

for the Record

Devoted to Kentucky's State Archives and the Historical Record

Summer 2005

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I N S I D E

Dr. Thomas D. Clark

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State Mourns Passing of ‘Father of Kentucky Archives’

Kentucky lost its most determined and eloquent advocate for archives and history with the passing of Thomas D. Clark on June 28, 2005. Dr. Clark, who would have celebrated his 102nd birthday on July 14th, worked throughout his life to protect and preserve historical resources and encourage the creation and continuing support of archives and records programs. During his life, he lent his voice and his remarkable energy to a number of worthy causes, including library development at the University of Kentucky (UK), formation of the Department of Special Collections at UK, creation of the new Kentucky History Center, and development of the University Press of Kentucky. But perhaps no individual entity benefited more from Dr. Clark's vision and tenacity than the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA).

From the time of his work with the WPA's Historical Records Survey in Kentucky during the 1930s, Dr. Clark became interested in preserving Kentucky public records, from state, local and judicial agencies. Kentucky had no central state archival facility and no records management laws in place, and there were no guidelines for preserving government records or for providing research access. Dr. Clark recognized the needs and went to work to change that reality.

With the help of many others that he enlisted in the lobbying effort, he achieved some initial success with the 1950 passage of legislation creating the Records Control Board. In 1958, he succeeded in securing enactment of the State Archives and Records Act, a comprehensive public records law which also created the State Archives and Records Commission. This new law made no provision for a State Archives facility, however, and Dr. Clark continued to press for a permanent, state-owned home for the state's records. He saw his efforts rewarded in 1979, with the groundbreaking for the current Department for Libraries and Archives building on Coffee Tree Road in Frankfort, which was formally dedicated in 1982.

Over the years, when public records issues were at stake, Dr. Clark was always there, playing a key role. He had a profound impact on the work of the State Archives and Records Commission, helping determine which records were preserved and would come to the State Archives and serving as its one-time chair and as a member for 42 of its 47-year existence. He was a key supporter of bringing together state library and state archival functions into a single agency in 1973; he helped develop the agreement which created the partnership arrangement between KDLA and the Administrative Office of the Courts on public records issues; and he was a founding member and inspiration for the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc. He was instrumental in the creation of the state's Local Records Program in 1984 and was quick to recognize the impact that electronic records would have on the state's public records management programs. In his final years, he worked tirelessly to secure the badly needed archival facility expansion for KDLA on its Coffee Tree Road site.

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"The keeping of the public record of a civilized people is a continuing responsibility where properly the task is never completed. The vigilance necessary to preserve the record is synonymous with that of preserving the freedom of an open and democratic society." Dr. Thomas D. Clark, former Historian Laureate of Kentucky

Archives Research Room Hours and Closings

KDLA's Archives Research Room is located at 300 Coffee Tree Road, off State Highway 676 in Frankfort. The Archives Research Room is open to the public from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is closed on Saturday and Sunday, all official state holidays, and special events.

Free parking is provided outside the KDLA building.

Please mark your calendars!

- November 11 – (Monday) – Veterans Day
- November 16 – (Wednesday afternoon) – Archives Symposium

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Plan to attend!

The **Friends' Annual Meeting and Symposium** will be held **Wednesday, November 16** at Shaker Village. Please call (502) 564-8300, ext. 252 for information and reservations.

Research Opportunities at the State Archives

Many researchers interested in the early judicial records for Kentucky may not be aware that the court system was reorganized a number of times within the first few decades of statehood. Several courts existed for only a limited time, including the Court of Quarter Sessions, the Court of Oyer and Terminer, and the District Court. The various jurisdictions of these courts were redistributed to other court systems. The General Court was a product of these early reorganizations, but it continued for over fifty years. Often overlooked by researchers, the records of the General Court can be a useful and interesting resource.

The first reference to the General Court occurred in an Act of the Legislature in 1796, which provided for the creation of a "General Session" of the District Courts. Three years later, this "session" was officially named the General Court. This new court held jurisdiction in cases involving public debtors and in disputes between residents and non-residents of the Commonwealth. The General Court could also hear certain limited cases concerning the ownership of land. Under the Constitution of 1799, the General Court retained its previous jurisdictions, and additionally could decide new or difficult questions involving land titles. In 1825, the jurisdiction of the Court was limited to cases involving amounts in excess of \$500. Finally, in 1850 the legislature abolished the General Court and transferred its powers to the Franklin Circuit Court.

The collection of General Court records available at the State Archives includes a complete set of order books, and over 2500 individual case files. These records document most of the actions heard by the Court over the course of its existence. Public Records Division staff recently compiled indexes to the case files in an electronic format, which allows a researcher to search on either plaintiff or defendant name.

Some of the most notable names in Kentucky history are represented in the records of the General Court, including Isaac Shelby, Simon Kenton, Humphrey Marshall, and Green Clay. In 1803, for example, George Martin, "a citizen of the Northwest Territory" and therefore a non-resident of Kentucky, brought suit in General Court against Simon Kenton, who was thought to be living in Mason County at the time. Isaac Shelby, during his second term as Governor of Kentucky, was party to a suit in General Court against a William Richards, who was charged with not performing his duty as tax collector in Scott County and therefore forfeiting his bond.

The jurisdiction of the General Court was fairly broad. Researchers who are unable to locate specific case files in other courts might find a search of the General Court records worthwhile. The General Court collection is also a good source of documentation of land title disputes, suits involving non-residents, and cases concerning debts owed to the state.

Participants enjoy 2005 Summer Archives Institute at KDLA



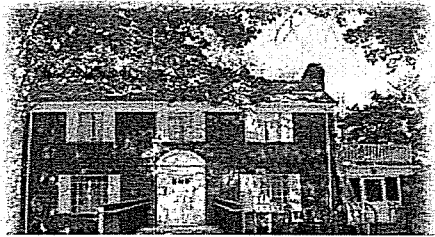
**On the occasion of a reception at KDLA for Dr. Thomas D. Clark on his 90th birthday,
KET host and former newspaper publisher Al Smith made these comments:**

"Some teachers are tyrants; they are respected perhaps, but also feared, because for their own security they must bluster at and dominate the uninformed. Intimidation is part of their persona. Dr. Clark wasn't that kind of teacher at all. Not all of his pupils would grow up to be governors, or judges, or social crusaders, although some did – Ned Breathitt, Harry Caudill, and Wendell Berry, for instance. But there were thousands of good Kentucky men and women who went through his classes in Kentucky and never forgot him. In the years after, they might have mixed up or lost a few dates, but they always remembered this professor with affection. Of course, he told them that the sun did not always shine bright on our beautiful land. He told them that our Eden had been stained with dark and bloody deeds, but he also told them that we could be better than our past. And he told them that he believed that we could change. He took us into our past and then, because he loved us, he showed us our future. This is leadership, ladies and gentlemen. For 60 years, Thomas Clark has been on the right side of important emerging challenges to our state. With energy, intellect, and eloquence, he has cajoled us into trying to be better than many of us want to be. Now, with the Bicentennial behind us, we pause in amazement to realize that he has lived through nearly half of the years of our statehood, and still tells us what it all means. So we thank him for these gifts and for one more: for being with us today, for showing up, hale and hearty on his 90th birthday, truly the conscience of Kentucky."

"Father of Kentucky Archives," cont. from page 1

Whether he was speaking before both houses of the General Assembly, meeting with every Kentucky governor over a 70 year period, or working with a local historical society, he was always striving to build an understanding of the importance of our historical records and of the institutions and people who preserve them. He was our most indefatigable champion, and he told our story with eloquence and warmth, in a remarkably accessible way.

It's very fitting that the Friends' archival internship program and KDLA's building bear his name, for they are testimony to his vision -- building for the future while preserving the past. His legacy is present everywhere, and it was a privilege to have known and worked with him.



New Museum Named for Board Member

Congratulations to Friends' Board member Dr. Jim Ramage, who has been honored with the naming of a new museum in Fort Wright, Kentucky. The James A. Ramage Civil War Museum opened June 30, 2005, and was dedicated August 20, 2005. The museum is on the site of Battery Hooper, one of the Civil War defenses of northern Kentucky and Cincinnati. Fern Storer bequeathed the battery and seventeen acres to the Northern Kentucky University Foundation, and the Foundation sold the property to the City of Fort Wright for a park, with the understanding that the battery would be preserved. Ramage, Regents Professor of History at Northern Kentucky University, led a grant project under NKU's University/Community Partnership Program to partner with the City of Fort Wright in excavating the battery and creating the museum. Battery Hooper is one of six Civil War defenses remaining out of twenty-eight. "I am greatly honored," Ramage said. "The museum symbolizes the best in university-community relations, historic preservation, and professional archaeological excavation."

Archives Workshop Repeats

Deadlines approach for registration

The Kentucky State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) has scheduled a repeat session of the popular workshop, *Understanding Archives: An Introduction to Principles and Practices*. Scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, November 7 and 8, from 9:00 to 5:00, at the Kentucky History Center, 100 W. Broadway, in Frankfort, KY, this workshop is for those who have responsibility for archival records, but little or no archival training. It will especially help librarians, records managers, museum staff, and administrators understand archives programs. If you are responsible for caring for historical records or archival materials, whether diaries and correspondence, the records of an organization or business, or the records of government agencies, special knowledge and training are a must, and this is a good opportunity.

The workshop is presented by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) and sponsored by the Kentucky SHRAB. The SHRAB is providing break refreshments on both days.

This workshop will provide an overview of basic archival functions, including appraisal and accessioning, arrangement and description, preservation, and reference.

As a workshop participant, you will:

- 1) learn basic principles that guide archives work; 2) practice applying those principles to appraisal, arrangement, description, and preservation of historical records; 3) discuss participants' questions about situations at their own archives; 4) gain an understanding of the limits of your knowledge and where to learn more about specific areas; and 5) evaluate your own archives program.

Workshop participants who complete the two day program will earn 1.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Registration fees are as follows:

Early bird (on or before 10/8/2005):

SAA Member: \$285.00; Nonmember: \$365.00

Regular (after 10/8/2005):

SAA Member: \$310.00; Nonmember: \$390.00

Special Registration Subvention Available

Through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the Kentucky SHRAB and the Society of American Archivists will provide a \$130 subvention toward the registration fee of workshop attendees who meet the following criteria: if you are a member of the Kentucky Council on Archives, the Kentucky Library Association, or work in a Kentucky archives, library, historic site, or museum, you are eligible for a \$130 scholarship for partial payment of your registration for this workshop. To register, go to the following web site and follow the registration instructions listed.

<http://www.archivists.org/prof-education/workshop-detail.asp>



KGS Makes Generous Donation. Kentucky Genealogical Society President Patty Knapke presented Friends' President Jim Powers with a check for \$3,500, to be used towards the microfilming of a collection of histories of Kentucky counties' involvement in the First World War. The Friends and the State Archives' staff are very grateful for this timely gift, which will make accessible a large body of rarely seen resources. Thank you, KGS!

Mark your Calendars!

2005 Kentucky Archives Week will be October 9th – 15th. Check the web site for events: <http://archivesweek.ky.gov/>

2005 Ohio Valley History Conference
 October 27-29, 2005, at Murray State University
 For details, contact:
[http://campus.murraystate.edu/academic/faculty/bill.mulligan/2005 Ohio Valley Conference.html](http://campus.murraystate.edu/academic/faculty/bill.mulligan/2005%20Ohio%20Valley%20Conference.html)

The Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., is a not for profit membership organization of private citizens concerned with helping the Public Records Division of Kentucky's Department for Libraries and Archives fulfill its role as a vital information link between people and government. The Friends' organization supports the management, preservation, and use of Kentucky's historic public records and serves as an advocate for the Kentucky State Archives, which the division manages. For further information, contact the Friends at P.O. Box 4224, Frankfort, KY 40604.

Yes, I would like to renew my membership in/become a member of the **Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.**

My check for _____ made payable to the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., is enclosed. Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter, a membership pin, and invitations to workshops, special events, the Kentucky Archives Institute, the Public Archives Symposium, and the annual meeting. Gifts to the Friends beyond the basic membership are tax deductible.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Telephone: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Membership levels: _____ \$15 Individual/Family _____ \$25 Libraries, Genealogical and Historical Societies _____ \$250 Life
 _____ \$50 Sustaining _____ \$1,000 Corporate _____ Gift to the Clark Endowment

Please clip and mail to: Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., P.O. Box 4224, Frankfort, Kentucky 40604 * We appreciate your support.

Honoring Dr. Clark: How you can participate

Dr. Clark's passing reminds us of just how much he meant to archival programs in Kentucky. He was also strongly committed to the preparation of future generations of archival professionals. The Friends' *Thomas D. Clark Endowment Fund for Internships in Archival Administration* honors Dr. Clark's work and helps train the next generation of archivists and manuscript curators. Contributions to the *Endowment Fund*, which is administered by the Friends, help sustain the internship program and honor his memory. All Friend's life memberships go to the fund.

Won't you join us in supporting this effort to "ensure a future for our past?" Please make your checks payable to: **Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.**, and note *Clark Endowment* on the "For" line of your check. Please use the form at the bottom of this page to make your contribution and mail it to the address on the form.

Donations of any size are most welcome, and all donations to the Friends are tax deductible. Thank you for your support!



Friends Board Meets

At its regular quarterly meeting in June, the Friends' Board discussed plans for the annual Kentucky Archives Institute in July and the Public Archives Symposium in November.



Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc.



Mrs. Edna M. Milliken and Kentucky Historian Laureate Dr. Thomas D. Clark celebrate the State Archives' move into its new quarters in 1982. Mrs. Milliken, who introduced thousands of researchers to genealogy and the use of original records, was a passionate advocate of the work of the State Archives and a key person in the creation of the Friends organization in 1983, passed away in July. She retired from KDLA in 1986 and had numerous friends in library, archives, and genealogical circles, and she will be remembered for her commitment to public service and her exceptional generosity with her time and knowledge.

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