

Preserving the Past, Protecting the Future



HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION GRANT PROGRAM

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

PUBLIC RECORDS ADMINISTRATOR
Eunice G. DiBella, CRM

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Connecticut State Library
Hartford, Connecticut
January 1, 2009

Front Cover

Rural scene at Gilead, CT (Hebron), ca. 1953, PG 170, Connecticut Development Commission, "Hebron."
Connecticut State Archives

Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program FY2008 Legislative Report

I. Description of Grants

a) Goals and Objectives

The major focus of the Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program during FY2008 remained providing targeted grants to every town that applied. Many towns have finished preserving their land records, but have a wide variety of other options through the other eligible projects offered by the program. As in past years, the staff strongly encouraged towns to utilize their targeted funding during FY2008 to conduct a planning survey to evaluate their needs and to meet one of the eligibility requirements for a competitive grant. The Public Records Administrator's other top priority remains the continuation of the competitive grant portion of the program, which began in FY2007.

The passage of PA 07-252 expanded the statutory definition of "preservation and management of historic documents" to include "providing public access to an electronic indexing system that combines the grantor and grantee indices of the town's land records." Through the Historic Documents Preservation program, all towns may apply for grants to provide public access to electronic indexing systems, including the purchase of public access computers. In addition, towns may also apply for grants to upgrade their land record indexes to comply with the provisions of PA 07-252.

Finally, the monthly filings from the towns throughout FY2008 continued to follow the ongoing downturn in the housing market. The State Librarian and the Public Records Administrator determined that the fund was sufficiently capitalized to sustain the current grant amounts for the three population levels for another fiscal year. However, the reduced amount of administrative funds available to the State Library had an impact on town clerk training and how the State Library distributed information about the program.

b) Grant Awards

In FY2008, the State Library awarded grants by July and December of 2007 as required by statute. One hundred forty-eight towns applied for and received grants totaling \$1,517,847. Of these, nine towns received competitive grants totaling \$379,847.

1. July 2007 awards

a. Targeted Grants

Municipality	Grant Category	Amount
Ashford	Preservation / Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Avon	Organization and Indexing, Program Development & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00

Municipality	Grant Category	Amount
Barkhamsted	Inventory and Planning, Organization and Indexing and Preservation / Conservation	\$7,000.00
Berlin	Organization and Indexing & Preservation / Conservation	\$7,000.00
Bethany	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Bethel	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Bolton	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Bozrah	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Branford	Organization and Indexing & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Bridgewater	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Brookfield	Preservation / Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Brooklyn	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Burlington	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Canaan	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Canton	Organization and Indexing, Preservation / Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Cheshire	Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Chester	Organization and Indexing & Preservation / Conservation	\$7,000.00
Clinton	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Colchester	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Colebrook	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Cornwall	Organization and Indexing & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Coventry	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Cromwell	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Darien	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
East Haddam	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
East Hampton	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
East Hartford	Inventory and Planning & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
East Haven	Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
Easton	Organization and Indexing & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Enfield	Organization and Indexing, Program Development & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Essex	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Glastonbury	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
Greenwich	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
Griswold	Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00

Municipality	Grant Category	Amount
Groton	Organization and Indexing & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Hamden	Inventory and Planning & Preservation / Conservation	\$12,000.00
Hebron	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Killingworth	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Lisbon	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Litchfield	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Lyme	Preservation / Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Manchester	Inventory and Planning & Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
Meriden	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Middlebury	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Middlefield	Organization and Indexing & Preservation / Conservation	\$7,000.00
Montville	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Morris	Organization and Indexing & Preservation / Conservation	\$7,000.00
Naugatuck	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
New Britain	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
New Canaan	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
New Fairfield	Organization and Indexing & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
New Hartford	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
New Milford	Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
Newington	Organization and Indexing & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Newtown	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Norfolk	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
North Canaan	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Norwich	Inventory and Planning & Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
Old Saybrook	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Orange	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Oxford	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Plainville	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Portland	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Preston	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Prospect	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Redding	Inventory and Planning & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Ridgefield	Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Rocky Hill	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00

Municipality	Grant Category	Amount
Salem	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Scotland	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Seymour	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Shelton	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Sherman	Preservation/Conservation & Program Development	\$7,000.00
South Windsor	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Stafford	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Stonington	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Thomaston	Inventory and Planning & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Thompson	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Tolland	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Wallingford	Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
Warren	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Waterbury	Preservation/Conservation	\$17,000.00
Waterford	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
West Hartford	Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
West Haven	Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
Westport	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
Willington	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Wilton	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Winchester	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Windsor	Program Development	\$12,000.00
Windsor Locks	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Total		\$762,000.00

b. Competitive Grants

Municipality	Grant Category	Amount
Bloomfield	Records Management	\$50,000.00
Farmington	Records Management	\$50,000.00
Hartford	Archival Management	\$49,851.00
Mansfield	Records Management	\$47,924.00
Marlborough	Records Management	\$28,782.00
North Branford	Records Management	\$23,310.00
Stratford	Records Management	\$50,000.00
Torrington	Records Management	\$50,000.00
Wethersfield	Records Management	\$29,980.00
Total		\$379,847.00

2. December 2007 awards

a. Targeted Grants

Municipality	Grant Category	Amount
Andover	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Bethlehem	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Bristol	Storage and Facilities	\$12,000.00
Canterbury	Inventory and Planning & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Chaplin	Organization and Indexing and Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Columbia	Organization and Indexing, Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Danbury	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
Deep River	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Derby	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Durham	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
East Granby	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
East Lyme	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
East Windsor	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Eastford	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Ellington	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Fairfield	Preservation/Conservation	\$12,000.00
Franklin	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Goshen	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Granby	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Hampton	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Hartland	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Harwinton	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Kent	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Killingly	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
New Haven	Preservation/Conservation	\$17,000.00
North Haven	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
North Stonington	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Plainfield	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Plymouth	Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Pomfret	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Putnam	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Roxbury	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Sharon	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Somers	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00

Municipality	Grant Category	Amount
Southbury	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Southington	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
Sprague	Organization and Indexing & Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Sprague	Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Sterling	Organization and Indexing & Program Development	\$7,000.00
Suffield	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Suffield	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Trumbull	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
Union	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Vernon	Organization and Indexing	\$12,000.00
Voluntown	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Washington	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Weston	Organization and Indexing, Preservation/Conservation & Storage and Facilities	\$7,000.00
Windham	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Wolcott	Preservation/Conservation	\$7,000.00
Woodbridge	Organization and Indexing	\$7,000.00
Total		\$376,000.00

II. Administrative Activities

a) Program Development

The Office of the Attorney General instituted new contracting requirements for all state agencies at the end of FY2007 that went into full effect for FY2008. Staff had to significantly modify the grant application form as the application and contract could no longer be a single form and specific information from each individual application needed to be in the contract for each individual town. The new procedures added steps to the approval process at both the municipal and state levels including certification of non-discrimination which required a new form. FY2008 Cycle 1 was the first time that the new procedures applied to every grant applicant. As with any new system, there were a few unforeseen difficulties that came to light during the application and approval process. By the end of Cycle 2, most of these problems had been resolved.

P.A. 07-252 § 55 expanded “preservation and management of historic documents” as defined in CGS § 11-8j to allow towns to use historic document preservation funds to provide public access to the town’s land records through an electronic indexing system that combines the grantor index and the grantee index. An informal poll of the towns by the Town Clerk’s Association early in FY2008 revealed that 32 towns did not have a public access terminal and three of the smallest towns still recorded transactions manually. The grant program encouraged the purchase of the required hardware and software as a project for those towns. In addition, compliance with the act’s provision is now a pre-requisite for any future grants. While the act did not mandate a retroactive conversion of a manual index to an electronic format, the grant program guidelines encouraged towns to apply for these types of projects through the targeted grants. At the

end of FY2008, most of the 32 towns had either applied for grants to purchase terminals for public access and/or create a combined grantor/grantee index or had utilized their own funds to do so. The remaining towns were expected to apply in Cycle 1 of FY2009 for these projects in order to meet the January 1, 2009 deadline in the statute.

b) Town Clerk Training

The staff held its annual half day training sessions on January 10 and 15, 2008 for those town officials interested in applying for a grant. Any town wishing to apply for a competitive grant is required to attend one of the two training sessions. The session is also highly recommended for towns applying for a targeted grant. The State Archivist and the Assistant State Archivist participated in the training sessions along with the grant staff. Topics included choosing and designing a large project; setting goals and objectives; developing a timetable; developing a budget; preparing an effective application; and supervising a project once it is underway. Forty-four town clerks and officials attended.

The Office of the Public Records Administrator offered its annual spring workshop, *Municipal Treasures: Unlocking the Secrets in Your Town's Archival Records* at the State Library's Van Block Facility on June 12, 2008. Forty town clerks attended the workshop. The goal of the workshop was to assist town clerks in safeguarding their archival treasures and making available the valuable information they contain. It was also designed to help in planning archival management grant projects. The workshop was an interactive session including tours and demonstrations of various archival and preservation techniques. Course instructors were State Archivist Mark Jones, Assistant State Archivist Bruce Stark and Government Archivist Paul Baran. The State Library held the workshop at its own facility and utilized its staff as instructors in part as a cost saving measure. In addition, due to the falling administrative revenues, the State Library had to initiate a registration fee for the first time to cover the costs for supplies, instructional materials, and other expenses.

c) Advisory Committee

The following individuals were members of the Historic Documents Preservation Program Advisory Committee:

Jane Cullinane, Preservation Librarian
Eunice G. DiBella, Public Records Administrator
Sandra H. Russo, Middletown Town Clerk
Mary Louise Jensen, Building Consultant
Dr. Mark H. Jones, State Archivist
Richard Kingston, Director, Administrative Services
Joyce P. Mascena, Glastonbury Town Clerk
Sheila Mosman, Grants Manager
Catherine S. Nurmi, Sterling Town Clerk
Therese Pac, Bristol Town Clerk
Carla Pomprowicz, Hebron Town Clerk

Joseph Quartiero, Torrington Town Clerk
Patricia H. Strauss, Westport Town Clerk
Lisa A. Valenti, North Branford Town Clerk
Sandi Wieleba, East Hampton Town Clerk
Kendall F. Wiggin, State Librarian

III. Financial Statement

Historic Documents Preservation Fund

FY2008 receipts	\$1,365,266
FY2008 interest accrued	\$ 116,158
Total	\$1,481,424

Grants to Towns and Municipalities

FY2008 grant funds received (70%)	\$1,036,997
Balance carried FY2007	\$2,110,699
Unexpended grant funds returned*	\$ 4,856
Total Grant Funds Available	\$3,155,552

*Returned at the end of the grant year

Grants awarded	
<i>Targeted</i>	\$1,138,000
<i>Competitive</i>	\$ 379,847
<i>Disaster Recovery</i>	\$ 0
Total Grants Awarded	\$1,517,847

Grant Funds Year End Balance **\$1,624,705**

CSL Program Administration and Preservation Activities

FY 2008 administration/preservation funds received (30%)	\$ 444,427
Balanced carried FY2007	\$ 411,835
Total	\$856,262

FY2008 operating expenses	\$634,853
Reimbursement from State Library	\$4,333

Administrative Year End Balance **\$ 225,742**

IV. Local Projects

The downturn in the housing market during FY2008 had an impact on the dollar-recording fee retained at the town level, especially for the smaller towns. The town clerk's revenue from this fee is to be kept in a separate account to support on-going preservation work or to supplement grant awards. The dollar fund supports projects such as reformatting records

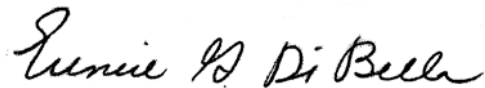
from paper to electronic media with a microfilm backup; purchasing equipment and supplies to improve internal records management; improving intellectual access to the town's vital records, minutes, land records, maps, town code and charter through indexing projects; and purchasing additional storage equipment for the new media or to meet revised archival and records management standards. Finally, some towns that applied for competitive grants used their local funds as an in-kind contribution toward the competitive grant projects.

Unfortunately, as the economy tightens, the Public Records Administrator has seen a rise in the number of requests from town clerks requesting assistance in situation where town fiscal officials take the fees collected for the general fund rather than maintain a separate account for preservation of historical records as defined in the statute.

V. Findings and Recommendations

The worsening housing market continues to have a dampening effect on the program for both the grant and the local funds. Initially, the reduced number of land recordings was considered a return to a normal market after a period of extreme growth. The surplus from the boom years allowed the State Library to avoid cutting the grant amounts for a number of years into the down turn in the hope that the situation would stabilize. However, housing sales and mortgage refinancing have reached historic lows and the program's revenue stream is at an all time low. Close scrutiny of the program's financial status at the end of FY2008 indicates that the program can not sustain these grant amounts past the FY2009 grant year. The program must reduce amounts available for each level of the targeted grants and the number of competitive grants will be cut in half.

Respectfully submitted,



Eunice G. DiBella, CRM
Public Records Administrator