
Friends of Kentucky Public Archives

Volume VI Number 2

Autumn 1990

Annual Meeting and Symposium Set for November 16

A full day of activity is on tap for individuals who plan to attend the Friends' annual business meeting and second Public Archives Symposium on Friday, November 16, at the Lexington Public Library.

The day's programs will get underway at 11:30 a.m. with a luncheon in the Library's lower level conference room. The annual business meeting, which includes reports on the state of Kentucky's archives and the election of officers, will follow. Again this year, the meeting will be a forum for recognizing selected public officials for their exemplary care and management of the records in their stewardship.

The luncheon address, "Searching Public Archives for the Stories of a Region," will be given by George Wolford, staff writer for *The Daily Independent*, Ashland, and author of histories of three Eastern Kentucky counties. Wolford will relate his extensive, and frequently humorous, experiences in researching public records to bring the past to light.

At 2:30 p.m. members and guests who attend the Friends Public Archives Symposium in the Library theater will hear from another author whose research involved extensive use of public records. Dr. Altina L. Waller, professor of history at the State University of New York, Plattsburgh, will talk about the work that led to her recent book, *Feud: Hatfields, McCoys, and Social Change in Appalachia, 1860-1900*, and the range of public records she used in her study. According to a review which appeared in the June 1990 issue of *The Journal of Southern History*, "Waller's study, itself a product of a thorough mining of local court and census records and an intelligent sorting of the region's rich oral tradition, promises to endure as the definitive narrative account and an influential interpretation of America's most famous feud." Following Dr. Waller's talk, fellow Appalachian scholar and historian Dr. Ronald Eller of the University of Kentucky will comment on her findings.

The Symposium will conclude with an informal reception at 3:30 p.m. in the lower level. Attendees will find convenient parking available in the Lexington Public Library's parking structure, which is adjacent to the building.

Scenes from the Annual Meeting



Dr. George C. Wright, above, talked to attendees following his address at the first Friends Public Archives Symposium last November.



Four county clerks were recognized for their exemplary records management practices at the 1989 annual meeting. Shown at the luncheon are Yvonne Guy, Warren County, David Logsdon, Hardin County, and Gallie Isaacs, Jr., Lawrence County. Taylor County Clerk Randall G. Phillips was the fourth official honored by the Friends.



H. Charles Grawemeyer, Chairman of the Clark Endowment Fund, reported on fund raising at the last annual meeting.

and Public Archives Symposium

Records Profiles: Military Records

While it is commonly held that military and pension records are associated with the federal government, many such records, particularly those from the 19th century, may also be found at the state and local level.

County clerks may still retain *Militia Lists* or *Records of Enrolled Militia*. The militia was composed of free white adult males, with categories of occupations exempted from service. In time of war, the militia could be called up for state or even national service. Another source for militia records are the Executive Journals of Kentucky's governors which contain dates of appointments and resignations for all officers.

The records of the county clerk also may include *Veterans Discharge Records* which, in some cases, date back to the Civil War. While seldom complete, these records provide at least a partial roster of men serving from a particular county and their service records. These are especially valuable sources for information regarding veterans who served in the First and Second World Wars because many

records maintained by the federal government were accidentally destroyed by fire several years ago.

In 1918 the Kentucky Council of Defense began a program of recording the contributions of Kentuckians who served in World War I. The State War Historian directed and supervised local war historians at the county level who compiled information on local men who served in the armed forces. In addition, they compiled information on members of the County Council of Defense, the Red Cross, Liberty Loan Campaigns, Food and Fuel Administration, and other domestic war-related activities. Frequently, the compilations would include photographs, letters, and reminiscences of veterans. These valuable "war histories" are often found in the County Clerk's office.

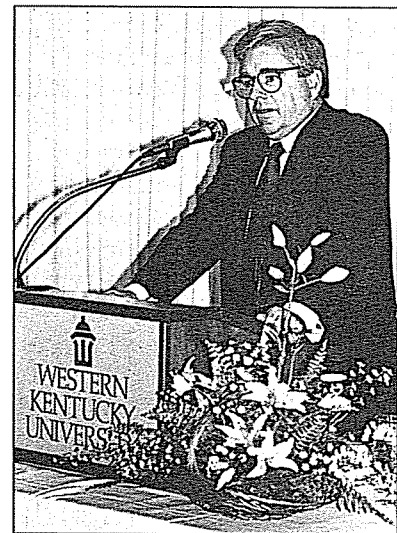
Military pension records from 1775 to 1916 are maintained at the National Archives. It should be noted, however, that veterans of the Revolutionary and Indian Wars were required to file their initial applications with the County Clerk. Early County Clerk *Order Books* may contain exact copies of these pension applications or, at least, an entry that indicates whether an application was filed. Although the federal government did not grant pensions to Confederate veterans, many southern and border states did. In 1912 Kentucky passed an act granting benefits to Confederate veterans or their widows. The law required that applications be filed with the local county courts. In addition to the pension files maintained by the State Pension Board, there may be duplicate applications as well as related entries in *Order Books* in the County Clerk's office. Given the fact that the records of many Confederate veterans, if properly maintained at all, were lost or destroyed during the war, these pension records may be the only surviving proof of service.

U.S. Archivist Addresses Meeting

Kentucky Council on Archives, Friends Hold Joint Session

Dr. Don W. Wilson, Archivist of the United States, was the featured speaker at the first joint session of the Friends and the Kentucky Council on Archives on September 21 at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

Addressing the groups' luncheon meeting, Wilson reviewed the National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) priorities. He discussed the resources NARA will require to function effectively in an age of accelerating growth in information technology and its current activity in the areas of archival research and development.



*Archivist of the United States
Dr. Don W. Wilson*

Noting that a strong National Archives is an essential ingredient in preserving a strong American democracy, Wilson pledged his commitment to upgrading NARA's facilities and staffing levels. A new facility, Archives II, is under construction next to the campus of the University of Maryland. Staffing levels, however, have declined over the last decade and must be restored if the National Archives is to fulfill its mission, he said. In addition, he stressed the overall need to make the National Archives a premier archival and research institution.

A word to our Friends...

This quarterly newsletter is published as a service of the Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., in order to increase public awareness of the State Archives, its mission, and collections. 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.

On behalf of the Friends, I urge you to use the form on Page 4 of this newsletter to become a member and join us today in this important work,

*Howard T. Goodpaster,
President*

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Some trace roots, one chases ghosts...

Summer Researchers Return in Force

Large numbers of researchers continue to visit the Department for Libraries and Archives' Research Room, delving into public records to seek out information about their family heritage, or to learn more about life in Kentucky's past.

According to Research Room Supervisor Jim Prichard, nearly 3,700 patrons visited the facility between the first of May and the end of September. In August, alone, 865 patrons filed through the doors of the State Archives.

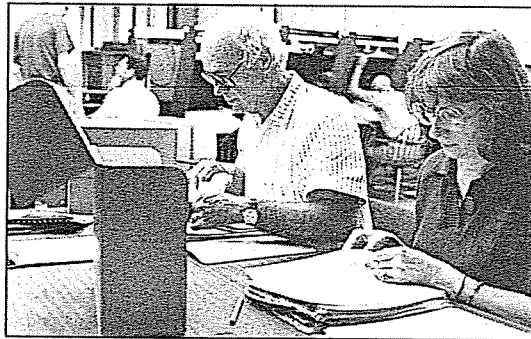
KDLA's third annual "Measure the Miles" project, which tracks the distances patrons travel to use the Research Room, has revealed that visitors this year have come from as nearby as Science Hill and as far away as San Jose, California. At the end of July, there had been 23 visitors from Texas, Illinois, and California. The long-distance champion appeared to be a patron from Ottawa, Ontario, until a family from New Zealand came to the facility searching for Kentucky roots.

Most summer patrons are genealogists, but many academic researchers visit the Research Room as well. This summer Dr. Lynwood Montell, emeritus professor of folklore from Western Kentucky University, scanned the State Archives' WPA Writers' Project files looking for ghost stories to include in a future publication on Kentucky ghost tales.

Dr. Suzanne Hall spent time at the facility researching violence in the "Black Patch" region of the state for a forthcoming book. She used "Requests for Pardons" from the Executive Journals of turn-of-the-century governors to document violence perpetrated by the "Night Riders." Hall, a teacher at Kennesaw State College in Marietta, Georgia, also searched criminal records from Trigg and Christian Coun-

ties which are housed at the State Archives.

Individuals interested in exploring Kentucky's rich heritage—historians, folklorists, and genealogists alike—will find the resources and the assistance they need at KDLA's Research Room.



Looking for ghosts!

Dr. Lynwood Montell and Margarette Perkins check WPA Writers' Project files in the Archives Research Room.

New Zealand Archivist Visits State Archives



Michael Hodder, right, Assistant Director for Archives Management at New Zealand's National Archives, made a two-day stop at the Kentucky State Archives during a July visit in the U.S. to study model archival practices. Hodder met with Division Director and State Archivist Richard N. Belding, left, and other Public Records Division staff members.

Recent Acquisitions

Recent acquisitions in the Archives Research Room include a variety of valuable research materials, including two standard genealogical sources, Quisenberry's *Kentucky in the War of 1812* and a reprint of the 1836 *Pensioners of the Revolutionary War Struck Off the Roll*. Barbara Wells Ingram's recently published *Menifee County Memories* is the latest addition to the Research Room's collection of county histories.

Kentucky related records in the Justice Department collection represent the latest National Archives microfilm made available for researchers. These records consist of letters received by the Department from numerous Kentucky officials and citizens between 1871 and 1884. Topics include the appointments or resignations of local federal officials, efforts to suppress the Ku Klux Klan, operations against "moonshiners" and matters related to Civil War pension applications by Union veterans or their widows.

The Local Records Film Grant program continues to make hundreds of county records available to the public. Recent acquisitions include numerous local and judicial records from the counties of Jackson, Magoffin, Carlisle, Breathitt, Todd, Knox, Clay, Warren, Oldham, Harrison, and Johnson.

Many of these records represent little-known or unique source material, including Carlisle County Medical Registers (1888-1982) and Veteran Discharge Books (1919-1988), and a Breathitt County Enrolled Militia Register for 1876. Another such source, "Breathitt County in World War I," is one of several county level reports commissioned by the Kentucky Council of Defense in 1918. In many cases such reports not only contain rosters of local World War veterans, but their photographs and wartime letters as well.



Students from the African-American Heritage Project at the University of Kentucky visited the Archives Research Room in October to conduct genealogical research. The group was led by O. Adeyemon, third from right.

Archivist of the U.S. Addresses Meeting

Continued from page 2

A strong National Archives, Wilson said, can continue to develop programs and provide leadership to assist state and municipal archives throughout the country. He cited the National Historical Publications and Records Commission's aggressive response to electronic record keeping concerns as an area in which a federal program is helping states, including Kentucky. The Commission will sponsor a national conference on electronic record issues January 24 and 25, 1991, in Washington.

Congress Approves Paper Policy

The U.S. Congress established a national policy on the use of acid free, permanent paper for federal records, books, and publications of enduring value when it passed Senate Joint Resolution 57 in September.

The measure also recommends that American publishers and state and local governments voluntarily use acid free paper for significant publications.

Federal agencies will be required to use archival quality acid free papers for permanently valuable federal records and confer with the National Archives on standards for paper quality.

The resolution instructs the Librarian of Congress to report on the implementation of the national paper policy to Congress in 1991, 1993, and 1995.

Wilson said the magnitude of electronic records management issues requires the cooperative commitment of institutions and government at all levels. Neither NARA, nor any other single organization, he stressed, can solve all the problems. The protection of electronic records, he added, is a nationwide challenge—now and in the future.

During his visit to the Western campus, Dr. Wilson took part in portions of the Friends' Local Records Workshop and the Kentucky Council on Archives' fall conference.

Coming Attractions...

November 16, 1990

Friends Annual Meeting
Friends Public Archives Symposium
Lexington Public Library

May 8 - 10, 1991

Southeastern Archives & Records Conference
Hyatt Regency, Lexington

Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc. Membership Form

Box 4224, Frankfort, Kentucky 40604

Date _____

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
- Family \$15
- Sustaining \$50
- Life \$250
- Corporate \$1000

Gift \$ _____

- New Member
- Renewal

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.