

# Seattle Fire Department Union Records, 1964-1998

## Overview of the Collection

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Creator</b>             | Seattle (Wash.). Fire Dept.  |
| <b>Title</b>               | Seattle Fire Department Union Records  |
| <b>Dates</b>               | 1964-1998 (inclusive)<br>1964 1998   |
| <b>Quantity</b>            | 4.4 cubic feet, (5 boxes)  |
| <b>Collection Number</b>   | 2802-02  |
| <b>Summary</b>             | Records maintained by the Seattle Fire Department relating to Local 27 and Local 2898.   |
| <b>Repository</b>          | <a href="#">Seattle Municipal Archives</a><br>Seattle Municipal Archives<br>Office of the City Clerk<br>City of Seattle<br>PO Box 94728<br>98124-4728<br>Seattle, WA<br>Telephone: 206-233-7807<br>Fax: 206-386-9025<br><a href="mailto:archives@seattle.gov">archives@seattle.gov</a> |
| <b>Access Restrictions</b> | Records are open to the public.  |
| <b>Languages</b>           | English  |
| <b>Sponsor</b>             | Funding for processing this record series was provided through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.   |

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## Historical Note

The creation of the Seattle Fire Department (SFD) can be traced back to July 6th, 1876, when the all-volunteer Seattle Engine Company No.1 was organized by a meeting of citizens convinced of their growing town's need for a dedicated fire-suppression capability. The various fire companies that appeared in proceeding years were similarly equipped and administered on a private basis until 1883, when the City Charter was amended to create and fund equipment, but not staff, for a centralized municipal fire department. The first fire chief of this new volunteer organization, Gardner Kellogg, would also become the first chief of the professionalized department in 1889, as well as the first Fire Marshall in 1901. The volunteer-based system persisted into the late 1880s, when the Great Seattle Fire of 1889 destroyed over 30 city blocks and resulted in approximately \$12-16 million in damages. Under pressure from the insurance industry and its citizens, the city council acknowledged the inadequacy of a part-time force to meet the city's expanding need for fire protection. The council passed Ordinance No. 1212 in 1889, which reformed Seattle's seven volunteer companies into a paid, professional unit of 32 men organized into five district fire stations.

The decades following the birth of the professional SFD brought rapid increase in size and resources commensurate with Seattle's explosive growth rate; from an 1890 population of 42,000, the city's inhabitants numbered over 237,000 by 1910. Prominent developments included the creation of a maritime fire unit with the deployment of the fireboat Snoqualmie in 1891; the complete transition from horse-drawn to motorized fire engines in 1924; and the development of firefighter-staffed, emergency response "aid cars" during the 1930s. The SFD also participated in the historic founding of the International Association of Fire Fighters in 1918; the department's Local 27 constituted one of the union's 218 charter members. While the rigors of the Great Depression necessitated the temporary dissolution of 14 of the SFD's 55 operational companies, recovery was hastened by the threat of new fire hazards posed by World War II-era industrialization. Associated incidents, such as the 1943 Frye Slaughterhouse fire caused by the crash of a B-29 bomber, would severely tax the department's limited resources during this time.

The postwar SFD experienced a wave of significant material and organizational changes, one of the first being the Local 27-sponsored institution of the 8-hour day and 48-hour week for firefighters in 1947. Other important developments included the installation of two-way radio communication in first-line vehicles in 1950, the 1958 upgrading of the aid car program with stretcher-bearing station wagons, and the 1959 adoption of a new Fire Code based upon national standards. Throughout this time, the SFD's institutional mandate continued to evolve beyond basic fire suppression. In 1970, the department's new Medic One program initiated the training and deployment of firefighters as first-response paramedic units throughout Seattle. In 1980, the specially trained and equipped Hazardous Materials Response Unit was deployed to respond to incidents involving dangerous chemicals, including fires, spills, and suspected drug labs. Some of the most consequential changes to the SFD at mid-century did not concern equipment but equality, as the department admitted its first African-American firefighter (Claude Harris) in 1959 and its first female firefighter (Bonnie Beers) in 1977. The ongoing commitment to the recruitment and training of under-utilized applicant pools substantially diversified the department's make-up; of the 49 firefighters enlisted in 1993, 9 were female and 11 of minority status.

As of 2010, the SFD contains 1,020 uniformed personnel organized into 5 Operational Battalions and one Medic Battalion, which are employed running 33 engine-equipped fire stations, 11 aid and medic teams, 4 fireboats, and a host of other emergency resources. Several specialized units are used for hazardous materials response, marine response, search and rescue, and other incidents requiring extraordinary expertise. Under the control of the Fire Marshall's Office, the SFD administers an array of fire prevention efforts, including Fire Code enforcement, inspection of building fire plans and safety systems, public education programs, and the regulation of hazardous materials storage and use. In addition, the department provides leadership and personnel to several regional incident response organizations, such as FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue Teams and the Puget Sound Marine Response Consortium.

## Content Description

Correspondence, meeting minutes, agreements and contracts, and negotiation and arbitration files maintained by the department primarily relating to the Firefighters Union Local 27. A small amount of materials relates to Local 2898.

## Use of the Collection

### Preferred Citation

Seattle Fire Department Union Records, 1964-1998  
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv12060>

## Administrative Information

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### Detailed Description of the Collection

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

#### 2802-02: Seattle Fire Department Union Records, 1964-1998

| Container(s) | Description             | Dates     |
|--------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Box/Folder   |                         |           |
| 1/1          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1964-1965 |
| 1/2          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1966-1967 |
| 1/3          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1970      |
| 1/4          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1971      |
| 1/5          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1972      |
| 1/6          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1973      |
| 1/7          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1974      |
| 1/8          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1974-1975 |
| 1/9          | Local 27 Correspondence | 1976-1977 |
| 1/10         | Local 27 Correspondence | 1978      |
| 1/11         | Local 27 Correspondence | 1979      |
| 1/12         | Local 27 Correspondence | 1980      |
| 1/13         | Local 27 Correspondence | 1981      |
| 1/14         | Local 27 Correspondence | 1982      |

| <b>Container(s)</b> | <b>Description</b>                   | <b>Dates</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1/15                | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1983         |
| 1/16                | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1984         |
| 1/17                | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1985         |
| 2/1                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1986         |
| 2/2                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1987         |
| 2/3                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1988         |
| 2/4                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1989         |
| 2/5                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1990         |
| 2/6                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1991         |
| 2/7                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1992         |
| 2/8                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1994         |
| 2/9                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1995         |
| 3/1                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1996         |
| 3/2                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1997         |
| 3/3                 | Local 27 Correspondence              | 1998         |
| 4/1                 | Local 27 Contracts and Agreements    | 1968-1975    |
| 4/2                 | Local 27 Arbitration and Negotiation | 1967         |
| 4/3                 | Local 27 Arbitration and Negotiation | 1968         |
| 4/4                 | Local 27 Arbitration and Negotiation | 1968-1969    |
| 4/5                 | Local 27 Arbitration and Negotiation | 1969-1970    |
| 4/6                 | Local 27 Negotiations                | 1974         |

| <b>Container(s)</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Dates</b> |
|---------------------|---|--------------|
| 4/7                 | Local 27 Agreements and Contract                                  | 1970         |
| 4/8                 | Local 27 Agreements and Contract                                  | 1971         |
| 4/9                 | Local 27 Agreements and Contract                                  | 1972         |
| 4/10                | Local 27 Agreements and Contract                                  | 1974-1983    |
| 4/11                | Local 27 Minimum Personnel Requirements and Paramedic Premium Pay | 1978         |
| 4/12                | Locals 27 and 2898 Contract                                       | 1988-1991    |
| 4/13                | Local 27 Meeting Minutes  | 1970         |
| 4/14                | Local 27 Meeting Minutes  | 1971         |
| 4/15                | Local 27 Meeting Minutes  | 1972         |
| 4/16                | Local 27 Meeting Minutes  | 1973         |
| 5/1                 | Local 27 Conference Board Meeting Minutes                         | 1968-1970    |
| 5/2                 | Local 27 Conference Board Meeting Minutes                         | 1970-1978    |
| 5/3                 | Local 27 Conference Board Meeting Minutes                         | 1975-1976    |
| 5/4                 | Local 27 Conference Board Meeting Minutes                         | 1987-1990    |
| 5/5                 | Local 27 Meeting Minutes  | 1981-1985    |
| 5/6                 | Local 27 Meeting Minutes  | 1986-1991    |
| 5/7                 | Local 27 Grievances   | 1964-1970    |
| 5/8                 | Local 27 Grievances   | 1970-1975    |
| 5/9                 | Local 27 Grievances   | 1980         |
| 5/10                | Local 27 Grievance - Lt Emerson - Dispatcher Pool Pay             | 1985         |
| 5/11                | Local 27 Grievance - McJunkins - Overtime compensation            | 1983         |

| Container(s) | Description   | Dates     |
|--------------|---|-----------|
| 5/12         | Local 27 Grievance - McJunkins - Recruit Class 45 - Urine Tests | 1984      |
| 5/13         | Local 27 Grievance - F Jay - Debit Day                          | 1985      |
| 5/14         | Local 27 Grievance - M Anthony - Holiday pay - Retirement       | 1986      |
| 5/15         | Local 27 Grievance - M Edelbrock - Vacation Day Compensation    | 1984      |
| 5/16         | Local 27 Grievances   | 1977-1988 |
| 5/17         | Local 27 Arbitration  | 1988      |
| 5/18         | Local 2898  | 1983-1995 |

## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Fire fighters--Washington (State)--Seattle  
 Grievance arbitration--Washington (State)--Seattle  
 Labor unions--Washington (State)--Seattle

### Corporate Names :

Seattle (Wash.). Fire Dept.  
 Fire Fighters Union Local 27  
 Fire Fighters Union Local 2898

### Geographical Names :

Seattle (Wash.)

Finding aid prepared by Anne Frantilla  
 2011