

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

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Office of the City Clerk
Legislative Department

Out of the Archives

A recent question posed to the Archives had us looking for early City ordinances requiring bicycles to be licensed and registered within Seattle. [Ordinance 68990](#) was passed on February 6, 1939, amending the existing license code to require registration and license plates for bicycles. A bit more digging unearthed letters sent in both protest and support of this legislation, giving a glimpse into a debate of the time that still resonates today.

Besides requiring licensing and registration for all bicycles, the ordinance declared certain bicycling acts unlawful, such as riding without a bell or lights, and carrying riders on handlebars. Penalties for not complying ranged from fines to time in jail.

Also considered for the ordinance, but ultimately not included, was a clause stipulating cyclists be permitted to ride on sidewalks. It was this



A car and cyclist share the road near a safety island at Third Avenue and Yesler Way in October, 1928. [Item 38287](#) (detail), Series 2625-10, SMA.

topic in particular that inspired most of the letters. “I feel that legal sanction of this practice will bring about a condition highly dangerous to small children who might be using sidewalks in front of their homes, particularly where there are hedges or shrubs limiting visibility,” wrote one resident. A letter in support of allowing the practice reads: “We have never heard of a pedestrian...being hurt or killed by a bicycle on the sidewalk—but oh! the tragedies that

occur when a bicycle meets a motorist on the street!” Another letter in support struck a compromising tone: “Why not make it a misdemeanor if a cyclist does not dismount when meeting or passing a pedestrian on the sidewalk. With the bicycles licensed, an offender’s name can easily be obtained.”

Letters like these, as well as petitions, protests, and other documents filed with the Clerk’s Office since Seattle’s beginnings, give voice to City residents and provide valuable context for legislative research.

A Close Call

SMA recently experienced a sudden storage emergency that could have been much worse without the quick thinking of our staff, the help of a network of experts, and the generosity of a local business.

Late in the afternoon on March 8th, an archivist took a routine trip down to the SMA records vault to return an original 1930s-era film to our basement storage freezer. The freezer and adjacent cooler are used by the Archives for storing original acetate and nitrate-based photographic negatives and motion picture film. Acetate and nitrate are inherently unstable and require consistently low to freezing temperatures and regulated humidity levels to slow deterioration. Radical environmental fluctuations can cause irreversible damage.

When the staff member discovered the freezer and cooler were not working, a call for service was immediately placed. Technicians quickly determined that the freezer could not be fixed right away, making it a top priority to find a facility that could provide appropriate temporary storage on short notice. SMA put a call out to the Seattle Heritage Emergency Response Network ([SHERN](#)), and received several responses from members offering suggestions and referrals. We contacted nearby storage facilities, and were grateful to accept Nordic Cold Storage’s offer to hold the materials free of charge. The items were taken to Nordic on March 9th.



Assistant audio-visual archivist for MIPoPS Ari Lavigne helps prepare containers of negatives and film to be moved to Nordic Cold Storage. Photo courtesy Libby Hopfauf.

We’re happy to report that the freezer was fixed by March 14th, and all items were moved back in by March 21st. SMA has since updated our emergency procedures in case of future malfunctions.

Newly Processed: Camp Long Records

Covering the years 1932 to 2014, the Dept. of Parks and Recreation's Camp Long Records ([Series 5808-03](#)) contains historical information related to the activities of this West Seattle park.

First conceived in 1937, Camp Long was carved from a 68-acre corner of the West Seattle Golf Course. Named in honor of Seattle Judge William Long, who recognized the property's recreational potential and was an early advocate for the park's creation, Camp Long was built through the collaborative efforts of City agencies, local residents and community groups, and with the support of the federal Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.). The park was constructed using materials salvaged from projects all over the city, including lumber from a dismantled school, building materials from a Civilian Conservation Corps camp, and old stone paving blocks from the repaving of East Madison Street.

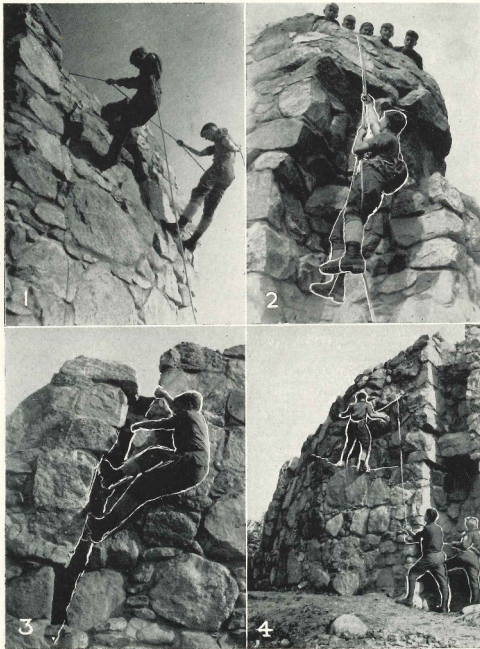


Photo courtesy of Clark Shurman, Mountaineers.
MONITOR ROCK

Pictures of Monitor Rock from Camp Long dedication program, November 8, 1941.
Record Series 5808-03, Box 2, Folder 7, SMA.

Clark Shurman, a camping, climbing, and wilderness expert, designed a climbing rock he named "Monitor Rock," known today as "Shurman Rock." His design was meant to incorporate every mountaineering rock problem a climber might encounter during an actual climb. Still a popular feature, it stands at 25 feet high and 15 feet across and has been used by climbers for many years.

Included in this collection are news clippings, camp programming brochures from 1979 through 2010, special event documents, and other ephemera such as a perfect attendance award from a camper in 1964. Additional records include camp policy and procedure materials and annual reports.

Newly Processed, cont'd.

Also recently processed and available are the Public Information Officer's Records from Parks and Recreation ([Series 5802-07](#)).

Comprising 5.6 cubic feet and filling 14 boxes, the materials include news releases, public feedback, photos, park complaints, and general parks management materials. The main focus of the records is on public relations relating to a wide variety of park related issues, most notably materials about off-leash areas for dogs.



Open Space Forum, October 1991.
Series 5802-07, Box 1, Folder 27, SMA.

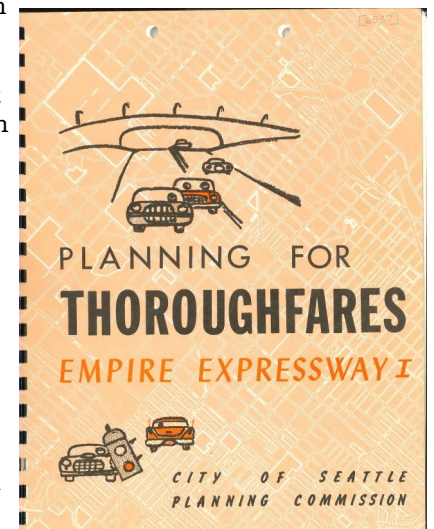
The bulk of the material spans the decades of the 1980s through the 2000s, although a small amount of information from 1942 and 1976 is also included.

Documenting Activism in the Archives

City Archivist Anne Frantilla spoke at the Pacific Northwest Historians Guild 2018 History Conference, held in March at the Seattle Public Library's central branch. The conference brought together historians, archivists, librarians and preservationists to explore the profound changes our region has experienced between 1918 and 2018 through the theme *From Armistice to Amazon: A Century of Transformation*.

Anne participated in a panel focusing on urban activism during and after WWII with her presentation *Citizen Activism and the RH Thomson Freeway*. The Empire Expressway (later renamed the RH Thomson Freeway) was part of an extensive system of freeways planned by highway engineers that would have cut through Seattle residential areas.

Covering the years 1959 to 1972, Anne's talk addressed how citizens and community groups interacted with City government through meetings, rallies, and attendance at public hearings to oppose and eventually convince City Council to stop construction of the freeway.



Seattle Planning Commission report on the Empire Expressway, 1957.
Series 1801-92, Document 6537, SMA.

Summer Photos in the Archives

Summer is here! We'll leave behind the long, wet winter and enjoy the spectacles, events, and sights Seattle has to offer. From the Fremont Solstice and Pride parades to Seafair, Bumbershoot, and our many parks, beaches, and greenbelts, Seattle's long summer days are well represented in the photo archives.

The Fremont Solstice Parade hits the streets in June. The annual procession of handmade floats,



painted (naked) cyclists, music, and dancing is one of Seattle's most beloved traditions. The parade was started in 1987 to show support for the arts and artists around the City. Check out the [scenes captured by City photographers in 2000 and 2001](#).

Seattle held its first Gay Pride March in 1977 and that same year Mayor Wes

Uhlman signed Seattle's first Gay Pride Week proclamation. See our elected officials don their rainbow gear and march with, and in support of, our LGBTQ community going back to 1993, [here](#).



[Pirates!](#) [Royal Court!](#) [Hydroplanes!](#) [Torchlight parade!](#) Seafair! This summer-long festival begins with events in various neighborhoods and culminates in citywide celebrations. Historic

Seafair photos give us a glimpse of its pageantry going back to 1951. Of particular note is this set of [City Light color slides from 1962](#).

More recent photos show Seattleites enjoying [4th of July fireworks at Gasworks park](#).



Seattle loves to celebrate music and the arts and does so with one of the largest annual music festivals in the country, Bumbershoot. Closing out the summer over Labor Day weekend, it features main and side stages, galleries, food, and arts and crafts vendors. Check out Record Series [5807-05](#) for images.



Seattle's winters may be short on daylight, but its summer days are long on fun!

Images top to bottom: Items [107984](#), [170595](#), [175384](#), [177330](#), [77463](#).

On Display: Gay Pride in Seattle

Featured now in our lobby exhibit case are materials documenting the evolution of Gay Pride in Seattle. Included is a copy of the first official City proclamation of Gay Pride Week issued by Mayor Wes Uhlman in 1977, as well as photos from past parades.



Councilmember Jan Drago at the 2002 Pride Parade. [Item 130664](#), Series 0207-01, SMA.



Gay Pride Parade, 1993. [Item 167122](#), Series 8405-04, SMA.



City Council marching in the 2010 Pride Parade. [Item 170656](#), Series 4600-11, SMA.

You can see many more related documents and photos online with our in-depth Digital Document Libraries on [Gay Rights in the 1970s](#) and [LGBT Issues in 1980s Seattle](#), both available on our website under Exhibits and Education.

Interns & Volunteers

We recently said farewell and good luck to our graduating work-study students. Jenn LaScala finished her BA in Art, and Rachel Mahre completed her Masters in Library and Information Sciences, both at the University of Washington. They each put in a lot of dedicated work here at SMA, and we will miss them!

Several new volunteers began working with us in June, including Lauren Ball, who is particularly interested in audio archives, and Marta Sivchuk, who will be working on our moving image collection. David Ross will be with us for the summer, doing an internship as part of his MLIS program at San Jose State.

Skyler Burger, Staci Crouch, and Kelly Rovegno continue their diligent work to process and catalog our records. Skyler recently finished a very large City Light collection that he spent nine months working on; this is another example of how our volunteers are invaluable in getting more of our collections described and accessible to the public.

