

**Annual Report to Joint Standing Committee on
Government Administration on the Preservation
Activities of the Connecticut State Library**



**HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION
GRANT PROGRAM**

2004 ANNUAL REPORT

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Connecticut State Library
Hartford, Connecticut
September 1, 2004

Front Cover

Connecticut Aerial Survey Mosaic, ca. 1934, RG 056, Connecticut Tercentenary Commission, 1929 – 1936, "Photographs." In 1935 at the State Armory in Hartford, a man with binoculars examines a mosaic map of Connecticut prepared with 10,000 images from the 1934/35 Fairchild Aerial Survey, the first statewide in the nation.

**Annual Report to the
Joint Standing Committee on Government Administration
on the Preservation Activities of the
Connecticut State Library
with its Portion of the Historical Documents Preservation Fund**

I. Preservation and Management of CSL Historic Documents

Summary Statement: As a result of the layoffs that occurred during FY2003, much of the State Library's historic document preservation efforts during FY2004 consisted of refocusing priorities and rebuilding the staff. Despite the heavy impact of the layoffs and budget cutbacks, the State Library was able to make significant achievements in both traditional and non-traditional areas of document preservation due to the historic document preservation fund.

A. *Preservation Projects*

1. *Local Records Project:* During FY2004, the Assistant State Archivist completed processing, arranging, and describing records for two municipalities and made substantial progress on a third. He completed processing 27 boxes (13 cu. ft.) of records for the town of Hartland, which was begun by the Local Government Archivist, prior to her layoff. The most interesting and valuable records in this collection are nine boxes of justice of the peace papers. He also completed three boxes (1.25 cu. ft.) of records from Colchester consisting primarily of probate court records. In March, the Assistant State Archivist began processing the records of the town of East Haddam. Administrative records from the Board of Selectmen and Town Treasurer make up the bulk of the records. Poor relief and roads, the two areas of greatest cost in the 19th century, are the principal subject areas.
2. *Judicial Records Project:* This project is significant because the county courts served as the workhorses of Connecticut's court system from 1666 until they were abolished in 1855. They dealt with a wide variety of cases, but the most prevalent, about ninety per cent, were civil actions for debt. Except for a handful of cases, the project staff members are the first scholars to examine these papers.

At the beginning of FY2004, only the Assistant State Archivist, who is compensated from the preservation fund, was able to work on the records. Despite a federal grant available from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission [NHPRC], there was no other project staff, due to the statewide elimination of all durational project positions the previous fiscal year. The Assistant State Archivist devoted approximately fifty per-cent of his work time to processing the court records.

During the late summer and early fall, the State Librarian obtained permission from OPM to fill both vacant one-year project archivist positions. The Library committed historic preservation funds for one of the positions to meet the matching requirements for the federal grant. The former project archivist returned to work on the Litchfield county records in October 2003. A law librarian who was laid-off from the Law and Legislative Reference Unit filled the other position. Once they returned, a volunteer

was also available to give the program valuable assistance. Finally, a general worker joined the staff in May 2004.

The reconstituted staff allowed the project to make substantial progress in processing these valuable court records. They were able to process 359 boxes during the fiscal year, the bulk of them from October to June. These included 131 boxes of case files and 63 boxes of subject papers from Litchfield County and 122 boxes of case files and 43 boxes of subject papers from New London County.

While processing the papers, the staff made two photocopies of any cases involving African Americans and Native Americans. One copy replaces the original document in the box folder and the second copy goes into a new artificial collection of records devoted specifically to African Americans and Native Americans. Public access to the originals is restricted due to their often-fragile condition and historical significance.

In addition to the standard finding aids, the project staff has created two databases for the Native American and African American court cases. These databases will include records from the two counties up to 1855. As of the end of June 2004, the archives staff identified 606 such cases. They have preliminarily identified another 172 cases involving either Native Americans or African Americans. A more thorough examination of these records will undoubtedly uncover additional materials. The work on this project will be invaluable to both genealogists and social historians.

The Executive Director of the NHPRC made an on-site inspection of the project in October.

3. *1934 Fairchild Aerial Survey Photographs*: This collection is significant because it was the first aerial survey of an entire state. The State Archives loaned 239 mosaic images to Patrick McGlamery, Map Librarian at UConn for scanning. His staff completed geo-referencing the individual images. The images were then made available on the web through the University of Connecticut's Map and Geographic Information Center [MAGIC] website <http://magic.lib.uconn.edu> for use by the general public. *Arcview* software is available at all higher educational institutions to allow researchers to use the survey images and other historic maps in conjunction with the Geographic Information System [GIS] for researching land development and usage. The project work located a long missing copy of a mosaic map. Mr. McGlamery demonstrated the on-line system to the Advisory Committee and the Library Staff on February 25, 2004. The Preservation Librarian wrote specifications for duplicating 10,500 higher resolution images from the 1934 flight to create new high quality negatives. The specifications could be a model for other state library photograph collections. This project met the long-term preservation goal because the life expectancy of properly stored photographic materials is 500 years. The same cannot be said for digital data.
4. *Other*
 - a) *Records of the State of Connecticut*: This on-going documentary publication has reached one of the most significant eras in Connecticut history, the Constitutional Convention of 1818. After a delay due to the budget situation, the funds were released and the editor continued working on the volumes

concerning 1817 and 1818 and a separate volume on the Constitutional Convention itself. During the past year, the editor located a previously unknown cache of newspaper debates regarding the Constitutional Convention of 1818 that will provide greater insight surrounding the political process. Publication is projected for late 2005 or early 2006. The money received from the sale of the volumes will be returned to the historic preservation fund.

- b) 2004 is the Sesquicentennial of the founding of the Connecticut State Library. The State Archivist used preservation funds to purchase security negatives and print use copies of the sixty-three original construction photographs from 1908 - 1909. Parts of images in several photographs were fading and the State Archives staff decided to preserve the images that remain. The original photographs will be retired from use. The print use copies will be accessible to researchers.
 - c) The State Archivist also used preservation funds to purchase a record of military exemptions and payments to soldiers, 1865-1868, from the town of Vernon that had been previously lost.
 - d) The Public Records Administrator has begun the process of reviewing the current regulations concerning municipal vaults. Topics of immediate concern include security, electricity and air conditioning in the vaults. The State Library contracted with Nick Artim, a consulting fire safety engineer, to review the municipal vault regulations. The Public Records Administrator, Connecticut State Library staff and Joe Camposeo, Town Clerk of Manchester, met with him to discuss needs and concerns of both the State Library and town clerks. Mr. Artim, Director of the Fire Safety Network in Middlebury, Vermont is a member of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) the national standards body for fire safety. At the meeting, the staff and the town clerks expressed their concerns regarding the need for the NFPA to balance temperature and humidity control necessary for document preservation with fire safety when it revises the vault standards in the future. The State Library is awaiting the results of his study.
 - e) The State Library transferred its cost of binding state agency publications to the historical preservation fund. As the state documents repository, the State Library by law receives sixteen copies of each state publication from annual reports to pamphlets and newsletters for the collection. It annually gathers these various publications together and binds them into a book format, which increases the documents' lifespan and decreases the possibility for loss or theft.
- B. *Analysis of Local Grant Distribution:* The State Library contracted with Center for Public Policy and Social Research at Central Connecticut State University to analyze the distribution of grant funds and make recommendations for possible changes. The staff is in the process of reviewing the center staff's recommendations for discussion with the Advisory Board.
- C. *Preservation Supplies and Equipment:* The Connecticut State Library purchased disaster recovery supplies for the main library at 231 Capitol Avenue and for the off-site archival storage facility at 75 Van Block. These included caution tape, clipboards, deli wrap, duct tape, dust masks, small fans, flashlights, gloves, absorbent paper, plastic sheeting, sponges, wax paper, Rescubes®, pails, large barrels, mops and ringer buckets. Each

location has also posted a building diagram that specifies the disaster recovery supply locations.

D. *Van Block Maintenance and Security*: More than half of the State Library's archival materials are stored at the Van Block facility including the county court records and much of the local records collection. The preservation fund supports building maintenance and security costs for these important historical resources.

E. *Professional Development*

1. *Workshops*: The Public Records Grant Program Specialist and the Archival Consultant attended a New York State Archives' grant training workshop in September 2003 to observe how they conduct their sessions.
2. *Conferences*: Assistant State Archivist and Court Records Project Archivist presented a paper at the October 2003 meeting of the New England Archivists about the court record project.
3. *Seminars*: The Public Records Program Grant Specialist completed the Northeast Document Conservation Center's course on "Managing Preservation for Library and Archives Collections" in September 2003.

F. *Town Clerk Training*

1. *Workshops*: Disaster Recovery, March 24 & 25, 2004. The grant program funded two one-day sessions that provided the town clerks with hands-on training on what to do in the event of a disaster. Lori Foley, Field Service Representative from the New England Documents Conservation Center, served as instructor for this very popular workshop. The session also included fire extinguisher training and a presentation on fire safety by Lt. William Call of the Hartford Fire Department's Special Services Division. State Library staff also attended the session.
2. *Town Clerks School*
 - a) *Competitive Grant Writing* (Advanced Town Clerks School), November 21, 2003. The program staff worked with CCSU Professor Antonia Moran and the Institute of Technology and Business Development in New Britain to provide the town clerks with an introduction to competitive grants that the program hoped to introduce in FY2005. Unfortunately, the staffing situation has forced the postponement of this component until a future date.
 - b) *Records Management Training* (Beginning Town Clerks School), May 13, 2004. The Public Records Administrator, State Archivist, Public Records Program Grant Specialist, Preservation Librarian and Archival Consultant provided an introduction to municipal records management, preservation and conservation and the grant program to new town clerks.

II. Administrative Expenses for the Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program.

Personnel Costs

Regular and Durational Staff	270,541
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Other Expenses

Advisory Committee and Workshop Expenses	2,474
Contractual Support and Educational Services	55,916
Equipment Lease and Rental	1,144
Equipment Maintenance and Repair - Contractual	460
Freight & Cartage	54
General Office Supplies	8,770
Membership Dues to NEDCC and COSHRA	12,000
Motor Vehicle Expenses	3,954
Photographic Services and Supplies	10,834
Printing & Binding of State Documents	2,590
Publications	228
State Agency Records Destruction Services	5,846
Subscriptions	1,831
Travel	7,175
Van Block Facility Internet and Telephone Services	9,324
Van Block Facility Maintenance Services and Supplies	3,122
Van Block Facility Security	37,864
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	163,586

Capital - Equipment

Capital - IT Hardware Purchase/Installation	935
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Total - Administration¹

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	435,061

Grants to Towns & Cities

165 Grant Awards	1,363,657
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Combined Expenses

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	1,798,718

¹ The program's administration costs dropped significantly from FY2003 due to the loss of staff. This number should increase as additional staff is added to the program and a major preservation project concerning the 1934 aerial photographs begins in FY 2005.