



TSLAFriends

Friends of the Tennessee State Library and Archives

Issue 20

Fall 2016

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MEMBERSHIP DUES:

It is renewal time!

It's "that time of year again" as the 2017 dues are now due and payable either by check or by PayPal from the TSLAF website. Select a category from our "Membership" tab on our website and help the Friends to support TSLA and all its many projects that will benefit us all. [Click here to go there now>>](#)

TSLAFriends

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Dear TSLAFriends,

The dog days of summer and the first days of school have slipped on to our calendar this year. We often ask where does the time go? My Dad reminded me once that history is the story we capture in our memory, and continue to tell. We are honored to have the wonderful staff at our Tennessee State Library & Archives. I hope that you remember to check out the changes to their website, which reflects some of the interesting things happening there. (<http://sos.tn.gov/tsla>) Many of the online resources are featured. I suggest you go visit and perhaps find a new reason to visit this great collection.

Several months ago, I asked the Board members of the Tennessee State Library & Archives Friends to share some of their favorite items found in our Archives. I'm sharing the first of those shared by Judge Andy Bennett.

He received a law degree from the Vanderbilt University School of Law in 1982. Upon completing law school, Judge Bennett practiced law in the Tennessee Attorney General's Office, rising to the position of Chief Deputy Attorney General. Judge Bennett was appointed by the governor to the Tennessee Court of Appeals in September 2007, and continues to serve.

Favorite TSLA Items by Judge Andy D. Bennett

My favorite items in the Tennessee Library and Archives are the three original Tennessee Constitutions, written in 1796, 1834 and 1870. Of these, while the 1796 Constitution is oldest and has signatures of our State's founders, and while the 1870 document has an extremely interesting drawing of the Capitol, my favorite constitution is the one from 1834. It represents the evolution of Tennessee from a frontier society to a more developed one. The delegates made the Tennessee Supreme Court more independent by placing it in the constitution so that it could not be abolished, inserting express provisions mandating the separation of powers,

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and providing that judges salaries could not be increased or decreased during the time for which they were elected. They also created more equitable tax provisions, banned lotteries and prohibited the legislature from granting divorces. These provisions, and others, modernized the state government for the changing times and addressed problems that arose under the first constitution.

These significant revisions make the 1834 Tennessee Constitution extremely important. But, another reason I like this document has nothing to do with substance. When you look at the pages of the 1834 Constitution, you see erasures and insertions. It is not a perfectly written document. It is flawed, just like the people who made it. We tend to think of constitutions as perfect documents created by perfect people. Neither notion is true. For example, the 1834 Constitution prevented free blacks from voting and perpetuated slavery. The visible imperfections created by the constitution's scribe are a reminder to me that the people who worked on the 1834 Constitution, indeed, all constitutions, were not perfect either. We continue to address the mistakes our predecessors made and to adapt our constitutions to present-day issues. Our successors will, too.

Current TSLA
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Time to get
Social!

The Tennessee
State Library and
Archives provide
updates on all the
current programs
and events on the
Facebook page
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TSLA welcomes interns
and volunteers who would
like to be involved in
aspects of library and
archival work.

All interested candidates
should be detail-oriented
and have some
background in history or
library work.

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is called the Great Iron or
the main ridge of ^{the} said mountain
rest of the said line, ^{as} before ment
g sovereignty and the right of soil
id State and the Ordinance of C
Recognized to them by the afores

Section 6. The number of Senators shall, at the several periods of making the enumeration, be appointed
Section 7. The number of Representatives shall, at the several periods of making the enumeration, be appointed
Section 8. The first session of the General Assembly shall convene on the first Monday in October
Section 9. No person shall be a Representative, unless he shall be a citizen of the United States, or
Section 10. No person shall be a Senator, unless he shall be a citizen of the United States, or
Section 11. The Senate and House of Representatives, when assembled, shall each choose
Section 12. Each House may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members
Section 13. Senators and Representatives shall in all cases, except treason, felony
Section 14. Each House may punish by imprisonment, during its session,
Section 15. When an officer and member of either House, the Governor for the time

Thanks to Judge Bennett for sharing one of his favorites with us. I admit he started with one of the most important, but learning about all of these resources make us appreciate our collection. Thanks for your support of the Tennessee State Library & Archives. Please encourage your friends to consider being a part of our support team (www.tslafriends.org)

J. Mark Lowe,
President, TSLAFriends



Unfolding Tennessee History: the Tennessee Supreme Court Case Files

Presented by Susan W. Knowles , Ph.D.
Saturday, September 24, 2016
9:30 a. m. - 11:00am

Tennessee is famous for many things, but some people may not realize the state once was a hotbed for the marble industry. Tennessee marble, known for its pinkish-gray coloring and ease of polishing, was used in buildings such as the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C., Grand Central Terminal in New York, and - closer to home - the Tennessee Supreme Court Building in Nashville. East Tennessee's role in the marble industry was so large at one point that Knoxville was nicknamed "the Marble City".

Join Susan W. Knowles, a digital humanities fellow at Middle Tennessee State University's Center of Historic Preservation, as she discusses the value of Tennessee Supreme Court case records. Dr. Knowles first explored the Supreme Court case files, which are housed at the Library & Archives, while serving as museum consultant for the Tennessee Judiciary Museum in 2012. Using the Tennessee marble industry as a case study, she will show how these records aided her research.

Those wishing to attend this free lecture must register online to make a reservation as the number of seats is limited. Parking is available in the front, on the side, and in the back of the Library & Archives building. Patrons can register by visiting: <https://courtfilesworkshop.eventbrite.com>

For more information contact:
Tennessee State Library & Archives Public Services
Phone: (615) 741-2764



*Save the Date for
Family History Day!
November 26
9:30am - 11am*

Sat, Nov 26, 2016 at TSLA is "Family History Day" with speaker Deborah Wilbrink, a Personal Historian, on "How to Write Your Personal Family History" from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. Afterwards, the TSLA staff and TSLAFriends volunteers will help patrons on a "one-to-one basis" with their family history research.

More information coming soon!