

# ARCHIVES GAZETTE



City of Seattle  
Seattle Municipal Archives

Number 36 Summer 2011

Office of the City Clerk  
Legislative Department

## Message from the City Archivist

In May, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council adopted a statement of core values; it is SAA's first statement of professional values. Included are a purpose statement and a list of eleven values with explanatory text. The values are: Access and Use, Accountability, Advocacy, Diversity, History and Memory, Preservation, Professionalism, Responsible Custody, Selection, Service, and Social Responsibility. The statement is too long to include in this space; it can be found on the SAA website at: <http://www2.archivists.org/statements/core-values-of-archivists>

The opening paragraph of the purpose statement concludes with the sentence, "Values embody what a profession stands for and should form the basis for the behavior of its members." Another way to formulate that sentence is that values are about what we believe and ethics is about how we act. The values statement is meant to work hand in glove with the Code of Ethics (a new Code is being written at this time).

I have four brief comments about the statement. First, I think it is a very good document and a long overdue statement of professional values. We should all thank former SAA President Mark Greene who, in his 2008 address at the Society's annual meeting, challenged the profession to develop a professional values statement.

Second, the statement reminds archivists "why they engage in their professional responsibilities..." I am a great believer that archivists should revisit the "why" question on a regular basis. Our personal answers may vary depending on the institutional environment in which we work. After all, the role of the corporate archivist is different than that of the government archivist; the role of the archivist in a religious institution differs from the manuscripts curator in a university or other research institution. The beauty of the core values statement is that it can be productively employed in all archival settings.

Third, under Access and Use, the document notes that "Access to records is essential in personal, academic, business, and government settings; and use of records should be both welcomed and actively promoted." For a government archivist, access is an issue of law as well as professional values. On the other hand, a corporate archivist might preserve records for the use of the corporation, not for general access.

However, the corporate archivist encourages access and use within the confines of his/her business mission; and if one accepts the notion that efficient and productive business entities benefit society, then the values clearly work in that arena.

Fourth, the statement identifies archivists as "responsible stewards." Steward can be defined as "one who actively directs affairs" (fifth definition in Merriam-Webster). This satisfies my belief that we are not passive custodians. Archivists Verne Harris, Eric Ketalaar, Terry Cook, Rand Jimerson, and others have long argued that archivists have a profound effect on the historical record, and that while we strive for objectivity in undertaking our work, we recognize that we make no neutral decisions.

SAA's new core values statement is written so that all archivists can productively embrace it. For me, it speaks of fostering the public good, and in so doing places the archivist affirmatively in the Aristotelian realm of social justice.

--Scott Cline, City Archivist

## Getting ready for the Fair!

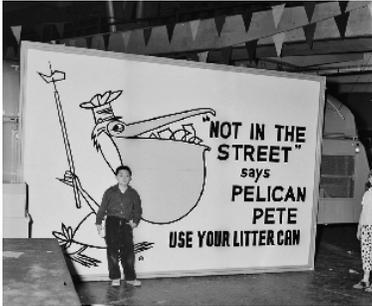
In 1961, the interdepartmental Seattle Beautiful Committee was meeting to discuss ways to clean up Seattle for visitors to the World's Fair in 1962. This committee, along with various community beautification committees, was working to spruce up the city. The interdepartmental committee addressed the issue of litter in Elliott Bay. Minutes from November 14, 1961, note that "Mr. Andersen said Councilman Miller had mentioned that any antilitter enforcement program should include dumping of debris into Puget Sound. He said that during a recent sea wall inspection trip, there was so much debris in some ferry slips that the captain of the inspection boat would not take his boat through it." (5710-01, Box 7/1) A major source of the litter was people throwing trash off of boats, including ferries. No immediate solution was found in the November meeting.



Letterhead. *Records of the Office of the Mayor, Record Series 5210-01, Seattle Municipal Archives.*

(Getting Ready for the Fair cont.)

The year before, a law was passed (Ordinance 89021) that defined “litter” and provided penalties for littering. New litter cans were introduced, and Pelican Pete was created to spread the news along with new signage. Signs were posted stating “No Littering. Violators prosecuted.”



New litter campaign signage.  
March, 1960 Item 64135,  
Seattle Municipal Archives

In 1961, Ethelyn Hartwich proposed a new song about keeping Seattle clean. After reviewing Hartwich’s song, the Engineering Department wrote to City Council on October 25, 1961: “In our opinion, there is a definite value in having a song to help publicize Seattle’s anti-litter cam-

paign....Songs like the “litter tune” are particularly helpful in anti-litter projects in the schools.” City Council did not approve her song for the City’s use. (October 25, 1961 to City Council from Roy Morse, City Engineer. Box 2/1078, Engineering Department Subject Files (Record Series 2602-02).

---

## What’s New in Photos

This spring, Archives intern/volunteer Morgan Bell dove into a collection of Seattle City Light glass lantern slides acquired by SMA in 1997. The entire collection consists of 220 slides. Morgan began a survey and culling process and ultimately selected 39 slides for scanning, cataloging, and inclusion in the online Photograph Index.

This collection of slides relates to the development of public power in Seattle. Showcasing the use of power inside the home, 15 hand-colored slides (circa 1930’s) depict day-to-day activities, such as reading, preparing food, and entertaining, which are made easier with interior lighting. The remaining 24 slides include scenes of Diablo Lake, the Skagit River Railway and other Skagit project locations, municipal buildings including the Lake Union steam plant, and scenes of flooding damage. Three slides are included which represent City Light’s promotional material comparing City Light facilities to private power companies.

To view this collection in the Photo Index, [search](#) “1204-03.”  
<http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~public/phot1.htm>

(What’s New in Photos cont.)



Lighting display in residential home.  
Item 78071, Seattle City Light Glass Lantern Slides  
(Record Series 1204-03)



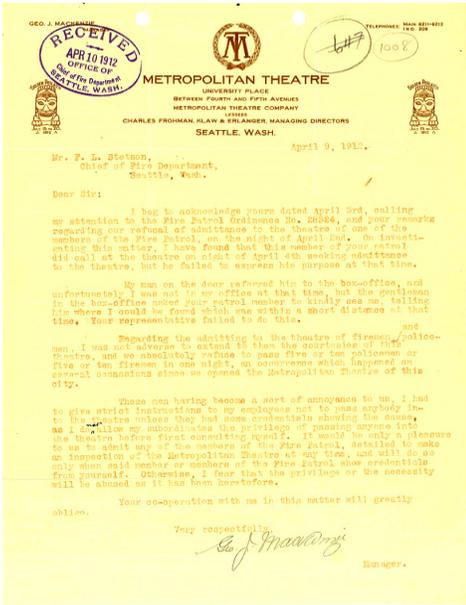
The “Alice Ross” on Diablo Lake c. 1930.  
Item 78072, Seattle City Light Glass Lantern Slides (Record Series 1204-03)

---

## Newly Processed Collections

The Seattle Fire Department is very well documented in the Seattle Municipal Archives. The largest set of records and most recently available is the Central Files (Record Series 2801-03). Almost 80 cubic feet of records, this series dates from 1890 to 2003. Topics include arson, civil defense, the pension fund, fire prevention, fireboats, professional activities, and emergency services, among others. Arranged by subject in 34 subseries, the Central Files reflect the history of the Department, changing technology, and the local and national context of the Department.

Newly Processed (cont.)



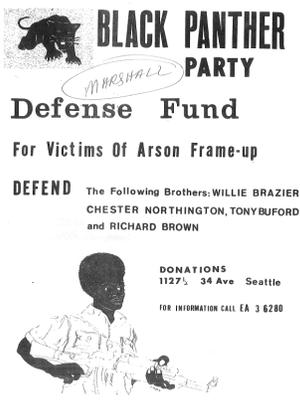
Building inspections in the Central Files contain information on early businesses and buildings not available elsewhere. Some contain floor plans and most have a description of the building layout in the context of needed safety alterations.

In this letter, the manager of the Metropolitan Theater responds to a complaint by the Fire Department that the Fire Patrol was refused entrance. He writes "...we absolutely refuse to pass five or ten policemen or five or ten firemen in one night, an occurrence which happened on several occasions...These men having become a sort of annoyance to us." Letter from George Mackenzie to Chief Stetson, April 9, 1912. Box 46/39, SFD Central Files, Record Series 2801-03.

Records were added to the Chief's General Correspondence (Record Series 2801-01); records now date from 1894 to 1951. The Chief's Correspondence, arranged chronologically by Chief, includes information on equipment needs and purchases, department budget, code violations, assessments of station sites, equipment and apparatus evaluations, and personnel matters. Included is correspondence from Chief Stetson with his son Horatio, who served in World War I.

Also of interest are the Fire Marshal Subject Files, 1951-1993, measuring 3.4 cubic feet (Record Series 2810-08).

Covering a wide variety of topics, the records can be used to explore building inspections, urban renewal, false fire alarms, and fire incident summaries through the mid-1960s. Of particular interest are the files on the Central Area community during the late 1960s. These records document civil disturbances, racial tensions, and groups such as the Black Panthers, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Seattle Rumor Center.



Flyer, Box 1/15. Fire Marshal Subject Files, 2801-08, SMLA.

### 54 Years Ago: Golf Clubs

In 1957, the superintendent of Parks, Paul Brown, wrote to Corporation Counsel to request an opinion relating to discrimination in park facilities, specifically golf courses. The superintendent wanted to know what recourse he had with a golfing organization that carried the same name as a municipal golf course but which restricted membership based on race, creed, color, or nationality. Corporation Counsel informed the superintendent that "the Board of Park Commissioners may adopt reasonable and uniform rules containing 'restrictions' denying the use of the city's golf course or other park facilities by private golf club organizations..." if the organizations engage in discriminatory practices. (Law opinion 4020, April 3, 1957. Law Department, Legal Opinions, Record Series 4401-05)

The Civic Unity Committee of Seattle pressed the superintendent on this issue earlier, writing on January 4, 1954, "...it would be in accord with the spirit of the Park Department policies to refuse the use of public golf courses to private clubs which excluded non-white people from membership. May we know if there has been success in preventing this indirect practice of discrimination in the use of public facilities?" (John Hetzman to Paul Brown, January 4, 1954, Box 32/1, Don Sherwood Parks History Collection, 5801-01)

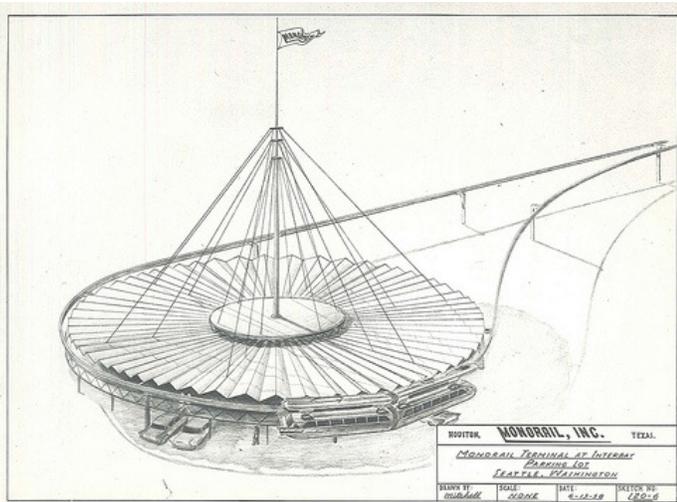
The Chairman of the Washington State Board Against Discrimination, Sidney Gerber, wrote to the Park Board on April 14, 1958, suggesting that simply asking clubs to change their name so it did not look as though they were associated with the City, would not suffice. "In view of the fact that the writer and our director have been discussing this problem with your board and your staff for eight months, during which period no Negroes have yet been admitted into the clubs...it would seem appropriate that a deadline be set." (Gerber to Park Board, April 14, 1958, Box 134/1, Dept. of Parks and Recreation Superintendent Records, 5802-01)

The superintendent wrote to the Jackson Park Men's Golf Club on April 17, 1958, that the Board of Park Commissioners was authorized by the City Charter to deny the use of the city's golf courses by private golf club organizations "...where there is reasonable ground to believe...that such organizations engage in discriminatory practices" and notified the club that as of June 1, 1958, the Board intended to exercise its authority. (Paul Brown to Jackson Park Men's Golf Club, April 17, 1958, Box 134/1, Dept. of Parks and Recreation Superintendent Records, 5802-01)

The issue was still not resolved by 1959. Citizen Robert Wright wrote, "...until clubs are formed on the public courses open to any one desiring membership, please don't use my tax dollars to support and maintain these courses." (Robert Wright to Park Board, February 10, 1959, Box 134/1, Dept. of Parks and Recreation Superintendent Records, 5802-01)

## Flickr News

We have recently created a set of images on Flickr relating to the 1962 World's Fair and the development and evolution of Seattle Center. Photographs include Engineering Department images of fair construction and signage, as well as snapshots taken by a fair visitor during the event. Ephemera includes letterhead, pamphlets, flyers, and images from the official souvenir program. A document from 1959 includes preliminary concept drawings of fair grounds and buildings, and an early map shows the property to be acquired for the site. The most popular image is a drawing for a proposed Interbay monorail terminal that looks like a large carousel. Images will continue to be added to the set – stay tuned!



Proposed Interbay monorail terminal.  
Document 6119, "[Monorail proposal for] Seattle Transit Commission, 1958, Seattle Municipal Archives

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

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/>

## New "Seattle Voices" Audio

The voices of Eldon Grimes and Margaret Ceis can be heard in the latest "Voices" audio clips. A hearing on construction of a secondary sewage treatment plant on June 14, 1977, aroused comments and reactions from many citizens. Grimes expressed concern that environmental issues were being addressed with the expectation of instant solutions, "in the best American tradition of instant pudding," and Ceis clearly articulated the impact of poor decisions and the complexities sewage treatment presents to the citizenry. [Listen](#) to the clips here:  
<http://www.seattle.gov/CityArchives/Exhibits/voices/metro.htm>

## Kudos to our Volunteers and Interns!

Volunteer Megan O'Shea is leaving this month in anticipation of her move back to the east coast. In her eight months of volunteer work, she has ably processed many collections from agencies including Ethics and Elections, the Design Commission, and the Office of Civil Rights. Kay Calkins, volunteer cataloger of documents is also leaving; her meticulous work is appreciated. Morgan Bell completed the processing of lantern slides and will be returning briefly in July.

## Did you know...

The Seattle Municipal Archives has almost 140,000 photographs, both scanned negatives and born digital, available online for searching and downloading?

*Total images available online = 139,711*  
*Number of scanned historic images = 76,957*  
*Historic images with high res scans = 3,189*  
*Number of born digital images = 62,753*

One of the most popular images on the Seattle Municipal Archives Flickr site for April through June 2011 was of Golden Gardens in 1969.



Check out comments on this photo and other favorites: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/seattlemunicipalarchives/5622500624/in/photostream>

## Upcoming Events

- June 28, 3 pm: Seattle Area Archivists Meeting  
Seattle City Hall Room 370
- June 28, 7:00-9:30 PM: Paramount Theatre  
Celebrate passage of ESSB 5834 with 4Culture  
RSVP to [rsvp4culture@gmail.com](mailto:rsvp4culture@gmail.com)
- June 30, 5:30—7:30 Renton History Museum  
Celebrate passage of ESSB 5834  
RSVP to 425-255-2330 by June 27

## 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>