

# Friends of Kentucky Public Archives

Volume VII Number 1

Winter 1991

## Lexington Library Hosts Friends' Meeting and Symposium

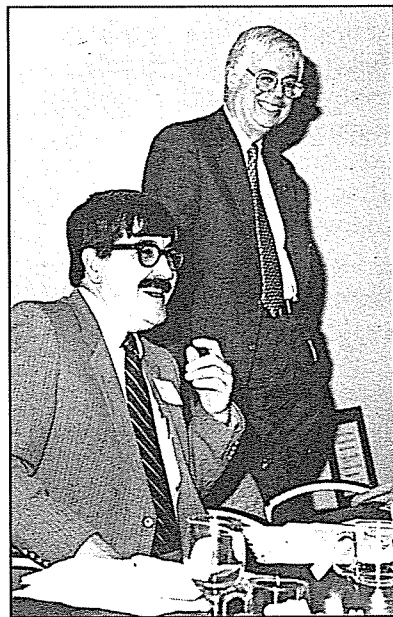
Members of the Friends from across the state gathered November 16 for the annual luncheon, business meeting, and public archives symposium at the Lexington Public Library.

The business meeting got underway with greetings and call to order by Paul F. Coates, Vice President, representing Howard T. Goodpaster, President, who was recovering from surgery.

Richard N. Belding, State Archivist and Records Administrator, then conveyed the greetings of James A. Nelson, Commissioner of the Department for Libraries and Archives, and expressed his appreciation and that of Commissioner Nelson for the continuing support of the Friends for department programs.

A highlight of the meeting was the presentation of a detailed report on Friends' activities during 1990 prepared by President Goodpaster and delivered by Vice President Coates. (See pages 4 and 5.)

Following Coates' remarks, Belding gave his annual state of the Archives address for 1989-90. Belding noted that Kentucky has had a formal, statutorily mandated program for protecting public records for only a little more than 30 years. Over the course of that time, the state has made great progress in managing public records, but, he stressed, much work remains to be done. Belding recounted that State Ar-



Luncheon speaker George Wolford, left, and Vice President Paul Coates shared a laugh at the annual meeting.

chives are a development of this century, formed as a result of particular circumstances in each state and responding to the increased roles of government in people's lives. He noted the impact of national and international developments on policies within each state and, in turn, on the records created in these states.



Featured Public Archives Symposium speaker, Dr. Altina Waller, looks on as Dr. Ronald Eller, Director of the University of Kentucky's Appalachian Center, comments on her presentation.

Belding further observed that whatever the organizational placement of State Archives, these agencies, from the beginning, have shared a common mission: to preserve essential government records for the use of citizens, whatever their purpose. State Archives, he elaborated, have held the resources which permitted a critical look at the past and informed the development of public policy. He concluded by sharing a variety of statistical measures of activity at the Archives during the 1989-90 fiscal year. (See page 6.)

The annual meeting agenda also included a status report on the Clark Endowment Fund by Endowment Chairman Charles Grawemeyer, the election of officers, and the presentation of special awards. (Reports on these items appear elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Please see page 3.

# Records Profiles: Bankruptcy Case Files

*an underutilized source for social and economic history*

By

**Gayle Peters & David Hilkert**

*National Archives—Southeastern Region*

Part One of a Two-Part Series

As a research resource for the study of American social and economic history in the 20th century, bankruptcy case files may be the best-kept secret in the holdings of the 12 regions of the National Archives and Records Administration. They are a valuable resource — standardized, voluminous, and meaty — yet they are rarely cited as sources by scholars.

Created by the thousands throughout the nation, bankruptcy case files provide a large pool of data for examining national trends or illuminating local studies. They are rich in detail, containing unique economic and social data about individual lifestyles, business operations, and commercial relationships.

Case files are customarily transferred to the National Archives when they are 25 years old. As open and public records, they are then maintained for researchers by the 12 regional archives as part of Record Group 21, the records of the federal district courts.

## *A word to our Friends...*

It is my pleasure to serve as your president for 1990-91 and I look forward to a year of growth and exciting activities for the Friends. The Friends, a not-for-profit corporation, is an independent group of private citizens concerned with proper management, preservation, and use of the Commonwealth's historic public records.

We will continue to publish this quarterly newsletter in order to increase public awareness of the State Archives, its mission, and collections.

On behalf of the Friends, I urge you join us today in this important work.

*George M. Cunha,*  
President

Throughout our history, various bankruptcy acts have been passed by Congress, and in each instance, the records created by the law reflected the economic and social conditions of the times: the Act of 1800 proceeded from the business disturbances of 1797, the Act of 1841 became law following the Panic of 1837, and the economic distress caused by the Civil War required action in 1867, when a more comprehensive law attempted to establish a national bankruptcy system. However, in each of these cases, the laws were of short duration, and large portions of the nation generated few records.

The 1898 Act was markedly different from its precursors and has produced the richest store of research material. Responding to the Panic of '93, Congress tried again, this time successfully, to structure a permanent method of addressing bankruptcy. The Act, amended heavily in the 1930s, continued in force until replaced in 1978 by the bankruptcy act that established separate bankruptcy courts. But for nearly half our national life, the 1898 Act provided a uniform law prescribing standard procedures and use of common forms. While it was in effect, America finished its nation-building, fought five wars, and experienced wild fluctuations in the economic heartbeat. The

1898 law not only provided each petitioner and creditor a method of settling debts; the records it engendered provide historians with an image of how Americans lived, struggled, and succeeded (or failed) in the economy of their community and the nation, both in hard times and happier days.

These records depict the methods by which each petitioner conducted business. They frequently hold detailed information on the occupation or business of the petitioner, names and locations of people with whom the petitioner conducted business, prices paid and demanded, routes of commerce, market boundaries and distribution, and the debtor's assets and expenses.

The list of assets presented by individual bankrupts may give information on the location of family homes and farmland, household goods, tools and equipment, contents of libraries, and value of livestock. The assets listed by businesses and corporations may include merchandise on hand, accounts receivable, notes and securities held, equipment, rolling stock, and raw materials.

*Reprinted with permission from  
The Court Historian, Vol. 1, No. 3,  
October 1990,  
published by the  
Federal Judicial History Program.*

## A Welcome to New Members of the Friends!

The Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., wish to welcome those individuals who have joined the organization to date during the 1990-91 program year. The following is a partial listing of new members. Others will appear in future newsletters.

Kandie Adkinson  
*Louisville*  
Diane Adler  
*Crestwood*  
Barbara Bishop  
*Campbellsville*  
Judith Bowen  
*Louisville*  
Elizabeth Boyd  
*Louisville*

Elizabeth Buxton  
*Frankfort*  
Mrs. Thomas Courtenay  
*Shelbyville*  
Martha Davis  
*LaGrange*  
Betsy Donahue  
*Salvisa*  
William Ellis  
*Richmond*

Fletcher Elmore  
*Louisville*  
R. Dallas Embry  
*Morgantown*  
James M. Everett  
*Hickman*  
Alma Fairchild  
*Louisville*  
The Filson Club  
*Louisville*

## 1990 Annual Meeting and Symposium

*Continued from page 1.*

At the conclusion of the business meeting, a special program was offered by George Wolford, Senior Newswriter for the *Daily Independent* in Ashland. Wolford discussed his activities as a writer searching public archives for the stories of his region. Once located, these stories have appeared as newspaper columns and articles, and in books he has written about the history of several Eastern Kentucky counties.

The meeting was adjourned and the afternoon's program continued with the Public Archives Symposium featuring Dr. Altina L. Waller, author of *Feud: Hatfields, McCoys, and Social Change in Appalachia, 1860-1900*. She shared the stage with Dr. Ronald Eller of the University of Kentucky's Appalachian Center, who commented on her presentation. Some 50 persons, both Friends and members of the general public, attended the event.



Author/historian Altina Waller and State Archivist Richard Belding listen to comments on the Public Archives Symposium topic, "Social Change in Appalachia."

### Public Officials Receive Friends' Merit Awards

Three Kentucky public officials were recognized for their outstanding contributions in managing and preserving public records at the Friends' 1990 annual meeting.

Ohio County Clerk Robert C. Magan was on hand to receive a framed tribute to his accomplishments in caring for the records in his custody.



Robert C. Magan

Other recipients of the 1990 merit awards were unable to attend the meeting and were presented with certificates at a later date.

They were Dora Henry, Estill County Clerk, and Bonnye Moody, Circuit Court Clerk for Simpson County.

### Officers, Board Members Elected at Annual Meeting

A slate of officers and board members for 1991 was introduced and accepted during the Friends' annual business meeting in November.

New officers are George Cunha, President; Jean Calvert, Vice President; Paul Coates, Vice President; Pat Hodges, Vice President; Porter Harned, Treasurer, and Mary Doyle Johnson, Secretary.

Members elected to serve on the board include Donna Stark Thompson, Jean Calvert, Paul Coates, Dr. William Ellis, Charles C. Hay III, Pat Hodges, George Packowski, and Chester Young.

Once the new officials took office in December, they held a planning meeting to chart the organization's course for 1991.

## Recent Accessions

By

James M. Pritchard

*Archives Research Room Supervisor  
Department for Libraries & Archives*

Research Room patrons used over 32,000 rolls of film in 1990. This total symbolizes the importance of our continued efforts to preserve and increase the availability of Kentucky's public records through our local records film grants program. Approximately 1,500 rolls of city, county and judicial film have been made available to researchers since the beginning of the fiscal year. These recent additions represent rich sources from across the state, including county clerk records from Bell, Bourbon, Boyle, Breckinridge, Carter, Lawrence, McLean, Marshall, Perry, Pulaski, Shelby, Simpson, and Webster.

These accessions provide a variety of record sources for family and local history research. Those from Boyle County yield numerous examples of county level "bond books" that contain important information on local officials and professions. Public officials were required to furnish the Commonwealth with surety bonds that guaranteed the faithful execution of their duties, particularly in regard to the collection of all public moneys. Such Boyle County records as *Constables Bond Books* (1842-1954) and *Sheriffs Bond Books* (1876-1893) may contain the names of the principal and surety, their respective signatures, title of office, date, amount and requirements of bond and attestation of county court clerk. These records would be extremely valuable for identifying early local officials.

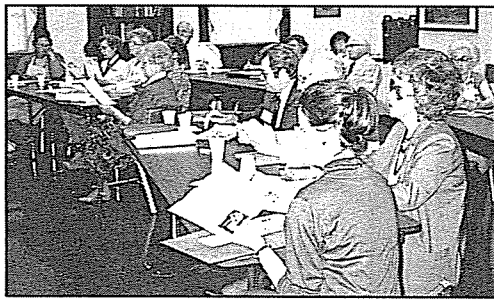
Other bond books reflect the activities of local professions and private individuals. *Boyle*

*Please see page 6.*

# 1990

## The Friends'

## Year in Review



Sponsored Local Records Workshop in Danville; more than 35 attend.



Trace Kirkwood selected as Clark Intern for 1990; begins work.

Completed work on first issue of Friends' sponsored publication, *Reflections: Occasional Papers on Research in Kentucky Public Records*.

January-February

March

April

May

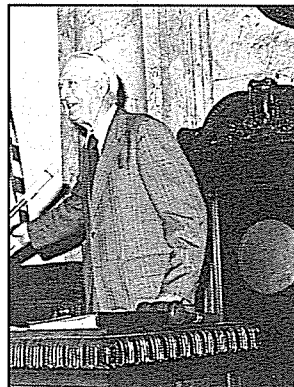
June

Developed a videotape on Kentucky's historic records, the Friends, and the role of the Clark Endowment Fund.

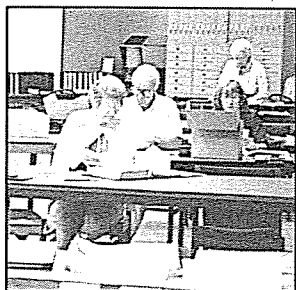
During the 1990 General Assembly, supported legislation strengthening Kentucky's statute dealing with tampering with public records.

Sponsored a reception honoring Dr. Thomas D. Clark upon his designation as Historian Laureate of Kentucky by act of the General Assembly and signature of Governor Wallace G. Wilkinson.

Developed and distributed a bookmark honoring Dr. Clark and describing the Friends, the Clark Endowment, and the State Archives.



Received word of grant for microfilm readers from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels.



Co-sponsored reception for attendees at the annual summer genealogical seminar of the Kentucky Genealogical Society at the Department for Libraries and Archives to encourage use of public records in genealogical research.



Held meeting with the Filson Club, using the event as an opportunity to discuss the mission of the Friends and especially of the Clark Endowment Fund. More than 75 attend.

**General Achievements**

- ✓ Increased membership to more than 200.
- ✓ Increased capital base of the Clark Endowment to more than \$60,000.
- ✓ Issued quarterly newsletter.

**August**

**October**

**July**

**September**

**November**

Held sixth annual Friends' Kentucky Archives Institute at the Department for Libraries and Archives; more than 60 attend.



Held joint Local Records Workshop meeting with the Kentucky Council on Archives at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green. Archivist of the United States, Dr. Don Wilson, addressed the combined groups. More than 125 attend.

Held annual luncheon and business meeting, followed by the second annual Public Archives Symposium. More than 45 attend luncheon and business meeting, more than 50 the Public Archives Symposium.



*Photo courtesy Western Kentucky University*

## State Archives' Statistics Show Growing Levels of Service

During the 1989-90 Fiscal Year, the work of the State Archives once again produced a remarkable variety of statistical measures of activity. The following statistics were reported by State Archivist Richard Belding at the Friends' annual meeting:

- The level of service provided to archival patrons exceeded 14,000 for the fourth consecutive year.

- Though staffing limitations required the Archives Research Room to reduce the number of days open to the public from six to five in March 1989, reducing public service hours from 2,652 in 1985-86 to 2,210 in 1989-90, the number of archival patrons served exceeded 14,000 for the fourth consecutive year.

	Daily Visits	Phone Requests	Mail Requests	Totals
1985-86	6,492	2,413	3,728	12,633
1986-87	7,053	4,560	3,186	14,799
1987-88	6,659	4,099	3,751	14,509
1988-89	6,669	4,035	3,442	14,146
1989-90	6,669	4,099	3,376	14,144
<b>Totals</b>				
<b>1985-90</b>	<b>33,542</b>	<b>19,206</b>	<b>17,483</b>	<b>70,231</b>

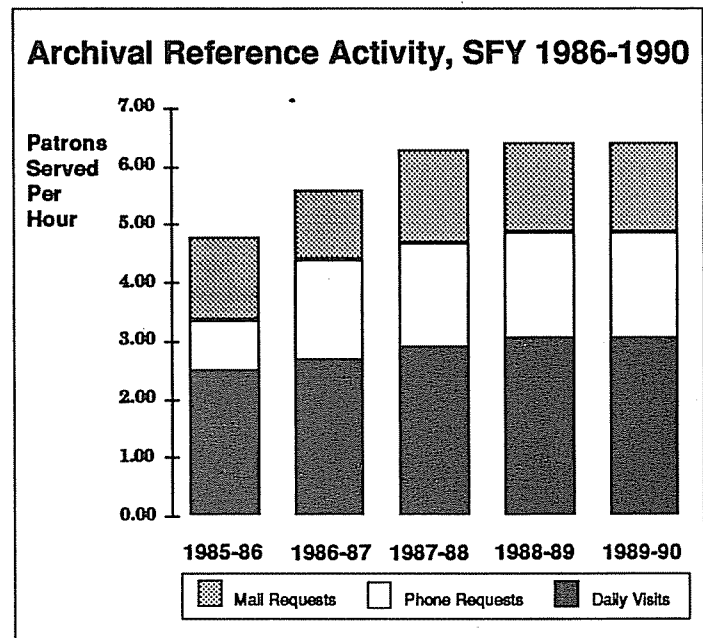
- The Archives accessioned more than 3,200 cubic feet of additional records.

- More than 21,000 documents were treated in the document preservation laboratory.

- Staff assisted more than 2,000 public agencies on more than 5,800 different occasions.

- More than 4.8 million images were filmed by the micrographics laboratory.

- More than 3,000 persons attended a comprehensive series of technical workshops and presentations during the year.



Graph by Glen McAninch  
Public Records Division

### Status Report: Clark Endowment Fund — 1990

During 1989-90 the Thomas D. Clark Endowment Fund grew to \$67,366. The Endowment is grateful for the contributions received during the year from the following:

• Mary & Barry Bingham, Sr. Fund • James Graham Brown Foundation • Thornton Oil Corporation • Anne & Philip Ardery • Mrs. C.C. Calvert (in memory of Earl Wallace) • Jean W. Calvert • C.V. Cooper, Jr. • G.M. Cunha • Norman Chrisman, Jr. • Mrs. Andrew C. Duke • H.E. Everman • Cecil E. Goode • Howard T. Goodpaster • Charles Grawemeyer • Porter Harned • Penny & Lowell Harrison • Charles & Melba Hay • Mary Doyle Johnson • Lynn Olympia • James Powers • Frank Rankin • Anne Rodick • Janet Sparkman • Cora Jane Spiller • Chester Young.

### Recent Research Room Accessions

Continued from page 3.

*County Ministers Bond Books (1884-1941)*, like similar records for other counties, record original surety bonds furnished the Commonwealth by ministers guaranteeing the observance of marriage laws. These records generally contain the names of principal and surety, date, number and amount of bond, nature of duties, affidavit of surety and attestation of county court clerk.

*Boyle County Tavern Keepers Bond Books (1874-1885)* contain surety bonds furnished by local tavern keepers assuring they would maintain an orderly house, provide wholesome food and clean lodging. These local records may provide information about individuals and social life in a county when other sources are no longer available.

These specific records are only a brief sampling of the many state, county and judicial records that await the researcher in the State Archives.



# Assisting Research Room Patrons Knowledgeable Volunteers Make the Difference in Service

Knowledgeable volunteers, under the Friends' Archives Volunteer Program, have been invaluable in supplementing the work of available KDLA staff. Maintaining a high level of public service, they have become an integral part of the Archival Services Branch since the program's inception in the Fall of 1989.



In January, the Friends' 15 charter volunteers were honored at a luncheon in Frankfort. KDLA Commissioner Jim Nelson, second from left, presented luncheon attendees with certificates of appreciation. Pictured above with Commissioner Nelson are, from left, Ellie Caroland, George Cunha, Mary Doyle Johnson, Ilene Wills, Donna Stark Thompson, Jo Ann Shingleton, Martha Stamper, Iris Winkler, Sam Munson, Patsy Benton, Iris Byington, Marjorie Diamond, and Gus Meade. Thank you one and all!

If you are interested in the Friends' Volunteer Program, please contact the Archives Research Room, P.O. Box 537, Frankfort, Kentucky 40602-0537.



**What do Friends' volunteers at KDLA do?**

Providing public service and access to the public records maintained by the State Archives are the primary responsibilities of the volunteer. These responsibilities may include:

- Helping patrons in the use of KDLA finding aids and microfilm equipment.
- Assisting patrons in understanding records and their potential for research.
- Responding to letter and telephone requests.
- Aiding the staff in refileing microfilm and reshelving books.

### Remembering . . .

#### Earl D. Wallace

Founding member of the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., and the Clark Endowment for Archival Internships, Earl D. Wallace, died in April 1990. A son of Kentucky and one of the Commonwealth's greatest benefactors, Mr. Wallace will long be remembered for his many contributions, the most visible of which was the restoration of Shakertown at Pleasant Hill. He will be missed deeply by all those who treasure Kentucky's rich heritage.

## Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., Membership Form

Box 4224, Frankfort, Kentucky 40604

My check for \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to the *Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.*, is enclosed. Benefits include a quarterly newsletter and invitations to workshops, special events, the Kentucky Archives Institute, and the annual meeting. Gifts to the Friends are tax deductible.

Individual	\$10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustaining	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life	\$250	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate	\$1000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gift \$	_____	
New Member		<input type="checkbox"/>
Renewal		<input type="checkbox"/>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive a membership pin. \_\_\_\_\_

*Please clip and mail to a friend along with a note about our work.*

## Plans Underway for Southeastern Archives and Records Conference



At an early December meeting, directors and representatives of state archives in five southeastern states met in Frankfort at the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives to develop plans for the annual Southeastern Archives and Records Conference (SARC) set for May 8-10 in Lexington.

Shown from left clockwise are Jim Berberich, Florida; Alexia Helsly, South Carolina, Richard Belding, Kentucky; Ed Bridges, Alabama, and David Olsen, North Carolina.

Participants from SARC's seven member states are expected to attend the conference, which is being sponsored by the Department for Libraries and Archives, with co-sponsorship by the Kentucky Council on Archives and the Friends.

**Now's the time to renew your membership in the Friends!  
See membership form on page 7.**

*Newsletter published with support from the  
Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives*

## Finding Your Civil War Ancestor

The success of the recent PBS series on the Civil War demonstrates the powerful appeal this epic period continues to have for many Americans. Plagued by divided loyalties, Kentucky played a key role in the conflict. According to official records, over 75,000 Kentuckians, including 23,000 black volunteers, fought for the Union during the Civil War. An additional 12,000 served the same cause in Kentucky's state troops and enrolled militia. Historians estimate that between 25,000 and 40,000 Kentucky volunteers served in the Confederate army.

On Saturday, April 13, 1991, the Kentucky State Archives will sponsor a seminar on "Finding Your Civil War Ancestor." This program will provide an overview of those Federal, State, and other related sources for discovering the role your ancestor played in this "American Iliad."

For further details about the program, contact Friends/Civil War Ancestors, c/o P.O. Box 4224, Frankfort, Kentucky 40604.

### *Coming Attractions...*

**April 11-14**

Organization of American Historians  
Galt House, Louisville

**April 13**

Finding Your Civil War Ancestor  
KDLA, State Archives, Frankfort

**May 8-10**

Southeastern Archives & Records Conference  
Hyatt Regency, Lexington

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