

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



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Seattle Municipal Archives

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Message from the City Archivist

This issue of the Gazette highlights something that is, or should be, second nature to all archives, libraries, and museums: collaboration and cooperation in extending the historical record and the retrievable past to the broadest possible audience.

The article adjacent to these remarks describes the transfer of City of Seattle digital audio files to the Washington State Archives (WSA) and their access through the innovative speech-to-text access WSA provides. As we build this digital collection of City Council meeting recordings, it will open a rich urban, social, and political history to researchers, as well as shed additional light on the legislative process and the intent behind City legislation.

Elsewhere in this issue is an article about Seattle Municipal Archives (SMA) participation in a new grant received by the Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA). SMA is a founding member of NWDA, a consortium of 36 institutions whose mission is to make archives and manuscripts more accessible through a union catalog of descriptive inventories. We currently have 452 finding aids in the catalog, representing approximately one-third of our collection.

The Archives is committed to expanding knowledge of the City's archival records as widely as we can. While we have created a very good website that contains a vast array of indexes, documents, photographs and other information, we cannot depend only on it to advertise our collection. In collaborating with other institutions and using other modes of outreach and access, we are able to reach new audiences.

This leads to a third article within these pages related to our Flickr site. Among American archives, SMA created an early presence on Flickr. At present, we have nearly 2000 images in our photostream with the modest goal of adding, on average, one image per working day. Our images received 560,000 hits during 2011; we also received several comments that provided value added information to several of the images.

These are just three examples of successful efforts in broadening our reach, facilitating greater access to our records, and developing strategic partnerships—all with modest resources at our disposal.

Ultimately, our concern at SMA is access and use of City records by as many people as possible, representing as many elements of society as possible. It is our hope that as a cultural and political institution, our work will foster and support civic education and civic engagement.

--Scott Cline, City Archivist

SMA Digital Audio Now Online Washington State Digital Archives

The Seattle Municipal Archives began transferring digital audio recordings to the Washington State Digital Archives in October 2011. The Digital Archives is partnering with Microsoft Research to offer Audio Search, enabling speech-to-text indexing and searching of digital audio content. With this innovative search technology, the Digital Archives provides preservation by storing the digital copies, as well as access.

The Seattle Municipal Archives is preserving analog audio recordings of Seattle City Council meetings by reformatting reel-to-reel and cassette copies to a digital format. Past support for audio preservation was received via a grant from the Washington State Library with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for reformatting, cataloging, and indexing. By transferring the digital files to the Washington State Archives, the content is being made more accessible to more people, both current and future users.

Audio from 1977 is the current focus for the SMA. The City Council members at that time were Sam Smith (president), Paul Kraabel, Randy Revelle, George Benson, John R. Miller, Jeanette Williams, Wayne D. Larkin, Phyllis Lamphere and Tim Hill. Topics include transportation planning, use of deadly force by the Seattle Police Department, energy conservation, Westlake Mall, utility wire undergrounding, utility rates, bicycles, floating homes, and women in the Seattle Fire Department.

State Archivist Jerry Handfield praised the initiative of the Seattle Municipal Archives and congratulated Seattle for being the first city to transfer audio files to the State Archives for preservation and public access on the state's Digital Archives. The 1977 recordings are just the start. Audio recordings will continue to be added to the collection as resources become available to transfer the analog recordings to digital format. The full set of audio files, held by the SMA, includes full City Council meetings, Council committee meetings, and public hearings. The recordings date from the 1950s, with the bulk from the 1970s to the present. The SMA also plans to transfer born digital audio recordings of more recent Council meetings.

The recordings were created by the Office of the City Clerk and Seattle City Council, both of which are part of the Legislative Department in the City of Seattle. The City Clerk maintains the city's legislative records, official filings, and the Seattle Municipal Archives; keeps the minutes of City Council meetings; and provides information services to city agencies and the public.

<http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/Search>

Photos :

Among the hundreds of new images cataloged, scanned, and posted online is a set of Seattle City Light images from 1961 and 1968. Included are billboards promoting the use of electricity, employee events, and displays at conventions and other events.



Seattle City Light billboard at 4th and Spokane, 1968
Item 78730, *City Light Photographic Negatives, Series 1204-01, Seattle Municipal Archives.*



March of Dimes Dance in Newhalem, March 1954
Item 78356, *City Light Photographic Negatives, Series 1204-01, Seattle Municipal Archives.*



Seattle City Light Seafair Float, July 1956
Item 78684, *Seattle City Light Photographic Negatives, Series 1204-01, Seattle Municipal Archives.*

(Photos cont.)

Recently scanned WTO protest photos offer a new glimpse of this historic event. There has been an uptick in interest in these previously unprocessed photos. Seventy-five black and white negatives have been added to the Photo Index, including several shots of Seattle's Mounted Police Unit. These images capture the citizenry in action and display the emotion and determination of the Seattleites who turned out for the rallies. Search "World Trade Organization and 0207-01" in the Photo Index or click on the link above to view.



World Trade Organization Protest, December 6, 1999
Item 166267, *Fleets and Facilities ImageBank Photographs, Record Series 0207-01, Seattle Municipal Archives.*

City Hall Open House

The Seattle Municipal Archives and the Office of the City Clerk participated in an open house at City Hall on Saturday, January 21, held by the Mayor and City Council. Citizens came to tour the offices of City Council and the Mayor and talk with departmental representatives from all over the City. Participating in this opportunity for civic engagement, the SMA staff talked with the public, many of whom enjoyed the historical exhibit, "Seattle's City Halls."



City Hall Open House, January 28, 2012

Recently Processed

Task forces, boards, and commissions reflect issues of importance to the City at different points in time. Various public development authorities in the City work to carry out their mission and tend to be more long lived.

The Air Pollution Control Advisory Board, for example, was created in 1955 to advise City Council on methods and legislation to combat air pollution. A precursor to the Puget Sound Air Pollution control Agency, the Board focused on air pollution control legislation, among other topics.

Records of several task forces were recently processed, including:

- Sick's Stadium Task Force, dating from 1976 to 1977, including a work plan and background information about the stadium property and neighborhood input, as well as a proposal from the United Indians of All Tribes for use of the site. (Record Series 9583-01)
- Seattle-King County Youth Commission Minutes, dating from 1962 to 1970. The group was established to advise elected officials of Seattle and King County on youth issues. Topics under discussion in the minutes include youth employment, drug use, and juvenile delinquency. (Record Series 1802-M5)
- Design Commission Minutes (1968-2005) and Project Files (1968-1986) include information on actions taken on project designs submitted to the Commission. Created in 1968, the Commission consulted with the Mayor and City Council on environmental and design aspects of city capital projects. Project files include information on the Seattle Aquarium, Woodland Park Zoo expansions, and Pike Place Market rehabilitations. (Record Series 9323-01, 9323-02)

The Pike Place Market Public Development Authority is a not-for-profit public corporation chartered by the City of Seattle in 1973 to manage properties in the nine-acre Market Historic District. Recently processed records of the Pike Place Market PDA include:

- Executive Director's Records, 1974-2005. Records address charter revisions, daystalls, financial issues and site selection for downtown public library. (Record Series 9710-01)
- Council Meeting Packets, 1979-2003. Packets include minutes, agendas, resolutions, and financial statements. (Record Series 9710-02)
- Executive Director's monthly reports, 1990-2003. Reports concern issues, activities and projects in the Market, including operations and capital improvements, property management services, and tenant news. (Record Series 9710-03)

Other board, commission, and task force records include Human Rights Commission Minutes (Record Series 1802-L7), Post-War Public Works and Improvements Advisory Committee Final Report (Record Series 5210-02), and Pro Parks 2000 Committee Records (Record Series 9559-01).

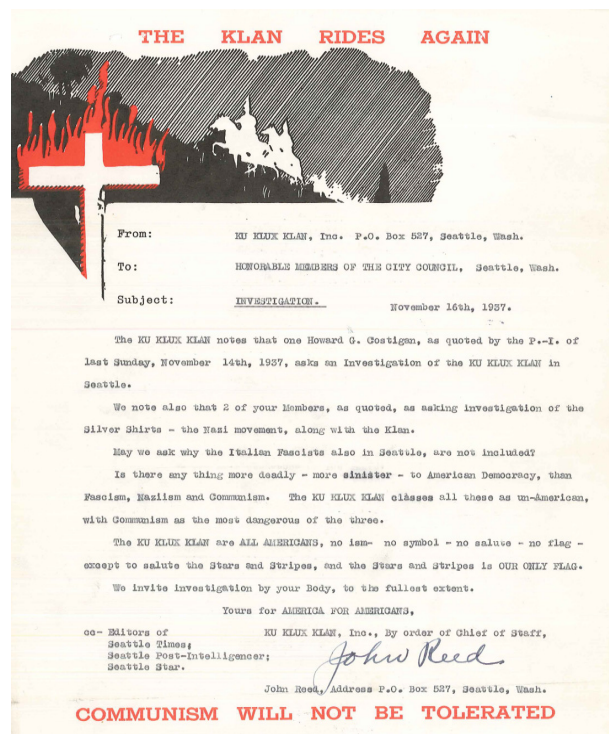
Sources Cited

Images from Seattle Municipal Archives were used and cited recently in various projects and publications including:

- "Miles Lost/Miles Gained"—Public Art Project <http://mileslostmilesgained.org/>
- Exhibition Catalog at Carnegie Museum of Art
- *New Land, North of the Columbia: Historic Documents That Tell the Story of Washington State from Territory to Today* by Lorraine McConaghy

75 Years Ago: Un-American?

On November 16, 1937, the Ku Klux Klan of Seattle wrote a letter to the Seattle City Council citing Howard Costigan's suggestion that the Klan be investigated. "May we ask why the Italian Fascists also in Seattle, are not included? Is there any thing more deadly—more sinister—to American Democracy, than Facism, Naziism [sic] and Communism.....We invite investigation by your Body, to the fullest extent."



Petition of Ku Klux Klan, Inc., for investigation of un-American organizations. Comptroller File 157147, Record Series 1802-01, Office of the City Clerk, Seattle Municipal Archives.

The petition was submitted to the Department Efficiency Committee and was placed "on file" in June of the following year.

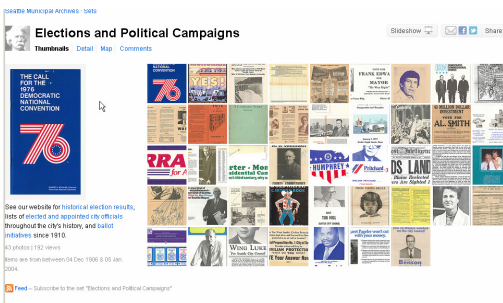
The Klan was very active in the northwest in the 1920s, but apparently less active in 1930s. For more information see the Seattle Civil rights and Labor History Project.

http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/kkk_seattle.htm

Flickr News

Take a break from the current campaign coverage to take a look back at past elections on our Flickr page. Our "Elections and Political Campaigns" set contains materials related to everything from presidential politics to campaigns for local ballot measures. Some of the items come from former City Councilmember Jeanette Williams, who was active in national Democratic Party politics in the 1960s. Materials posted from her collection include an image of her credentials for the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. The set also includes samples of campaign literature for Seattle mayoral races spanning 70 years, as well as brochures from successful and unsuccessful City Council candidates. More will be added to Flickr as we continue to find election-related material in our collections.

Set: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/sets/72157624800498111/with/6796431797/>



Credentials: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/6796431797/in/set-72157624800498111>

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

SMA Participating in IMLS National Leadership Grant

The Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA), a program of Orbis Cascade Alliance, received a National Leadership Grant from the Institute for



Museum and Library Services to develop a tool that allows users to search for primary sources across institutions, combining digital assets and all associated description and metadata. The search results will allow researchers to get information on getting copies, contact information, and access to the digital object, if there is one.

The design process for developing this discovery tool for digital content in context for archives is user-centered and enables input from users to be incorporated into the design at several places during the creation of the tool.

IMLS NLG cont.

All NWDA institutions will be involved in the pilot. Eight core institutions, including SMA, will be closely involved with design of the user experience and in evaluation activities. The grant concludes in March 2013.

NWDA provides enhanced access to archives and manuscripts materials at thirty-seven institutions in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Alaska.

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 December 2011 through February 2012 was of the Pioneer Square pergola in 1959. Originally undated, our Flickr fans helped us place the photo in time.



First and Yesler, about 1959

Item 111175, ImageBank Collection, Record Series 0207-01, Seattle Municipal Archives

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/6461071995/in/photostream>

Upcoming Events

- March 27 AKCHO Membership Meeting, 9:30 AM
Renton History Museum
- April 26-28 Joint Conference of Northwest Archivists
and Oregon Heritage Commission, Salem, OR
- May 10-11 SAA Electronic Records Workshop, Seattle, WA
sponsored by Seattle Area Archivists
- May 11-12 Pacific Northwest Historians' Guild Conference
Seattle Center, Northwest Rooms

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