



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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The Library Company of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Office of the City Representative Join *PhillyHistory.org*

Popular Geographic Photo Search Website Now Holds Over 87,000 Images and Maps from Five Philadelphia Organizations

Philadelphia, September 14, 2010 – [The Philadelphia Department of Records](#) and [Azavea](#) announced today that [PhillyHistory.org](#) (www.phillyhistory.org), the online geographically-enabled database of historic photographs and maps, has just added three collections from the Library Company of Philadelphia - the James McClees Philadelphia Photograph Collection, the Frederick De Bourg Richards Photograph Collection, and the Montgomery P. Simons Philadelphia Stereograph Collection - and over 1,100 photos from the Philadelphia Office of the City Representative. These new additions bring the whole collection on *PhillyHistory.org* to over 87,000 photos and maps available for the public to search, use for research, share with friends, and purchase.

To date, five Philadelphia organizations - the Department of Records, the Philadelphia Water Department, the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Office of the City Representative, and the Library Company - have joined the *PhillyHistory.org* site and are contributing ten different collections of historic maps and images. The Library Company of Philadelphia is the first non-city agency to join the consortium. It is the hope of the Department of Records, who manages the City Archives, that other Philadelphia institutions will join *PhillyHistory.org* and provide increased public access to visually rich, but not well-known archival collections.

The images from the Library Company and the Office of the City Representative capture over 125 years of Philadelphia history. Among the collections from the Library Company of Philadelphia are photographs depicting Civil War recruiting camps outside Independence Hall (<http://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/Detail.aspx?assetId=104996>), the ruins of the northeast corner of 6th and Market Streets after an 1856 fire

(<http://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/Detail.aspx?assetId=104822>), and the Western Exchange Hotel at 15th and Market, which was then the western end of many omnibus lines (<http://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/Detail.aspx?assetId=104832>). The Library Company hopes to build on this initial collaboration and add other image collections to *PhillyHistory.org* in the next few months. Featuring images of everything from planes (a Spirit of St. Louis reproduction arriving at Northeast airport: <http://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/Detail.aspx?assetId=103030>) to parades (Mummers marching near City Hall) to presidents (President Kennedy speaking in front of Independence Hall: <http://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/Detail.aspx?assetId=103936>), images from the Office of the City Representative collection depict historic events in our city and country's history. Additional images from the City Representative's collection will be added throughout fall 2010.

"I am thrilled by the amount of enthusiasm we have received from other organizations who manage historically significant collections. It is my hope that *PhillyHistory.org* will continue to grow and continue to be an example of how a regional consortium of collections can operate together and be successful." – Joan Decker, Commissioner, Department of Records

Thanks to a sophisticated collection management system, powered by [Sajara®](#), a geographic digital collection management system built by Philadelphia-based GIS software firm, [Azavea](#), each collection can be managed separately and directly from the website. Each agency can upload assets to the site, edit metadata, geocode (assign latitude and longitude) their assets, retrieve usage information and sales, and receive collection-based error reports. Authorized users have access to only the collections from their institution, making the system ideal for a consortium of organizations that might not individually have the funding to build their own web-based digital collection.

"The Office of the City Representative is enthusiastic about providing public access to the 50 years of Philadelphia history documented in our photograph collection. We are pleased to make these beautiful images available for public viewing and purchase on *PhillyHistory.org* for the first time. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Department of Records, we can work together to show the wonderful people, places, and events of Philadelphia's history." – Melanie Johnson, City Representative

"The Library Company is excited to make our historic images of Philadelphia available to a wider audience via *PhillyHistory.org*. We're proud to be the first non-city agency to join this collaborative effort and hope that visitors will enjoy the opportunity to view the amazing photographs of nineteenth-century Philadelphia that are available in the Library Company's collections." - Dr. John C. Van Horne, The *Edwin Wolf 2nd* Director, Library Company of Philadelphia

The collections are also available via a location-aware [iPhone application](http://phillyhistory.org/i/) (<http://phillyhistory.org/i/>), enabling users to compare historic images to their present location. And to further help people see the past all around them, the Philadelphia Department of Records has recently been awarded a [NEH Digital Humanities](#) Start-Up grant to develop a prototype augmented reality application. Utilizing a combination of the GPS and camera technologies available on smart phones, this mobile phone application will enable users to view the historic photographs from *PhillyHistory.org* as overlays on the current urban landscape.

To view the photographs and maps contained in *PhillyHistory.org*, please visit www.phillyhistory.org. To search particular collections, select the 'Collections' search item on the search page. To request interviews, high-resolutions photographs, and more information about the *PhillyHistory.org* project or the technology that underlines it, please contact Abby Fretz at (215) 701 – 7503 or e-mail afretz@azavea.com

About Azavea

[Azavea](#) is an award-winning geospatial analysis (GIS) software development firm specializing in the creation of location-based web and mobile solutions, as well as geospatial analysis services to enhance decision-making processes. Azavea is committed to working on projects with a strong social value component in order to promote the emergence of more [dynamic, vibrant, and sustainable communities](#). Each of Azavea's projects, products and pro bono engagements showcases this commitment. Azavea is a certified [B Corporation](#). For more information, visit www.azavea.com

About the Philadelphia Department of Records

The Home Rule Charter of 1952 established the [Department of Records](#) to ensure that Philadelphia's municipal records are appropriately controlled and managed. The Department sets records management standards and procedures for all departments, boards, commissions and agencies, and it manages key central recordkeeping operations and services such as the City Archives, the Records Storage Center, the Recorder of Deeds and the Central Reprographics Services. www.phila.gov/Records/

About the Library Company of Philadelphia

The Library Company of Philadelphia is an independent research library concentrating on American history and culture from the 17th through 19th centuries. Free and open to the public, the Library Company houses an extensive non-circulating collection of rare books, manuscripts, broadsides, ephemera and works of art. The mission of the Library Company is to preserve, interpret, make available, and augment the valuable materials within our care. We serve a diverse constituency throughout Philadelphia and the nation, offering comprehensive reader services, an internationally renowned fellowship program, an online public access catalog, and regular exhibitions and public programs. Located at 1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, it is open to the public free of charge from 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Library Company can be found online at www.librarycompany.org/.

About the Philadelphia Office of the City Representative

The [Office of the City Representative](#) serves as the marketing, promotion, public relations and branding arm for the City of Philadelphia responsible for developing and promoting events to attract commerce, visitors and new residents while raising the quality of life for its citizens. The Office collaborates with various regional agencies and institutions to ensure that a unified Philadelphia marketing message is perceived by regional, national and global audiences.

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