



The Mary Baker Eddy Library

Christian Science Plaza construction photographs, 1963-1975

a finding aid

200 Massachusetts Ave.
Boston, MA 02115
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Collection Description

Collection #: LSC010

Collection Title: Christian Science Plaza construction photographs

Inclusive Dates: 1963-1975

Extent: 21 boxes

Restrictions: No

Scope: This collection contains black and white photographs and color slides documenting the construction of the Christian Science Plaza in the 1960s and 1970s.

During the early 1960s work began on a vast urban renewal project in Boston. This involved the construction of the Prudential Center and a number of other projects throughout the city. As part of this urban renewal, The First Church of Christ, Scientist announced its plans in 1966 to redevelop 31 acres of residential, business and public land in Back Bay. This project involved the construction of two new administration buildings, a Sunday School, and a public plaza, complete with a reflecting pool. Private developers were also encouraged to undertake residential, commercial and retail projects nearby.

The Plaza buildings were designed and built by I.M. Pei & Partners and Araldo Cossutta, Associated Architects. They are prime examples of Brutalism, an architectural style popular in the 1950s and 1960s. Construction on the Plaza started in 1967, with a garage for 550 cars covered by a reflecting pool measuring 686 feet long, 98 feet wide, and 2 feet deep, holding 1.3 million gallons of water.

Two new administration buildings were built on the Plaza to alleviate overcrowding in existing Church office spaces. The Colonnade building, a five story structure running parallel to the reflecting pool, was completed in 1972. Another administration building was constructed at 177 Huntington Avenue. This tower was built 27 stories high, supported by 500 massive pilings sunk 180 feet deep into bedrock. To soften the Brutalist architecture, the concrete was sandblasted and 200 trees planted around the Plaza. A new Sunday School was built in 1970-1972.

Demolition and land clearing for the project began in 1966 and was completed in 1973 when the administration offices moved to Huntington Avenue. The previous administration building, built in 1908, on Falmouth Street was torn down, along with a number of buildings along Massachusetts Avenue. This made it possible to create an appropriate entrance to The Mother Church and make it visible from the main street (Massachusetts Avenue).

The portico of The Mother Church was completed in 1975, continuing the signature theme across the Plaza of inset windows behind large columns – in this case Corinthian columns. Simultaneously, Falmouth and St. Paul Streets, and a portion of Norway Street, were closed to make the neighborhood much more pedestrian-friendly.

The photographs in this collection document all stages of this significant urban renewal project, which changed the face of Boston.

Notes: This collection was processed by Dan Bullman, Photo Archivist, in 2018.

Arrangement: This collection is arranged into two series: 1) Color slides and 2) Black and white prints.

Series Descriptions

Series #: 01

Series Name: Color slides

Scope: This series contains color slides documenting the construction and renovation projects on the Christian Science Plaza during the 1960s and 1970s.

Inclusive Dates: 1963-1975

Notes:

Extent: 9 boxes

Series Container List

Collection/Series #: LSC010 / 01 – Color slides

Box . Folder	Title
001	Christian Science Center construction slides, 1966/07-1968/09
001.01	Demolition of Capri Theatre and Huntington Avenue apartments, 1966
001.02	Demolition for Church Center, 1966/07-1967/11
001.03	Christian Science Church Park and Falmouth Street apartments, 1966/06-1966/07
001.04	Demolition of Albiani Restaurant, 1966/06/06-1966/06/07
001.05	Demolition of Albiani Restaurant and Falmouth Street apartments, 1966/06
001.06	Demolition on Huntington Avenue, 1966/06-1966/08
001.07	Demolition on Falmouth Street, 1966/06
001.08	Demolition of apartments on Norway Street, Falmouth Street, and Huntington Avenue, 1966/07-1966/08
001.09	Christian Science Church Park, 1966/07
001.10	Completed demolition, 1966/08
001.11	Start of new construction in Christian Science Center, 1967/08-1967/11
001.12	Demolition at 64 Clearway Street, 1967/11/09
001.13	Demolition (possibly Clearway Street), 1967/11/10-1967/11/21
001.14	Removal of trees from Church Park, 1968/02
001.15	Removal of trees from Church Park, 1968/02

001.16 Demolition for construction of Christian Science Center, 1968/04/10-1968/04/11

001.17 Demolition for construction of Christian Science Center, 1968/04/11

001.18 Demolition for construction of Christian Science Center, 1968/04/11

001.19 Demolition for construction of Christian Science Center, 1968/04/24-1968/04/29

001.20 Demolition for construction of Christian Science Center, 1968/04/29

001.21 Demolition for construction of Christian Science Center, 1968/05-1968/06

001.22 Demolition of Back Bay Theatre, 1968/06-1968/07

001.23 Demolition of Back Bay Theatre, 1968/07-1968/09

002 Christian Science Center construction slides, 1969/07-1970/12

002.01 Christian Science Center construction, 1969/07-1969/11

002.02 Christian Science Center construction, 1969/07

002.03 Christian Science Center construction, 1969/07

002.04 Christian Science Center construction, 1969/11

002.05 Christian Science Center construction, 1969/08

002.06 Christian Science Center construction, 1969/11

002.07 Christian Science Center construction, 1969/08-1969/10

002.08 Christian Science Center construction, 1970/04-1970/09

002.09 Sunday School construction, 1970/03-1970/10

002.10 Christian Science Center construction, 1970/04-1970/06

002.11 Christian Science Center construction, 1970/04

002.12 Sunday School and Colonnade construction, 1970-1971

002.13 Christian Science Center construction, 1970

003 Christian Science Center construction slides, 1968-1969

003.01 Church Center construction (5), 1968/11/21

003.02 Church Center construction - reflecting pool (6), 1968-1969

003.03 Church Center construction (7), 1968-1969

003.04 Church Center construction (8), 1968-1969

003.05 Church Center construction (9), 1968-1969

- 003.06 General views from the top of the dome of The Mother Church (10), 1969/04
- 003.07 Church Center construction (11), 1968-1969
- 003.08 Church Center construction (12), 1969/04
- 003.09 Church Center construction (5), 1969/02/27
- 003.10 Church Center construction, 1968/12
- 003.11 Church Center construction, 1969/09
- 003.12 Church Center construction, 1969/04
- 003.13 Church Center construction (4), 1968/09/16
- 003.14 Church Center construction, 1969/03
- 003.15 Church Center construction, 1969/03-1969/04
- 003.16 Church Center construction, 1968/09
- 003.17 Church Center construction (14), 1969/03
- 003.18 Church Center construction, 1968/11-1968/12
- 003.19 Church Center construction, 1969/04
- 004 Christian Science Center construction slides, Circa 1965-1973
- 004.01 Christian Science Center models (1 of 2), Circa 1960-1965
- 004.02 Christian Science Center models (2 of 2), Circa 1960-1965
- 004.03 Christian Science Center construction - Rechner and Cossutta, Circa 1960-1970
- 004.04 Christian Science Center construction (1 of 4), 1966-1972
- 004.05 Christian Science Center construction (2 of 4), 1966-1972
- 004.06 Christian Science Center construction (3 of 4), 1966-1972
- 004.07 Christian Science Center construction (4 of 4), 1966-1972
- 004.08 Christian Science Center construction (1 of 2), 1968
- 004.09 Christian Science Center construction (2 of 2), 1968
- 004.10 Christian Science Center construction (1 of 2), 1969/02-1969/11
- 004.11 Christian Science Center construction (2 of 2), 1969/02-1969/11
- 004.12 Christian Science Center construction, 1970
- 004.13 Sunday School and Colonnade construction, 1970-1971
- 004.14 Christian Science Center construction (1 of 2), 1971/04-1971/08

- 004.15 Christian Science Center construction (2 of 2), 1971/04-1971/08
- 004.16 Christian Science Center construction (1 of 2), 1971-1972
- 004.17 Christian Science Center construction (2 of 2), 1971-1972
- 004.18 Views of Christian Science Center construction, 1972/01
- 004.19 Construction from new Admin building 27th floor (1 of 2), Circa 1972
- 004.20 Construction from new Admin building 27th floor (2 of 2), Circa 1972
- 004.21 Construction projects Christian Science Center, 1973
- 004.22 Admin building demolition photos - demolition at 107 Falmouth Street, 1973/07
- 005 Christian Science Center construction slides, 1965-1972
- 005.01 Church Park and The Mother Church (1 of 2), 1965-1966
- 005.02 Church Park and The Mother Church (2 of 2), 1965-1966
- 005.03 Christian Science Center artists conceptions and aerial views, Circa 1960-1965
- 005.04 Aerial views of Christian Science Plaza, Circa 1960-1965
- 005.05 Archives office in Admin building prior to moving, 1973/05
- 005.06 Christian Science Center construction (1 of 2), Circa 1965-1975
- 005.07 Christian Science Center construction (2 of 2), Circa 1965-1975
- 005.08 Admin building construction (1 of 2), 1972
- 005.09 Admin building construction (2 of 2), 1972
- 005.10 Sunday School construction (1 of 3), 1968-1972
- 005.11 Sunday School construction (2 of 3), 1970-1971
- 005.12 Sunday School construction (3 of 3), 1971
- 005.13 Christian Science Center construction (1 of 2), 1972
- 005.14 Christian Science Center construction (2 of 2), 1972
- 005.15 Undated photos of Christian Science Plaza construction (1 of 2), Circa 1965-1975
- 005.16 Undated photos of Christian Science Plaza construction (2 of 2), Circa 1965-1975
- 006 Christian Science Center construction slides, 1971-1974
- 006.01 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/02
- 006.02 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/02

- 006.03 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/02
- 006.04 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/03
- 006.05 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/03
- 006.06 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/04
- 006.07 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/04
- 006.08 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/05
- 006.09 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/05
- 006.10 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/07
- 006.11 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/08
- 006.12 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/09
- 006.13 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/09
- 006.14 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/10
- 006.15 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/11
- 006.16 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/11
- 006.17 Christian Science Center construction, 1971/11
- 006.18 Christian Science Center construction, 1972/01
- 006.19 Undated slides of Christian Science Center construction, Circa 1971-1974
- 006.20 Christian Science Center construction, 1972-1974
- 007 Portico construction slides, 1967-1975
- 007.01 Plaster models for stone carving - TMC Portico construction (1/5), Circa 1973-1974
- 007.02 Plaster models for stone carving - TMC Portico construction (2/5), Circa 1973-1974
- 007.03 Plaster models for stone carving - TMC Portico construction (3/5), Circa 1973-1974
- 007.04 Plaster models for stone carving - TMC Portico construction (4/5), Circa 1973-1974
- 007.05 Plaster models for stone carving - TMC Portico construction (5/5), Circa 1973-1974
- 007.06 Portico construction - structural steel, 1974
- 007.07 Portico construction - Plaster capital models - Montreal (1/4), 1974
- 007.08 Portico construction - Plaster capital models - Montreal (2/4), 1974
- 007.09 Portico construction - Plaster capital models - Montreal (3/4), 1974
- 007.10 Portico construction - Plaster capital models - Montreal (4/4), 1974

- 007.11 TMC - details of existing plaster, 1974
- 007.12 Rose window erection - stone - stained glass (1/2), 1974
- 007.13 Rose window erection - stone - stained glass (2/2), 1974
- 007.14 TMC Portico construction - details of existing stone carving and buildings (1/2), 1974/03
- 007.15 TMC Portico construction - details of existing stone carving and buildings (2/2), 1974/03
- 007.16 TMC Portico - granite base carving - RI, 1973-1974
- 007.17 Portico construction - misc, 1975/01
- 007.18 Portico construction, 1975
- 008 Portico construction slides, 1967-1975
- 008.01 CS Plaza building models (1/2), Circa 1967-1969
- 008.02 CS Plaza building models (2/2), Circa 1967-1969
- 008.03 Interior plaster models carving by Dr. Cascieri - Boston, 1974
- 008.04 Portico construction - plaster installation, 1973/02/22-1973/04
- 008.05 TMC Extension Portico - Montreal - Loubot's studio - plaster models misc, 1973
- 008.06 TMC Extension Portico - plaster models, 1973
- 008.07 TMC Extension Portico - plaster models, 1973
- 008.08 TMC Extension Portico - stone erection (1/4), 1974
- 008.09 TMC Extension Portico - stone erection (2/4), 1974
- 008.10 TMC Extension Portico - stone erection (3/4), 1974
- 008.11 TMC Extension Portico - stone erection (4/4), 1974
- 008.12 TMC Extension Portico - tree planting, 1974
- 008.13 Misc - TMC Portico project slides, Circa 1973-1975
- 008.14 TMC Extension Portico - stone carving and Woollery Mill - quarry and offices, 1973
- 008.15 TMC Extension Portico - carvings - misc stone, 1974
- 008.16 TMC Portico - Indiana - Woollery Quarry - turning capital drums, 1974
- 008.17 TMC Portico - Indiana - Woollery Quarry - capital stone carving (1/2), 1973-1974
- 008.18 TMC Portico - Indiana - Woollery Quarry - capital stone carving (2/2), 1973-1974

- 009 Portico construction slides, 1971-1974
- 009.01 CS Plaza construction project - demolition on Falmouth Street, 1966-1967
- 009.02 Demolition for TMC Portico (1/2), 1973/07/30
- 009.03 Demolition for TMC Portico (2/2), 1973/07/30
- 009.04 Demolition for Portico (1/2), 1973/08
- 009.05 Demolition for Portico (2/2), 1973/08
- 009.06 Portico construction (1/2), 1974/06
- 009.07 Portico construction (2/2), 1974/06
- 009.08 Portico construction, 1973/04
- 009.09 Portico construction, 1973
- 009.10 Portico sculptures, 1973/06
- 009.11 TMC Portico (1/2), 1974/01/25
- 009.12 TMC Portico (2/2), 1974/01/25
- 009.13 Portico construction (1/2), 1974/03/03-1974/03/04
- 009.14 Portico construction (2/2), 1974/03/03-1974/03/04
- 009.15 Portico construction (1/2), 1974/05
- 009.16 Portico construction (2/2), 1974/05
- 009.17 Portico construction, 1974
- 009.18 TMC Portico (1/2), 1974/07
- 009.19 TMC Portico (2/2), 1974/07
- 009.20 Portico construction - rose window, capital, 1974/09/01-1974/09/21
- 009.21 Portico construction, 1974/10/07
- 009.22 Portico construction (1/2), 1974/10/08
- 009.23 Portico construction (2/2), 1974/10/08

Series #: 02

Series Name: Black and white prints:

Scope: This series contains black and white prints documenting the construction and renovation projects on the Christian Science Plaza during the 1960s and 1970s.

Inclusive Dates: 1963-1975

Notes: This series of photographs has been digitized and is available for viewing in our Research Room at The Mary Baker Eddy Library. Please contact research@mbelibrary.org for more information on how to access the digitized images.

Extent: 12 boxes

Series Container List

Collection/Series #: LSC010 / 02 – Black and white prints

Box . Folder	Title
010	P02310-P02381, Circa 1967
011	P02382-P02584, 1967-1968
012	P02585-P02749, 1968-1969
013	P02750-P02915, 1969
014	P02916-P03069, 1969-1971
015	P03070-P03220, 1971-1972
016	P03221-P03415, Circa 1968-1987
017	P03416-P03474, Circa 1965-1975
018	P03475-P03633 (Gordon Converse), Circa 1971-1972
019	P03634-P03797 (Gordon Converse), Circa 1971-1972
020	P03798-P03966 (Gordon Converse), Circa 1971-1972
021	P03967-P04138 (Gordon Converse), Circa 1971-1972