

# ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle  
Seattle Municipal Archives

Number 26 Fall 2008

Office of the City Clerk  
Legislative Department

## Message from the City Archivist

Welcome to the new, expanded edition of the Archives Gazette, the newsletter of the Seattle Municipal Archives. We are taking the *Gazette* from a two-page publication that has appeared generally three times per year to a four page quarterly. Our goal is to report more about the Archives, our holdings, and relevant news and events affecting the City of Seattle's historical record.

The change in format comes at a special time; it coincides with the *Gazette's* tenth anniversary. The *Gazette* first appeared in the fall of 1999 when newly arrived Deputy City Archivist Anne Frantilla took it upon herself to get it started. That issue was devoted primarily describing the mission and holdings of the Seattle Municipal Archives. Anne continues to be the editor and driving force behind the newsletter.

This issue of the *Gazette* is just in time for Archives Month and it includes two short articles on this page about activities in City Hall. Looking ahead, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition centennial will soon be upon us, and in just a year and a half the Seattle Municipal Archives celebrates its 25th anniversary.

But the real impetus for expanding the newsletter is that we just have a lot going on at the Archives and we want to let you know about it.

The *Gazette* will include a number of regular features, including a page dedicated to the Archives' photograph and visual materials program, focus on a recently acquired or processed records series, a periodic column related to an unusual "find" in the collection, continuation of a short feature called "One Hundred Years Ago," and a liberal sampling of graphics from the collection.

The balance of the *Gazette* will be filled with special features and news from the Archives. We hope you like the expanded *Gazette*. Let us know; we like to hear from our readers.

— Scott Cline  
City Archivist

## Archives Month: At Home in the Archives

In celebration of Archives Month, the Seattle Area Archivists Archives Fair will be held October 27 at Seattle City Hall. Learn more about the historical resources in Seattle as ten repositories will have booths describing their holdings and archivists will be present to answer questions. City Hall is located at 600 Fourth Avenue in downtown Seattle. The Fair is in the Bertha Knight Landes room, off the lobby on the main floor. For statewide activities see the [webpage](http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/Archivesmonth/default.aspx):

<http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/Archivesmonth/default.aspx>

You will find information about workshops, frequently asked questions about preservation of your personal collections, and resources for researching the theme of "at home" in the archives.

## Treasures in the Seattle Municipal Archives

Scott Cline, City Archivist, will give a talk on "Treasures in the Seattle Municipal Archives" at 11 am on October 27, during the Archives Fair, in the Bertha Knight Landes Room in City Hall. Historical images, graphics, and textual materials will be showcased. Founder of the Seattle Municipal Archives and head of the Archives for over 23 years, Cline will draw on his experience with the records and with users to highlight interesting and little known documents and images.



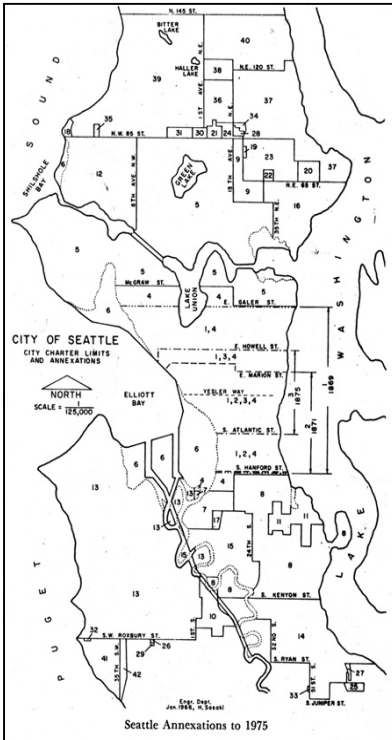
Image featured on the Washington State Archives Month website. A home on Lake Dell Avenue suffering the ill effects of a landslide, December 19, 1933.

*Item 7191, Engineering Department Negatives, Seattle Municipal Archives*

## New Annexation Tool on Archives Website

From the time of its initial incorporation until 1975, the City of Seattle underwent 42 annexations, with two more added since then. A new interactive annexation tool is available online that visually displays areas annexed from 1869 through 1975.

Links to annexed areas provide larger images of the annexed section and are printable as pdfs.



Links to full text of the appropriate ordinance are provided, along with links to other resources, such as related records and historical information. The original map was taken from the book "Public Works in Seattle: 1875-1975" and shows annexations through 1975. The accompanying list of annexation ordinances is current through 1986. The interactive Annexation tool is located at:

<http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/annexations/>

## One Hundred Years Ago

The Superintendent's correspondence in the Streets and Sewers Department reflects one of the City's ongoing concerns: garbage. This letter is taken from the outgoing correspondence in record series 2625-01.

*Seattle, Wash., June 11, 1908*

*Major H. J. Gallagher, Commissary US Army  
306 Arcade Annex, City*

*Dear Sir: - In reply to your letter of June 10th, regarding the removal of garbage from the rear of your residence at 505 Harvard Avenue North. I beg to say that as yet the collection of garbage is not done by the city, but that same is taken care of by private parties, organized under the name of the Garbage Union. I have, however, referred your communication to Mr. Charles Moore, engineer in charge of the city incinerator, who will take the matter up with Garbage Union and see that they make prompt disposal of your garbage.*

*Yours respectfully,  
M. T. Maloney*

## Tidying up after AYPE in 1909

In the fall of 1909, the City of Seattle was also dealing with what was left behind after AYPE closed. From leftover buildings to left behind fire alarm boxes, the City had to make decisions. This letter is from the Superintendent of Buildings to the Superintendent of Streets and Sewers regarding the Welcome Arch, constructed for the AYPE.

*Re Welcome Arch, 2nd & Marion, October 25, 1909  
Hon M. T. Maloney, superintendent of Streets,  
Seattle, Washington.*

*Sir:*

*You are respectfully requested to do the necessary excavating, back filling and re-paving in connection with disconnecting the steam service on the Welcome Arch, at Second Avenue and Marion Street, and bill the same to this Department on inter-departmental bill.*

*Respectfully, Francis W. Grant, Superintendent of Buildings.*

*From Department of Streets and Sewers Superintendent's Incoming Correspondence, 2625-09, Seattle Municipal Archives*

## Collection Focus:

### SMCP Environmental Health Project

The Municipal Archives contains over a hundred cubic feet of records of the Seattle Model City Program. One set of records within this collection is the Environmental Health Project. This project was a campaign to remove junk and garbage, raze unsafe buildings, clear vacant lots, eliminate rodents, and extend environmental health education in the model neighborhoods. It was operated by the Central Area Motivation Program until being transferred to the Seattle/King County Health Department, and services were expanded to the new model neighborhoods.

The progress reports in this collection start in 1972 and include a summary of programs, including community participation and training, statistics on quantity of trash removed, and photographs. The reports are a good source for visual images of clean-



up, education and outreach activities of the SMCP environmental health project. Digital copies of

Environmental Health Project display at the Black Commu-

nity Festival held during 1972.

*Part of Quarterly Progress Report of Seattle Model City Environmental Health Project, September 1, 1972 - December 31, 1972.*

photographs from the reports were recently added to the online database and can be found by searching on the record series 5412-03.

## Grants

### NWDA Receives IMLS Planning Grant

The Northwest Digital Archives (NWDA), of which the Seattle Municipal Archives is a member, received an Institute for Museum and Library Services planning grant for \$38,844. The project title is "Planning for Northwest-Wide Access to Digitized Primary Sources."

NWDA is part of the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a combination of 35 academic libraries in the states of Washington and Oregon. NWDA is a 31-institution consortium of archives in Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, and Montana that currently maintains a database of finding aids for its members' archival collections.

The grant, part of a long-range planning process, will support the second stage of planning, in which the NWDA will determine solutions to specific problems that are currently impeding the development of sustainable digital programs. The project will be a collaborative effort of the Alliance, Washington State University, Lewis & Clark College, Whitman College, and Whitworth University.

## From the Photo Archives

### Mid-Century Landfill Images

Throughout its history, Seattle's solution to disposing of its garbage has been, for the most part, to dump and bury. This method was cheaper than most acceptable alternatives and was also used to transform hard-to-develop property (ravines, steep slopes, wetlands, shorelands, and other difficult terrain) into land suitable for schools, parks and playfields, commercial areas, and industrial land. More than 150 acres throughout Seattle were "reclaimed" this way, permanently changing the city's geography.

By the 1950's, Seattle operated public landfills at University (near Husky Stadium), Interbay, 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South (now Genesee Park), West Seattle



University garbage dump [seagulls flying over], February 2, 1954. *Item #44895, Engineering Department Negatives, Seattle Municipal Archives.*



West Seattle Dump, August 10, 1955  
*Item 52764, Engineering Department Photographic Negatives, Seattle Municipal Archives*

(on the tide flats along Harbor Avenue, South Park, and N. 125<sup>th</sup> St. at Stone Way.

However, as land became scarcer and neighbors less tolerant of the smells, smoke, traffic, seagulls, and other pests these dumps brought, the Engineering Department authorized a series of studies to find a permanent solution, culminating in the 1963 *Report on Refuse Disposal* (Item #6065, Seattle Municipal Archives Publication Collection). This report acknowledged that no new suitable landfill sites existed within city limits, and recommended waste incineration and metal salvage as a permanent solution.

Incineration proved more expensive than planned, and the public objected to the

potential air quality impacts. Finally, Seattle obtained landfills in South King County, built transfer stations in Fremont and South Park, and closed the last two in-city landfills at West Seattle and Interbay in November, 1965.



43rd Avenue Dump [now Genesee Park], August 10, 1955  
Item 52768, *Engineering Department Photographic Negatives, Seattle Municipal Archives*



University Garbage Dump. Sunday Use. July, 1960  
Item #65975, *Engineering Department Photographic Negatives, Seattle Municipal Archives*

Seattle garbage dump pictures are viewable online at The Seattle Municipal Archives Photograph Collection website by entering “garbage dumps” into the search box. A more detailed description of Seattle’s solid waste disposal history is provided in *Public Works in Seattle: A Narrative History. The Seattle Engineering Department 1875-1974*. (Item #7055, Seattle Municipal Archives Publication Collection).

## Recently Cataloged Photographs



Seattle Hotel, at James and Yesler, prior to being razed, March 31, 1961. Built in 1890, it was used as offices by the time the Smith Tower was built, in 1914. Torn down and used for a parking garage, it sparked a preservation movement and revival of the Pioneer Square district.

Item 66611, *Engineering Department Photographic Negatives, Seattle Municipal Archives*

## Events

### 2008

October 7 Films from Ruth Kirk Moving Image Collection,  
7 pm Northwest Film Forum 1515 12th Ave <http://www.nwfilmforum.org>

October 15 “Basics of Archives Workshop”  
NARA, Pacific-Alaska Region , Free  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

October 23 Seattle Area Archivists Meeting,  
Speaker, Scott Cline, 2 pm NARA

October 27 “Treasures in the City Archives”  
BLK, City Hall, 11 am

October 27 Archives Fair, 9:30—3:30

October 28 ACKHO Monthly meeting  
King County Archives, 10 am

### 2009

March 7 Pacific Northwest Historians Guild,  
MOHAI

July 15-18 NAGARA Annual Meeting, Seattle

## 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](mailto:archives@seattle.gov) <http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives>