

New Jersey State Archives eNews
Number 5 (Summer 2008)

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends and colleagues, who can subscribe directly by sending us a message at archives.news@sos.state.nj.us.

Hope you're enjoying your summer and wishing you success in your research,

Joseph R. Klett
Deputy Director for Archives

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Collections News

“Save America’s Treasures” Update

The State Archives’ four-year Save America’s Treasures (SAT) project to preserve New Jersey’s most important Revolutionary War-era documents reached the “home-stretch” in June when staff sent the seventh and final shipment of manuscripts to the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) for treatment. The final cache of documents included records of seized property and forfeited estates of Loyalists who served with or supported the British during the Revolution. Due to reach completion by the end of 2008, the SAT project is funded through a 2004 joint grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Parks Service.

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Preservation Planning

Earlier this year, the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) announced the award of \$40,000 to five partner institutions for preservation planning in New Jersey. The consortium includes the State Archives, the State Museum, Newark Museum, Rutgers University Libraries, and the State Library. The project will entail development of a statewide plan for over 600 museums and historical societies, 400 libraries and 80 archives. In addition to the tier-one partners, the planning will also involve advisors from many other cultural and professional organizations, to produce representation from all sizes and disciplines of museums, libraries, and archives. In light of the IMLS grant, the State Archives, through the New Jersey State Historical Records Advisory Board (NJSHRAB), applied for and received related funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) through its State and National Archival Partnerships (SNAP) grant program. This award of \$56,652, announced in June, include funds for the administration of the NJSHRAB but also nearly doubles available funding for the analysis of conservation needs in New Jersey—in particular, a more in-depth study of the hundreds of needs assessments for local (county and municipal) records produced by the Public Archives and Records Infrastructure Support (PARIS) grant program administered by the Division of Archives and Records Management. The goals of the joint planning effort include: to determine the advisability of establishing a conservation center in New Jersey, to develop models for disaster planning and emergency response, and to explore opportunities for shared archival and museum storage.

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1849 Railroad Map Comes Home

The State Archives recovered a long-missing filed map of the right-of-way of the Belvidere Delaware Railroad in March. The exquisite map appears to have been loaned by the Secretary of State’s Office to the Department of Transportation some time in the early- to mid-20th century, and was missing at the time of accessioning of this collection by the State Archives. DOT officials recently contracted for conservation treatment of the map in Philadelphia, which led to its return instead to the State Archives, where it has been reunited as a filing of the Secretary of State’s Map Collection. Completed in 1855, the Belvidere Delaware Railroad was a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad, running parallel to the Delaware River from Trenton to Belvidere in Warren County. Measuring approximately three by nine feet, the intricate route survey includes names of all contemporary land owners as well as locations and names of islands in the Delaware.

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Proprietary Records

Thanks to a grant from the New Jersey Society of Colonial Wars announced in December 2007, five of the most significant documents from the ancient proprietary records of the Province of West New Jersey are now being treated by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia (CCAHA). Of special significance are the 1664 lease and release of James, Duke of York, to John, Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret—together, the “birth certificate” of the English colony.

In April, another collection of proprietary-period treasures returned to the State Archives following treatment at CCAHA. This was the 1684 *Record Book of Robert Barclay, Proprietary Governor of East New Jersey*. The most significant item acquired by the Archives at Christie’s in June 2005, the Barclay volume contains transcriptions of original land grants, legal cases, correspondence with officials including William Penn, and a record of the proceedings of Lords Proprietors during 1682-84.

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Intern Projects

Chris Mazur, a Rider University history/education major, and Dana Treichler, a senior at Hightstown High School, interned under the supervision of Collection Manager Ellen Callahan this summer. Mr. Mazur’s projects included organizing Works Projects Administration (WPA) records from the late 1930s which contain benchmark inventories of early colonial and state records. He also processed miscellaneous records of the East Jersey Proprietors, including a newly discovered cache of Revolutionary War-era accounts and receipts relating to an East Jersey account book held by the Library of Congress, a microfilm copy of which is available at the Archives.

Ms. Treichler produced the database that will be used to create a guide to the WPA inventories of material once stored in the State House. She also sorted collections of Hudson County Court of Common Pleas and Court of Oyer and Terminar case files.

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In-House Access to Collections

The State Archives has begun using a Microsoft Access-based database system developed by Archivist Vivian Thiele as its accessioning and cataloging management tool. The new system, as it is refined, will provide more robust ways to accession, inventory and catalog material, and will eventually provide a searchable catalog on the Archives’ website. The new system will ultimately replace the venerable dBASE system known as ARMADA, created by Chief of Archives Joseph Klett nearly two decades ago, adapted for the move of the State Archives in 2000, and further developed to produce the Archives’ browseable website catalog in 2003.

The State Archives has also recently acquired in new version of ISYS software, which is used for keyword searching of collection guides.

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Preservation Microfilming

The State Archives has completed preservation microfilming of the following records, which are now available in our Microfilm Reading Room:

Robert Barclay Record Book, 1664-1685, 1 reel.

Essex County Naturalization Indexes, 1906-1931, 18 reels.

U.S. Colored Troops Muster Rolls, 1863-1865, 2 reels.

Supreme Court Minute Book, 1775-1782, 1 reel.

New Jersey Home for Disabled Soldiers Case Files, 1866-1920s [in process, 17 reels completed thus far].

We have also filmed the following non-governmental records, copies of which are also available to the public:

Greenwich Presbyterian Church Records, 1747-1913, 3 reels.

Moorestown Republican and Moorestown Daily Herald, 1895-1910, 1 reel.

Montgomery News, 1985-1987, 1 reel.

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New Acquisitions

The recent acquisitions listed below are especially noteworthy for their potential research value. For information about donating or transferring records to the State Archives, contact Collection Manager Ellen R. Callahan at archives.collections@sos.state.nj.us and/or consult our *Collecting Policy* at <http://www.njarchives.org/links/collecting-policy.html>.

For genealogy:

2007.067	Mercer County Circuit Court minutes, 1844-1847; Cape Island/Cape May City oaths and bonds of public officials, 1851-1887
2008.004	Original parchment deed of Greenberry Dorsey to John & Abigail Kible for 85 acres in Waterford Twp., Gloucester Co., 1777 [a recorded deed].
2008.008	Deposition of John Fitzgerald regarding a shooting in Little Egg Harbor Twp., Burlington Co., 1765.

For cultural resources studies and local history:

2007.067 & 2007.068	Photographs of property of the Morris Canal and Banking Company, ca. 1924.
2008.023	Survey of the Route of the Belvidere Delaware Railroad, 1849.

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Website News

New Databases Online

The State Archives has added three new databases to its website since our last issue. The first indexes Passaic County and Atlantic City returns from the 1885 New Jersey State Census. The database was built through the generous contributions of time and data-entry work by volunteers Marie Hook and Nancyann Carkeek. The census can be searched at:

<https://wwwnet1.state.nj.us/DOS/Admin/ArchivesDBPortal/Census1885.aspx>

The second database indexes legal name changes filed with the Secretary of State or granted by the Legislature during the period 1847-1947, with a few records from as late as 1964. While this source has significant genealogical value, it will also be of interest to social historians researching the assimilation of immigrant families into American society. The database was created through the diligent work of State Archives' staff member Joanne Nestor. Search the index here:

<https://wwwnet1.state.nj.us/DOS/Admin/ArchivesDBPortal/NameChanges.aspx>.

The third database indexes inventories of Revolutionary War damages to personal estates by British and American soldiers during 1776-1782. Legislation in 1781 produced the inventories; however, records are not extant for all of the counties. Nevertheless, the collection provides invaluable historical and genealogical data about local and personal losses during the war. Since no claims were apparently ever paid, the survival of this documentation is especially fortuitous. Search the index here: <https://wwwnet1.state.nj.us/DOS/Admin/ArchivesDBPortal/RevWarDamages.aspx>

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Imaged Collections

In honor of Black History Month, the State Archives posted a new online historical resource exhibiting images of birth certificates of children of Hunterdon County slaves from the period 1804-1835. The collection—invaluable for both genealogical and social history research—includes 415 images of manuscripts. The URL for the new website is:

<http://www.njarchives.org/links/guides/chncl004.html>

In March, we posted two imaged collections featuring canal photography of former State Geologist Dr. Henry B. Kümmel in conjunction with a presentation on the dismantlement of the Morris Canal presented by Joseph R. Klett at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference Spring Meeting in Chautauqua, NY. For Kümmel's collection of Morris Canal photos, see:

<http://www.njarchives.org/links/guides/pmors037.html>

For Dr. Kümmel's Delaware and Raritan Canal photos, see:

<http://www.njarchives.org/links/guides/scr00003.html>

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New Online Order Form

Last spring, the State Archives launched a new feature in the Searchable Databases area of its website that allows users to easily generate custom order forms selecting specific records they would like to order through the mail. This new functionality will also help the Archives' reference staff expedite mail requests by providing clear citations for the record requested. Kudos to Archivist Vivian Thiele for her ingenuity and the cooperation of the reference staff.

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Reference Services

Search Room Access to Online Resources

The State Archives negotiated an institutional membership with Ancestry.com, the world's largest online resource for genealogical information, in return for permission to place the State Archives' 1895 New Jersey state census online for the first time. Access to Ancestry was formerly made possible through a subscription to Heritage Quest Online. The latter subscription remains intact, with its available resources (absent the now-redundant Ancestry component of course).

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Manuscript Reading Room

Due to major attrition of part-time staff and the ongoing hiring freeze, the Archives has had to curtail manuscript paging service during the two-hour period in which staff take their lunch breaks (12:00 noon to 2:00p.m.). Staff will continue to page manuscripts and other original records from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For similar reasons, the Archives has had to suspend Interlibrary Loan Service for copies of microfilmed records and newspapers.

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Tales from the Search Room

Dylan Penningroth of Northwestern University has commenced socio-economic research, using various sources, relative to African-American life from 1865 to the 1930s. Penningroth has undertaken similar research in Washington, D.C. and Virginia, where African Americans also comprised a significant percentage of the general population. Penningroth is using census records to identify Black families and individuals in conjunction with chancery court records to determine whether patterns can be seen in the causes brought before the court and case judgments.

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Events and Outreach

Great Expectations

On October 6th, the County Archives and Records Management Association of New Jersey and the Division of Archives and Records Management will co-host an all-day conference entitled “Great Expectations: Meeting the Challenges of Archives and Records Management in New Jersey.” The conference will commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Division, and will feature plenary and concurrent sessions on a wide variety of topics ranging from the conservation of ancient parchment to the management of modern electronic records. The event is open to anyone interest in progress and developments in the field. For more information, see: <http://www.njgreatexpectations.com/>.

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1796 Archives Site Dedicated

In May, Secretary of State Nina Mitchell Wells and Division Director Karl J. Niederer hosted a public unveiling of a historic marker commemorating the rediscovery of the 1796 building erected to house the original archives of the state. Located under the plaza in front of the State House, the foundations of the ancient precursor to today’s institution were revealed during 2006 archaeological excavations. The site has been delineated in the plaza with inlaid cut stone of the same kind used in the 1796 construction. An interpretive marker unveiled the history and purpose of the building, and the archaeological findings that led to its authentication. The New Jersey Historic Sites Council and State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Environmental Protection, honored the Department of State with a 2008 New Jersey Historic Preservation Award for the discovery, preservation and commemoration of the site.

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Archives in Print and Media

The following publications and exhibits have made extensive use of photographs and documents from the New Jersey State Archives:

Photographic Archivist Joanne Nestor assisted filmmaker Cynthia Wade in choosing images of Ocean County for Wade’s short film “Freehold.” The film is about an Ocean County police officer diagnosed with terminal cancer, trying to secure benefits for her partner. The motion picture won an Oscar in the category of Short Subject.

The recently published <i>Colonels in Blue: Union Army Colonels of the Civil War, the Mid-Atlantic states, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia</i> , by Roger D. Hunt contains several vintage <i>carte-de-visite</i> images of Union veterans from the State Archives’ collection.
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On February 1 st , the <i>Star-Ledger</i> of Newark published “Lessons in Black and White” by Kathleen O’Brien, featuring historic photographs from the State Archives’ Bordentown Manual Training School collection. The school is one of several subjects celebrated in the Archives’ Imaged Collections website, found at: http://www.njarchives.org/links/guides/sedma005.html .
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The World War II Memorial now under construction on West State Street will include images from the State Archives’ New Jersey National Guard Collection. The New Jersey State Council on the Arts requested the images for use by an artist commissioned to work on the memorial.

The 25 th anniversary of the Division of Archives and Records Management was featured in “Treasure Trove of New Jersey’s Genesis: State Archives Celebrates a Quarter Century as Division of Government” by Tom Hester in the <i>Star-</i>

Ledger, Newark, and *The Times*, Trenton, on 4 July 2008.

The following recent journal articles have featured materials from the State Archives:

“Amwell Township Poor Families, 1775” by Bette M. Epstein. <i>The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey</i> 83:48, January 2008.
“1870 US Census Mortality Schedules: Middlesex County, New Jersey” [cont’d] by James A. Jolly and Pamelyn P. Bush. <i>The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey</i> 83:18-25, January 2008.
“Accounts for Quartering Soldiers at Trenton and Vicinity, 1757-1758” [part] by Thomas B. Wilson. <i>The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey</i> 83:2-9, January 2008.
“New Jersey Supreme Court Cases, 1704-1760” [cont’d] by Thomas B. Wilson. <i>The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey</i> 83:38-46, January 2008.
“Slave Births in New Jersey Online” by Jan Alpert. <i>GSNJ Newsletter</i> 17:1, March 2008. Reprinted from <i>UpFront with NGS</i> [online newsletter of the National Genealogical Society].

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Upcoming Events

State Archives staff member regularly provide lectures to local historical and genealogical groups. Upcoming presentations include:

9/5/08	“Using the Records of the East and West Jersey Proprietors” to be presented by Joseph R. Klett at the FGS <i>Footprints of Family History</i> conference, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, 9:30-10:30 a.m. For registration information, visit www.fgs.org .
9/5/08	“Resources for Tracing Your Revolutionary War Ancestor at the New Jersey State Archives” to be presented by Catherine Stearns Medich at the FGS <i>Footprints of Family History</i> conference, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon. For registration information, visit www.fgs.org .
9/5/08	“PARIS Grants Program: Changing Public Access to Historical and Genealogical Records” to be presented by Sean A. Curry at the FGS <i>Footprints of Family History</i> conference, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, 5:00-6:00 p.m. For registration information, visit www.fgs.org .
10/31/08	The State Archives’ original 1783 manuscript of the preliminary Treaty of Paris, ending the Revolutionary War, will be exhibited, for one day, at an event to be hosted by the Crossroads of the Revolution Foundation at Drumthwacket in Princeton. Following the event, images and transcriptions of the treaty pages will be added to the Archives’ “Documentary Treasures” website.

For a list of possible lectures by Archives staff, contact us at archives.reference@sos.state.nj.us.

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