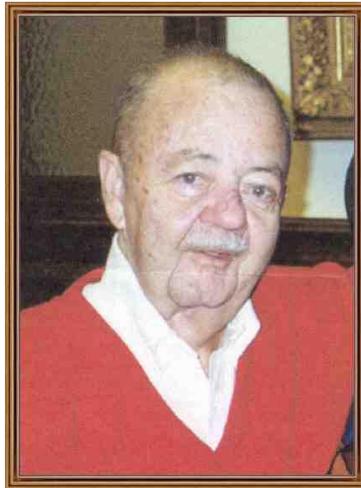


For the nine years ending June 30, 2009, this fund raised about **\$20,000,000** for the preservation of Connecticut's historic documents.

(Figures courtesy Office of the Public Records Administrator)



Warren Dunn Buchanan

Members of The Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council are proud to have introduced the legislation that instituted the Historic Records Preservation Program in Connecticut. That legislation has enhanced genealogy and the preservation of historic documents throughout Connecticut far beyond our imagining.

Our late president, Warren Dunn Buchanan, conceived of the idea to have Connecticut collect a fee to preserve our historic documents. Warren had seen the program work successfully in New York State where he performed much of his genealogical research. He was annoyed that Connecticut, the wealthiest state in the country (per capita), did not treasure its historic documents enough to systematically and professionally preserve them for future generations.

Warren and member Bob Rafford brought the matter to Senator Tim Upson in 1997. Warren convinced Tim of the need for such a fund, and Tim subsequently introduced legislation to establish a fee to be attached to all land transactions in the state. The bill did not pass initially, but gradually made its way through the legislative process, aided greatly in its final year by state Representative Steve Fontana (D-North Haven). The late Donna Holt Siemiatkoski, first president of CPGC, worked diligently with Warren and members of the CPGC, lobbying legislators until the bill became law in 2000. Warren did not live to see its passage, but he was aware of how close it was to becoming a reality.

The bill, called [An Act Concerning Real Estate Filings and the Preservation of Historic Documents](#) (subsequently [amended](#)), was signed into law by Governor John G. Rowland in May 2000, and went into effect July 1, 2000. This legislation imposes a fee of three dollars to be paid for all documents recorded on the land records. The town clerk is responsible for collecting the fees. One dollar is retained by the town for the preservation of historical documents, as specified in the legislation. The remaining two dollars is forwarded to the State Library for the Historic Documents Preservation Account. The program that is established by this fund is administered by the Connecticut State Library Office of the [Public Records Administrator](#). The office has prepared a [Fact Sheet](#) briefly outlining the provisions of this public act.



CPGC Former President Robert L. Rafford (center) with Town Clerks Joan Locke (Brookfield) and Joe Camposeo (Manchester) at the Awards Ceremony, August 7, 2001.

On Tuesday, August 7, 2001, many Town Clerks gathered in Memorial Hall of the Connecticut State Library and Supreme Court building in Hartford for an Historic Documents Preservation Program Awards Reception. At that ceremony, grants were presented to 104 towns and cities in Connecticut totaling \$340,000, part of the monies received by the state through this program. CPGC president Robert L. Rafford was there representing CPGC's role in the initiation of and ongoing efforts to enact the legislation.