
Letter to the Editor

A thought concerning Tweedsmuir Histories

I have been involved in this project since the beginning, and with other curators at branch and district level. During the last few years, I have found branch curators are often intimidated by rules and regulations regarding setting up the books. They are great for those who are well organized and truly interested in history, but, let's face it, that type of person is not present in every branch. To many members, the past is past, let it rest in peace.

To me, the most important thing is to gather the information, the photos, the stories, to preserve and conserve the story of our small communities. The manner in which it is arranged should, and will, vary with the individual curator.

In my contacts, I have found a fear that, lest it be done according to the FWIO Handbook, it won't be valued. Some books I have seen are so well organized they are overpowering to one less gifted and with less time. The value in these records lies not in winning a competition, rewarding though that may be, but in preserving an account of the growth and development of a rural community and its peoples.

The six-year term sounds efficient, but in branches with small membership, there may be only one person who will put forth the effort necessary to produce a properly organized history. I would suggest in a situation of this sort, that the branch look for someone in the local historical society who might

give guidance, but not wish to become a member.

In addition, I have found that once the pressure is off to produce a superior product, the person grows into the task, and simple organizing results. I do not suggest all rules and regulations be dropped, but small branches be encouraged and assisted in their efforts to gather the history of their community and organize it in whatever manner is easiest for them. Only those of us who are or have been curators know what a tremendous task it is if carried out in the best fashion. Just because we cannot do everything, let us not fail to do something.

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