



The CONNservator

Newsletter of the Office of the Public Records Administrator

February 2002

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2001 Cycle 2 Grant Recipients

The Office of the Public Records Administrator announces twenty-eight grants totaling \$92,531 to the following towns from the Historic Documents Grant Programs. This round of grants completes the first year of the grant program which awarded \$424,915 to 132 towns.

Town	Category	Amount	Town	Category	Amount
Bethany	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	Naugatuck	Paper Conservation	\$5,000
Bethel	Paper Conservation	\$2,498	New Canaan	Preservation Survey	\$2,500
Bloomfield	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	New Haven	Paper Conservation	\$7,500
Bolton	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	North Haven	Paper Conservation	\$2,500
Branford	Paper Conservation	\$5,000	Old Saybrook	Paper Conservation	\$2,500
Bridgeport	Paper Conservation	\$2,000	Oxford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500
Bridgewater	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	Plainfield	Preservation Survey	\$2,500
Canton	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	Torrington	Paper Conservation	\$5,000
Danbury	Paper Conservation	\$5,000	Trumbull	Paper Conservation	\$5,000
East Haddam	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	Waterford	Paper Conservation	\$2,500
Fairfield	Paper Conservation	\$5,000	West Hartford	Preservation Survey	\$3,033
Killingworth	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	Westport	Paper Conservation	\$5,000
Lebanon	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	Winchester	Paper Conservation	\$2,500
Lisbon	Paper Conservation	\$2,500	Woodbridge	Paper Conservation	\$2,500

Notes from the Public Records Administrator

The Historic Document Preservation Grant Program is now entering its second year. Our first year was a learning experience for both the town clerks and the State Library staff. The program issued 133 grants amounting to \$424,915. Although we did not reach our goal of 100% participation for the first year, we are all proud of what we were all able to accomplish.

My office has been working with an advisory committee this past year to evaluate the preservation categories for the FY2003 grant cycle. In addition to preservation planning and paper conservation, we have added microfilming and index recreation as eligible grant options. We have changed the application form to address some of the problems that we encountered when

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Public Records Administrator*(Continued from page 1)*

reviewing the forms last year. Sample completed grant applications have also been included in the application booklet to assist you. Finally, we have doubled the grant amounts for each population category.

At the end of 2001, we surveyed the towns concerning various aspects of the grant program. To date, 129 towns responded to the survey form. Our review of the com-

pleted forms revealed that, overall, you are pleased with the program and its operation. We will address your concerns and implement suggestions where possible. A summary of the results is included below.

I look forward to another year of working with you. We share a common goal in preserving the public records of the State of Connecticut and its citizens. I strongly encourage every town clerk to apply for a preservation grant this year. **Eunice G. DiBella**

2001 Town Clerks Survey

Number of returned surveys 129

Did you have trouble accessing your town funds?

Yes	2
No	127

The overwhelming majority of towns had no trouble accessing the money collected from the towns' \$1.00 portion of the filing fee. Both towns that experienced difficulty accessing the account reported their town had a complicated procedure created by the local Finance Committee.

Have you spent any of the funds collected from your portion?

Yes	60
No	69

Most towns used their own money to restore maps, vital records and/or early town records that were in poor condition. Many of these projects were already in process or were partially funded by the town's first grant. Other projects included digitally scanning recorded maps; purchasing computer equipment and/or printers for the scanned maps; purchasing archival supplies; reproducing and rebinding old indexes; vault shelving; microfilming; purchasing a laptop for the local library to create abstracts of old land records; purchasing a PC for public access; and converting land records microfilm to digital imaging.

Most towns that reported not spending any money had committed the money, but were waiting for the vendor to complete the project and send them an invoice. The majority of the rest were waiting to accumulate more money. A few towns didn't know where to begin especially where a new town clerk had just taken over the position and two town clerks reported that they had no records in need.

Did you apply for a grant in FY2002?

Yes	107
No	22

More than half of the respondents who did not apply for the grant did not give a reason why. Those that did gave a variety of reasons. Lack of staff and time was the most common. The town budget process hampered another town. Finally, vendor problems prevented two other towns from

applying.

If you did apply were the guidelines easy to read?

Yes	99
No	8

There were no major complaints about the preservation grant guidelines. The revised guidelines for 2002 include sample documents for assistance as well as clearer language wherever possible.

If you did apply, was the application form easy to complete?

Yes	98
No	9

The resolution created the most problem for applicants. The revised forms have corrected the signature order. PA 00-146 requires the involvement of the town's First Selectman or other chief executive officer that was an area of concern even to those who found the form easy to complete.

Did you attend any or all workshops offered by the PRA?

Yes	73
No	56

Insufficient staffing was the most common reason given for not attending a workshop.

If you attended, did you find the workshop(s) helpful?

Yes	61
No	12

Most respondents found the preservation and reformatting workshops helpful. Some that did not were expecting something different than what was offered. A few others felt overwhelmed by the content.

Did you attend grant training during the October Town Clerks' conference?

Yes	78
No	51

Insufficient staffing was the most common reason given for not attending the conference training session.

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A Glossary of Preservation Microfilming Terms

(Adapted from Lisa Fox, ed. *Preservation Microfilming: A Guide for Librarians & Archivists*, 2d ed. Chicago: American Libraries Association, 1996; revised, Jane F. Cullinane, 2002)

The CONNServator offers a brief glossary of microfilming terms to help town clerks tell if a vendor has experience with Preservation Microfilming

Bibliographic inspection	verification of the microfilm to ensure that all targets are correct and that the vendor filmed all targets and text in their proper order and in their entirety. Cf. <i>technical inspection</i> .	Image orientation	copy) made from the printing master. placement of images with respect to the edges of the film.
Book cradle	device that supports bound volumes for microfilming in an open position so that pages are flat and approximately parallel to the focus point of the camera.	Light box	device for inspecting film that provides diffused light evenly dispersed over the viewing area by using a translucent surface illuminated from below or behind.
Collate	to review an item to find out whether it is complete and in the correct order, to note any irregularities, and to identify any problems that may require additional preparation prior to microfilming.	Line pair	in a resolution test chart, an adjacent black line and white line.
Densitometer	instrument used to determine the density of an image or film base by measuring the amount of light reflected or transmitted under standardized conditions.	Master negative	in preservation microfilming, a first-generation silver-gelatin, safety-based camera negative that is manufactured, processed, and stored in accordance with nationally accepted standards, specifications, and guidelines to achieve a life expectancy of a least 500 years. Although the terms "camera negative" and "master negative" are often used interchangeable, it is possible to produce a camera negative that does not meet preservation specifications for a master negative.
Density	opacity of film; light-absorbing quality of a processed photographic image. Key density measures on a master negative are the maximum density and minimum density.	Methylene blue test	preferred method of measuring residual processing chemicals in preservation microfilm.
Background density	the opacity of the non-information area of a microform.	Planetary camera	type of microfilm camera in which the film and documents being photographed remain stationary during exposure. The page or documents lay on a plane surface while being filmed. Also known as a flatbed camera. See also <i>rotary camera</i> and <i>step-and-repeat camera</i> .
Eye-legible type	font size on a target that is legible without magnification after filming. Under ANSI/AIIM standards, the resulting font on the processed film must be 2mm (approximately 0.08") high. A 60-point font generally satisfies that requirement.	Preservation microfilm	microfilm manufactured, processed, and stored in accordance with nationally accepted standards, specifications, and guidelines to achieve a life expectancy of at least 500 years.
Flag	thin sheet or strip of paper inserted in (not adhered to) a volume or a set of documents, to alert the camera operator to problems or to instruct the camera operator to take a specified action.	Preservation microfilming	the selection, preparation, production, quality assurance, bibliographic control, and storage associated with creating microforms to preserve the intellectual content of deteriorated, unstable, or damaged materials; to provide a security copy of highly valuable records; and/or to provide a use copy to minimize handling of original materials. Requires the use of materials and methods that have maximum longevity and creates a master negative
Frame	area of microfilm on which light falls in a camera during a single exposure.		
Generation	one of the successive stages of photographic reproduction of an original or a master film. The first generation is the camera film. Copies made from this first generation are second-generation, etc. Preservation microfilming generally encompasses a first generation (camera negative or master negative), second generation (printing master), and third generation (service		

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A Glossary of Preservation Microfilming Terms*(Continued from page 3)*

	that is housed under controlled storage conditions and used only to make a printing master.	Resolution test chart	chart containing a graded series of blocks of lines and spaces (line pairs) used for determining the optical performance of microfilm equipment (the ability of a photographic system to record fine detail) and the resolution characteristics of materials used in microfilming. The ISO Resolution Test Chart No. 2 (governed by ISO 3334) is generally used in microfilming, and five of the test charts must be properly positioned on the technical target as specified by ANSI/AIIM MS23. See also <i>technical target</i> .
Printing master	in preservation microfilming, a silver-gelatin, safety-base duplicate negative created directly from the camera negative and processed and stored in accordance with nationally accepted standards, specifications, and guidelines. The second generation of preservation microfilm and the source from which all subsequent service copies are made. Also known as the duplicate negative or printing negative.	Retake	to refilm documents or portions of documents.
Quality control	(1) planned systematic activities to ensure that a product or process conforms to established technical requirements. (2) all actions taken to ensure that a department or organization delivers products that meet performance requirements and that adhere to standards and specifications. (3) policies, procedures, and systematic actions established to provide and maintain a certain degree of confidence in the product's longevity and performed by the film-producing organization, service bureau, or other organization.	Service copy	distribution copy; use copy.
		Splice	joint made by attaching two pieces of film together to function as a single piece when passing through a camera, processor, viewer, or other apparatus. Preservation microfilming guidelines allow only ultrasonic splices for polyester film bases; allow splices only in the camera negative; and limit the number of splices allowed on a reel.
Quality Index (QI)	subjective relationship between legibility of printed text and the resolution pattern in a microimage. Used to predetermine legibility in the third-generation (service copy) microfilm. Entails measuring the lowercase "e" and evaluating the resolution test chart. Governed by ANSI/AIIM MS23 and further refined by RLG specifications.	Target	(1) any graphic or textual document or chart containing identification information, coding, test charts, or information that helps patrons use and interpret the microform. (2) an aid to technical or bibliographic control that is photographed on the film along with items, titles, collections, reels, etc.
Reduction ratio	relationship (ratio) between the dimensions of the original document and corresponding dimensions of the microimage; e.g. a reduction ratio of 12:1.	Technical inspection	assessment of technical film characteristics to ensure that all generations meet the institution's guidelines for density, resolution, image stability, and life expectancy.
Reel break	point in the filming of a series of documents, volumes, etc. at which the camera operator ends one reel and begins another. See also <i>reel programming</i> .	Technical target	aid to technical control that helps the testing of system resolution and application of the Quality Index method for each reel, title, or collection. Must include the resolution test charts and may include other test elements (e.g., rulers, density patches, gray scales, etc.). See also <i>target</i> .
Reel programming	the pre-filming task of determining which volumes, documents, etc. will be filmed together on the same reel of microfilm. Reel programming is a combination of calculating the maximum number of exposures per reel and, using this figure, deciding where an appropriate bibliographic or chronological break can be made to end the reel.	Uniform density target	clean white sheet of paper or board (as specified by ANSI/AIIM MS26-1990) that fills the frame area and is filmed on each reel. During technical inspection, density readings are taken on the filmed image of this target to ensure that the background density is consistent across the frame.

“A Microfilming Tale of Woe”

by Mark H Jones, State Archivist, Connecticut State Library

Once upon a time, there was a public official who had responsibility for the care of important volumes of official records. The official took this job seriously. When there was no room in the office for additional volumes, she asked colleagues about what should be done. “Move the old ones off site,” said one friend. “Send them to the Province’s Hall of Records,” advised another. “Microfilm them and offer the originals to anyone who will take them,” said the third colleague.

The official knew very little about microfilming and asked for names of vendors. After getting two names, the official invited each vendor to visit in order to look at the books and to explain options and costs. The first vendor was into optical scanning. “The world of microfilming is dead,” he declared. “Everyone knows this!” The last statement made the official feel stupid. “Scanning is the solution,” the vendor advised. “How much will it cost?” the official asked innocently. The vendor quoted a price for the hardware and software that would be needed as well as the cost of scanning. “Of course, you know that you will have to update your software and hardware every five years? You can purchase our proprietary software. All our customers do this.” The official saw the dollar signs adding up to a prohibitive cost without creation of a security copy that would stand the test of time.

Next the official talked with a microfilming vendor of the Magic Small Book Company. The vendor assured the official that her company did this kind of work regularly for local clerks. “We can microfilm and from that film, recreate small books that can be used your office. At the same time, we can create a security microfilm copy that we will store in the Mammoth Caves of the Western Mountains. The cost is vastly cheaper than scanning.” The official felt more at ease with this vendor. After calling the Magic Small Book Company’s references, she signed a contract. In it, the vendor promised to do

everything. The official would never see the finished microfilm. “We’ll do all the quality checks,” the vendor assured. “No need to worry with Magic Small Book on the job.”

When the filming was done, the official contacted the Province’s Hall of Records and asked the Chief Records Keeper if he wanted the books. “We might want to purchase the film. Have you inspected it,” he asked, “to know whether you can safely dispose of the books?” “No,” was the hushed and worried answer. “The vendor told me that the company would take care of everything. That was enough for me.” “Has the vendor followed the Hall’s microfilming standards?” “I have never heard of them,” the official confessed. “Are you telling me that we might have wasted our money?” The Keeper explained the steps in planning a microfilming program and negotiating a contract. “Random quality checks must be made by the customer before paying the final tab. Is there a provision in your contract for retakes at no cost?” By now, the panicked official answered, “No. What do I do?” The Keeper advised the official to request a few reels picked out at random by the vendor and to check them herself frame by frame.

This the official did and was shocked to see that many of the frames on two of the five reels provided were illegible. She called the Keeper. “What do I do now?” she asked. “I have already paid the Magic Small Book Company a large amount of money.” “The only thing I can suggest is to retain the books as a backup to illegible frames.” The official’s heart sank. She felt hoodwinked but admitted that she was a party to this disaster. Thereafter, she wandered the corridors at meetings telling her sad tale of woe to colleagues stressing the need to understand and insist that vendors adhere to established standards, to examine the contract with an attorney, and to inspect the film before paying for it.

The End

Q & A

Q: I haven’t started any preservation activities or applied for a grant because I don’t know where to start. What do you suggest that I do?

A: I suggest that you start with a preservation survey. That will give the best information for establishing goals and objectives for future grants.

Q: I have a project all picked out and find that the vendor that I want to use is not on your approve list of vendors. What should I do?

A: Contact the Office of the Public Records Administrator and we will evaluate the vendor that you want to use. If it turns out that they are not qualified, we may be able to assist you in choosing a qualified vendor or in developing another project.

Q: I have a large project in mind but the vendor says it will take more than a year to complete. Can I still apply for a grant?

A: Yes, but you need to divide the project up into phases, and apply for each phase annually.

Q: I want to attend an educational workshop and my municipality says that there is no money in the budget to fund my expenses. Can I use money out of the town portion of the Historic Records Preservation Account?

A: Yes.

Q: I want to buy map cases with the town portion of the fund. Is that considered a legitimate expense?

A: Yes

NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ADMINISTRATOR

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This newsletter is published quarterly by the Office of the Public Records Administrator. Please send submissions to Lizette Pelletier, Editor, Office of the Public Records Administrator, CSL, 231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106-1537 (lpelletier@cslib.org).

Financial Report

Receipts

through January 2002	\$2,192,499
(includes interest accrued)	

Disbursements

Grant Cycle #1 (104 towns)	\$ 332,384
Grant Cycle #2 (28 towns)	\$ <u>92,531</u>
Grant Total	\$ 424,915

CSL Operating Expenses	\$ 53,417
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Current Balance	\$1,713,823
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The above figures include receipts and expenditures from July 2000 through January 2002. The State Library Fiscal Office predicts a 19% growth in receipts for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Based on this growth projection, the State Library has doubled the grant limits for this year's granting cycles.

Town Clerk Survey (Continued from page 2)

If you attended did you find it helpful?

Yes	65
No	13

Those who did not find the training session helpful said that they had no difficulty filling out the forms. Therefore, the session was repetitious.

Would you like additional grant training or more workshops?

Yes	68
No	61

Most respondents felt they had enough grant training unless there was a change in the process. Many were looking forward to additional workshops. Among the suggested workshops were a session on document preservation strategies; imaging; long term preservation planning; microfilm standards using actual microfilm and records.

Other comments?

Most town clerks used this section to restate their appreciation for the program or make suggestions concerning improvements to the process such as revising the certified resolution process.

