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Preservation Perspectives: Continuing Education

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BY BILL STOLZ

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PRESERVATION PERSPECTIVES: *Continuing* EDUCATION

Want to learn more about archives, pick up new preservation skills and techniques, and/or meet fellow archivists and librarians? National conferences and workshops can be difficult to attend due to location, travel costs, and high registration fees, but we are lucky here in Kentucky to have organizations that sponsor very affordable, one-day conferences focused specifically on archives, preservation, and historical research. And if you are a public librarian in Kentucky, you may even receive continuing education credits for attending. This year I have had the opportunity to attend two such conferences and can happily report both were very well-organized, informative, and included sessions/topics that rival anything found on the national level. Another plus was the cost for both was super affordable and, coming from Northern Kentucky, just a car ride away.

The Kentucky Council on Archives (KCA), founded in 1976, “is an association of archivists, historians, librarians, records managers, and individuals interested in the advancement of archives.” Each year the Council offers spring and fall meetings. The spring meeting is typically a traditional conference with

presenters from various archives and libraries throughout Kentucky discussing topics related to a central theme. The fall meeting varies between preservation workshops and traditional panel discussions. This year the theme for the spring meeting was “If These Walls Could Talk: Exploring and Managing Facilities in Archives,” a subject of vital importance to those handling and storing historical materials in their workplace. Presenters from historical societies and university archives from around the Commonwealth spoke on a range of topics, including expansion/new construction, HVAC systems and controls, architectural collections, and disaster planning.

The KCA spring meeting was hosted by Kentucky State University in Frankfort. Mammoth Cave National Park, the Keeneland Library in Lexington, and Eastern Kentucky University have played host in previous years. The cost to attend this year’s meeting was \$15 dollars for members (yes, you read that correctly) or \$35 for nonmembers (with the option of adding a year membership in KCA at no additional charge) and included lunch. The fall meetings are traditionally held in early



2016 Kentucky Council on Archives Spring Conference

November and have been held in locales such as Louisville, Lexington, and Campbellsville. Keep an eye on the KCA web site for information about the fall conference.

June 17th marked the 32nd Kentucky Archives Institute sponsored by Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., and the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives. Created in 1983, The Friends of Kentucky Public Archives, Inc., "is a group of private citizens concerned with helping the Archives and Records Management Division of Kentucky's Department for Libraries and Archives fulfill its role as a vital information link between people and government." The annual Institute is an all-day event held at the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives Building in Frankfort that brings together library and archival professionals and the general public to hear speakers share information on archival and historical research topics. This year attendees were very fortunate to have noted genealogist J. Mark Lowe open the day with a session on early Kentucky courts. Other topics included the Kentucky Council on Defense Records, a discussion on the records of organizations within the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and using archival records to discover local heritage. Because of the Institute sponsorship by KDLA, public librarians even received CEUs for attending!

This year the fee was \$50 for the Institute and it included a boxed lunch. Attendance is limited to 50 due to space constraints, so be sure to register early. Information on the Institute is released in the late spring in "For the Record," the newsletter for the Friends of Kentucky Public Libraries, and on various listservs.

Both the KCA meeting and the Kentucky Archives Institute proved to be exceptional days of learning, and are highly recommended to anyone seeking continuing educational opportunities or hoping to gain new archival and research skills. If you have not taken advantage of our local resources, no need to worry as you'll have opportunities again this fall and in 2017. Not only do these local conferences offer great sessions at a very reasonable cost, but they allow library and archives professionals the chance to network, talk shop, and, most importantly, learn new skills and techniques that can benefit our institutions and the patrons we serve. And if there are other local archives workshops, seminars, or conferences out there, please send me an email.

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