

Historic Records and Artifacts Inventory Project

Report and User Guide
with Introduction
and Comments

ARTIFACT INVENTORY CHRONOLOGY

"The City [of Portsmouth] owns one of the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive set[s] of historic records for the period 1645- 1900 in the United States." So states David Goodman in a recent City sponsored inventory of municipal records and artifacts. To give some perspective on that project, here is a chronology of related efforts and activities:

1979- Peace Report on Library's Historic and Special Collections

Ms. Nancy Peace of Simmons College of Library and Information Science studies the Library's collections and provides a basic set of guidelines for collecting, preserving, and making them accessible to the public. Report cautions against the Library attempting to take on the role of City Archive and/or Museum.

1979- Library Trustees begin what became a decades-long project to use Library Trust Funds, donations, fund-raisers, and grants to conserve the paintings at the Library.

1980- Consortium of local historic agencies including such as Strawberry Banke, Athenaeum, Masonic Library, and Portsmouth Public Library, formed to develop better cooperation.

1980-81 Work-Study students, paid for by grants, used to inventory and catalog some of Library's Special Collections.

1982- Library seeks approval of \$45,000 in Capital Budget to provide more extensive cataloging and preservation of historic material. This was not funded.

1983-Grant written to create a City Archive was proposed to the National Historic Preservation of Records Commission by several historians. A condition of the grant is that the City guarantee to continue to support the project by providing space and staff for the archival material on a continuing basis. The City cannot make such a guarantee and the grant fails.

1984- Library added an eight-hour per week staff position to help with historical research questions.

1986- Library requests \$105,000 in Capital Budget to provide better care and protection for its Special Collections that include paintings, artifacts, and documents. City Council rejects the request, later approves use of Building on Marcy Street to serve as a small city museum displaying various city artifacts. Funded from donations and about \$4,000 from City appropriation.

1987- City Council approves devoting about 20 hours per week in one Library position to Special Collections.

1988- City Council appropriates \$10,000 to assist the Library Trustees in their continuing project to conserve the Library's paintings.

1990- City Hall moves its operation to Junkins Avenue Municipal Complex and stores City Records in Clerk's Office and 1895 Building.

1992-Members of the Portsmouth Athenaeum, write a grant requesting the National Historic Preservation of Records Commission to fund an Archive for Portsmouth. Grant is again rejected since the City could not guarantee continuation of the project once the grant money ran out.

1997- On a motion from Councilor Lafond the City Council votes \$10,000 to hire someone to conduct an inventory of the City's historical artifacts and records. The Library is assigned responsibility for supervision of the project and RFPs are issued.

1998, June- After Library interviews candidates, City negotiates with David Goodman and offers contract.

1999, March Goodman submits an inventory of over 5,500 items, a finding tool, and recommendations.

Overview of Supplementary Documents

The following documents are a small part of a large inventory project authorized by the City Council and carried out by David Goodman during 1998 and 1999. The City contracted with Dr. Goodman to prepare a list of art and artifacts owned by the City. The inventory was also to include a list of all historic records owned by the City, including a detailed list of records up to 1945 and a general description of records created since 1945. The inventory was to be presented in two forms—a printed version and a computer-based version, specifically an Access database file.

Early in the project, it became clear that a second product would be necessary and a third might be useful. With an inventory running to thousands of entries, covering every department of city government, and listing things in dozens of locations, a user's guide would be absolutely necessary. This guide would help users to understand the structure of the inventory, to know what to expect, to know what not to expect, to sort out the abbreviations and terminology, and to learn how to search the database in print and electronic forms.

A third product might also be of considerable use. Given Dr. Goodman's great familiarity with the artifacts and historic records and their conditions and locations, he was in a unique position to advise the City on immediate needs for care and preservation. Accordingly, we asked him to submit a list of recommendations in a way that distinguished immediate, critical needs from long-term idealistic preservation and presentation possibilities. We wanted to know what he thought should be done first and what choices the City might make.

The major portion of the project was accomplished impressively. The inventory includes more than 5,500 citations to objects, records, and series of records held by the City. A copy of

the print version of the inventory is available in the Special Collections area at the Library. Another copy is in the City Manager's office. The Library also has a computer-based version of the inventory. This version will be searchable by scholars and researchers. The computer version can also be used to generate lists of holdings by department and to create forms for updating the inventory as artifacts may be collected or records moved to storage.

The short guide to the inventory explains what exactly was inventoried, describes the kinds of information found in the citations, and spells out the numerous abbreviations needed in so large a project. That guide is included at the end of this document.

The recommendations, which make up the largest part of the documents at hand, have proved less useful than we had hoped. Specific suggestions are offered, but the lengthy descriptions of artifacts, records, and locations sometimes obscure the ideas. Dr. Goodman's intense interest in the material he inventoried leads him to strong statements and, some may feel, unrealistic recommendations. Some readers may be put off by the style or irritated by the tone in sections. It is important to remember that the entire project draws attention to the rich and varied holdings of the City, accumulated during more than 375 years, and providing vivid glimpses and specific details of our heritage. Throughout the project, Dr. Goodman told members of the Library staff of the excellent cooperation he received from city employees during his work on the inventory. And he commented several times on the special interest some city employees take in the care of the artifacts and records in their areas.

Some parts of the recommendations are controversial, some are helpful, some are unrealistic, some are confusing. As necessary, we have annotated parts of the report, providing clarifications or corrections where they may be helpful. (Our comments appear on colored pages inserted into Dr. Goodman's text.) The report should probably be read with the understanding

that the significant accomplishment of the project is the massive inventory. The version of the report that follows, by the way, is the last submitted of several similar versions. Dr. Goodman made corrections and changes as he continued to work on the inventory. Even so, this version contains typographical and other errors, and it is not the useful list of clear recommendations, priorities, and alternatives we had hoped for.

A REPORT ON THE SURVEY OF THE
MUNICIPALLY OWNED
HISTORIC ARTIFACTS AND DOCUMENTS
OF
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

by

David M. Goodman



The disadvantage of men not knowing the past is that they do not know the present. History is a hill or high point of vantage, from which alone men see the town in which they live or the age in which they are living.

- G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936), English author. *All I Survey* (1933)

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CONTENTS

Summary	1
Part I: Historic Artifacts	3
Part II: Historic Records, 1645-1945	9
Part III: Historic Records, 1946-1999	17
Part IV: The City of Portsmouth's Record Storage Practices	24
Part V: Recommendations	32
Part VI: A Brief Project History	39
Appendix	
Finding Aid for the Computerized List of Official Town and City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire Records and Artifacts, 1649-1999	43

Summary.

In this section, Dr. Goodman provides a brief outline of the inventory project. The conclusions and recommendations are his and come from his perspective as a historian. They must be read in that light. Here, and throughout the report, readers will find Dr. Goodman's practice of stating his observations in the most dramatic language. If his report encourages the City, its employees, and its citizens to take greater care of our heritage, he will have accomplished his purpose. If we can ignore the inflammatory rhetoric, we shall all be better able to work toward the preservation and systematic presentation of the records and artifacts we own.

One example will illustrate the hazards of this exaggerated style. In his Conclusion 2, Dr. Goodman says "in no instance does the City keep its historic records and artifacts safe from theft and mutilation...." "Safe" is a relative term. If artifacts and records are to be seen and used—and making them available to be seen and used is the only reason for keeping them—they will always be at some risk. Accidents, of course, can happen. But, in fact, the City puts artifacts and records in vaults, in locked rooms, in protective storage, in display cases. Dr. Goodman himself cites employees who have taken special care of materials in their departments and work areas. In short, much of what was inventoried is relatively safe. Is every important record perfectly safe? Of course not. Can better environments be constructed for our artifacts and records? Certainly. Should we devote some resources to improved preservation and display? Our long history and the wide interest in that history argue that we should.

We had hoped that Dr. Goodman's recommendations would identify the *most* vulnerable records, the *most* important artifacts, the storage practices *most* in need of improvement. He chose instead to provide a broad overview of the historical records and artifacts the City owns, emphasizing vulnerability and instances of loss. He tends to overstatement, and the report

should be read with that tendency in mind. In any case, the massive inventory, the heart of this project, will give city employees and officials a tool for assessing the areas most in need of immediate attention.

SUMMARY

The results of the City of Portsmouth's historic records and artifacts inventory (conducted from September 1998 until August 1999) are summarized below.

Project purposes

- (1) Locate and describe all City of Portsmouth historic artifacts
- (2) Locate and describe all City of Portsmouth historic records, 1645-1945, in detail and the records for 1946-1999 in more general fashion.
- (3) Enter all data into a computer via Microsoft Access for public retrieval at the Portsmouth Public Library

Project management

While the 1996 City Council appropriated \$10,000 to conduct only an artifact's survey, I offered to add at no cost to the City my 1800-1900 historic records inventory, and I agreed to include at no extra compensation information about the period after 1945. The Public Library at the request of the City Manager coordinated the project.

Conclusions

- (1) The City owns one of the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive set of historic records for the period 1645-1900 in the United States.
- (2) In no instance does the City keep its historic records and artifacts safe from theft and mutilation, and in most cases the material suffers from too dry and too humid conditions and from the ravages of dust mites. Many records and artifacts that were inventoried, 1983-1985, have disappeared, vanished especially between 1986 and 1994.
- (3) The City has not made most employees aware of the importance of historic records and artifacts, and some workers are unable to recognize items as possibly historically important, if they come to their attention.
- (4) While the City officially follows the State's record retention policies for municipalities, those regulations concern only legal matters and not the identification, preservation, and use of historic records.

COMMENTS ON

Page 2

(5) & (6) It is important to note that the City goes well beyond State records retention requirements in what it keeps. The sheer bulk of the records stored in the 1895 building contradicts the assertion that records are routinely destroyed and history lost. Dr. Goodman's picture of disorganization and lost time is mere editorializing.

Dr. Goodman's recommendations fail to provide the City with realistic options. To put all historic records "under lock and key", for example, tells us nothing about organizing, preserving, or making the records accessible. "Creating a City museum and gallery" may be a laudable long-term goal, but there are obviously other projects that must precede such a museum. And sending our materials to the State Archives is not an option, as we confirmed in a conversation with the Archivist.

- (5) While all City departments keep current records properly, almost all bureaus either destroy their old records or deposit them haphazardly in whatever storage space is convenient, especially in the 1895 Building.
- (6) Because the City does not have a central records management system, there are no clear rules, except the State's limiting few, about retention and discard. There is no record of the records, no explanation why a department made a past decision, there is time wasted in disorganized searches, the City risks being unable to defend itself legally, and the municipal history of Portsmouth is by and large lost.
- (7) The City owns a particularly valuable folk art collection, several significant paintings, and a large assemblage of first rate old and new pastels.
- (8) The Project enables the City and the public to know for the first time what historic records, other records, and historic artifacts that the City owns and where each may be found.

Recommendations

- (1) The City must provide for both the protection and display of its property and should inform employees and the public of the laws and policies governing public access to the municipality's records and artifacts.
- (2) The City should collect immediately all its historic records, 1645-1945, place them under lock and key, and keep them from deteriorating until it takes one or more of the following steps: (a) creates a historic records archive staffed by a professional, (b) establishes a central records management administrative unit that defines how and what records should be kept and manages them that way, and (c) hires a professional municipal historian-archivist-records-manager to centralize all records by City project and additional categories to enable City employees and the public to identify, retrieve, and review all significant documents immediately.
- (3) The City should consider creating a City museum-art gallery to display its publicly-owned artifacts and provide space for city-wide art exhibits.
- (4) While the City must never lend its historic records, it should develop a policy for loaning its artifacts for short periods to reputable institutions under conditions stringently drawn to ensure safety and integrity.
- (5) If the City will do little or nothing about the problems, the City should send its historic records to the State Archives in Concord or ask the University of New Hampshire to take them; it should consider querying the New Hampshire Historical Society about taking the historic artifacts.

Every time history repeats itself the price goes up.

Part I.

In this section, David Goodman provides his own tour of the artifacts—the physical objects of historic interest—owned by the City. His mixture of reporting, description, recommendation, assertion, historical narrative, unsubstantiated accusation, and even whimsy make the chapter difficult to follow and make any useful advice for the City even more difficult to extract. The important point in this section, however, is that interesting, significant, historical, and even beautiful objects associated with Portsmouth's past are located in nearly every city building and place of work. Because there is no policy controlling the retention, storage, display, or maintenance of these objects, they are vulnerable when space becomes cramped, offices move, or employees are not told of their importance. In reacting to Dr. Goodman's provocative rhetoric and his occasional unsupported charges, it is easy to lose sight of the larger picture he is drawing. The City possesses a wealth of wonderful objects and needs to formulate policies and procedures to protect them from all kinds of hazards.

COMMENTS ON

Page 3

It must be noted that here and elsewhere Dr. Goodman recounts the exemplary work of various City personnel to go beyond their daily responsibilities as they discover, identify, and display City historic material. Dr. Goodman however, chooses to begin his report with accusatory rhetoric rather than a thank you or well done to the many people who, over time, have made it possible for Goodman to state that Portsmouth has one of the greatest collections of records in the United States.

PART I

HISTORIC ARTIFACTS

One will find the City of Portsmouth's historically important artifacts a varietal collection, one that reflects municipal history, the skills of students, professionals, and folk artists, and the inclination of the public to present gifts to Portsmouth. The material, by and large, is notable, attractive, numerous, and interesting enough to fill a small museum. In only a handful of instances, however, has the town called attention to the objects. For example, Water Department Engineering Technician Thomas Cravens, on his own volition, for years rescued significant archeological specimens (hollowed-out wooden logs, fittings, and pipes of various metals) from street excavations, that daily unearthing that demonstrates the mechanics of Portsmouth's 206-year-old water system. With no display case at hand, Mr. Cravens once informally arrayed (and identified) the objects along the floor under a table in his office hallway. The relics now lie jumbled in a corner.

At the Sherburne Springs Station, there are several pertinent items. Longtime City employee Woodbury Argeneow not only has collected the various water meter types that the City has installed since the turn of the century, but he has procured the serial number catalogs that list each. The booklets identify a meter's manufacturer, its size, style, and the year that City purchased it. One may view 20 different meter designs arrayed along a shelf in Mr. Argeneow's office.

In contrast to a lone, tinted, 19th-century bottle, a few hollowed-out logs that City laborers uncovered during excavations, several yellow bricks that once lay under the Islington Street trolley track mall, and early granite curbing, the Sherburne Station still houses the imposing 1896 Worthington Steam Pump that once forced water into the City's mains. While the Water Department pointedly has salvaged the wonder's three brass steam gauges, exhibiting them in the Sherburne foyer, the partially dismantled pump rusts away from the rain that pours upon it through a gaping hole in the Pump Room roof during wet weather. An artifact so significant and so demonstrative of Portsmouth's municipal history ought to be rescued, restored, and publicly displayed in working condition. Recently, someone tried to rebuild the machine, but money fell short.

How the municipality's naivete and human nature can injure the town is demonstrated in the disappearance of two historic, City-owned swords and the neglect of a historic ensign, each of which had been on public display for decades. Responding to a citizen's "concern

COMMENTS ON

Page 4

Obviously, objects can be misplaced, lost, erroneously loaned, and even stolen. If Dr. Goodman's point is that clear city policies and procedures would minimize such loss, it is a point well taken. If he has knowledge of specific wrongdoing, he should report details to the City Manager or the police. In tracking misplaced material, by the way, the computer version of the inventory will help alert departments to search for missing items.

about the condition" of the artifacts, the City some time ago sent the articles and one other item for safekeeping and preservation to a local institution. The objects were as follows: (1) the US Navy ensign that flew from an American vessel at the Battle of Santiago in the Spanish-American War, (2) the sword that Acting Master's Mate Francis A. Dran carried during the Civil War, and (3) an ancient Samurai sword. The donors trusted the municipality to preserve and display the artifacts.

While the original donors had meticulously sealed the flag under glass and kept the swords together in an oak case with a glass front, today the organization simply stores the ensign in an acid-free box in both freezing winter and humid summer. The association could have improved upon the way that the City housed the flag, but the swords certainly were not deteriorating at their municipal location. Last May, a club member and I could not find the swords!

Four additional items present in 1985 at a City building are missing: (1) an oak, L-shaped lunch counter that was part of the eating area of the 1903 Portsmouth High School basement but used in 1985 as a counter in an office, (2) a 48.5cm x 92.5cm World War II wooden sign painted, "Cafeteria for Service Men. Open 6 AM to 7 PM," (3) a set of fireplace tools, and (4) an original matted and framed Currier and Ives lithograph, "The American National Game of Baseball . . . Elysian Fields, Hoboken, NJ." The latter item, auctioned at thousands of dollars, is so rare that 1866's original prints have not been offered for sale, to my knowledge, for years. Many of the items disappeared during the building's remodeling.

Perhaps the most disheartening City artifact loss is the disappearance of most of the Grand Army of the Republic's (GAR) historic memorabilia from the large glass-front display case that was located in the Daniel Street City Hall opposite the City Council Chambers. There the City exhibited the battle flags of Portsmouth Civil War units, group photographs of several local War of the Rebellion veterans, and the ceremonial uniform accouterments of Portsmouth's Grand Army of the Republic post. Only the unit's 1867 establishment certificate and some of the framed, typewritten artifact descriptions are in the City's possession. The certificate helps decorate a wall in the Portsmouth Public Library's local history room, and Planning Department Director David Holden salvaged other items from the Daniel Street City Hall basement trash heap. He relocated them under lock and key in his office. The GAR artifacts vanished in 1989, when City Hall moved. All, significantly, were military articles.

Among City Hall offices, a single, canceled, framed \$500 bond (issued Jan. 1, 1920) for a new Fire Station hangs by the Director of Finance's office, but in the City Council Chambers there are several items. One wall displays the large, well-known, 1830 oil painting (by John Blunt), "View of Portsmouth from Freeman's Point," a landscape that City Manager James McSweeney, at Councilman Kevin G. Lafond's urging to protect it from impending damage and possible theft, had transferred from the City Hall foyer. The opposite wall exhibits oil portraits of a dozen late 19th- and early 20th-century Portsmouth Mayors, all by Elliot, Maine-born Nellie Mathes Horne (1870-1950). Since beauty is in the eye of the beholder, one may judge if the painter's skill was equal to her subjects' greatness. The images first hung in the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and the Common Council Room in the Pleasant Street City Hall, but they materialized after 1903 in various offices in the Daniel Street City Hall and in its basement. When the City moved in 1989, the Public Works Department appropriated the likenesses, suspending each along a hallway in its Islington Street building. And now the public may see them appropriately displayed in Council Chambers.

One may view in City Hall additional valuable paintings, some photographs and posters, and other objects. Various departments display artwork, and a person will find still

more in closets and dimly lit alcoves. The City's single publicly-commissioned oil painting, "Skating on South Mill Pond," graces the hallway between the Police Department and the City Clerk's Office, but Mary E.B. Miller's (1841-1939) portrait (needing cleaning and revarnishing) of an unidentified man lies all but forgotten in a fourth floor closet beside the photographed faces of the 1916 City Council, which peer from individual ovals in a framed mat. The Planning Department, under David Holden, displays or keeps under lock and key historic posters of City events, photographs, and maps that Mr. Holden rescued from a municipal trash heap in the Daniel Street City Hall basement. Cognizant of rare and important items, Mr. Holden also recently saved from impending oblivion the original 1827 manuscript Almshouse lot plan and the City's unusual 1927 zoning pamphlet, a booklet that features a pair of large, colored, foldout maps. Even Mr. Holden could not prevent the disappearance, however, during City Hall's 1989 relocation, of the framed 40.5cm x 90cm "Map of the City of Portsmouth, N.H., from original surveys under the direction of H.F. Walling, Civil Engineer, C.W. Brewster Publisher. 1850" from the Economic Development Office.

The City Manager displays historically prominent items, such as the framed 1855 colored drawing of the merchant ship *Granite State* entering Smyrna Bay (lent by the Portsmouth Public Library Board of Trustees) and the turn-of-the-century City of Portsmouth Official Seal press, reincarnated today as his doorstep. In the Manager's conference room, there rests under glass a small block of wood excised from *HMS Victory* (Admiral Horatio Nelson's flagship at the Battle of Trafalgar [1805], the vessel upon and the engagement in which he was killed) and a miniature copper anchor. The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, Hampshire, England, presented the gift to the City of Portsmouth in August 1973, in commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the first English settlement in New Hampshire. One will not find, however, in the City Manager's office or in any City building, as one could view in the 1985 City Manager's sanctum, the framed 54.5cm x 32.5cm lithograph, "View of Portsmouth, N.H., on July 4, 1873. From the head of Mount Vernon Street, looking across South Mill Pond. Drawn from nature by E. Warfield, entered according to Congress in the year 1873"

Because Edward Hamlin Adams (1860-1951), the last gundalow captain, carved over his long life and left to the City more than 175 objects, most of them carvings, such as birds, animals, utensils, whimsical figures, and boat models, Portsmouth owns a unique, large, attractive, and eminent folk art collection. Rarely displayed and little known, most of the assembly lies dormant in cardboard boxes in a Prescott Park building attic, stressed by temperature extremes. Such a storage policy, outsiders' incautious handling, and occasional lending to museums and other entities have reduced the collection to about 120 articles, several of which some borrowers have broken or mishandled in other ways. The Strawberry Banke, in contrast, with proper care preserves for the City other pieces, items that the museum's curators deem the best of the lot. Because there was no photographic record of the collection, I photographed, much dependant upon Prescott Park's Michael Warhurst's and the Strawberry Banke's courtesy and favors, each remaining article. The photographs, lodged with the Portsmouth Public Library, form part of this report.

COMMENTS ON

Page 6

The Barnabee collection is in the library and has been for many years. It has been used by several scholars, including one who did his doctoral dissertation on Barnabee. The collection was also featured on a NH Crossroads show several years ago.

COMMENTS ON

Page 6

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Known today as the "1895 Building," Portsmouth's former third hospital structure stores four large, crated, plaster Parthenon frieze scenes, gifts to Portsmouth High School from its turn of the century senior classes. Several years prior to 1983, longtime Portsmouth High School Art Department Chairperson Phyllis Hodgdon lent the objects to local florist Leslie Clough, who for years displayed them in his shop. After I discovered the friezes at "Flowers by Leslie," I lodged the information with the Public Library in 1983, and shortly after Mr. Clough died, his attorney, John P. McGee, Jr., returned the items to the City. The friezes' peregrination illustrates what can happen when a City lacks a policy for storing and lending artifacts. The matter emphasizes the need for such a policy, one that applies across all City departmental borders.

The former hospital also contains a *circa* 1900 long oak office table, a wooden shipping box (one of several into which locally-born actor Henry Clay Barnabee (1833--1917) packed mementoes of his famous career) that was destined for the Portsmouth Public Library (which once displayed its contents in a special room), Victorian fireplace fronts and mantels, several Classic Age style columns and moldings that were once part of the building's exterior, and 1880s-1920s built-in, utilitarian (but hardly fine) period cabinetry.

Consistent with many American public libraries' historic practice of accepting gifts from past and present residents, Portsmouthans have given and still present to the institution objects of art. While a Chinese and Japanese ceramic collection (one in which the Boston Museum of Fine Arts has expressed interest), 940 Sarah Foster watercolors, and several famous portraitists' works highlight the Library's art assemblage, the establishment also displays old and recent folk art, 19th-century bronze and marble statuettes and busts, oil cityscapes and landscapes, original drawings of many kinds, and some Victorian furniture. In its attic, the institution stores arrowhead, seashell, and butterfly assemblages and original artwork for books about local history that found a national audience.

One will find 109 19th- and 20th-century Police artifacts and records in Police Department foyer display cases. Ninety-three items belong to the Department, three to the Auxiliary Police, one to the CRIMELINE Association, and 12 to private citizens. Photos of old time police officers and police commissioners, weapons, handcuffs, radar equipment, night sticks, billie clubs, uniforms, rules and regulations, badges, summons books, and historic signs make up the collection. In the Department's locked rooms and safes, one will find more historic badges, equipment, weapons, and records. The law enforcement memorabilia, effectively arranged by Officer David Ferland, make a riveting exhibit, one that even would have been more interesting had someone not "borrowed" in 1991 the large, framed mat with 16 oval cutouts displaying photographs of *circa* 1890s Portsmouth police officers. The "borrowing" occurred when the Police relocated from Penhallow Street to the Municipal Complex in 1991. If the local servants of the law at the time did not protect their own property, what could anyone have expected of other municipal departments? In exceptional contrast, however, current Police Chief Brad Russ prevented the destruction in 1991 of many manuscript police ledgers by placing them at the Athenaeum. Captain Fred Rubino keeps examples of decades-old Police badges worn by local lawmen (Chiefs, City Marshals, Patrolmen, Detectives), night sticks, uniform parts, brass buttons and insignia, and gold braid in his Training and Personnel Office and in a lower floor closet.

Before the Fire Department remodeled (1998-1999) its Court Street Station, the Firemen's Relief Association displayed there an unusually large number and variety of historic artifacts, such as parade ribbons, silver ceremonial and everyday brass speaking trumpets, protective gear, badges, 19th-century record books, awards, photographs, brass nozzles,

COMMENTS ON

Page 7

Dr. Goodman's method of reporting on the contents of several safes demonstrates how his emotionally charged rhetoric confuses rather than clarifies. He states that several locked safes contain "vital microfilm" and the "combinations of two have been misplaced!" Calling our attention to the safes by claiming their contents are "vital" and using an exclamation point to call attention to the fact that the combinations are misplaced makes dramatic prose. But in a report that is supposed to help describe conditions and suggest action steps, information needs to be supplied about such things as:

- What information does Dr. Goodman have about the contents of the safes that warrants his describing them as vital?
- Did Dr. Goodman ask the various departments whether someone had the combinations?
- Are the contents "vital" enough that a locksmith should be used?

banners, helmets, plaques, a 58cm x 28cm, framed, 1908 City of Portsmouth Fire Department rules and regulations broadside, and several emblems. Today the items are kept from public view, crammed in metal, Fire Department lockers and stored in the Firemen's Relief Association's (FRA) office, a thin display case along the main stairs, various rooms, and closets. Inside a nearly empty second floor room, one will find the *circa* 1900 historic, large, rectangular, oak wall clock with brass pendulum and fancy moldings (presented to the Col. Sise Steam Fire Engine Co. No. 2 by a Sanford, Maine Fire Department unit). About 10 objects are Department property.

Of particular value are approximately three dozen 19th-century and early 20th-century FRA-owned framed photographs, most of which, never published, are stacked in the basement lockers. I did not find the unforgettable photograph that hung from a wall in the Department's business office in 1985, the picture that showed unidentified uniformed firemen from the chest up with caps and badges that read "Ladder Co. No. 1." It is important to note, though, that private hands own and have restored two of Portsmouth's late 19th-century steam fire engines. The first rests in an old City firehouse, the other, which is for sale, is in another New England state. Should the City build a permanent, staffed, protected display area, it well might be able to borrow each to exhibit.

The City possesses several safes. One that the North Church once owned, dated 1912, stands in the Chief of Detectives' office, Police Department. Another, an older model, rests in one of the Tax Collector's City Hall alcoves. A small late 19th-century vault squats in a corner of the Connie Bean Center Recreation Director's office, and the Public Works Department houses three locked safes (containing vital microfilm), the combinations to two of which have been misplaced!

During this century, particularly, the City of Portsmouth has lost for lack of vigilance and a protective policy many critical artifacts and records. Historically significant items have disappeared, especially when City Hall or individual departments have changed location. One example concerns a large set of post-Civil War street drawings. That is, while the City still deposits the manuscript field notebook of the City's 1860 comprehensive survey of streets and drainage at the Public Works Department, the project's 27 cloth-backed manuscript maps, each measuring 27"x54" (the municipality had kept them in oak cases) disappeared after Authorities relocated City Hall in 1903 from Pleasant Street to the 1856 High School building on the corner of Daniel and Chapel streets. A moving company was supposed to have transferred in 1989 all the historic records in the Daniel Street building to today's municipal complex. Missing, however, are more than 200 bound volumes of historic ledgers, 1817-1960, that had been in the City Clerk's Daniel Street vaults in 1989.

Furthermore, when the City sold the wooden building next to the present Court Street Fire Station, City workers tossed to the ground the attic's contents, which included such historic documents as the architectural plans to the Portsmouth Academy. (Built in 1809, the Academy became in 1896 the present Portsmouth Public Library). While someone saved the drawings and other documents, no one seems to know their present location. At about the same time, the City sold to an Andover, Massachusetts museum the large 1880s wooden sign, with carved firefighting equipment and the names of two fire companies, that decorated the old Court Street Fire Station front above the doors.

During one recent City official's time in office, he ordered removed from the Daniel Street City Hall attic a large quantity of 19th- and 20th-century records, especially school manuscripts, textbooks, other written items, and 19th-century scientific and gymnastic equipment. Thrown from attic windows into City trucks, the material was bound for the local

dump. Considering the circumstances, no one can blame "Little Jack Horners" if they pulled out plums. The material had been destined, before the housecleaning, for a City of Portsmouth Public Schools museum.

The Portsmouth School District Department possesses an excellent record among City bureaus for protecting and/or displaying historic artifacts. In the Superintendent's office under lock and key are four gold Haven Medals (1880-1883), an award presented yearly since the 1850s to the Portsmouth High School student with the highest academic achievement, and a 1881 similarly designed medal awarded by the New Hampshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Returned to the District as gifts, they are meaningful examples of one of the City's oldest scholastic traditions, one that continues today.

Little Harbour School displays the two portraits (kept in excellent condition) that the GAR presented to Portsmouth's schools during an elaborate, famous 1891 ceremony. The visages of Civil War Admiral David G. Farragut and Revolutionary War General William Whipple (both done by renowned Ulysses Dow Tenney under a special GAR commission), after whom the City named the Farragut and Whipple grammar schools, peer from ornate gilded frames. Little Harbour School also exhibits one of the few surviving ceramic forms — Christopher Columbus set upon a fluted pedestal — of several such art objects that Portsmouth High School classes contributed to their *alma mater* upon graduating, 1900-1918.

What has not survived are about 50 framed black and white prints of Classical Age subjects that famous Boston publisher and Portsmouth native James T. Fields (1817-1881) presented to Portsmouth High School between 1860 and 1881. In 1985 I found the prints, many in broken frames, in the attic of the former Portsmouth High School building on Islington Street, where several senior citizens now live.

The School District salvaged from the 1983 old New Franklin School fire two items: the architect's original front elevation drawing (hanging now outside the new New Franklin School's Principal's office) and local artist H.M.S. Harlow's portrait of Benjamin Franklin, a work done in the 1930s with Works Progress Administration funds. The Franklin rendering, scorched, torn and covered with soot, rests in Kittery, Maine, awaiting \$1,500 in private funds for restoration and cleaning.

The School Department owns other notable artwork. Examples of elementary school pupils' handicraft with textiles, ceramics, and metals hang in the various schools. Some of the artwork resulted from federally-funded "Artist-in-Residence" programs. Such objects will be among the city's most interesting historic artifacts in the future, if the School District preserves them. In addition to the children's work are local artist Lorraine Koch Palmer's 13 pastel drawings of historic Portsmouth school buildings, although the display does not include renderings — Ms. Palmer apparently never drew them — of the 1840s-1890s Lafayette School still standing opposite Southgate Plaza nor the 1850s Woodbury School yet surviving (just north of K-Mart). While most of the drawings hang gallery fashion from the walls of the Portsmouth School Board's meeting room at the Superintendent of Schools Office, authorities display or store the others in the Little Harbour School Principal's office. As a result the public generally does not see or know of these excellent works. Unless people visit Clough Drive, they will not appreciate the School District's decision to commission historic drawings and choosing Ms. Palmer to make them.

Words convey the mental treasures of one period to the generations that follow; and laden with this, their precious freight, they sail safely across gulfs of time in which empires have suffered shipwreck and the languages of common life have sunk into oblivion.

-- **Anonymous.** Quoted in: Richard Chevenix Trench, *On the Study of Words*,
Lecture 1 (1858)

Part II.

For the purposes of the project, we agreed that a detailed inventory was practical for records up to 1945. This section of the survey report describes those pre-1945 municipal records Dr. Goodman was able to inventory. These historic records appear in every conceivable form: ledgers, unbound manuscripts, minutes, charts, maps, diagrams, forms, rosters, tax receipts, and on and on. This chapter makes clear the variety of these documents and the detailed information about life in the city that they illuminate. Dr. Goodman organizes his summary of documents by department. Again here, clarity sometimes suffers when the writing becomes especially excited or dramatic.

Dr. Goodman makes one important point, although somewhat indirectly. In addition to the usual hazards of carelessness, loss, and theft, paper is vulnerable to damage from changes in temperature and humidity. Paper made after the middle of the nineteenth century is especially delicate. Historic records need more than the protection given a statue or a historic water meter or a notable police badge. They need a climate-controlled environment.

Like artifacts, records also need the protection of policies that specify how they will be organized, stored, and made available for use.

Dr. Goodman fails to make one other important point in this chapter. Most of these records do not need to be kept—at least not on the basis of any State or Federal law. Most of what he describes are materials whose retention period has long expired. As a city, we are fortunate to have what we have. Because we are an old city and because we emphasize our historic connections, we want to keep as much of the record of our past as we can. Keeping such a record now, however, is more a matter of policy to be formulated than it is of law.

PART II

HISTORIC RECORDS, 1645-1945

While Portsmouth spends considerable money calling attention to its past and its historic buildings, it is troubling that many municipal Authorities do not know that the City possesses one of the most old, complete, voluminous, and extraordinary set of historic records in the country! While historians, genealogists, attorneys, municipal employees, and school children would benefit substantially—even vitally—from the knowledge one could gain in a City Archives and a Portsmouth history program, businessmen and property owners could profit just as much. If they researched the records, people would possess a goldmine of ideas with which they could promote their establishments, ensure their rights, and increase the ease of sale and value of their property.

Yet, Portsmouth's historic official public manuscripts suffer disquieting prospects. The present locations of the records and their peregrinations will surprise many. Dispersed among a variety of public and private institutions in New Hampshire and other states, often kept in rooms not climate-controlled, and sometimes easily subject to theft and ruin, they also are often unavailable for public viewing.

Police Department, 1811-1945

Taken from the City Clerk's office after the Civil War by prominent Portsmouthan William H. Sise, who appropriated the ledger by writing inside the front cover, "Property of Col. William H. Sise," the first Board of Police records, 1811-1819, came into private hands. As years passed, local merchant Charles W. Gray fell heir to the item, crossed out Sise's name and penciled-in his own. By 1985 the peripatetic ledger had reached the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, where it remains. The Portsmouth Athenaeum no doubt obtained the 1876-1888 Portsmouth Police blotter in similar fashion.

While other extant historic manuscript Police records, such as the minutes of the Board of Police Commissioners from the late 1800s, are lodged with the Police Department in a variety of rooms, the City Clerk's vault houses some Police blotters, and the 1895 Building others. The present Police Chief, with crucial presence of mind, moreover, placed at the Athenaeum for safekeeping and public use, several 19th- and 20th-century arrest ledgers that in 1985 were in boxes in the Penhallow Street Police Department basement. In such disparate fashion does the City keep its Police records, but the collection is markedly incomplete, since

COMMENTS ON

Page 10

Dr. Goodman points out that some of the records he listed when he did an inventory in 1983-84 and in 1989 are missing. Dr. Goodman also mentions that "Five other records about which I knew nothing, surfaced." Obviously, as departments have moved over the years, some materials were moved from their original locations. Using the inventory to identify "missing" items will allow more thorough searching and, in some instances, rediscovery.

the Board of Police meeting minutes for 1820-1849 and the arrest ledgers for 1820-1871 have been missing since 1981, at least.

Fire Department, 1803-1945

Fire Department manuscript records are also scattered. Correspondence concerning the great 1802 fire, a list of sufferers, and a register noting the help that each person received are at the private Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston. The two earliest known Board of Firewards minute books, 1806-1834 and 1834-1854, and three 19th-century City fire company manuscript ledgers rest in the Portsmouth Athenaeum's vault, each listed not together with other City of Portsmouth official records but, rather, as various "small collections." The remaining Fire Department historic manuscripts are dispersed among the City Clerk's vault, the 1895 Building basement, the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, and Fire Station No. 1. Recently, someone *donated* to the Department two manuscript volumes that were in the 1989 City Clerk's upper vault.

Receipts and Expenditures, 1645-1945

In preparing the inventory, I found only nine of 35 19th-century manuscript bookkeeping ledgers (beginning with the Town Clerk's accounts and progressing to the journals of the City Auditor and City Treasurer prior to 1945) that I located during my 1983-1984 survey. Five other records about which I knew nothing surfaced, however, in the City Clerk's present vault. Still, the loss is a staggering 65%. Yet, losing several bookkeeping manuscript records is not completely disastrous, for several copies of the City's annually published yearly accounts, 1832-1989, exist in various publicly accessible libraries.

Board of Mayor and Aldermen, 1850-1913

The complete meeting minutes of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen are in the City Clerk's vault. However, three of the four volumes of executive records of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (1850, 1850-1866, 1892-1897, and 1897-1899) that my 1983-1984 survey cites have disappeared, a serious loss of irreplaceable documents.

Common Council Minutes, 1850-1913

The records for 1895-1912, present in 1989, are missing.

Records of the Selectmen, 1645-1849

Composed of meeting minutes, lists of taxpayers, and amounts of tax due and notations when one paid them, the records appear in three kinds of ledgers: (1) the original records, 1645-1833, kept in five boxes, (2) a five-volume copy of the originals that, however, excludes some tax and expenditure information, and (3) seven ledgers for the period 1833-49. The multi volume corpus illustrates and documents all official phases of Town of Portsmouth history.

City Ordinances, 1850-1945

The City Clerk's vault houses all City Ordinances from 1850.

Overseers of the Poor, 1838-1945

Starting in 1838, the Town separated the Overseers' of the Poor records from the Selectmen's Minutes of Meetings. Between 1838 and 1945 there survive 56 manuscripts (ledgers and unbound records) that take up matter, such as the department's receipts and expenditures, lists of those who received Town, County, and State aid, where each lived, meeting minutes of the Board of Overseers of the Poor, the kind of assistance given, personal information about each applicant (often genealogical), and the way in which the Town furnished money, scrip, and supplies.

Vital Statistics, 1645-1945

The 157 surviving vital statistics records, 1753-1945, are ledgers, microfilm, aperture cards, and card files. The subjects include censuses, marriages, deaths, adoptions, births kept by the town either as a whole or by ward, naturalization, burials, disinterment and body removals, voter registrations, and kinds of animals kept. Much of the information provides names and ages of each family member, the name of the physician, clergyman, or public official who performed the marriage, burial, or funeral ceremony, and the doctor who delivered the child. There is one volume of copied North Parish manuscripts that records, among other matters, marriages, deaths, and causes of deaths, 1707-1801, and another in which physician Nathan L. Folsom listed the births that he assisted, 1853-1890.

Personal Property Mortgages, 1832-1912 and 1946-1947

Thirteen ledgers record loans, list the collateral (such as machinery, books, household furnishings, vehicles, and stock in trade) that secured them, and set down the names of the makers and recipients. The ledger for 1894-1912 includes leases, liens, contracts, chattel sales, and partnership notices. The volumes reveal the many items with which a variety of specific people furnished their houses during most of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th.

Conditional Sales, 1912-1927 and 1949-1961

Of the original 88 Conditional Sales binders that the City Clerk housed in 1989, the surviving 46 are in the 1895 Building and City Clerk's vault. Composed of copies of time payment agreements made in Portsmouth for services and goods, the contracts illustrate many kinds of business arrangements between consumers and local merchants. They identify specific merchandise that people purchased, such as automobiles, furniture, and appliances, and they reveal the services that residents required, like lawn care and house painting. If a person today owns any item listed, he will find its detailed documentation in these records.

COMMENT ON

Page 12

Police Court

Note Dr. Goodman's supposition that "someone removed the initial ... docket and eventually the responsible person, who in time fell heir to it, placed the volume with the Police Department." Another simple explanation is that the document was simply misplaced and later found – no evil plot.

Animal Censuses and Dog Licenses

Twenty-three varying-sized volumes remain of the 40 dog license receipt ledgers that the City kept, 1893-1912. Five cover 1891-1901, two 1901, and fifteen 1907-1912. The documents cite a dog's name, whether it had been registered before ("old dog"), its color, and its owner's name and address. There is one complete animal census for an unidentified year.

Police Court

Extant Town and City of Portsmouth Police Court records cover the period 1830-1907 in varying degrees. An index to Town court cases, 1830-1850, without, however, a single précis, introduces the Police Court's City phase, 1850-1945 (the record for 1898 is missing). Several post-Civil War ledgers, containing both civil and criminal cases, give names of judges, plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses, cite a crime's nature, and summarize the verdicts of several thousand trials. During the 1989 City Hall relocation, someone removed the initial (1850-1858) City of Portsmouth Police Court docket from the City Clerk's upper vault, and eventually the responsible person, who in time fell heir to it, placed the volume with the Police Department for display in its foyer showcase. Today 30 and more volumes of court material will be found in four places: (1) the Portsmouth Athenaeum [2 ledgers], (2) the 1895 Building [6 ledgers], (3) the Portsmouth District Court [19 and more ledgers], and (4) the Police Department display case [1 ledger].

Town Watch, 1834

A lone, filled-in, 1834 printed form and various references in the Selectmen's minutes comprise the extant manuscript Town of Portsmouth Watch records.

Military, 1775-1945

Portsmouth's military records delineate locally the nation's conflicts. The American Revolution is represented by a dozen manuscripts. War of 1812 records survive in five Committee for the Defense of Portsmouth items, located at the New Hampshire Historical Society, and a sheaf of other papers filed in the City Clerk's office. Seventeen ledgers and several individual manuscripts concern the War of the Rebellion. The Great War is reflected in a set of 1924 forms (to establish proofs for veterans' tax exemptions) that provide a variety of information about a man, such as name, address, date of entry in service, war record, discharge details, and relatives. There is an enumeration of 1870-1878 militiamen (today's National Guard) and a document or two relating to the Korean War.

Portsmouth's Civil War manuscripts fall into nine categories: (1) lists of dependents of military personnel with amounts of money supplied each, (2) enumerations of payroll assistance to volunteers, (3) affidavits by families of military men who needed assistance, (4) lists of those subject to do military duty, (5) lists of volunteers, (6) lists of draftees, (7) rosters of various companies, (8) State aid given to military dependents, and (9) applications for government bounties.

COMMENT ON

Page 13

Here Dr. Goodman's list of the large array of documents kept at Public Works, demonstrates the respect for Portsmouth's history that City employees have exhibited throughout the years.

Maritime, 1842-1940

Established in 1842 and kept for tax reasons until 1871, two ledgers record the shipping investments of many Portsmouth residents. The compilations provide the following significant information about a vessel: name, owners and each percentage of ownership, when the ship was built, tonnage, and valuation. A third ledger, containing a record of all ships that passed beneath the Boston & Maine Railroad Portsmouth drawbridge, 1895-1940, cites the date that the boat passed, its name, ship class, home port, and other information, such as if the bridge was open at the time of passing.

Public Works, 1800-1945

The Department of Public Works houses the City's greatest document numbers and variety. There are records of public structure-building, a field book for the City's initial comprehensive street profile survey, bond issue documents for public projects, and legal petitions to break, widen, and connect roads. The Department also keeps sewer system and water supply studies, Board of Water Commissioners' and Board of Street Commissioners' meeting minutes, and detailed maps, plans, drawings, and surveys of every part of Portsmouth for almost any year. Harvard University's Baker Library keeps, moreover, the 1800-1802 "Brick Market" account, a seven-page record that documents the building of one of the Town's earliest large public edifices.

The records of the Portsmouth Aqueduct Company (started in 1798, the proprietors sold out to the City of Portsmouth in 1892) form a major corpus. Composed of share transfer documents, minutes of Annual Proprietor Meetings, lists of Proprietors, amounts of dividends paid, lists of water-takers (including their addresses, amounts of water used, and the rate paid), receipts and expenditures, documents accompanying the firm's sale, and Boards of Directors' meeting minutes, the collection may be the oldest extant comprehensive documentation of an American municipal water system. When City Hall moved in 1989, a Water Department clerk asked Thomas Cravens (Water Departmental Engineering Technician) if she should throw out the records, "Some old books for which we have no room," as she, more or less, phrased it. Only because Mr. Cravens' was aware of the items' significant local and national importance did the City not ship them to the City dump!

While I did not locate a single Public Works Department manuscript produced before 1800, I did find approximately 400 original maps, diagrams, plans, surveys, and a small sheaf of correspondence for 1800-1945 that document the City's public works projects. Drawn many times in color, some of the material beautifully illustrates planned parks, buildings, and highways. More often than not, the surveyor outlined the shapes of various public and private structures and appended explanations with eye-catching calligraphy. For the professional and amateur historian and homeowner, the documents are invaluable. One may discover when, where, and by what route water, sewer, electrical, gas, and telephone lines entered specific properties, when Officials widened, narrowed, lengthened, eliminated, added, or shortened a street, who were the owners of specific nearby parcels of land at a specific time, and the shapes of various long-razed structures.

Shelved in dozens of wooden bins and metal map cabinets at the Department of Public Works, thousands of documents, guarded by no one, often are victimized by unrecorded borrowing, failure to return items, mis-shelving, and climatic ravages. For performing their jobs properly, Water Engineering Technician Thomas Cravens and Highway Engineering

COMMENT ON

Page 14

Dr. Goodman states that "only the meeting minutes of various Boards of Street and Water Commissioners survive." He goes on to say that "such a policy may cause serious legal problems for the City... if it wishes to know historically why Officials made specific decisions." This is another example of Dr. Goodman using exaggerated emotional claims. The City, as Dr. Goodman repeatedly states, follows the State law in respect to record retention. Indeed, keeping the minutes of these Boards and Commissions and the plethora of other records far exceeds any legal requirements.

Technician Suzanne Purdy voluntarily maintain the documents in neat, common sense, indexed fashion, but their fellow workers and the public regularly undo in an instant what took them considerable time to put in order.

Since the Department usually organizes its records by project, one should locate quickly all a project's documents. Such, however, is not the case. Guided only by the State's minimal document retention policy, various Public Works Department directors periodically have destroyed much correspondence and other material. For all practical purposes, only the meeting minutes of various Boards of Street and Water Commissioners survive to document officially the Department's history to 1985. Such a policy may cause serious legal problems for the City and can make the Department's work difficult, if it wishes to know historically why Officials made specific decisions.

The situation becomes further worrisome, when a public-spirited person deposits with the Department historic documents. Such an event occurred last year when the daughter of recently-deceased local attorney Wyman Boynton presented her father's large collection of Water/Sewer Department historic documents and newspaper clippings to Water/Sewer Operations Manager Sue Diaz. Sensing the research importance of the Boynton material, Ms. Diaz placed the accumulation under lock and key. By receiving and protecting the gift, she provided an notable public service and a significant convenience for historians, engineers, and attorneys who wish to know about the City's 20th-century water supply. The Public Works Department, however, could jettison the crucial assemblage at will, especially since Ms. Diaz no longer works for the City.

Boards of Assessors and Tax Collectors, 1645-1945

Portsmouth's earliest extant records (the documents for 1623-1644 are lost), which concern property assessment and tax collection, begin in 1645. From simple initial notations, tax records, apparently complete to 1999, provide each year increasingly more personal and financial information about individual taxpayers. They cite, moreover, when the State first levied (and, in some cases, withdrew) specific taxes. For example, the first year that the General Court taxed automobiles was 1911, gasoline 1925, and airplanes 1945. For a limited period, taxpayers had to state the value of their stock in publicly held corporations. The records also include preliminary and final property valuations, ledgers of alphabetized poll tax-payers (1914-1970), real property, chattel, and business inventories, notes on abatements applied for and granted, lists of tax-exempt individuals (i.e. veterans, the blind, charities), tax sale auctions, and automobile registration (1927, 1932, 1934, and 1938) index cards. Like other City departments' records that are scattered in various places, the Assessors' and Tax Collectors' are replete with genealogical data. Most documents are located in the City Clerk's vault, the Portsmouth Public Library, and the 1895 Building, but the Tax Collector, who knows the professional value of historic records, also keeps in her safe a handful of ledgers that delineate several 1896-1976 tax sales. Located at the New Hampshire Historical Society, furthermore, is a 1711-1884 ledger that sets down, with pertinent legal documents, all Town and City of Portsmouth public real property,

The School Department, 1645-1945

A basement storage room at the Superintendent of School's Office, the City Clerk's Office, the 1895 Building, and the Portsmouth Athenaeum house most of Portsmouth's pre-

COMMENT ON

Page 15

Dr. Goodman neglects to mention the need to maintain confidentiality when storing student records.

1946 manuscript school records. The Athenaeum accommodates, lent by various Superintendents of Schools, over 60 leather bound class registers for 15 identified and unidentified schools, 1849-1896, several volumes of pupil registrations, 1887-1935, two miscellaneous High School scrapbooks, and a group of administrative records. The City Clerk's vault contains five daily attendance ledgers from various schools, 1853-1887, while the 1895 Building holds only one (1874-1887) plus three other ledgers concerning school district business, 1861-1946, including a Civil War era teacher's payroll receipt book to which are appended several valuable, highly collectable US revenue stamps. Furthermore, the locked basement room at the Superintendent of School's Office houses several index cards files that provide much data, especially for 1913-1937 and 1954-1998, concerning pupil registration, health matters, movements of their families, promotions, graduations, and admissions. The room, interestingly, also harbors the 1913-1937 St. Patrick's School pupil registration cards, perhaps placed there to safeguard the State-mandated information. Portsmouth High School's vault contains a complete set of student transcripts, 1936-1999, while a 1920s manuscript booklet in the Bookery lists various graduating classes' gifts to their *alma mater*.

The 1895 Building's Basement "Archives" Room

The old healthcare center's basement accommodates several hundred irreplaceable and immensely important manuscript ledgers and files. They are a large part of Town and City of Portsmouth records, 1645-1996, material that found there a temporary home (heaped without care or order on the basement floor), when City Hall moved in 1989. The City provides two small, inadequately secured rooms and an insufficient number of bookcases to keep the material. Subject to theft, heat, cold, and humidity and threatened with destruction from overhead water pipes, should the lines leak or burst, the City risks losing or severely compromising a great part of its unique, irreplaceable records. Many similar documents, in contrast, rest securely, if mainly unorganized, in the City Clerk's vault. There, with a less vigilant City Clerk than the present Official (who has little time to monitor records users), the unsupervised public could steal manuscripts and/or rip pages from them. The Clerk allows no one in the vault she does not know well and prohibits public use of more than one record at a time. Meanwhile, nearly all City departments use the 1895 Building as an unorganized and unsecured depot for non-current records, regardless of their legal and historic importance, as they have done for years.

Miscellaneous Records, 1645-1945

Among miscellaneous pre-1945 documents are two late 19th-century ledgers that identify people naturalized in Portsmouth, some public property lists, six "Voluntary Corporation" registers, 1885-1995, that name stockholders, set down articles of agreement, and contain some corporate meeting minutes, and a few *circa* 1900 enumerations of junk, pool room, bowling alley, and gasoline station license holders. Also located there are 1930s Works Progress Administration employee rolls, 1930s-1940s welfare recipient lists, and a series of 1906-1997 voucher registers. Municipal bonding from 1873 is represented by canceled bonds bagged and bundled or pasted into a ledger (the 1873 Portsmouth and Dover Railroad securities) and a 1883-1898 public works bond register. Other documents include a 1849-1902 index of attachments, a record of the 1841 Federal distribution of surplus revenue, a 1870-

1900 delineation of the subdivision of large parcels of land in Portsmouth, a 1876-1877 inquest of a fiery death, a 1879-1882 ledger of "tissue copy" City correspondence, a passenger register, 1858-1859, of possibly a packet ship, and an undated list of people who deeded real property to the City.

Only the history of free peoples is worth our attention; the history of men under a despotism is merely a collection of anecdotes.

-- Sébastien-Roch Nicolas de Chamfort (1741–94), French writer, wit. *Maxims and Considerations*

Part III.

This section describes the kinds of records to be found in the city offices that Dr. Goodman surveyed. The distinction was made between records created before 1945 and later records, because the period after World War II saw a marked increase in numbers of records. Exact enumeration of these records is not as important as a basic description of what records exist. The inventory lists all kinds of records, and this chapter gives the reader or researcher a good understanding of the diversity and scope of the City's newer records.

PART III

HISTORIC RECORDS, 1946-1999

Commissioned only to ascertain concerning post-1945 records what kinds of City documents still exist and where, when, and how the public may access them, part of the project offers only bare-bones document enumeration. Nevertheless, I did examine in detail and listed in the survey hundreds of post-1945 documents, because I believe that the public should have a delineation of the type of material that the City should continue to preserve. Below is a list of the categories into which the records fall.

Tax Collector:

Poll tax payers, real and personal property valuations, payment receipts, tax sale redemption certificates, tax sale certificates, property exemption notices, resident and non-resident taxes, tax deeding, parking meter scoff laws, amount of tax paid previously on any item

Schools:

Teachers payroll, Parent-Teachers Association procedure books and scrapbooks, business affairs, staff development training, Haven Awards, personnel documents, School Board meeting minutes

Board of Trust Funds Trustees:

General business, correspondence, Prescott Park planting, grounds and building contracts, maintenance, scheduling calendars, Board's annual reports and meeting minutes, banking, awards of money

Police:

Adult and juvenile arrests, officers' duty logs, general orders books, detective work, professional grievances, child abuse matters, incident reports, dispatch logs, personnel matters, contracts, labor-management events, Chief's correspondence, information checks on individuals; internal investigations, payroll accounts, victims' files, active homicides, general case file, evidence logs, telephone message logs, CRIMELINE concerns, Police Commission meeting minutes, weapons and training affairs, accident records, Traffic and Safety Committee items, budgets, general business, used equipment and bicycle sales, report on a records

management program for the Police Department, canine patrol, animal control, neighborhood liaison officer's business

Planning:

Plans, maps, diagrams, zoning matters and definitions, Pease International Tradeport, tax maps, Assessor's property maps, various studies (such as, feasibility), correspondence, Planning Board meeting minutes, variances granted, sub-division specifications, census data, property definitions, Community Development projects and proposals, soil surveys, Portsmouth Housing Authority affairs, urban renewal, Planning Board awards of merit, improvement projects, 1980 Master Plan, Assessor's maps, land exchanges, wetlands mapping, site reviews, nearly 250 maps and plans in storage

Assessor:

City maps (1996-1999, labeled urban and rural), valuations, building plans, lot changes, preliminary invoices, condominium plans, declarations, and specifications, taxable property inventories, tax exemptions (for elderly, veterans, charities, the blind), resident taxes, property cards (show address, assessment, number of rooms, kind of rooms, amount of square footage, footprint of house, what building permits were taken out), tax warrants, real estate sales by map and lot, maps that have changed, urban and rural property maps, building permits, Pease International Tradeport valuation summaries, assessment changes, correspondence, assessment definitions and standards, tax liens, property sales (21 vols.), building permits, tax warrants (24 vols.), building plans (1952-1999), lot line changes (1952-1999)

Recreation:

Connie Bean Center

Photographs, general events and activities, Teen Canteen, analysis of old armory for recreation use, various sports league records, correspondence, programs, newspaper clippings, program brochures, scrapbooks, girls' junior athletic events, 20 78rpm phonograph records

Indoor Swimming Pool

Billing, chemical analyses, memberships, swimming lessons, registrations, correspondence, use of pool statistics, conference room rentals, accident reports, swimming and Red Cross courses, calendars, open/close pool check lists, public sign-in sheets

Public Library:

Visitor registers, Library Trust Fund summaries, City appropriation for Library, circulation statistics, Library Board of Trustees' meeting minutes, proposed new Public Library documents (plans, perspectives, and elevations), budgets, finances, correspondence, book acquisitions, receipt books, computer system, book accounts, journal tapes, purchase orders, new Public Library site selection study, internet projects, technical reports, memos, North End Urban Renewal maps and other documents

Fire:

Board of Fire Commissions' meeting minutes, record books of various Fire companies, fire safety inspections, personnel time records (including overtime), personnel training, Officers' daily journals, Dispatch Officers' logs, Desk Watch logs, accident reports, station renovations, fire investigations, internal investigations, fire alarm box tests, juvenile fire-setters, public education information, budgets and statistics, inspections, pre-fire surveys, safety provisions, non-emergency business, memos, correspondence, emergency response reports, ambulance, traffic, and safety records, responses to maritime fires, training course, daily Fire Department activity logs

Public Works:

Madbury Facility

US geodetic maps, alarms, historical trends, chemical analysis of water, personnel log, equipment catalogs, shift logs, correspondence, well reports, event logs, plant logs, proposed 1994 water treatment plant material, Bellamy River survey and proposed pipeline profile

Sherburne Facility

Shutoff measurements, water meter readings, water meter pamphlets, general business, sewer ties, call-out repairs, customer complaints, applications for water/sewer service

Peirce Island Facility

Equipment manuals, purchase orders, personnel records, sludge hauled, chemicals used, discharge monitoring reports, call-outs, plant general log, shop designs, payroll, maintenance log, sludge flow, contracts for new plant, discharge monitoring reports, daily sludge flow reports, septic tank log, operation report sheets, construction of new plant, photos of water treatment projects, settleable solids bench sheets, settleable solids and weekly/monthly discharge limitations, chlorine residual bench sheets, chain of custody record for affluent, discharge limitations' weekly/monthly averages for settleable solids and coli, pH bench tests, chlorine residual bench sheets, flow charts, bisulfite tank readings, monthly reports of seven lift stations, hourly sewerage peaks and lows daily charts, work orders for machines, monthly sewerage flow charts, general system records, hypochloride tank monthly readings, plant flow schematic

City Clerk's Office

Public works (1953-1980), resource recovery incinerator, traffic pattern concerns, Borthwick Avenue Extension, vital statistics, contracts, public land deeds, ordinances, City Council meeting minutes, adoptions

Islington Street Facility Library-Active Archives Room

Thousands of maps, plans, drawings, diagrams of utility lines in all parts of the city, specifications for equipment and work, bus stops and parking areas, receipts and expenditures, City buildings plans, Coakley Landfill miscellany, annual City printed reports

Islington Street Facility Water/Sewer Locked Area

Wyman Boynton Collection of Water/Sewer Department history and the history of the Federal Government's acquisition of property to build Pease Air Force Base

Islington Street Facility 2nd Floor Large Storage Room

200 banker's boxes containing Water/Sewer Department sewer survey legal work, personnel records, sewerage studies of various streets, water treatment plant records, sewerage drainage reports, construction of subdivision utilities, engineering records and correspondence, contracts of all kinds, specifications for equipment and work, purchase orders, time cards, Madbury plant chemical reports, lift stations contracts and payroll, water/sewer inter-town connectors, water/sewer billings, water/sewer test results, sewer project bids, proposals for sewer engineering, budgets, work orders, urban renewal contracts and construction reports, equipment catalogs, foremen's reports, vehicle expenses, traffic studies, blast surveys, vehicle fuel records, sewer service instructional materials, waste water facility operational studies, structure and machinery repairs, interceptor studies, several Highway Department work orders, personnel records, time cards, project files

Islington Street Facility, 2nd Floor Small Storage Room

87 banker's boxes containing Highway Department invoices, cover sheets, names of vendors, worksheets, time cards, payroll, payment vouchers, foremen's reports, Refuse-to-Energy, City Hall construction, invoices

Islington Street Facility Highway Department

Adopt-a-Sport program, current project files, Highway Engineering Technician's correspondence

Islington Street Facility, Public Work's Director

Personnel records, current project files, correspondence, minutes of meetings, schedules, event calendars, memos

Islington Street Facility, City Engineer

Current projects, current correspondence, miscellaneous maps, plans

Islington Street Facility, Water/Sewer Department

Water Engineering Technician's current projects, correspondence, past projects, work orders, memos, deeds and easements, pumping records, program records (i.e. back flow prevention and wellhead protection), flow test records, emergency operation plan, operational records

Islington Street Facility, Garbage Collection Department

Schedules, memos, vehicle repairs, personnel

1895 Building First Floor

Thousands of records in banker's boxes concerning pre-1970 correspondence, various public works projects, parking garage correspondence, refuse-to-energy project, water meter readings, water bill payments, water supply receipts and expenditures

Pease Facility

Not surveyed; post-1945 records only

Well Heads

Not surveyed; post 1945 records only

Lift Stations

Not surveyed; post 1945 records only

City Clerk:

Vital records (births, deaths, marriages, burials, adoptions, affidavits of paternity), City Charter, deeds to City property, vendor lists, automobile permits, mortgages of personal property, voluntary corporations, contract sales, conditional sales, birth certificates, death certificates, marriage certificates, business licenses (to do business in Portsmouth), City budget, City receipts and expenditures, City ordinances, litigation results, City contracts, utility pole and buried cable permits and locations, federal tax loan releases, sale bids for City property (including parking meters), redeemed bonds and coupons, Board of Voter Registrars' time and wage books, contracts and lien records of private businesses, City Council candidates' filing papers, City officers' oaths of office, list of registered voters, City Council meeting minutes, City Council resolutions, City Council general records, appointments to City boards and commissions, public hearing minutes, contracts for pole locations, City Council rules and regulations, redeemed bonds, general correspondence, several hundred one-three leaf, legal, historic manuscripts

Human Resources:

Personnel, job applications, labor negotiations, public information, memos, notes on meetings held with various city groups, project (event) files

Overseers of the Poor and Welfare:

Voucher lists for living expenses, case notes, food stamp authorization, food stamp receipts, leaves of absence

City Manager:**City Manager's Foyer**

Child care, city-wide electrical service problems and possibilities, neighborhood improvements, public transportation, public ceremony rules, area-wide utility cooperation, area-wide sewer overflow and control, City Charter, work with area and city organizations, computer system oversight, building inspection, City property, city housing, city-wide communications, disease prevention, public facilities, litigation, area-wide medical cooperation, fiber optic utility poles, correspondence with County, State, and Seacoast area public officials and

departments, City projects, voter registration, summaries of meetings with department heads, bids for supplying City with goods and services, labor negotiations, contracts, business with various departments, waste management, concerns with Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, development of Pease International Tradeport, dealings with Seacoast municipalities, animal control, pigeon-feeding

1895 Building First Floor Rooms

Over 200 banker's boxes of manuscript documents and printed material that originated in and sporadically chronicle the daily operations of almost every City department, 1960-1997, including several City Managers' (especially Robert Violette) 1950s-1980s correspondence, labor relations matters, traffic matters, and general business

1895 Building Basement Temporary City Archives' Two Storage Rooms

Incomplete collection of official manuscript records and printed material, 1946-1995

Community Services Coordinator's Office

Television Channel 22 information, lists of city organized groups and the civic minded, complaints about City services, City Council-City Manager liaison records, newspaper clippings, press releases, liaison activity among the City and neighborhood associations, telephone call log of residents' problems and solutions to them, responses to complaints, attempts to cooperate with groups and individual residents, press releases, newspaper clippings, work as liaison between neighborhood groups. Since this Office collects much indispensable primary source material for the social historian, its records should be kept in tact and never jettisoned.

City Hall Receptionist and Telephone Switchboard Operator

Tourist informational brochures and pamphlets, events calendar, City Hall floor plan, City Hall office directory

Purchasing and Finance:

Voucher registers, bids for purchases, canceled checks, City employees' retirement

Building Inspection:

Building plans, plumbing and electrical inspection reports, health officer's correspondence and travel records, food permits issued, Pease International Tradeport building inspections, construction permits issued, inspection report card file, structures used by private companies at Pease International Tradeport, food service establishment inspection reports, plans and maps used jointly with Planning Department, a few files on vermin and garbage, nearly 1,000 "old" maps and plans in storage

City Attorney:

Legal opinions, legal work sent to outside contractors, ongoing litigation (case files), correspondence

Mayor:

Promotional material for Portsmouth, correspondence, reception of visitors, ceremonial events

Data Processing:

Financial records, correspondence

Stawbery Banke

South End Urban Renewal manuscript maps and other papers given to the museum, because the City did not want them

Part IV.

The useful part of this section is the straightforward description of how and where records are kept. Again organizing the information by department, Dr. Goodman reports the filing cabinets, vaults, computers, special storage areas, and displays used to hold city documents. This summary gives a good picture of the variety of storage needed to keep the wide range of records we have. The researcher will have a better idea how to frame questions and where to ask them.

In addition to the helpful location information in Part IV, there is a mixture of historical notes, editorial comments, unsupported conclusions, and unrealistic recommendations. We read about what *could* or *might* happen or what the *possible* results are if a department relaxes its vigilance. We find Dr. Goodman's characterization of current practices as an "open...invitation to...steal and mutilate" city records despite his detailed descriptions of filing practices, conscientious care, and routine use of storage bins, filing cabinets, and vaults. We even get the recommendation that one city office throw away nothing. Clearly, the value of this section is in the listings of storage locations.

It must be noted that this section was written before the Public Works Department move from Islington Street to its current location. The section on Public Works' storage practices needs to be revised. Because the Inventory is in an Access database, the precise locations given in it can be updated easily. The storage location information in this section can also be extracted and sent to the city departments for regular additions and corrections as needed.

PART IV

THE CITY OF PORTSMOUTH'S RECORD STORAGE PRACTICES

Handicapped by lack of a uniform records-keeping system, with only minimal State direction, and with neither convenient storage space nor central records keeping leadership, City employees, with a handful of exceptions, do their best with records. Since they are obliged to follow the State's inadequate records-keeping policy, however, workers are prone either to destroy material or to pack it into boxes, which they place in a variety of insecure, dimly lit, difficult to use storage areas.

As a result, municipal workers seldom know why their predecessors made specific decisions, the City Attorney and others sometimes cannot find critical documents, people file documents in improper areas, and for lack of information, employees sometimes cannot direct the public or each other to needed items, even though the records might be a foot or two away. The municipal memory, moreover, is lost, City litigation could fail, the work force loses great amounts of time searching—more often than not fruitlessly—for records, and employees repeat the mistakes of the past.

Using 1945 as an arbitrary cut-off year, the City's historic documents are dazzling, even mind boggling, for their subject matter, degree of completeness, and national importance. Rarely can an American city boast that its historic records have survived in the scope that has Portsmouth's. While the Police records for 1820-1872 are gone, the researcher will find the bulk of every other major department's documents (through 1907, at least) available in Portsmouth at the City Clerk's Office, the 1895 Building basement, the archives room at the Department of Public Works, the Tax Collector's Office, and the Planning Department. The New Hampshire Historical Society and the New Hampshire State Archives in Concord, the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, and the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston also house stray significant Town of Portsmouth documents. "Foreign" institutions harbor Portsmouth's records professionally, while the City of Portsmouth maintains little better than an open door invitation to those who would steal and mutilate the great body of material that has survived for 376 years!

Every City employee with whom I spoke, with the exception of one department head, was troubled with City record-keeping. Some felt compromised, others felt that they sometimes could not do their jobs properly, and nearly all felt that they too often wasted much time

COMMENT ON

Page 25

City Manager, Municipal Complex

Dr. Goodman's charge that the City Manager's office "should jettison nothing" is first of all unrealistic and second in contradiction with his recommendation that the City needs policies and procedures to guide it in dealing with its records. The City cannot save everything. Therefore, guidelines for what to save are needed.

Public Works

This paragraph is another example of Dr. Goodman's single-minded insistence that the City must save everything. He here lists the tremendous array of material saved, points out that space is limited and then makes an unsupported charge that "vast numbers of documents" have been destroyed.

searching, usually unsuccessfully, for records that they or their predecessors generated and received. The culprits in every case were inadequate storage space within an office, periodic City Hall or individual office location changes, an inadequate record-keeping policy, and no central records bureau. The observation that an 1864 traveler in Arizona made about the meanderings of the Colorado River is apropos for Portsmouth's records. "To locate the course of the Colorado River," he complained, "one is best advised to seek it exactly where it was not the last time!"

The City of Portsmouth would do well to emulate the private Portsmouth Police and Firemen's Relief associations' work acquiring, maintaining, and displaying historic firefighting and law enforcement artifacts and records. With display cases in public locations, both organizations, which inherited items from their predecessors, gained the confidence of residents who lent them historic photos, documents, and artifacts, and in some cases their departments allowed them to use official historic manuscripts, printed items, and artifacts. I add, however, that while the display case at the Police Department still stands, recent Court Street Fire Station renovations have exiled most of the historic firefighting items to storage in Fire Department basement lockers and the Firemen's Relief Association Office. Only a single glass case shows a limited number of artifacts.

Record Storage by Department

City Manager, Municipal Complex:

Of Portsmouth's several City Managers, only Robert Violette's files exist in bulk. Few papers of other men in that office have survived. A City employee informs me, moreover, that one City official purposely destroyed his files. The current City Manager displays model record-keeping. His assistant, the Community Services Coordinator, who accumulates crucial basic information about neighborhoods and individuals concerning City affairs, is in a position to save important and unusual material that is not applicable to current situations. That office should jettison nothing. All extant former City Managers' papers are in boxes in the 1895 Building.

Public Works:

Islington Street Facility

On one hand, because they could not do their jobs successfully without collecting and preserving, regardless of date, as many maps, plans, diagrams, charts, and other documents as possible concerning pole locations, above and below ground utility lines (water, sewer, electrical, telephone, gas), water purification, pumping, and sewerage disposal, building maintenance, garbage collection and disposal, and their many special projects, various Public Works sub-departments carefully place such items in the Department's library. There, however, the documents are subject to borrowing and theft, often are not returned (if at all) to the proper place, and mutilated. On the other hand, Public Works employees put into dead storage (in two storage rooms in the Islington Street Building and in the 1895 Building) correspondence and project files after the State records retention limits have expired. From time to time, moreover, Public Works Directors have ordered destroyed vast numbers of documents. Also, because office space is limited, many employees keep banks of file cabinets in hallways.

COMMENT ON

Page 26

Many of the City's records are now produced in digital format. Preservation of this material presents very special challenges for the City. Dr. Goodman does not address this issue.

Peirce Island Facility

While they keep in a small room and in a stairwell several four-drawer file cabinets full of equipment catalogs manuals, technical data files, and Waste Water Treatment Plant business, Peirce Island employees rely mostly upon computers to keep records.

Madbury Facility

Records are in four places: (1) maps in a second floor purification system room, (2) daily logs stored in a common cabinet in the locked Superintendent's office, which also houses four file drawers with the "private" records of a facility employee who prevents access to them, (3) a stairwell file cabinet containing equipment manuals, and (4) a series of computers with recent and current technical monitoring data.

Pease Facility

Not surveyed.

Well Heads

Not surveyed

Lift Stations

Not surveyed

Building Inspection (Health, Plumbing, Electrical, Mechanical, General), Municipal Complex:

Health Inspector

Some records kept in a computer; inspection applications kept for a limited time

Plumbing Inspector

Some records kept in a computer; other documents are integrated in inspection files

Assistant Building Inspector

Some records kept in a computer; other documents are integrated in inspection files

Building Inspector

Some records kept in a computer; other documents are integrated in inspection files

The Building Inspection Department also maintains an active set of plans and maps that it regularly shares with the Planning Department. Employees maintain a room containing banks of files cabinets that hold inspection records of specific buildings and of several projects, such as Pease International Tradeport. Additionally, the Department keeps nearby nearly 1,000 post-1975 building plans, drawings that it also lists in a computer.

Fire Department, Court St:

While every office houses documents in a file cabinet or two and keeps records in its computer the Department files much material in cabinets located in nearly any space in the building. By reserving a large basement room for nearly 50 bankers' boxes containing the service's 1980-1990 files, the bureau keeps under lock and key the bulk of its recent documents. Basement lockers, however, hold several meaningful historic documents (many belonging to the City, others to the Firemen's Relief Association), mostly in the form of ledgers and photographs.

Office of the Receptionist-Secretary

In file drawers

Business, personnel, historic Board of Fire Commissioners meeting minutes, Fire warden applications, budget, payment vouchers, outside burning data, insurance data, Department's "Five Year Plan," radio station licenses (in house), salary schedules, outside mechanical repair contracts, fire alarm invoices, burning permits

In computer

Records for purchasing, current Board of Fire Commissioners meeting minutes, reports of fires, overtime database, spreadsheets

Fire Prevention Conference Room

Several file drawers of manuscript and printed material

Fire Inspector's Office

A few file drawers of fire records for industries, day care centers, and other buildings

Operations and Training Office

A few file drawers of personnel records and printed material; a computer contains memos, correspondence, and responses to marine fires

Office of the Chief

A few file drawers with accident records and station renovations

Ambulance Data Room

A few file drawers with ambulance records, invoices, traffic and safety committee material, fire reports, and daily (1997-present) Fire Department activity logs

Shift Captain's Office

File folders with records on emergency call-outs, equipment protection, self-air bottle, hose conditions, insurance needs, work schedules, bi-weekly equipment checks, supply procurement, working arrangements with Portsmouth Regional Hospital, statistics, standard operating procedures for several activities and responses

COMMENT ON

Page 28

Ironically elsewhere Dr. Goodman criticizes Public Works for similar record-keeping practices which he praises here. It should be noted that the Police Department hired a firm to examine its record-keeping space problems and recommend solutions and found that implementing the suggestions would be too costly.

Upstairs Closet

Ledgers recording 1970s time and inspection records and a 1968 inspection notebook

Planning Department, Municipal Complex:

The Department maintains records in five locations: (1) 1895 Building for banker-boxes full of mostly pre-1990 documents, (2) Conference Room-Library for several maps, meeting tapes, printed material, and building card files [kept in a bank of file cabinets], (3) short hallway for Historic District records and Planning Board award items, (4) Planning Manager's Office for general business records and a locked file for rare historic material, and (5) an archives room for several score rolled and flat plans kept mostly in bins and upon shelves. The Department shares with the Building Inspection Department a large area containing plans for nearly every building in the city. A computer holds memos, correspondence, and schedules.

Police Department, Municipal Complex:

Nearly every Police Department room contains records, a few have historic photographs, and some hold historic equipment and other artifacts. The amount and variety of records that the Department generates is so great that it hired in 1996 a local firm to examine the Department's record-keeping space problems and recommend solutions. When the Department wished to implement the suggestions, however, it found them too costly. As a result, without the Department's constant and time-consuming vigilance, records could fall easily into disarray. Some juvenile and adult files, for example, could be mixed. Meanwhile, historic records lie unorganized upon file cabinets, nearly all records are in locked rooms (requiring someone to locate a key), material might be kept disparately, there is no master record locator, and an incautious person might be tempted not to return a record to where he found it. Despite laboring, albeit most unwillingly, under such conditions, the Police Department is among the best organized municipal bureaus, at least as far as records are concerned.

"Rock" Room

File cabinets full of historic documents, juvenile and adult files intermixed, Police reports dating back to at least 1970

Archives Room

Historic personnel ledgers, Board of Police Commission typed meeting minutes, scattered files from 1955-1988

Business Office

Financial material in file cabinets

Personnel and Training Office

File cabinets with historic Standard Operating Procedures, general order books, 1950s printed rules books, files on equipment bought, issued, and sold to 1970s

Chief's Office

Files of internal investigations and grievances for one year in cabinets

Chief's Secretary

In computer: Board of Police Commissioners meeting minutes, Department correspondence and memos

Room 227

1990s business office records

Youth Services

File cabinets with folders concerning 1995-1999 referral forms, DARE program, domestic violence, child abuse, CRIMELINE, investigations

Room 147

Card file of adult arrests, 1946-1980

Detectives Division

Banks of file cabinets containing crime suspect photographs, Grand Jury cases, past investigations, unsolved homicides, sex offenders, photo logs of crime scenes, standard operating procedures, daily material

Room 150

File cabinet containing homicide records, 1980-82

Unnumbered Room (next to Room 147)

File cabinet containing active homicide investigations, 1980s-present

Room 127 (Main Evidence Room)

Evidence log

Room 131A

Weapons and tear gas training records (1984-1990s), memos

Room 106 (Union Office)

Grievances and bargaining records in a bank of file cabinets

Department, Municipal Complex:

Department keeps file drawers of client cases for six years and keeps on hand personnel

Department, Municipal Complex:

Department contains correspondence and tax deeding dating to 1900s. Pre-1979 records are in boxes in the 1895 Building's temporary City Archives, the Tax Collector's safe, and a vault. A computer holds current tax data and vehicle registration information. Several tax warrant books.

Recreation Department:

The Recreation Department houses records at the Connie Bean Center and at the indoor swimming pool.

Connie Bean Center, Daniel Street

In the Director's Office are business records; in the Assistant Director's room are program material and correspondence, and in the attic and men's shower room closet are photographs. The Department recently procured a plastic box in which it planned to place its photographs and scrapbooks to prevent further damage to items upon which rain had leaked.

Indoor Swimming Pool, Andrew Jarvis Drive

File drawers: memberships, activities, pool rentals, statistics of all phases of building activity

Outdoor Pool, Peirce Island

Not surveyed; post-1945 documents

Adult Center, Parrott Avenue

Not surveyed; post 1945 documents

Assessor's Office, Municipal Complex:

Most records, current assessment formulas, and correspondence are in a computer, but there are several card files, individual maps, bound books of maps (including early and mid-20th-century insurance maps), and computer printouts.

Data Processing Office, Municipal Complex:

Records in a computer

Purchasing and Finance Office, Municipal Complex:

The office maintains a general ledger for 10 years on paper and a general ledger, trial balances, accounts payable, and payroll in the computer for five years. The Department's library holds budgets and department reports.

Mayor's Office, Municipal Complex:

The Mayor keeps in a bank of file cabinets promotional and public relations material.

City Clerk's Office, Municipal Complex:

While the Clerk keeps a limited number of documents in her computer, she has filled the perimeter and waist-high center shelves inside a large vault and has started to stack records in the aisles. The vault holds hundreds of large ledgers, many maps, plans, and other drawings, several small file cabinets, boxes of microfilm and aperture cards, and a sheaf of unbound documents, as well as serving as her supply room. A rear storage room and several alcoves house still more historic and current records and a bank of vital statistics card files. Other file cabinets hold City Council candidates' filing papers and voter registration material. The Clerk also keeps many boxes of documents in a room set aside for her office in the 1895 Building.

Public Library, Middle and Islington Streets:

The institution's every day business records rest in banks of file cabinets in two downstairs administrative rooms and in as many upstairs offices. Two attic chambers house about 40 boxes of recent Library records, its historic newspaper collection, a miscellany of pictures, picture frames, nature collections, and *objects d'art*. In a second floor hallway, a number of file cabinets contain additional records. The basement is crowded with discarded furniture, various parts of the building's interior and exterior, and a large marble bust. In the 1895 Building basement, the Library maintains a large, dehumidified room for several hundred books, several framed prints, and a miscellany of other items no longer deemed popular. Among the items in the Local History Room is the North End Urban Renewal collection, a large body of vital manuscript material that remains largely unorganized for lack of funds.

Human Resources Office, Municipal Complex:

The office keeps some computer records and a file cabinet of other documents. A separate room holds confidential files concerning former City employees. The 1895 Building quarters many boxed pre-1990 Departmental non-confidential personnel records.

School Department, Clough Drive:

Large amounts of current administrative records lie in main room file cabinets and in various school officials' offices. Many Portsmouth historic school records and teacher retirement files may be found in a basement locked room, where they rest in boxes, on shelves, in wooden file cabinets, and atop metal file cabinets. While the Department keeps most historic records in an orderly fashion, the significant post-1945 school building plans remain uncataloged, rolled up, and placed without order atop a bank of file cabinets. Lack of space has prompted various Superintendents to deposit many bound volumes with the Portsmouth Athenaeum.

City Attorney, Municipal Complex:

While several banks of file cabinets house ongoing litigation and other confidential documents, the Department keeps a public library with many printed Town and City of Portsmouth annual reports and separate departmental annual reports together with a few 19th-century State law volumes.

Portsmouth District Court (State of New Hampshire):

Under supervision of the Clerk of the Court, Portsmouth's Police and Municipal Court records, 1868-1952, are shelved in dead storage in a locked room in the building basement. The chamber also houses the District Court documents for the period after 1952.

Part V.

As mentioned earlier, this section was a disappointment. Perhaps we did not make clear to Dr. Goodman precisely where his expertise could be most useful in formulating recommendations about storage practices. Because of his familiarity with the city's historical records and artifacts and his repeated examination of them, Dr. Goodman could offer an informed opinion about which objects are most vulnerable, which records are most useful to a historian, and what kinds of records should be flagged for employees as the most important to secure. He could point out items unique to Portsmouth or categories of old records that might seem relatively useless but have historical utility that is not obvious. He could provide the historian's equivalent of *triage*, listing what is most important to save first. He could shed light on what records duplicate other records, what series of records must be retained in their entirety, and what records could be kept as samples. He could indicate records or categories of records in the greatest need of special preservation procedures and list objects in need of conservation.

The eleven recommendations made, however, range from the fairly obvious (*e.g.*, the City needs to develop policies that, going beyond the inadequate requirements set by the State, reflect the unique character of Portsmouth) to the impractical (*e.g.*, that someone copy and index every document relating to the Pease International Tradeport) to the idealistic (*e.g.*, that the City create a museum and an archive and hire the staff to run them).

In the pages that follow, we have commented on some of the statements of problems and recommendations. It is worth noting that recommendations were never expected to be a major element of the project. The Inventory was—and is—the essential part. Dr. Goodman's recommendations can be read for what they are and can be added to the mix of recommendations and ideas from many sources to be considered in forming a comprehensive records management

policy for the City. That policy will need to address how we select and store historical records of more than three centuries, floppy disks from the 1980s, and web pages from 2000.

PART V

RECOMMENDATIONS

General Observations

The City of Portsmouth labors, in this electronic age, under confusing, antiquated, woefully inadequate, and alarming retrieval and examination procedures for nearly all historic records. As a result, as far as old records are concerned, the municipality wastes money, often frustrates its work force and the public, and serves the taxpayer sometimes inefficiently and occasionally not at all. While all departments can find their most recent records, they only know, at best, that older documents either have been put into storage or have been destroyed. Some employees in every department, surprisingly, have no knowledge that their department disposes of records according to the State's retention policy. Consequently, the oftener that a department's employees change, the less likely it is that the agency will know about its annals.

One need not remind people about the importance of effective records-keeping in their lives. While the City fully understands the efficacy and necessity of keeping historic records efficiently and effectively, it does little about it. A homeowner or prospective property purchaser will be better informed if he knows when and where utility lines entered a specific neighborhood or building, what repairs have been made by the Department of Public Works over the years, and why the areas needed alterations. For those interested to profit intellectually or financially about a structure, it might be crucial to know, for examples, that horse-drawn and electric trolleys once ran in front during the 1890s, that the neighborhood was an Irish, Jewish, or Italian ghetto, or that the street in back was one that quartered ship's carpenters before 1815. While proof of all and infinitely more are in the municipal records, few would know where to seek the information, and still fewer would be cognizant that the complete picture lies not in one but in several City departments' documents — if a City employee had the foresight to save them! One need not elaborate upon the legal importance of records, but those interested in genealogy might be startled to know, for instance, that the City's 1832-1912 personal property mortgages list the furnishings of a person's household, that 19th- and 20th-century adoption documents (by law not publicly available) tell much about one's relatives, that a 1899 Police blotter gives a physical description of a great uncle, and that all the males on one's mother's side hired substitutes to take their places in the Union Army.

COMMENT ON

Page 33

1) Recommendation

Dr. Goodman's recommendation that the City should devise a records-keeping policy supplementary to the State's is good, but his specific suggestions are not helpful. For instance, what purpose is served in basing a records retention policy on the "history of municipal administration"? And why would "all documents concerning Pease International Tradeport...be duplicated"?

- 2) Dr, Goodman displays his lack of understanding of the tremendous difficulty of records management when he glibly states that the City "will keep its records in such a fashion (that) anyone may ascertain the status of any project at any time and will know where to find information in finished project files." The phrase "in such a fashion" tells us nothing about how to proceed to bring about Dr. Goodman's wished for historian's utopia of having all records available at all times.

One may gather, moreover, much family financial and social history from the City's complete set of tax records, 1645-1999, that the City has preserved, albeit nearly inadvertently. One could continue infinitely about the genealogical research possibilities of Portsmouth's public records.

Problems and Recommendations

1. Problem: Saving Records

The State's records retention policy does not consider a document's importance beyond time limited by legal considerations, in some cases only a year, in others 10 years. As a result, in following State requirements, how much longer a department preserves its records currently depends only upon the amount of space available and the character, foresight, and knowledge of the department head.

Recommendation:

The City Manager or City Council should devise beyond the State's requirements a records-keeping policy based upon the following: (a) the unique purpose of each department, (b) the relationship of that department to other departments, and (c) the history of municipal administration and government. For example, the Planning and Building departments maintain a common Pease International Tradeport file, but the Tax Collector, the Assessor, the City Clerk, the City Attorney, and the Police and Fire departments, to mention only some bureaus, also preserve pertinent records on the subject. All documents concerning Pease International Tradeport should be duplicated, indexed, and kept together in a single records-keeping center. In such fashion, a researcher will have on hand all documents on the matter. One will not fear that some critical item is located elsewhere.

2. Problem: Maintaining Documents in an Orderly Way in Each Department and According to Newly Defined Rules

Employees often organize record storage in unique but sometimes, to others, unfathomable ways.

Recommendation:

Since most departments keep records by project, those documents should be maintained in a specific, consistent order that does not vary from project to project. If the City will keep its records in such fashion, anyone may ascertain the status of any project at any time and will know where to find information in finished project files.

3. Problem: Not Enough Office Space for Both Current Records and Those Not Immediately Needed

Often saddled with inadequate space, the first items that employees remove from their offices are project files. If, however, anyone needs such records, they have to range far a field, often having to manage flights of stairs, consequently wasting time and interrupting concentration repeatedly.

Recommendation: The City should scan into a computer some documents, microfilm others, store as they appear still more, and devise a carefully considered disposal policy based upon carefully calculated departmental, historical, and public future use of the records.

COMMENT ON

Page 34

- 3) Scanning technology is improving, but still expensive, time consuming, and not always dependable.
- 4) This recommendation presupposes the existence of a City Archive and several new City positions. Once again, Dr. Goodman has given the City only one very expensive option and has not addressed how to take more realistic and less expensive measures which may be phased in over time.

4. Problem: Cataloging, Accessing, and Keeping in Order the Maps, Drawings, Plans, and Diagrams in the Public Works Department Library

As does the City Clerk, the Public Works Department daily examines both current and historic records, storing its maps, plans, and associated drawings in a hodgepodge of wooden bins, flat file drawers, and cabinets. The problem centers around three situations.

- (a) For nearly 400 years, the public, and sometimes municipal employees, have rolled up municipal drawings, which has caused the items to rip, crack, tear, and be heavily soiled from dirty hands. For 30 years, at least, some people have thrown the documents into bins without regard to order, causing the next user to waste time searching.
- (b) No one catalogs many items, limiting their use only to those who know where someone placed them.
- (c) No one compels a person to check out a drawing, note its destination, and return it to the same place. The public, moreover, has complete, unimpeded, and unobserved access to the material, which anyone thus may steal or mutilate. Water Department Engineering Technician Thomas Cravens' and Highway Engineering Technician Suzanne Purdy's frequent cataloging new documents and "putting the place in order" last only as long as the next person who uses the records.

Recommendation:

The department would eliminate the problems, as well as noticeably reduce great amounts of time lost, by taking three actions: (1) Use the Department's considerable copying facilities to duplicate the historic maps, plans, and diagrams, (2) Send the historic maps to the City Archives, and (3) Hire a certified librarian—in conjunction with the Public Library—to use professional methods and new archival equipment to accession, unroll, catalog, and guard the ever-increasing collection. The librarian, moreover, could employ considerable time each week indexing the material, a project that would make the documents infinitely more useful. If the City does nothing or little about the situation, which deteriorates geometrically, the Public Works Department soon will operate under severe handicaps when it tries to find its documents. It risks, moreover, losing to theft and mutilation more and more irreplaceable legal records.

5. Problem: Lack of Space for the City Clerk to Store Increasing More Records

Working in an office that constantly retrieves and creates records for the public and registers City business, the City Clerk labors with two staff members in two thirds the space in which the Clerk operated on Daniel Street. Meanwhile, calls for the Clerk's aid constantly increase, as does the amount of records that the Clerk now must keep under lock and key. The Clerk is running out of vault room. If the City moved the 1895 Building's historic records into the Clerk's vault — many of them were in the Clerk's two Daniel Street vaults — the remaining space would not accommodate the assemblage.

COMMENT ON

Page 35

- 5) Dr. Goodman recommends computerizing vital statistics in the City Clerk's office. He gives no example of any existing program that the City could evaluate. Does such a program exist and what is the cost of implementation?
- 6) Dr. Goodman states that "the law demands that the public be able to consult public records during business hours" and therefore a "Municipal History and Archives Office" should be established. He also recommends that the "Historian-Archivist maintain a complete set of records for every City project." His proposal is unrealistic. Where would these duplicate records reside, how would they be cross-indexed, and how would a "Historian-Archivist" organize this mass of records?

Recommendation:

The City should remove from the Clerk's vault 400 volumes, 1645-1945, and place them in a professionally managed, safe City Archives. The change would provide the Clerk 20% more vault room. If the City, furthermore, computerized the vital statistics card file that takes up 15% of the Clerk's file room and the bound vital statistics that consume much vault space, the Official could dispatch daily tasks more quickly. A few computer keyboard strokes would replace the great amount of time that the staff spends sallying to and fro, pulling out drawers, lifting from the shelves heavy bound volumes, and scribbling down data. The taxpayer could receive, in addition, a quickly produced, easy to read, detailed printout.

6. Problem: Establish a Proper Place and Adequate Protection for and Encourage the Public Use of the City's Historic Records

Since the law demands that the public be able to consult public records during business hours, the City constantly has to deal with increasingly more people wishing to view documents. Keeping the municipality's historic records in many places throughout the city, not assigning anyone to watch City employees and the public while they use the material, neglecting educating City workers about historic material and the need to preserve it, and often keeping the documents in damp, dusty, too dry, difficult to access, and unguarded places, the City of Portsmouth faces a difficult challenge if it wishes to improve its public service.

Recommendation:

The City should create a Municipal History and Archives Office for professionally housing, protecting, preserving, and making available its historic records. Additionally, the Office would receive other documents as one deems them historically valuable. The employee in charge should assume two main responsibilities: (1) collect the historic records and oversee their use, and (2) maintain a complete set of records for every City project, bringing together all departmental documents in each matter. The Historian-Archivist could be part of the City Manager's Office, be under the Public Library, or serve with the City Clerk's office. The job would include being Public Works Department Librarian.

7. Problem: Prevent the City's Historic Artifacts from Being Further Stolen, Preserve Them in Professional Fashion, and Display the Items Publicly

After the recent disappearance of several of the City's historic artifacts, in view of the deteriorating conditions under which others exist, with inadequate, at best, security, and with no central place to store and display the objects, Portsmouth would do well to improve the situation in a professional manner. Without proper storage facilities, for example, the Board of Trust Funds Trustees feels compelled to put several publicly owned folk art items in storage at the private Strawberry Banke. That museum takes proper care of them, to be sure, but the public hardly can expect to see the items there at will.

Recommendation:

Since no City department is equipped, has funds for, and has space for displaying the artifacts under its care, Authorities must develop an anti-theft policy, one that prevents informal borrowing and ensures an item's integrity, while providing for public display of the artifacts. If the City Fathers create a City museum, perhaps in the old Portsmouth Academy after the Public Library moves to a different location, and staff it

professionally, the omnipresent artifact problems would be resolved. To prevent further loss, the City immediately should gather all its historic artifacts, whether held in public or private hands, and secure them under lock and key.

8. Problem: Lending Public Historic Records to Private Institutions

The Portsmouth Athenaeum is open to the public two afternoons each week and several hours on Saturday. The institution houses for the Police Department (since June 1991) at least 17 bound manuscript Police records, 1887-1952, and (since September 1991) four Police laws, rules, and regulations printed booklets, 1890-1954. The Department recently returned to the Police Station some items for public display.

The library also keeps for the School Department 137 individual class registers, pupil registrations, scrapbooks, administration records, and miscellaneous items, 1849-1935. As I verified the existence of each, I found that several were mislabeled, ten for lack of inner vault space were stored (under lock and key, however) outside the inner vault (contrary to legal agreement), and 14 were not listed in any Athenaeum finding aid or Athenaeum enumeration.

While the Fire Department has not lent records to the Athenaeum, over the years at least five official Portsmouth Fire Department manuscript ledgers, 1806-1907 and 1834-1854, including the two earliest Board of Firewards' records, fell into Proprietors' hands. The Proprietors, in turn, gave those items to the Athenaeum. It has been years, however, since the institution lent the volumes to its Proprietors. Indeed, the place keeps the items in its vault and prevents their circulation.

Yet, the Athenaeum catalogs several records in a way that few would know that they are City-owned. When I received a list from the Athenaeum of the Town and City of Portsmouth records that it claims to hold, the enumeration did not mention the Fire Department material. Moreover, the catalog also did not include the post-Civil War Portsmouth Mercantile Library Association manuscript ledger that the City received from the society in 1882, a record that the Public Library recently loaned to the Athenaeum. The institution does make all items available for public research, however.

Recommendation:

If the City wishes to preserve and protect its historical records, ensure their professional management, and guarantee the public 9AM-5PM access, it should consider creating a City Archives, administered by the City Manager, Public Library, or City Clerk, with temperature controls, a professional security system, state of the art document cabinets, and other preservation materials. The City should hire a professional for the operation, a person who would aid the public and municipal employees to conduct research. If that individual assumes additional duties, he may require an assistant. While volunteers might help, in no case should the City manage its Archives entirely with free labor, as does Newburyport, Massachusetts, where retirees, who never have worked professionally with historic records, labor in earnest but usually inadequately.

9. Problem: Preventing Theft, Destruction, and Misuse of Historic Documents and Artifacts Located in Several City Offices

Ignorance of what constitutes a historic record and its legal and historical importance has resulted in the past in City employees jettisoning documents to the City dump. After being discarded, some of the items have appeared in antique shops and used bookstores. When the City made major moves, such as relocating City Hall, several historic records and artifacts disappeared. The Public Works Department soon will

COMMENT ON

Page 37

10) Dr. Goodman recommends that the City “devise record retention policies that preserve only particular items that chronicle the main thrusts of municipal history”.

Of all Dr. Goodman’s recommendations this is one that addresses the heart of the problem. The City has a wealth of material; it cannot save everything; decisions must be made and policies and procedures must be put in place to deal with the difficult and expensive job of deciding what will be preserved and how it will be protected and made accessible.

change location. Unless the City assigns someone specifically for superintending the packing up and transporting the department's archives, the municipality should not be surprised if many records are "lost." Historic maps, plans, and other documents dating to the 1600s will soon find their ways to private coffee tables, antique shops, rare book stores, and premium auction houses, like Sotherby's, Christie's and Park Bernet in New York and Skinner's in Massachusetts.

Recommendation:

The City immediately should gather under lock and key all its historic manuscripts, scrapbooks, and photographs. Officials should remove especially from the Public Works Department the late 19th- and early 20th century Boards of Street and Water Commissioners meeting minutes, the Water Department's historic records file, Robert Harris' 1860 field notebook, pre-1945 maps and plans, the Portsmouth Aqueduct records, and the Boynton file drawer. The artifacts that Water Department Engineering Technician Thomas Cravens salvaged from street excavations and those at the Sherburne Station (particularly the hollowed-out logs and steam gauges) should be moved into a locked 1895 Building Room. The photographs at the Recreation Department and Peirce Island Waste Water Treatment Plant should be deposited at the Public Library or in the 1895 Building's temporary Archives room for eventual sorting and mounting for public use. The proper City professional should devise a memo that defines a historically important document and send a copy to every municipal employee. Moreover, the City should educate every future municipal worker about historically important materials.

- 10. Problem: What to Do with 900 Boxes of Records That Various Departments Store in the 1895 Building, Shaw Warehouse, Public Works Department, and Other Places**
 Since City Hall moved to the Municipal Complex, several times yearly almost every department boxes up documents after the State retention schedule permits them to be jettisoned. The departments send many such cartons to random, unsecured rooms in the 1895 Building. Sometimes a department locks up its records in the structure, but most agencies simply dump them into the first likely space. While some bureaus label their material, most do not. Like pre-1900 records, the post-1970 items (only a few City records, 1900-1970, are extant) document each department's history and, consequently, form Portsmouth's municipal chronicle. Destroying them would widen untenably the City's 20th-century historic records gap. Should the City continue its current practices, however, today's documents foothill soon will become tomorrow's mountain.

Recommendation:

While society awaits more effective, easier, and less expensive records storage options than it now has, the City could microfilm all documents at increasing expense. Alternatively, Officials could devise more selective record retention policies that preserve only particular items that chronicle the main thrusts of municipal history. Those policies coupled with record retention guidelines (beyond the present State requirements) that each department must follow should be determined by the City Manager, after he confers with department heads, a historian, the City Attorney, and an archivist. Whatever the City does, it should consider that software companies are developing products that will use photographic recognition for digitizing document

COMMENT ON

Page 38

11) Dr. Goodman recommends that the City either create an Archive or send all its pre-1945 records to the State Archives or University of New Hampshire. A City Archives, especially one as inclusive as Dr. Goodman has hinted at in his report, would be a very expensive solution. The State Archives will not accept City records. They already have a tremendous space problem. The University of New Hampshire would likewise not have the space for all of Portsmouth's records. Moving municipal records 10 miles away could hardly improve access.

The tremendous effort in creating this inventory project gives Portsmouth a significant first step in taking control of its historic records and artifacts.

Next, using the inventory and relevant alarms and practicable recommendations the City can develop the policies and budgets needed for the storage, preservation, and accessibility to our City's past.

storage. What will happen, however, if repeated technological advances quickly render such methods outmoded? Who will know how to operate passé records storage programs?

11. Problem: What to Do with the Historic Records if the City Does Not Create a City Archives and Permanently Staff It with Professionals

If the past is prologue to the future, people will continue to steal, jettison, and deface Portsmouth's historic records. The documents must be made secure and professionally managed, if the City wishes preserve them. Since any individual has the right to view public documents during business hours, the City should be particularly on guard. Because genealogical research is a national pastime, the City may be sure that researchers, already numerous in Portsmouth, shortly will seek the material *en force* daily.

Recommendation:

If the City will not professionally create and professionally staff an Archives, it should send its pre-1945 historic records as soon as possible to the New Hampshire State Archives in Concord, which, I quickly observe, suffers a severe space shortage, or ask the University of New Hampshire Dimond Library to make them part of it's New Hampshire Collection.

Part VI.

Here, Dr. Goodman outlines his activities in the Inventory project. The majority of his time was spent locating and describing the artifacts and records held by the City. The result of that work is available in print form at the Library and will be available in Access database format for searching on the Library computers.

In this section, Dr. Goodman also mentions his earlier involvement with proposals to deal systematically with recording and preserving the City's documents.

In any discussion of the history of this project, some mention should be made of the document at hand. The actual inventorying of records and artifacts took longer than anyone expected, and the narrative and summary forming this document were submitted late in the project. Dr. Goodman declined to discuss alternative ways of summarizing the project and making recommendations. After we sent him some suggestions in response to a first draft, he submitted a "final" draft directly to the City. He later made a few changes in that draft but would not consider reorganizing it into a more useful form. Since he had accomplished the purpose of the project—the Inventory—we accepted that as the final project and simply annotated the report document.

PART 6

A BRIEF PROJECT HISTORY

Using a 1996 City Council \$10,000 appropriation, sponsored by Councilman Kevin Lafond, for inventorying the municipality's historic artifacts, I compiled not only the desired list but also an enumeration of most Portsmouth public records. Believing that the project could include, without further cost, the material to 1945, I began the work in September 1998. I based my search upon the artifacts and 19th-century document inventories that I had compiled during 1982-1983, a list that I subsequently deposited with the Portsmouth Public Library, the New Hampshire Historical Society, and the New Hampshire State Archives. The City Manager designated the Public Library as monitor. Before I began the enlarged compilation, moreover, I acceded to the Library's request that I survey the 1946-1999 records in, as a practical matter, less detail than I did the others. As it turned out, however, the inventory for the post-World War II period consumed 80% of my time, required an assistant (paid from the \$10,000), and called for a supplementary \$2,200 (additional City funds) for computer aid.

Allotted two small rooms in the 1895 Building basement and several metal bookcases, I arranged by municipal department over 900 bound historic City records dating from 1792. (Earlier records, dating to 1645, lay in the City Clerk's vault.) Since all lay in indiscriminate heaps in the Public Library's storage room down the hall and in several locked and unlocked rooms on the floor above, the Public Works Department transported the heavy ledgers to the "Archives" rooms. Later another person and I moved many more bound and unbound records from the first floor to the cellar depository.

The bookcases soon filled, but the City failed to supply additional, stating that I was to "make do." One may assess the consequences by viewing several boxes and bags of records on the floor, subject to floods, and others piled on furniture here and there. Moreover, across the ceiling and along a wall run pipes for the 1895 Building's heating system and water supply. In the winter the rooms, as a result, are uncomfortably hot and dry, an environment that soon will take its toll of the documents. Summer humidity will create as much, if different, damage.

After filling the "Archives," I continued the project by visiting each City department and various municipal structures. Following the City Manager's directive, all department heads participated professionally, some with high interest, all with courtesy. Only one employee, supported by his Supervisor, prevented me from seeing his "private" departmental records, items that he kept in a City file cabinet in a City building.

Only a small number of offices contained no records or artifacts, others held only a handful, and some housed an abundance. The School Department, through Superintendent

Suzanne Schrader and Dr. Charles Ott, opened a bonanza of records, artwork, and school building plans, and the knowledgeable School District and Board of Trust Fund Trustees' Financial Manager Peter Torrey apprized me of many records and over 100 artifacts that one would not find readily in City buildings. The Police and Fire departments' cooperation was extraordinary, even exemplary. Each directed an officer (Fire Captain Stephen Griswold and Police Captain David Young) to guide me through a maze of rooms, show me all non-confidential records and artifacts, and fully explain their departments' record keeping. Taking a special interest in law enforcement artifacts and historic and current constabulary documents, Police Commission Chairman Theodore Mahoney helped me immeasurably to ferret out items under his authority.

After noting the locations of most records and artifacts that I listed 15 years before, I spent several weeks finding and cataloging in detail 1900-1945 material, once a voluminous corpus, but one that the City largely had destroyed. I intended to work with the post-1945 records, by agreement, in less detail, noting only their location, subject matter, and public accessibility. I had estimated at the project's start that I could complete the work in four months, but the material proved so interesting and weighty that I inventoried some records far more descriptively than required. Inevitably, the project absorbed an additional eight months. Consequently, when the public uses the inventory, it should know that the number of post-1945 entries are only examples of the mass that the City stores uncataloged for the period starting with World War II's conclusion to the end of the century.

I hired Mr. Gifford Booth to help (nearly indispensable aid, as it turned out) inventory almost 1,000 post World War II banker's boxes of records scattered throughout the 1895 Building, Public Works Department, Prescott Park, and City Hall and to photograph the large Captain Edward Adams folk art collection. The boxed records in the 1895 Building remain piled atop each other on the floor, stuck into cubby holes, and shoved onto shelves, all without (as I found them) a germ of order, the preponderance unlabeled, and usually very heavy. To discover their contents, we had to open them all. To most, I affixed the following label:

If this box/item is moved, please update the location information in the Inventory. This box/item was included in the 1998 Inventory of City Records and Artifacts.

No. _____.

I placed my notes on each record and artifact into a computer, organizing the body in Microsoft Access, the City's database program, after discussing with the Public Library the kinds of information (fields) that should describe each entry. As a result, each insertion supplies a title, the dates it covers, where it may be found, the City department that generated it, what kind of record or artifact it is, of what material an artifact is made, who, if that person may be identified, made the artifact, and often additional information about the item. Time and money considerations prevented the addition of a number of highly desirable fields. Seacoast Computer, Inc. converted my original 800-record database, made in WORDPERFECT for DOS, into Microsoft Access, although I spent, as I expected, considerable time editing the results, then integrating them in the database. The public may use the project at the Portsmouth Public Library, and soon it will be accessible in other ways. The City now possesses a database of almost 5,600 entries. The enumeration cites specific paper records, lists documents in a variety of film formats, and inventories a large assortment of historically significant artifacts, several museum quality oil paintings, watercolors, and line drawings. Each item is owned by the City of Portsmouth and may be examined by the public.

People, such as Assistant Building Inspector Roger Clum and Planning Department employees Carol Arrington and Barbara Driscoll, made the post-1945 project phase immeasurably more useful by making me aware of and supplying long lists of plans and maps, material that they keep organized in storage rooms. Mss. Arrington and Driscoll ferreted from their computer several unconnected plan enumerations. The alert, professional Mr. Clum presciently assembled from his computer an "old" plan list (which he bound for me). Only because Planning Department Head David Holden watches for historically invaluable materials does the City still have several irreplaceable historic maps, items that he prevented from falling precipitously into oblivion. Such individuals act beyond the call of duty.

Similarly, at the Public Works Department, I found old map and drawing catalogs that Suzanne Purdy and Thomas Cravens, on their own volition, keep current and new ones that they create, lists that I have integrated almost wholly in the inventory. At the department's Peirce Island Waste Water Treatment Plant, Gregory Donovan and Barry Brescia showed me the facility's records and educated me about them. Lee Roseberry, with foresight, gave me the effective plant tour necessary for understanding the mass.

Peter Torrey explained Prescott Park's public records and pointed out the common's great variety of historic artifacts, articles that I had no idea existed. He also called my attention to the protean Michael Warhurst, who, among other duties, oversees the Captain Edward Adams folk art collection and keeps vital landscape records. Without Mr. Warhurst's aid, I could not have inventoried and photographed Adams' assemblage, and the project also would not have included indispensable documents that chronicle the park's history.

With foresight, Swimming Pool Supervisor Janice Beck has instituted and carries out procedures that gather pool statistics. Before she inaugurated the program, no one could assess accurately the pools' surprisingly large impact upon the entire Seacoast and southern Maine, as well. The figures she gathers also reveal, unexpectedly, much current social history about Portsmouth and the surrounding area.

The artifacts-historic records survey supplies information for determining whether or not a historic record archive, when coupled with an efficient, effective record-retention policy, tailored to the City's unique needs, will serve Portsmouth's best interests. During the last sixteen years, others and I unsuccessfully prodded the City to establish an Archives. I coupled my initial attempt, made in 1983, with an excellent opportunity for Portsmouth to receive \$10,000-\$20,000 in matching National Historic Records Preservation (NHRPC) support, a program, administered by the National Archives, which already had awarded millions of dollars to local governments throughout the country to institute such public depositories. Portsmouth's City government, however, showed little interested, if any, in the project.

During the mid part of the 1990s, two attempts to establish a City of Portsmouth Archives failed, because those involved did not seek (and, consequently, did not gain) the City Council's approval before making application to the NHRPC. A cardinal Program requirement calls for a place like Portsmouth to gain its Council's authorization before applying for funds. I opposed both applications for the same reason that the NHRPC stated, and, additionally, because the City Manager refused to say how he would professionally staff the Archives after the grant expired. The NHRPC program is ongoing, and the City of Portsmouth may at any

time apply for a grant. Recently, Washington awarded Manchester, New Hampshire \$65,000 to establish a historic record archives, an amount that various Granite State charitable funds then increased substantially!

PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC LIBRARY



A DATABASE FOR HISTORIC RECORDS AND ARTIFACTS

FINDING AID FOR THE COMPUTERIZED LIST OF OFFICIAL
TOWN AND CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
RECORDS AND ARTIFACTS, 1645-1999

The historic records and artifacts of Portsmouth, New Hampshire listed below are the result of a 1983-1999 search conducted not only in the City of Portsmouth but also at various historical societies, the official archives of several states, and various libraries in New Hampshire and other places. While principally manuscript items compose the compilation, it includes pertinent typescripts and printed items. The purpose of the project was to list in detail all extant records and artifacts that the Town and City of Portsmouth produced before 1946 and to select representative items that the City issued from 1946 to 1999. Each of the 5,577 citations, dated between 1645 and 1999, is described by eight fields:

From (starting year of record, when ascertained)

To (ending year of record, when ascertained)

Record (actual title or other suitable title)

Department (of Town or City Government from where the record originated)

Type (ledger, manuscript leaf, drawing, painting, typescript, map, diagram, publication, tool, etc.)

Medium (manuscript, typescript, publication, oil painting, etc.)

Location of Record (current)

Exact Location (more specific location within "Location")

Creator of Record (who was the artist)

Memo (description of record)

While the survey concentrates upon historic manuscripts and artifacts, included are various printed Town and City reports and other official municipal publications that one may find (except those that the Portsmouth Public Library holds) in City of Portsmouth offices. The City does not

own all its historic printings, but researchers will find most missing items in libraries and historical societies.

SEARCHING THE DATABASE

One may most easily conduct a search by the municipal department that most likely issued a specific type of record, then by subdivisions within each bureau. The researcher also may do a word search. Most municipal departments and the divisions of each that are used in the database are as follows, but one must search by the abbreviations in the "Abbreviations Table"

DEPARTMENTS AND SUB-DEPARTMENTS

DEPARTMENT	SUB-DEPARTMENT
1895 Building Maintenance Office	
Airport Commission	
Assessor	Board of Assessors
Auditor	
Building Inspection	Archives Electrical Health Plumbing
City Attorney	Library
City Historian	
City Manager	Community Services Coordinator City Manager
City Hall	
City Clerk	Clerk 1895 Building Basement (Archives in 1895 Building) Upper Vault, Daniel St. City Hall Lower Vault Daniel St. City Hall
Commissioners of the Sinking Fund	

DEPARTMENT	SUB-DEPARTMENT
Common Council	
Court	Municipal Police District of Portsmouth
Data Processing	
Finance	
Fire Department	Youth Division Ambulance Officer Court St. Station Lafayette Road Station Chief Conference Room Secretary Shift Captain
Human Resources	Director Assistant Director Switchboard
Mayor and Board of Aldermen	Mayor Mayor and Board of Aldermen
Mayor	
Municipal/Police Court	
Overseers of the Poor	
Planning	Planning Board
Police Department	Youth Division Archives Board of Police Commissioners Detectives Chief

DEPARTMENT	SUB-DEPARTMENT
Public Works	Storage Board of Water Commissioners Board of Street Commissioners Library Engineer Director Water/Sewer Sherburne Station Peirce Island Waste Water Treatment Station Madbury Water Treatment Station Water/Sewer Engineering Technician Highway Engineering Technician
Public Library	Director Associate Director Technical Services
Purchasing	
Recreation	Connie Bean Center Indoor/Outdoor Pools Director Goodwin Park Haven Park
Schools	Portsmouth High School Dondero School Little Harbour School Superintendent's Office New New Franklin School
Selectmen	
Tax Collector	
Treasurer	
Trust Fund Trustees	Shaw Warehouse Sheafe Warehouse Prescott Park
Ward Three Selectmen	
Welfare	

ABBREVIATIONS TABLE

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE CITY OF PORTSMOUTH'S COMPUTERIZED RECORDS INVENTORY SURVEY

ABBREVIATION	ABBREVIATION MEANING
AAS	American Antiquarian Society
AC	Accounting Department
ASR	Assessor or Assessor's Office
ASRB	Board of Assessors
AUD	Auditor
B	Box
BI	Building Inspection Dep't
BIAR	Building Inspection Dep't Archives Room
BIE	Building Inspection Dep't Electrical Inspector
BIH	Building Inspection Dep't Health Inspector
BIP	Building Inspection Dep't Plumbing Inspector
BMA	Board of Mayor and Aldermen (Mayor and Board of Aldermen)
BSF	Board of Commissioners of Sinking Funds
BV	Basement Vault, Clerk's Office, Daniel St. City Hall
CA	City Attorney
CAL	City Attorney library
CCC	City Council chambers
CCL	City Clerk
CH	City Hall
CHWS	City Hall west entrance stairwell

ABBREVIATION	ABBREVIATION MEANING
CICO	City Council
CM	City Manager
CMCM	City Manager's Office
CMCSC	City Manager's Community Service Coordinator
CMSO	City Manager's Secretary's office
COCO	Common Council
CT	Court (Police, District, Civil, and Criminal)
DCRT	Portsmouth District Court
DFI	Director of Finance
DP	Data Processing Dep't office
FD	Fire Department
FDA	Fire Dep't Ambulance officer
FDBL	Fire Dep't basement lockers
FDBR	Fire Dep't basement room
FDC	Fire Dep't, Court St.
FDCF	Fire Dep't Chief's office
FDCR	Fire Dep't conference room
FDG	Fire Dep't Steve Griswold's office
FDL	Fire Department, Lafayette Rd. station
FDP	Fire Dep't George Pierce's office
FDS	Fire Dep't Secretary's office
FDSC	Fire Dep't Shift Captain
FDUL	Fire Dep't upstairs closet
HB	1895 Building basement archives room
HBox	Box in HB
HR	Human Resources Dep't

ABBREVIATION	ABBREVIATION MEANING
HRA	Human Resources Ass't office
HRCHS	Human Resources Dep't City Hall switchboard
HRD	Human Resources Dep't Director's office
HSN	City Historian
HU	1895 building first floor
HUBL	Harvard University Baker Library
LHR	Local History Room at PPL
MHS	Massachusetts Historical Society
MTN	Maintenance, 1895 Building
MYR	Mayor
NHHS	New Hampshire Historical Society
OP	Overseers of the Poor (Poor Dep't or Welfare Dep't)
OPBO	Board of Overseers of the Poor
PA	Portsmouth Athenaeum
PDS	Planning Dep't storage room
PHIS	Portsmouth Historical Society (John Paul Jones House)
PHSL	Portsmouth High School Library
PHSV	Portsmouth High School vault
PL	City Planner
PLB	Planning Board
PLD	City Planner Dep't
PLS	Planning Dep't storage room
PO	Police Dep't
POAR	Police Dep't archives room
POARAR	Police Dep't archives room ante-room

ABBREVIATION	ABBREVIATION MEANING
POBC	Police Dep't Board of Police Commissioners
POBO	Police Dep't business office
POC	Police Dep't Chief's office
POCS	Police Dep't secretary's office
PODD	Police Dep't Detective's Division
POER	Police Dep't evidence room
POF	Police Dep't downstairs foyer
POPT	Police Dep't personnel and training office
POPTER	Police Dep't personnel and training equipment room
PORR	Police Dep't "rock room"
POYS	Police Dep't Youth Services Division
PP	Prescott Park
PP-SF	Prescott Park Sheafe Warehouse
PP-SHA	Prescott Park Shaw Warehouse
PPL	Portsmouth Public Library
PPLAD	Portsmouth Public Library Associate Director's Office
PPLD	Portsmouth Public Library Director's office
PPLT	Portsmouth Public Library Technical Services
PPLV	Portsmouth Public Library Vaughan Room
PRC	Purchasing Dep't
PW	Public Works
PW2LSA	Public Works large storage room
PWBSA	Public Works Dep't Board of Street Commissioners
PWBWC	Public Works Board of Water Commissioners

ABBREVIATION	ABBREVIATION MEANING
PWDO	Public Works Director's office
PWE	Public Works Engineer
PWET	Public Works Engineering Technician's office
PWETS	Public Works Engineering Technician's storage room
PWH	Public Works Highway Division
PWL	Public Works library
PWPIP	Public Works Pierce Island waste water treatment plant
PWSHS	Public Works Sherburne pumping station
PWW/STF	Public Works Water/Sewer Technician's foyer
PWW/S	Public Works Water and Sewer Division
PWW/STO	Public Works Water/Sewer Technician's office
RC	Recreation Dep't
RCB	Recreation Dep't Board of Overseers
RCCH	Rockingham County Courthouse, Brentwood
RCDA	Recreation Dep't Daniel St. attic
RCDAS	Recreation Dep't Ass't Director's office
RCDD	Recreation Dep't Director's office
RCDER	Recreation Dep't Daniel St. education room
RCDG	Recreation Dep't, Daniel St., ground floor
RCGP	Recreation Dep't, Goodwin Park
RCHP	Recreation Dep't, Haven Park
RCIP	Recreation Dep't indoor pool
RCOP	Recreation Dep't outdoor pool
SB	Strawbery Banke

ABBREVIATION	ABBREVIATION MEANING
SCD	Dondero School
SCNF	New Franklin School
SE	Selectmen
SESR	Selectmen's committee on streets and roads
SS	School Dep't
SSC	Superintendent of School's office
TC	Tax Collector
TFT	City of Portsmouth Trust Fund Trustees
TRE	City Treasurer
UV	Upper Vault, Clerk's Office, Daniel St. City Hall
WE	Welfare Dep't office
WL	James F. Whalley Museum and Library, Masonic Temple, Portsmouth