “Zoo Doo” compost program, an employees recycling program, and yard waste recycling were all tested successfully between 1983 and 1986.

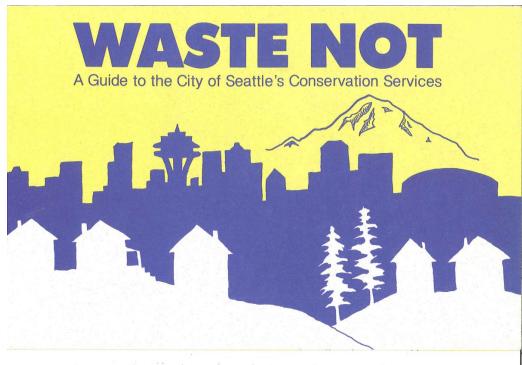
(Curbside Recycling *cont.*)



Curbside recycling begins in Seattle February 1, 1988 near 28th Ave NW and NW 75th St.

Item 171486, Seattle Municipal Archives

The recycling goal of 40% was reached in 2000. Improvements to the curbside collection program included adding multi-family residences and businesses. By 2013, Seattle was a recognized leader in recycling. The City had recycled 1.7 million tons of material, enough to fill two city landfills. A pioneer at the start, Seattle is now one of more than 8,000 cities with municipal curbside recycling programs in the U.S.



Brochure created by Mayor Royer's Office in cooperation with other departments

Record Series 5200-06, Seattle Municipal Archives

Newly Processed: Councilmember Richard McIver Subject Files

Richard McIver served 13 years on the Seattle City Council from 1997 to 2009. Born in Seattle in 1941, he graduated from Garfield High School and attended Fairhaven College at Western Washington University. After college McIver served 16 years with the City of Seattle

McIver (*cont.*)

in the Office of Urban Renewal and the Department of Community Development. Following his tenure with the City, he worked in a variety of planning and community development organizations. He served a stint as development director for the Tacoma Housing Authority, and just before his appointment to City Council, McIver was the Executive Director of the Washington Association for Community Economic Development, a state-wide association committed to the revitalization of disadvantaged communities.

While serving on City Council, McIver chaired four committees: Transportation (1997-2001); Housing, Human Services and Community Development (2002-2003); Finance and Budget (2004-2007); and Housing and Community Development (2008-2009).

McIver was a powerful advocate for disadvantaged communities and underdeveloped neighborhoods. He was also an outspoken advocate for the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative, which was created to combat institutional racism. He was fiscally conservative when it came to the City's budget.

His records contain correspondence, memoranda, reports, studies, and other materials reflecting McIver's interests and work on City Council, especially issues that came before the committees he chaired and those on which he served. The largest grouping of records relates to transportation issues, housing and neighborhood development, fair extension of social services, police accountability, and race and social justice concerns. Identified by record series number 4650-02, Councilmember McIver's records measure 8.8 cubic feet and are open to the public.



Councilmember Richard McIver at Homer Harris Park Dedication, November 13, 2002
Item 133511, Seattle Municipal Archives

100 Years Ago: Ravenna Bridge

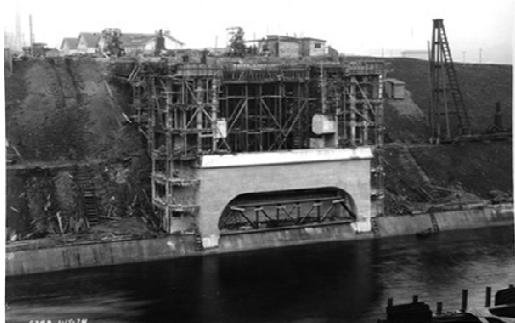
Approval for construction of the 20th Ave. St. Bridge - also known as the Ravenna Park Bridge, as it crosses the ravine in Ravenna Park - was granted in 1913. The bridge was completed in 1914 at a cost of \$40,000 with funds from both the County and the City. Closed to vehicular traffic since 1975, it is heavily used by pedestrians and bicyclists. In 1977, the City designated the bridge an historic landmark.



20th Ave. Bridge, October 14, 1914
Item 417, Seattle Municipal Archives

Photographs

Seattle Engineering Department Damage Case ([Series 2608-03](#)) photographs are currently being cataloged, indexed and scanned by our work study student, Kendra Hale. These photos are housed with their textual materials and relate to court cases brought either against or by the City of Seattle concerning property damage due to natural causes, street grading, or construction projects. Some cases include the Rainier Heat and Power Company v. City of Seattle, the Strauss Bascule Bridge Co. v. City of Seattle, and the William Cramp & Sons Ship & Engine Building Co. v. City of Seattle. Records provide historical imagery of Seattle landmarks including the Fremont Bridge, Volunteer Park Reservoir, and the Seattle Public Library. Photos processed so far range from 1914-1925, although the textual collection represents the years 1891-2003.



Strauss
Bascule
Bridge Co
v City of
Seattle,
January 15,
1924.
Item
171042,
Seattle
Municipal
Archives

3

(Photographs cont.)



Rainier
Valley
Flood,
January 7,
1914
Item
170979,
Seattle
Municipal
Archives



Water
main break
at 6th Ave
S and
Weller St.
October 7,
1918
Item
170949,
Seattle
Municipal
Archives

Staff News

The Seattle Municipal Archives welcomes Sarah Shipley as the new Digital Asset Manager. We are excited to have her knowledge and skills on board, especially in the digital preservation arena. She comes to the Archives from The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, where as the Digital Archivist she implemented digitization standards and practices, created digital preservation policies, and undertook the first processing of born-digital textual materials at the institution. She holds an M.A. in Information Science as well as a M.F.A. in Studio Art. Prior to the MFAH Archives, she worked for several years in museum education.

Volunteer Rose Oliveira leaves the Archives to attend Simmons Graduate School of Information and Library Science in Boston. We thank her for her assistance working with maps, photos, and textual records and wish her success in her new adventure in graduate school. Jessica Gimse, currently attending the University of Washington iSchool, will be taking what we hope is a leave of absence to do her field work at the Museum of Flight Archives. Her work appraising and cataloging 3/4" videotape, scanning images of Discovery Park, and processing textual records contributed in a meaningful way to the ongoing work of the Archives.

Flickr News

For a vintage take on the holiday season, check out our “Christmas in Seattle” board on Pinterest. You’ll find snowy scenes, images from City Light and Engineering Department Christmas parties, holiday singers, and then and now images of the Christmas ship. You can ogle the goodies on a buffet table and see a creepy Santa or two. Take a look at Christmases past over at <http://www.pinterest.com/seattlearchives/christmas-in-seattle/>.



Mayor Clinton at Office Christmas Party, December 22, 1961



Most popular image on Flickr for this period: Don Sherwood with election sign, 1958



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/10676113123>

Archive Engine West: New Search Tool

Archive Engine West is a demonstration project to bring together digitized content and detailed metadata from archival and manuscript collections in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, and Utah. The project creates access to digitized objects in context with their collections to better meet the needs of administrators, avocational researchers, college and university research faculty and teaching faculty, college and university students, and family historians.

Archive Engine West is supported by a National Leadership Grant awarded to the Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA), a program of the Orbis Cascade Alliance, through the University of Oregon. The \$249,904 grant, which began in October 2011 and concludes in December 2013, is allowing NWDA to build, evaluate, and demonstrate the long-term viability of what was originally called the Cross-Search and Context Utility (XCU)—now Archive Engine West.

Between now and March 2014, the project will undergo evaluation and substantive discussions within the Northwest Digital Archives Steering Team, membership, and with the Alliance’s Board of Directors and Council to determine the long-term future of Archive Engine West and how it fits with the Alliance’s Strategic Agenda.

Feedback is welcome! Check it out at: <http://www5.iath.virginia.edu/nwda/prototype/about>

Upcoming Events

- AKCHO Annual Membership Meeting, January 28, 2014, Museum of Flight 9:30-12:30
- Pacific Northwest History Conference “Citizenships in the Pacific Northwest” April 3-5, 2014 - Vancouver, Washington
- Northwest Archivists Conference “Moving Forward: Reaching New audiences with the Past” Spokane, Washington May 29-31

Seattle Municipal Archives

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