

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

Number 19 Summer 2006

Office of the City Clerk
Legislative Department

Northwest Folklife

The Seattle Municipal Archives is working with the Northwest Folklife Festival to preserve and make available a collection of sound recordings from past festivals, as well as related folk music recordings. Most existing recordings in the collection originated as radio feeds from the festival, and the bulk are from festivals in the 1980s. Also included in the collection are recordings from the Washington Fiddlers Project. To date, 292 recordings have been cataloged and digitized for reference use.



An online index to the recordings is available on the Archives website at: <http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/folk1.htm>. Digital copies of the recordings are accessible through a listening station in the City Clerk's research room on the 3rd floor of City Hall. Researchers interested in listening to the recordings in the research room should contact the Municipal Archives (archives@seattle.gov or 206-233-7807). Visitors can also listen to recordings at Folklife offices at the Seattle Center. Requests for copies must go through Folklife. This project is ongoing and is looking for financial support to continue; contact the Northwest Folklife Festival at info@nwfolklife.org, 206-684-7300).

Spokandy

Describing themselves as a Chocolatier since 1913, the Spokane chocolate and candy company called in March this year to request use of images in the Municipal Archives on a new chocolate bar wrapper they were creating. Based on wrappers they created featuring Spokane and Coeur d'Alene, Spokandy designed two Seattle chocolate bar wrappers, one with historic photographs, and one with current images. The wrappers feature six photographs on each bar and credit the Municipal Archives on the reverse. Although the Archives did not receive a lifetime supply of chocolate bars for its staff, we look forward to finding the bars in Seattle stores in the fall.

Images used on the wrappers include Pioneer

Square, Smith Tower, the waterfront, and Pike Place Market. Look for this photo of the Pioneer Square pergola in 1914 on a Spokandy chocolate bar wrapper.



Item 29986, 5801-01

50 Years Ago

On October 16, 1956, Janice M. Freeman wrote to Seattle City Council "in regard to the issue before you as to whether or not Elvis Presley should appear at the Civic Auditorium. Elvis is my favorite vocalist and there are many, many more teenagers in Seattle that agree with me...It should be a very profitable transaction to rent the auditorium to Elvis as it is sure to be filled to the capacity with his fans. Our money is as good as the adults and we sure would spend it to see Elvis Presley. Please don't let any adult groups give you the idea that Elvis is bad for us teenagers...We'd sure appreciate it if you will let him come."

City Clerk Comptroller File 230418, 1802-01.

100 Years Ago

In his annual address to the City of Columbia, Mayor Corbett wrote in January 1906 of the many needs the town had, including a sewer system, a better water supply, improved lighting facilities, and better telephone service. He also wrote of the importance of a park. "Our children have no place to develop their bodies, or work off their superabundant steam and vitality except in the public streets or on private property...It seems to me that the purchase of a plat of ground on the shores of Lake Washington, at this time, will fill a real want. We are not all rich enough to own parks and lands, but combined, we can procure and repose under his [sic] own vine and fig tree." The City of Columbia did not have long to act on the Mayor's suggestion as it became part of the City of Seattle on May 3, 1907

Old Mayors' Records Returned to City

The Archives recently acquired 319 boxes of Mayors' records from the University of Washington. The records, dating 1957-1978, are from Mayors Gordon Clinton, J.D. Braman, Floyd Miller, Wes Uhlman, and Charles Royer.

The records document a period of rapid social and physical change in Seattle. Social unrest, urban renewal, citizen participation in governmental programs, and the Forward Thrust Program are a few of the topics illustrated in the Mayors' records.

The UW collected the records before the Municipal Archives was established, probably saving them from destruction. In recent discussions, the City Archivist and the Head of UW special Collections agreed that the records belong with the Municipal Archives.

Municipal Court Records

The Seattle Municipal Archives has recently processed records documenting the early municipal court system in Seattle. In 1891, state law created a municipal court system that included a Police Court and a Justice Court. Both were "courts of limited jurisdiction," hearing misdemeanors, traffic offenses, minor civil suits, and small claims. The Police Court was under the purview of the city, while the county was the parent agency for the Justice Court.

The archives holds records from both these court systems. A total of 409 volumes date from 1886 to 1950. Docket records summarize each case, with information about the defendant, offense, and outcome of the proceedings. A series of indexes facilitates searching in the dockets. Other records kept by the court clerk and the judge also contain case summary information. Of special interest are series of volumes that document liquor-related cases during the Prohibition era, as well as dockets of cases heard in Columbia City's Justice Court before the town was annexed to Seattle.

Some of the most common offenses were drunkenness, vagrancy, and disorderly conduct, with prostitution and fighting also making frequent appearances. Larceny, assault and battery, and burglary appear fairly regularly as well, and later records show many automobile-related offenses such as speeding or reckless driving. Some of the more unusual offenses include driving across a fire hose, caravanning cars without a permit, Sabbath breaking, fishing with tackle not held in the hand, smoking opium, refusing to pay poll tax, seduction, and selling liquor on election day.

Recently Cataloged Photographs

Photographs recently added to the Archives Photograph Index date primarily from the late 1950s and are from the Engineering Department. They include many images of work done at Broad and Mercer. Also added recently are images of traffic-related work, such as channelization, which included traffic islands, concrete curbs, and painting lane lines. Urban renewal activities and employee events, such as safety awards, and employees in their work environment are also subjects.

City of Seattle's
Stenographer
Pool March,
1958

Item 57182



Asphalt workers in the crowded Charles Street Shop break room, January 1958

Item 56600

Jackson Street Community Council celebrating the opening of a ramp between Jackson and Main. Wing Luke is 5th from left. August 1957

Item 55218



Seattle Municipal Archives

600 Fourth Avenue, Floor 3, PO Box 94728

Seattle, WA 98124-4728

206 233-7807 or 206 684-8353

archives@seattle.gov <http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives>