

Arcata City Collection Finding Aid

Collection Number

2004.01

Contact Information

The Library, Special Collections
Humboldt State University
One Harpst Street
Arcata, California 95521

Processed By

Carly Marino, MA, and Edie Butler, MA, CA

Date Collection Processed

2011

Language

English

Collection Creator

City of Arcata, California

Dates Covered by Collection

1883-1992 (date span)

1895-1977 (bulk dates)

Size of Collection

Five cubic feet

Abstract

The collection consists of historical material from various city offices of Arcata, California. The documents reflect the planning, finances, management, and departments for the City of Arcata over a 100 year span. Photographs, maps, and scrapbooks complete the collection and create a look at how the City of Arcata functioned as a government body.

The collection's strengths include court documents from the 1930s (with numerous citations due to prohibition) early city ordinances dating from 1874, street number

assignments from 1916, city department documents, election documents, and photographs.

Access

The collection is open for use by appointment.

Copyright

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Acquisition Information

This collection was donated from the City of Arcata in October 2004. Material had been stored at the Phillips House Museum (administered by the Historic Sites Society of Arcata) for some time before transfer to HSU library. The collection is reported to have been the result of office cleaning upon the retirement of a longtime employee.

Scope and Content of the Collection

This collection, dated 1883-1992 (bulk dates 1895-1979), consists of receipts, correspondence, legal documents, maps, blueprints, scrapbooks, pamphlets, photographs, and slides concerning to the City of Arcata. These documents relate to different departments, and the series are loosely arranged according to the function of the documents (example—items related to finances can be found in the Treasurer's Office series). If items are not official documents the series is arranged by format, e.g.: photographs and scrapbooks.

Arrangement of the Collection

The contents of the Arcata City collection are arranged in 11 series. Some documents could be placed in other series folders in this collection, but in hopes of retaining some provenance the documents folded in envelopes have been kept in the City Documents and Receipts series. Generally, folders are arranged chronologically in each series.

Series List

- Series: City Documents and Receipts
- Series: City Departments and Services
 - Subseries: Maps
- Series: City Correspondence
- Series: Court Documents
- Series: Treasurer's Office
- Series: Arcata Public Library

- Series: Arcata Schools
 - Subseries: PTA
 - Subseries: Maps
- Series: Humboldt State College
- Series: Photographs
- Series: Flags
- Series: Scrapbooks

Container List

Box 1

Series: City Documents and Receipts

The City Documents and Receipts files include early city documents from 1874-1972, the bulk of the documents are from 1894-1900. The documents relate to a variety of City functions, and include election documents, oaths of office, receipts for bills paid, and a variety of correspondence from different departments, city bonds, and bids for services for the city. Originally these documents were folded in five envelopes without a clear organization strategy. In order to aid the researcher, these documents have been unfolded and arranged chronologically by year.

Researchers interested in early city founding documents, financial information, and election material from 1894-1900 should consider looking at folders from this series. Of particular interest is an annotated book of city ordinances dating from 1874-1899.

1. City Ordinances, 1874—1899. [Handwritten book of city ordinance].
2. [Undated documents].
3. [1894 Documents]. (Applications for town appointments, bids for gravel, correspondence).
4. [1895 Documents]. (Certificate of nomination for town office, election documents, treasurer's record, oaths of office).
5. [1896 Documents]. (Receipts from bills, treasurer record).
6. [1897 Documents]. (Election documents, bonds, bills & receipts, correspondence, business licenses). 1 of 2.
7. [1897 Documents]. (Election documents, bonds, bills & receipts, correspondence, business licenses). 2 of 2.
8. [1898 Documents]. (Town recorder correspondence, bills and receipts, bonds, oaths of office). 1 of 2.
9. [1898 Documents]. (Town recorder correspondence, bills and receipts, bonds, oaths of office). 2 of 2.
10. [1899 Documents]. (Bonds, bills, correspondence, election documents).

11. [1900 Documents].
12. [1920s Documents]. (Certificate of election, bonds, oaths of office).
13. [Insurance Documents], 1933-1936.
14. [1940s Documents]. (Oaths of office).
15. City Council Candidates, 1968-1972.

Series: City Departments and Services

The City Departments and Services series includes documents from various departments and public works. This is not a complete collection of city documents. Many department documents were grouped together and this organization was maintained while processing. The folders are divided by department, and then the files are loosely organized chronologically. The date span is from 1883-1981. This series contains a subseries of maps that may be of particular interest to researchers, including an annotated map for a waste treatment facility, and a proposed tract map and petition for the Sky Valley subdivision.

1. Application for Official Number, 1916. [Street number assignment].
2. [Sewer and Water Documents], 1883-1951. (Includes contract for sewer pipes, Union Water Company report and audit).
3. [Telegraph and Telephone Poles], 1903-1926.
4. [Street Improvements], 1921-1930.
5. [Railroad], 1915-1971. (Northwest Pacific Railroad-1915, Union Oil Company-1930).
6. Fire Department, 1908-1972. [Fire truck and ladder purchase].
7. Agreement for Municipal Athletic Field Grand Stand, 1912.
8. Specifications of City Hall and Lodge Building, 1929.
9. Inventory of Office Furniture and Equipment, 1966-1967.

Box 2

1. [Emergency Operating Center Facilities], 1964-1974.
2. [Central Business District], 1967-1973.
3. [Downtown Revitalization, 1970s].
4. Arcata Beautification Committee, 1967-1981. 1 of 2.
5. Arcata Beautification Committee, 1967-1981. 2 of 2.

Subseries: Maps

1. Arcata South Quadrangle, 1959. [Public works/waste treatment project]. (Annotated).
2. Reinforced Concrete Culvert blueprint, 1945. [11th Street near "B" Street]. (Blueprint was part of bigger project to update/replace the older wooden pipes).
3. Parks and Recreation Department, 1970/1972. [Park and green belt map].

4. Department of Transportation, 1972. [Arcata Segment of Highway 101 expansion].
5. Proposed tract map and petition—Sky Valley Subdivision, Unit One, January 1966. (Kent Stromberg was one of the key developers in Arcata in the 1950s-1960s).
6. U.S Department of Agriculture, 1921. [Humboldt County Soil Map].
7. Eureka Precincts, 1942 and 1960.
8. Block Map Printing Plate. [Oversized - See Box 7]

Series: City Correspondence

The City Correspondence series consists of incoming and outgoing correspondence. The majority of the documents are from 1974 – 1981 when Roger Storey was Arcata City Manager. The outgoing correspondence often responds to a letter sent to the City Manager's Office, and when possible related documents have been clipped together. There are also a small number of correspondences from the City Clerk and the Mayor. Included in this series is a folder of petitions to the City Board of Trustees; only the 1899 and 1923 ones are dated.

1. Correspondence, [City Manager Correspondence], 1965-1975. 1 of 3.
2. Correspondence, [City Manager Correspondence], 1965-1975. 2 of 3.
3. Correspondence, [City Manager Correspondence], 1965-1975. 3 of 3.
4. Correspondence, [Petitions]. n.d.; 1899; 1923.
5. List of Material in Box Marked "Historical Documents". (No description of box or indication of the box's location).

Series: Court Documents

The Court Documents series consists of legal documents from the City of Arcata Court (1930 – 1936), including arrest warrants, search warrants, criminal complaints, bail bonds, and official judgments. Of particular interest are court documents related to alcohol and prohibition. Also in this series are record books with lists of fines paid to the court, several documents related to other courts of law, and a court costs study from the 1960s. The files are organized chronologically, while keeping related files together.

1. Oath of City Judge, 1930.
2. City of Arcata Court Documents, n.d.
3. City of Arcata Court Documents, 1930.
4. City of Arcata Court Documents, 1931.
5. City of Arcata Court Documents, 1932-1933.
6. City of Arcata Court Documents, 1934-1935.

7. City of Arcata Court Documents, 1936.
8. Reports to Judicial Council, State of California, 1932-1936.
9. Memorandums of Opinions; Affidavits; Complaints, 1935-1949.
10. [Statements and Notes], 1932-1936.
11. Records of Fines, [notebooks of fines paid], 1928; 1932; 1938.
12. Correspondence related to fine payments, 1933-1939.
13. [Documents from various courts], 1928-1948. (Includes City of Berkeley, Superior Court of California, and various Humboldt County Courts).
14. Legal Proceedings for the Issuance and Sale of Waterworks Bonds, 1934.
15. Small Courts, Laws and New Districts, 1951.
16. [Court Costs Study, Court in new City Hall], 1963-1969.

Box 3

Series: Treasurer's Office

The Treasurer's Office series contains documents that relate to the city's finances. These documents include a list of taxable inhabitants, license receipts, city assessment list, bond assessments, and deeds and mortgages. The bulk of these documents date between 1893-1920, and are organized chronologically.

1. List of Taxable Inhabitants.
2. Town Licenses, [Business License Stubs], 1893.
3. [Checks from the Town of Arcata], 1895-1896.
4. [Receipt Books], 1918-1920.
5. License Follow-Up, [Business License Stubs], 1918-1920.
6. License Follow-Up, [Business License Stubs], 1920-1922.
7. Assessment List, City of Arcata, [1920s]. 1 of 4.
8. Assessment List, City of Arcata, [1920s]. 2 of 4.
9. Assessment List, City of Arcata, [1920s]. 3 of 4.
10. Assessment List, City of Arcata, [1920s]. 4 of 4.
11. Record of Improvement Bond Assessments, 1924-1927.
12. [copy of Humboldt Standard Delinquent Tax List], 6/5/1940.
13. [Deeds and Mortgages], 1933; 1940.
14. Certificate of Participation—Redwood Empire Financing Authority, 1992.

Series: Arcata Public Library

The Arcata Public Library Series consists of documents that related to the library, or are stamped "Arcata Public Library", indicating it once was part of the library's collection; dates 1912 - 1960. Two ledger books contain records of library fines from 1912-1926.

Of particular interest are pamphlets from the League of Women Voters of Eureka and the California Redwood Association. These pamphlets are illustrated and in excellent condition.

1. [Library Fine Record Book], 1912-1926.
2. [Library Fine Record Book], 1926-1938.
3. The Arcata Union, [article about the library], 4/8/1960.
4. A Forestry Program for Women's Organizations, [pamphlet], 1927.
5. "This is Humboldt", [Pamphlet by the League of Women Voters of Eureka], 1961.
6. Pacific Outdoors, [issue about Humboldt County], 1917.
7. [Pamphlets by California Redwood Association], 1917; 1926.
8. "Picking a Plant Site: Where Nature Pays You Extra Dividends", [pamphlet], 1947.
9. "An Industrial Survey of Humboldt County California", 1947.
10. "Brief Arguments Against Public Ownership", 1913.

Box 4

Series: Arcata Schools

The Arcata Schools series is divided into two subseries. The first subseries consists of records related to Arcata elementary schools' PTA. Two scrapbooks include programs, newspaper clippings and images of the College Elementary School and the Arcata Grammar School. The second subseries has school district maps, probably before 1960, around the time when new construction was underway due to the annexation of so many subdivisions between 1951-1961.

Subseries: PTA

1. [Records of P.T.A. meetings for Arcata Elementary Schools], 1935-1937.
2. Scrapbook, April 1937-April 1938.
3. Scrapbook, April 1938-May 1939.

Subseries: Maps

1. School Districts, [elementary and high school], [1951-1961?].

Series: Humboldt State College

The Humboldt State College series has one document, a report on the examination of the books and records of account of the Humboldt State College, for the period of May 1, 1946 to July 31, 1947.

1. Auditors Report, 5/1/1946—7/31/1947.

Series: Photographs

The photograph series contains about 100 photos and negatives related to the City of Arcata. A lot of photos say Arcata Union and are tagged or marked for cropping, indicating that most were taken for the Arcata Union newspaper. When known, the date and subject have been included in the file description. The majority of the photographs are from the 1960s. This series also includes about 70 slides, mostly related to projects funded by the Arcata Foundation in the 1990s.

1. Street Construction and Improvements, [1950s?-1960s]. (Includes 7th Street overpass dedication, 9/13/1966).
2. Arcata Plaza, [1960s].
3. Mayor Ward Falor, [City Council photographs], 1967.
4. City Hall Dedication, 2/11/1967.
5. Arcata Public Library, [1960s].
6. Railroad Historical Exhibit.
7. PG&E substation on 5th and I Street, 1969.
8. 1964 Flood.
9. Construction, Removal of Railroad ties-bike path on Alliance Road, n.d.
10. Construction at NE corner of 11th and Janes Road-creamery property, 1970.
11. Log spill on 7th Street.
12. Vehicle for painting the stripes/lines on the streets.
13. Old Corporation Yard?
14. Rifle Range.
15. Miscellaneous. 1 of 2.
16. Miscellaneous. 2 of 2.
17. Slides (include Arcata Foundation, Children's Center, Redwood Coast Children's Chorus, Music Festival, Mural Painting, Community Health Center, Railroad Historical Society, Photos of Arcata, YES, Arcata Main Street).
18. Negatives

Series: Flags

Two flags were donated with this collection, both likely from the 1970s.

1. American Revolution Bicentennial, 1976.
2. United Way.

Series: Scrapbooks

The Scrapbooks series contains 9 scrapbooks with dates ranging from 1937-1992, though the dates are not continuous. Chronologically, earlier scrapbooks have more clippings from a technical and records perspective—more tax and city ordinances. The later scrapbooks have information about social organizations and viewpoints.

Box 5

1. 1937-1946.
2. 1946-1948.
3. 1948-1954.
4. 1967-1981.
5. 1988-1989.

Box 6

1. 1989-1990.
2. 1990.
3. 1990-1991.
4. 1991-1992.

Box 7

1. Block Map Printing Plate. [Oversized from City Departments and Services Series]

Related Collections

Historic collection stored in a vault at Arcata City Hall.

HSU Library Humboldt County Collection Pamphlet Collection subject headings: Arcata, Arcata–City Hall, Arcata–City Manager, Arcata–History, Arcata–Planning, Arcata–Housing, Arcata–Laws, Statutes, etc., Arcata–Streets, Courts

Subject Headings

Arcata (Calif.)

Arcata (Calif.) – History

Arcata (Calif.) – Politics and government

City Planning – California – Arcata