

Preserving the Past, Protecting the Future



HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

2002 ANNUAL REPORT

PUBLIC RECORDS ADMINISTRATOR
Eunice G. DiBella, CRM

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Connecticut State Library
Hartford, Connecticut
September 2002

Front Cover

Graphics designer, Peter Good of Cummings & Good located in Chester, CT was commissioned by the Connecticut State Library to design an image for a poster to represent the Historic Documents Preservation Program. All of the historic documents represented in the image are photographs of materials found in the State Archives.

Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program Legislative Report

I. Legislative History

On May 26, 2000 Governor John Rowland signed into law Public Act 00-146, "An Act Concerning Real Estate Filings and the Preservation of Historic Documents." This legislation, which took effect July 1, 2000, established an "historic documents preservation account" for the "preservation and management of historic documents." It charged the Connecticut State Library through the Office of the Public Records Administrator with the responsibility of developing and administering a grant program to help municipalities enhance or improve the preservation and management of historic documents in their custody.

This is the most significant piece of legislation ever passed by the General Assembly in support of the preservation of the historic documents of the State of Connecticut and its citizens. *C.G.S. Sec. 11-8m(b)* requires that the Public Records Administrator submit to the joint standing committee responsible for government administration an annual report on the grant program. This report is filed to meet this requirement.

II. Description of Grants

a. Goals and Objectives

The Public Records Administrator's first priority was to create a grant program that was straightforward for both the applicants and the administrators and beneficial to every town whether or not it was aware of the condition of its historical records. With input from the Historic Documents Preservation Advisory Committee, the State Library decided to offer targeted grants focusing on specific types of projects for the first three years.

The Public Records Administrator identified paper preservation/conservation as the area of greatest need. Although many towns had been able to fund very limited preservation of their vital records, most did not have a comprehensive view of the condition of all their records. In order to address this problem, the grant program funded two types of projects, paper preservation or a survey for preservation planning.

Paper preservation grants permitted towns to continue work already in progress while the town clerks learned the grant application process. Preservation surveys allow towns to evaluate the overall condition of its records and develop a strategy for utilizing its funding in the most efficient manner. The eligibility criteria for the applicants was that the municipality be up-to-date on filing its monthly fee collection reports and that it submit a completed and accurate grant application.

To facilitate distribution of the money as equitably as possible, the Public Records Administrator created a three-tier system of small, medium and large towns based upon population from the latest federal census. After analyzing the state's population figures and reviewing other grant programs, the Administrator divided the towns into three groups: a small town had less than 25,000 residents, a medium town had between 25,000 and 99,999, and a large town/city had 100,000 or more. The grant amounts were based on a ratio of 1:2:3. The actual amount of money distributed each fiscal year depends upon the account balance prior to the start of the grant year. This ensures sufficient funding for the year if all municipalities applied for a grant. The Public Records Administrator set the first grant year limits at \$2,500 for a small town, \$5,000 for a medium town and \$7,500 for a large town.¹

PA 00-146 authorized two grant cycles per fiscal year. The first cycle ends on or before July thirty-first and the second cycle ends on or before December thirty-first. A municipality is eligible for one targeted grant award each grant year.

After consulting with the Advisory Committee, the Public Records Administrator decided to set aside a portion of the grant money for document recovery in the event of a disaster such as a fire or flood. A disaster recovery grant covers eligible expenses up to \$10,000 that were not paid out of other funds available to the municipality such as an insurance policy. A municipality may apply for a disaster recovery grant even if it receives a targeted grant award during a grant year.

b. Grant Awards

During the first grant year, the State Library and the Advisory Committee actively encouraged all towns to participate in the program. In fiscal year 2002, the State Library awarded grants in July and December of 2001. One hundred thirty-two towns applied and received grants as shown below. The State Library also provided disaster recovery assistance to one town.

1. July 2001 awards

Town of	Grant Category	Amount
Andover	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Ashford	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
Avon	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Bristol	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Brookfield	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Brooklyn	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
Burlington	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Canaan	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Cheshire	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Clinton	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00

¹ Due to a strong accumulation of funds, the program was able to double the grant amount for FY 2003 grants.

Colchester	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Columbia	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Coventry	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Cromwell	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Darien	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Deep River	Paper Conservation	\$2,250.00
Derby	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Durham	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
East Hampton	Paper Conservation	\$2,475.00
East Hartford	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
East Haven	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
East Lyme	Paper Conservation	\$2,400.00
East Windsor	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Eastford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Ellington	Paper Conservation	\$1,927.00
Enfield	Preservation Survey	\$3,000.00
Farmington	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Franklin	Paper Conservation	\$2,255.00
Glastonbury	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Goshen	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Granby	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Griswold	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Groton	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Guilford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Haddam	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Hamden	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Hampton	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Hartford	Paper Conservation	\$7,380.00
Hartland	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Hebron	Paper Conservation	\$2,243.00
Kent	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Killingly	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Ledyard	Paper Conservation	\$1,958.00
Litchfield	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Madison	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Manchester	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Mansfield	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Marlborough	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Meriden	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Middlebury	Paper Conservation	\$2,461.00
Middlefield	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Middletown	Preservation Survey	\$3,786.00
Milford	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Monroe	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Montville	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Morris	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00

New Britain	Paper Conservation	\$4,950.00
New Hartford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
New Milford	Disaster Recovery	\$2,505.00
New Milford	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Newington	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Newtown	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
North Branford	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
North Canaan	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
North Stonington	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Norwalk	Paper Conservation	\$4,980.00
Orange	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Plainville	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Preston	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Prospect	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Redding	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Ridgefield	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Rocky Hill	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Roxbury	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Salisbury	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
Seymour	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Sharon	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Shelton	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Sherman	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Somers	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
South Windsor	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Southbury	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Southington	Preservation Survey	\$3,200.00
Sprague	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Stafford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Stamford	Paper Conservation	\$7,500.00
Sterling	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
Stonington	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Stratford	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Thomaston	Paper Conservation	\$2,300.00
Vernon	Paper Conservation	\$4,997.00
Voluntown	Paper Conservation	\$2,375.00
Wallingford	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Washington	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Waterbury	Paper Conservation	\$7,500.00
Watertown	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
West Haven	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Westbrook	Paper Conservation	\$2,442.00
Weston	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Wethersfield	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Willington	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Wilton	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00

Windham	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
Windsor	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Woodbury	Paper Conservation	<u>\$2,500.00</u>
Total		\$332,384.00

2. December 2001 awards

Town of	Grant Category	Amount
Bethany	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Bethel	Paper Conservation	\$2,498.00
Bloomfield	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Bolton	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Branford	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Bridgeport	Paper Conservation	\$2,000.00
Bridgewater	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Canton	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Danbury	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
East Haddam	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Fairfield	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Killingworth	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Lebanon	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Lisbon	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Naugatuck	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
New Canaan	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
New Haven	Paper Conservation	\$7,500.00
North Haven	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Old Saybrook	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Oxford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Plainfield	Preservation Survey	\$2,500.00
Torrington	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Trumbull	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Waterford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
West Hartford	Preservation Survey	\$3,033.00
Westport	Paper Conservation	\$5,000.00
Winchester	Paper Conservation	\$2,500.00
Woodbridge	Paper Conservation	<u>\$2,500.00</u>
Total		\$92,531.00

c. Advisory Committee

PA 00-146 created an advisory committee consisting of town clerks from the various geographic areas of the state and State Library staff with preservation and grant program experience. The following individuals currently serve as

members of the Historical Records Preservation Grant Program Advisory Committee:

Barbara L. Allen, Town Clerk Goshen
Jane Cullinane, Preservation Librarian
Eunice G. DiBella, Public Records Administrator
Edward J. Friedeberg, Town Clerk Glastonbury
Joan E. Gersden, Town Clerk Mansfield
Sandra R. Hutton, Town Clerk Middletown
Mary Louise Jensen, Building Consultant
Dr. Mark H. Jones, State Archivist
Richard Kingston, Director Administrative Services
Cynthia C. Ladwig, Town Clerk Stonington
Karen L. Marsden, Town Clerk Clinton
Joyce P. Mascena, Town Clerk Vernon
Catherine S. Nurmi, Town Clerk Sterling
Therese Pac, Town Clerk Bristol
Patricia H. Strauss, Town Clerk Westport
Lisa A. Valenti, Town Clerk North Branford
Kendall F. Wiggin, State Librarian

The following previously served as members of the Historical Records Preservation Grant Program Advisory Committee:

Mollie Keller, Records Manager, City of Bridgeport
Leona Mainville, Town Clerk Brooklyn
Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk Groton

III. State Library Expenditures

a. Program development

During the first eighteen months of the program, the Public Records Administrator developed policies and procedures for establishing the program. To develop the necessary forms, create the administrative procedures, and serve as program administrative assistant, the Public Records Administrator hired Lizette Pelletier as a part-time Archival Consultant. Once the program and the fund became established, LeAnn Johnson was hired as Public Records Program Grant Specialist to oversee the grants program. The State Library also hired Barbara Austen as Local Government Records Archivist to work with the local government collections at the State Library as well as serve as an advisor to local officials.

b. Training and Workshops

In order to educate the town clerks and other town officials concerning matters pertaining to the preservation of historical records, the program initiated an ongoing series of workshops. The first three sessions included *Preservation 101* in June 2001, which addressed basic document handling and storage; *Reformatting Technologies* in October 2001, which made the Town Clerks aware of the strengths and weaknesses of preservation photocopying, preservation microfilming, digitization, and other methods currently in use by conservators; and *Disaster Response and Recovery* in June 2002, which examined disaster planning, response and recovery including damage assessment and priority setting during the critical 48 hour period immediately following a disaster. Staff from the New England Documents Conservation Center served as instructors for the workshops. The Public Records Administrator plans to offer at least two sessions each year funded by the State Library's portion of the account.

The grant program staff conducted a training session on grant applications during the Town Clerk Associations' 2001 Fall Conference. The Public Records Administrator also attended a series of Town Clerk Association county meetings to discuss the grant program and its procedures.

c. State Library Records Preservation

The State Library, under the direction of the State Archivist, began a number of preservation initiatives. In addition to hiring a local government records archivist to oversee the Library's local government records collection, the State Archivist oversaw the publication and distribution of volume 17 of the "Connecticut State Records."² He also hired a qualified editor to complete volumes 18 and 19, which will include the 1818 Constitutional Convention and the debates over its ratification.

² The "Connecticut State Records" consist of edited and annotated journals of the General Assembly.

Financial Statement

Funds Received by Historic Documents Preservation Account July 2000 to July 2002

Month of Receipts	FY 2001	FY 2002	% Difference from Previous FY
Jul	0.00	135,900.00	100%
Aug	74,681.00	126,676.00	41%
Sept	97,154.00	158,002.00	39%
Oct	117,928.00	122,012.00	3%
Nov	130,930.00	132,028.00	1%
Dec	114,231.00	134,515.80	15%
Jan	104,404.00	159,907.20	35%
Feb	107,672.00	154,902.00	30%
Mar	105,754.00	146,977.00	28%
Apr	109,585.00	140,900.00	22%
May	115,271.00	200,484.00	43%
June	146,945.00	168,199.00	13%
Annual Total	1,224,555.00	1,780,503.00	31%

	FY2001	FY2002	TOTAL
Revenue from Towns	1,224,555.00	1,780,503.00	3,005,058.00
Interest Earned	15,766.52	41,143.58	56,910.68
Total Receipts	1,240,321.52	1,821,646.58	3,061,968.68
Grant Round #1 (104 towns)		332,179.00 ³	
Grant Round #2 (28 towns)		92,531.00	
Total Grants Awarded		424,710.00	424,710.00
CSL Operating Expenses	15,728.88	114,759.17	130,488.05
Balance at end of FY 2002			2,506,770.05⁴

d. Local Projects

In late 2001, the Office of the Public Records Administrator surveyed the Town Clerks concerning their experiences with and impressions of the new program.

³ Figure includes unexpended funds returned by a town to the State Library after the grant project was completed.

⁴ The Public Records Administrator approved 109 grants in the amount of \$699,255 to be awarded for cycle 1 in FY 2003.

One hundred and twenty-nine clerks returned the survey. They responded overwhelmingly in favor of the program and the work it is accomplishing.

In addition, the survey inquired as to how the towns were utilizing their portion of the \$3.00 fee. Many towns are continuing preservation work they had started on their records prior to the grants program or are supplementing their recently awarded grants. Some town clerks, however, have used the money to address other concerns such as reformatting records from paper to electronic media or purchasing equipment and supplies. One town developed a joint project with the local public library to improve public access to local land records. A few towns had not spent any funds because the town clerk had recently assumed the position or was engaged in the planning process to determine the most efficient use of the town funds after a sufficient amount accumulated in the town's account. Only one town reported difficulty in accessing its funds through their local finance board. The Public Records Administrator is working with the town clerk to resolve the problem.

IV. Findings and Recommendations

The grant program continues to evolve as the town clerks become more comfortable with the process and the program staff resolves the inevitable small problems that occur with new program policies and procedures. The staff continues to aim for a straightforward, yet comprehensive program.

The Public Records Administrator has expanded the targeted grants to include preservation microfilming and land record index recreation for the 2003 grant year. Due to a strong accumulation of funds, the program doubled the grant amounts for each population tier in the upcoming grant year. In the future, the staff is considering grants for records management needs assessment as well as competitive grants that will provide larger amounts of money for cooperative efforts among towns or between institutions responsible for local records.

Staff will continue to develop additional educational programs such as workshops and training sessions. With more grant options and additional staff available to assist the towns, this office believes it will soon reach the goal of 100% participation by Connecticut's towns and municipalities.

Respectfully submitted,

Eunice G. DiBella,
Public Records Administrator