

ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle
Seattle Municipal Archives

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Office of the City Clerk
Legislative Department

Out of the Archives

A researcher visited the Archives recently looking for materials documenting the original construction and planning of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. We've seen questions about the viaduct increase over the past several months, perhaps not surprisingly as Seattleites prepare for the viaduct's closing and the opening of the replacement SR 99 tunnel.

Among the many reports, subject files, maps, photographs, and other related records we have in our holdings are a series of original pencil drawings from 1948 showing the viaduct as envisioned the year before construction began.



Alaskan Way Viaduct drawings, 1948.
Engineering Department Maps and Drawings (Series 2613-01), SMA.

The drawings are from the City's Engineering Department, and show the viaduct from several different angles and locations. Some even include details of buildings, cars, and streets.

A report issued that year by the Engineering Department regarding preliminary plans for the Alaskan Way viaduct gives many additional details, even including recommended speed. "It should be emphasized that the term free-way does not mean speed-way," it cautions, "and there is no thought that a speed limit in excess of 35 miles an hour will be either desirable or tolerable on the Alaskan Way freeway at any point in its entire length." (*Alaskan Way Viaduct: Report on Preliminary Plans*, June 1948. Document 198968, SMA.)

Our researcher was happy to find these and many other resources for her topic here at SMA, and we're happy we can make them available for her and others!

Seattle at 150 Years

Next year marks the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Seattle. The Municipal Archives has partnered with HistoryLink to produce a publication rich with images showcasing the City's history and the SMA's own collections on a wide range of themes.

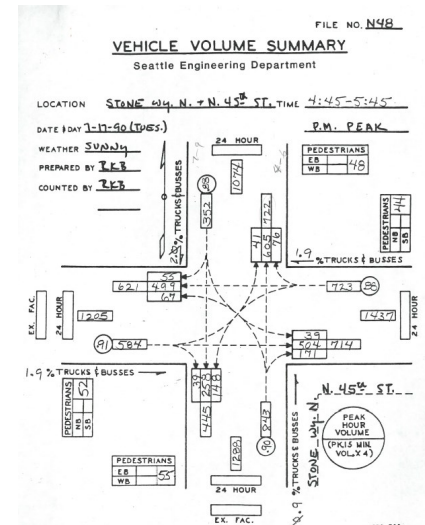
The publication will include documents, photographs, maps and more illustrating events, projects and people that engage the reader in the City's history. The concept for the publication is to tell the history of the City in 150 objects. Staff and writers are hard at work. Stay tuned for updates.

Newly Processed Collections

One of several new collections recently processed at SMA are Bicycle Program Records from the Seattle Department of Transportation (Series 8105-01). Covering the years 1987 to 2000, these records document plans and programs to create a bicycle-friendly city by making it more accessible to bicycles. Records include proposals, plans, and sketches of streets and trails. The series also has some records of the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board, established in 1987 and active until 2000.

Another recently processed record series is made up of Zoning Policy Map Change Requests for the years 1979-1982 (Series 4605-04). As part of widespread zoning updates in the 1980s, the City created a policy map. This series reflects appeals to specific portions of the map submitted by residents. Arranged by neighborhood, each request includes a form with location, current zoning, proposed zoning, petitioner's request, staff recommendation, reason for request, community response, staff discussion, and final decision. Maps and correspondence for each case are also included.

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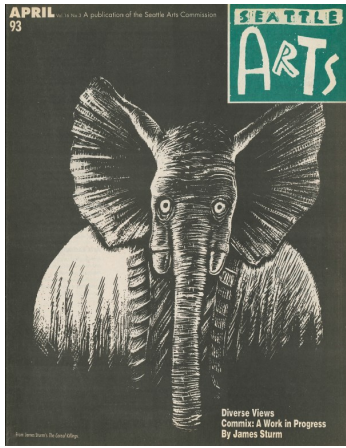


Vehicle Volume Summary for Stone Way N. & N. 45th St. as of July 17, 1990.
Bicycle Program Records (8105-01), SMA.

(newly processed, cont'd)

Also newly available for research are Seattle Arts Newsletters published by the Seattle Arts Commission between 1977 and 2002 (Series 7400-04), containing updates on arts projects in the City, articles about local artists, minutes of the commission, and more.

A substantial number of boxes have also been added to an existing series, the Board of Parks Commissioners Subject Files (Series 5800-07). Containing correspondence, reports, briefing materials, clippings, plans, agendas, minutes, flyers and photographs, this series is a great resource for information on parks projects and topics of interest to the Board.

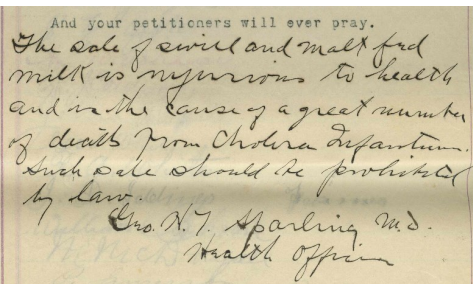


Seattle Arts Newsletter, April 1993.
Seattle Arts Newsletters (7400-04), SMA.

New! Crowdsourcing at SMA

SMA is happy to announce the launch of a new crowdsourcing project for transcribing early City records. The project is available at <https://fromthepage.com/sma-archives/city-of-seattle-records>. All are welcome to participate! Simply create a free account, select a page to transcribe, and follow the brief transcription guidelines provided.

Records ready for transcription include petitions and letters submitted to City agencies and officials, as well as early legislative records such as City Council minutes and ordinances. Most date from the 1870s to the 1890s and contain glimpses into the lives and activities of a quickly growing Seattle. The petition shown here was signed by over 100 residents requesting ordinances prohibiting the sale of milk from



Can you read this handwriting? If so, you can help!
[General File 991067](#), July 9, 1891, SMA.

cows fed malt leftover from breweries, as they believed such milk caused disease. In addition to recording the function of government, the document shows how residents engaged with

their City through their own words, intent, and signatures. Maybe you'll see a name you recognize!

Once the records are transcribed, the full content of each page will be searchable in our Digital Collections site so others can find names, places, and events they recognize, too. The project is currently in a trial period, and we plan to continue adding documents as demand increases. Please join us in helping to make these records more accessible to all!

Moving Image Preservation Grant

The Municipal Archives is pleased to be participating in a grant Moving Image Preservation of Puget Sound (MIPoPS) received from the National Historical Records and Publications Commission (NHPRC).

Titled *Visualizing History in the Pacific Northwest: Saving Our Magnetic Media*, the project is providing public access to historical records that broaden public understanding of democracy, history and culture in the Pacific Northwest. MIPoPS was formed to help preserve audiovisual heritage in the Pacific Northwest by assisting heritage organizations with the conversion of analog video recordings to digital formats according to archival best practices.

SMA will be digitizing the magnetic media in the Seattle Channel collection. Seattle Channel programming narrates the political, social, and cultural fabric of Seattle's history in the last thirty years, a period of intense change, both in terms of infrastructure and the built environment and its social landscape. Programming includes topics such as homelessness, race relations, public safety, the arts and environmental issues. Created from 1980 to 2010, there are 400 videotapes in the collection representing an estimated 400 hours of content. The tapes are in a variety of formats including DVCAM, VHS, 1-inch Type C, Digital-Betacam, Betacam SP, 3/4" U-matic and D-2. Volunteer Jennifer Zook will be working with audiovisual archivist Libby Hopfauf on the Seattle Channel Collection.

Welcome Libby Hopfauf!

SMA is pleased to announce the addition of a half-time audiovisual archivist to our staff, Libby Hopfauf. Libby has worked as a temporary employee in various capacities for several years and we are thrilled to have her on board as a permanent employee. She works as Program Manager for Moving Image Preservation of Puget Sound as well, which is housed in the Office of the City Clerk, so she will wear two hats.

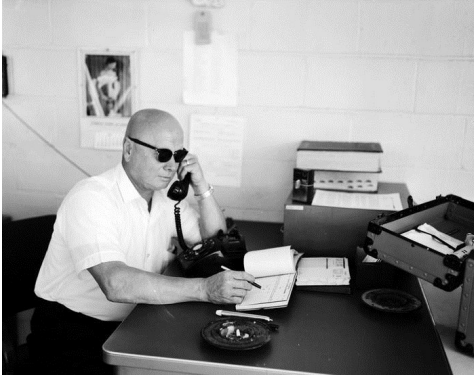


Libby graduated from the University of Washington with a Master's in Library and Information Science in March 2015. She has trained many in the process of digitizing magnetic media and worked extensively with SMA's audio collection and Seattle City Light's moving images. Welcome Libby!

Recently Processed Photos

Consumer Protection Photographs (Series 2705 -03) from the Weights and Measures Division have been processed and are available for research.

The division was established in 1911 in the Department of Public Utilities and included a chief inspector, two assistant inspectors, and a bookkeeper/stenographer. Spanning 6 decades (1910-1960s), this collection shows the work of the



Inspector at desk, estimated 1960s.
[Item 191681](#), SMA.

inspectors, who were responsible for checking loads of firewood, weighing coal deliveries, testing

taximeters, inspecting oil pumps, and verifying the net contents of packaged goods. Similar functions are now performed by the Consumer Protection unit of the Department of Finance and Administrative Services.

The [189 digitized image records](#) showcase an assortment of early to mid-century vehicles including taxis, sight-seeing cars and busses, ambulances, and tow trucks. Early photos show lumber wagons from a number of well-known companies carrying firewood, as well as

inspectors in the field and various types of confiscated scales and other equipment.

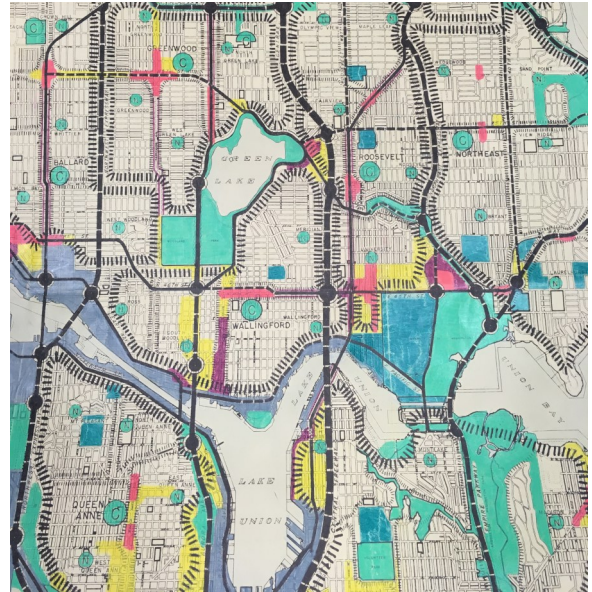
Room full of confiscated scales, 1915.
[Item 184120](#), SMA.



Farwest Cab, 1947.
[Item 188327](#), SMA.

Guide to the Comprehensive Plan

Among the more frequently asked questions here at the Archives are those relating to City zoning and planning efforts, both past and present. To help answer these questions, we've added a new [Guide to the Comprehensive Plan](#) on our website, which outlines Seattle's earliest to most recent planning efforts, and traces how the plans have shaped the City we know today. Also included in the guide are links to digitized copies of records such as planning and zoning commission reports, meeting minutes, maps, and other related original documents.



A segment of Seattle's first Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 1957 and presented by the Seattle Planning Commission in the form of an illustrated map. Map 1753, Engineering Department Maps and Drawings (2613-01), SMA.

83 Years Ago: The "canoe menace"

In 1935, [Kenneth Gilbert wrote to City Councilmember Austin Griffiths](#) about his concerns relating to small pleasure craft in the city's lakes and harbor. He writes: "Newspaper accounts of the near-drowning of three boys clinging to an overturned canoe off Mercer Island are a forceful reminder of a matter which, apparently, has long been accepted as being inevitable as death and taxes - the canoe-menace...the sight now of one of these frail, tricky craft being handled by an inexperienced dub gives me the same feeling of horror as would the sight of a maniac armed with a gun. We license car-drivers and aviators, yet permit any blundering fool to take trusting companions out in a dangerous canoe, and drown them."

Gilbert suggested that all boat renting establishments be required to have patrons sign a form highlighting the dangers of canoes and providing boating safety tips, and advised "we MUST have measures to protect the innocent from the foolhardy and the thoughtless just as much as we must protect law-abiding citizens from criminals." Read more in the [Find of the Month](#) section of our website!

YouTube and Flickr News

A recently uploaded picture to [SMA's Flickr page](#) that is already popular is this shot of Fourth & Jackson in 1929. Flickr user studebruce commented, "Note the small building down by the tracks; this was a switch 'tower' that controlled rail traffic into the tunnel, and also the approach tracks to/by King St. Station."



Fourth & Jackson, 1929.
[Item 3378](#), Engineering Department Negatives (2613-07), SMA.

With nearly 3,000 views, popular on [SMA's YouTube Channel](#) is a Seattle Fire Department film highlighting a 1968 training program aimed at diversifying the department. The film includes footage of trainees learning to use the ladder truck and work hoses with the help of other firemen.



Seattle Fire Department Trainees, 1968.
[Item 931](#), Seattle Fire Department Moving Images (Series 2801-11), SMA.

Seattle Municipal Archives

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Interns & Volunteers

A new work-study student, Minying Feng, started working at SMA in the fall. Minying is a senior at Seattle University, majoring in psychology and criminal justice. She has previous work experience with the city in HSD's Upward Bound program and at the Office of Housing. We have been keeping her busy pulling records for researchers and processing civil rights case files, among other projects.

Three new volunteers have recently come on board. Marissa Hiller is a Seattle native who recently moved back to the area from New York City, where she held several archives-related jobs. Jen Zook has an MLIS from the University of Washington and previously worked as a librarian at the Seattle Public Library. Andrew Wagster is a recent graduate of UW's iSchool, also with an MLIS. Marissa and Andrew are currently working on processing textual collections, while Jen is working on our video holdings.

Carla Ginnis, Staci Crouch, and Kelli Yakabu continue their great work on our collections – scanning, processing, cataloging, and more. Our volunteers help keep us running!

48 Years Ago: Concert at Sicks' Stadium



Concertgoers watch the opening acts of Jimi Hendrix's Cry of Love Tour at Sicks' Stadium. This concert would be Hendrix's last show in Seattle.
[Item 191565](#), Engineering Department Negatives (2613-07), SMA.

Upcoming Events

- Jan 16 [MOHAI History Café](#): Decoding Art in Seattle's Public Spaces, 6:30-8pm.
 Jan 24 [Pacific Northwest Historians Guild](#) Graduate Student Forum, 7-9pm.