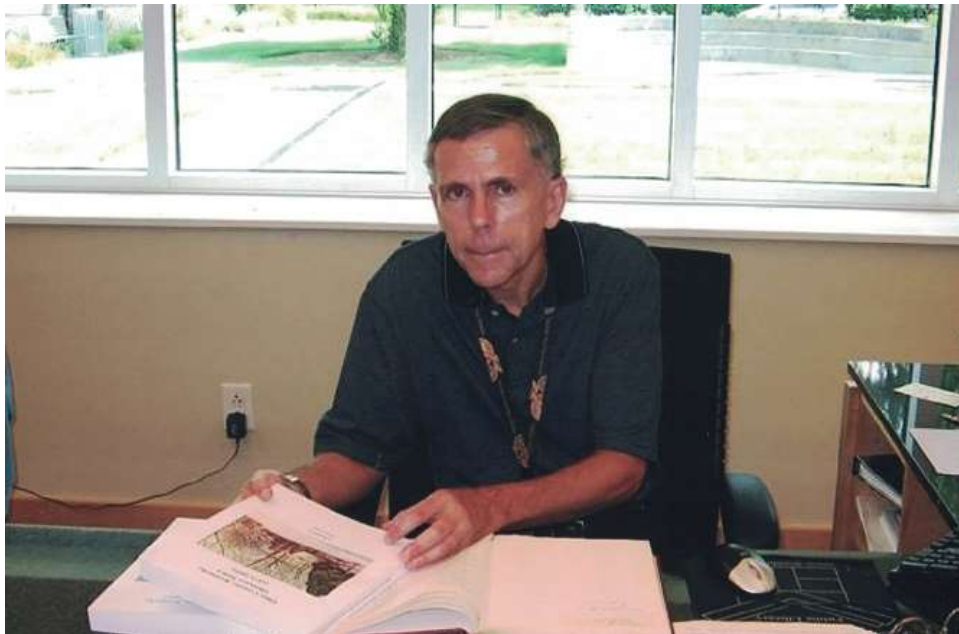


KDLA's Review of Library Certification of Jerry Long

By Jerry Long



Jerry Long, Kentucky Room, Daviess County Public Library, Owensboro, KY



E-mail sent on 25 June 2013 by Jerry Long, Kentucky Room, Daviess County Public Library, Owensboro, KY: To Jim Blanton (jblanton@dclibrary.org), Director of Daviess County Public Library, Owensboro, KY. On 26 July 2013 also e-mailed to Beth Milburn (KDLA.Certificatiob@ky.gov), Wayne Onkst (wayne.onkst@ky.gov), Dennis Carrigan (carrigan@uky.edu), Pam Federspiel (admin@scplibrary.net), Rebecca S. Kelm (csbranchmanager@cc-pl.org), Tim Middleton (tmiddleton@woodfordcountylibrary.org), and Vicki Logsdon (library@hartcountypubliclibrary.org):

Mr. Blanton:

The following message I plan to submit to the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives' director and board for certification of librarians. I was wondering if you have any concerns or suggestions before I do so. It may be of no consequence but at least it makes me feel better that they will be informed of the inappropriateness of their decision in this one particular case.

Best wishes,
Jerry Long
Kentucky Room, Daviess County Public Library, jlong@dcplibrary.org

I would like to thank KDLA for allowing me to complete or work toward my mission in life for the past twenty-five years. This decision has been a great service to the public. This statement needs considerable explanation.

I am a library associate at the Daviess County Public Library (DCPL). There I work in the Kentucky Room, the library's special collection of history and genealogy. I work there because I am a historian and genealogist. Before working in the Kentucky Room I was a professional genealogist and worked for a historical-genealogical book publishing company. I consider myself a historian not just a librarian. I only work in the Kentucky Room because it allows me to accomplish my mission in life. I love history and am dedicated to its preservation. I would be working somewhere else to achieve this mission if I was not at the DCPL.

My situation is quite atypical for public libraries. I am not the typical employee or librarian, who does just what is laid out in the job description and completes a 40-hour work week. My employment is not a "job". It is essentially my life. Due to my motivation I have accomplished far more than what was expected or required. I have sent a Word file of 44 pages that outline some of my accomplishments as part of the Kentucky Room. Some of these accomplishments are – nine books in the Library of Congress, over 200 articles on history & genealogy published in state and regional publications, 30 books in the card catalog of the DCPL that I have created and many other books & research tools in the Kentucky Room that I have compiled but are not cataloged under my name. Among the latter is the "Owensboro Area Obituary Index" on the DCPL's Internet site. The latter source is the most utilized online resource offered by my library and ranks with the best databases of its kind on the Internet – I am its primary creator. All of the resources cited are an effort to achieve the goals of the Kentucky Room.

Several years ago the director of the Kentucky Room, Shelia Heflin, a 33-year employee and one of the most accomplished master librarians in the state, thought that it was fair that I should be getting some credit for my work that was so far beyond expectations. She suggested that I start submitting documentation of my published sources to KDLA for the renewing of my librarian's certification. For several years I have done this and they were accepted. However, this past year and hence afterward they were classified as not being acceptable due to a change of standards revised in the 2010 KDLA catalog.

DCPL was informed that is **"why some of his stuff cannot be counted any longer"**. When my work is just called "stuff" I cannot but take this as a disparagement of what I have done. Two of the salient points of why my published sources no longer qualify appear to be that they are not sufficiently library related and the periodicals that they were published in do not meet requirements. It may be considered that what I have done is not "Library" related but my work is pertinent to the very reason for the existence of the Kentucky Room. Since the Kentucky Room is part of the DCPL it is indeed related to the library's mission and is hence "Library" related. I have had articles published in some of the leading state and regional historical and genealogical publications. Why are these publications devalued and not considered credible? To rule that they do not measure up is somewhat prejudicial. Many of the articles I have written are over ten pages, some over twenty and the complexity and amount of research involved indeed makes them of

comparable value to someone's opinion about a particular book or a seminar on the "Sensitivity Issues in the Workplace".

The work I have compiled is indeed a "continuing education" process. I believe that it has served me and our patrons well. It has allowed me to learn research techniques and familiarize myself with sources. It has allowed me to learn what has been described as an encyclopedic knowledge of local history and genealogy. These areas of knowledge due to my work equal or exceed those of master librarians in my department. My research skills are frequently acknowledged. I have been honored by the Kentucky Genealogical Society. Several years ago, James E. Starrs, a nationally known author and forensic scientist, visited the Kentucky Room to do research. After successfully uncovering several items that were meaningful to his search Mr. Starrs praised my ability as a researcher saying they were far above what he has found in most research facilities. This level of expertise is due to my compiling research that is now labeled stuff and not worthy of accreditation.

I am currently researching and writing an article about, John P. Thompson, who has not received appropriate credit in the histories of Owensboro and Daviess County. I was introduced to him when representatives of the PBS TV show, "History Detectives", contacted the Kentucky Room several months ago. They were preparing an episode about the Civil War derringers of John P. Thompson of Owensboro, KY. The main question they presented was: "What happened to John P. Thompson?" "When and where did he die and where was he buried?" They had not been able to discover this from their prior contacts, including members of his family, the Virginia Historical and Kentucky Historical Societies. I was able to document when he died here in Owensboro and that he was buried in an unmarked grave at Owensboro's Elmwood Cemetery. I also informed them of the fact that his claim to fame was that he organized and served as the captain of the very first Confederate outfit organized in Kentucky during the Civil War. When I complete this article on John P. Thompson I hope to have it published. I strongly disagree when you infer that such research is not credible.

I do not believe that there is a certifiable seminar or course that could have served me as well as what my research has accomplished for me and the patrons I have served. If you realized the time, effort and research that went into some of my work or if you were in the Kentucky Room and saw what I have done possibly your evaluation and decree might seem questionable. I realize that you have to have standards to go by – but I believe I meet those standards and possibly exceed them. Please keep in mind that the goal of KDLA is to see that librarians achieve a level that can best serve the public. At this point I doubt that there is another individual that could serve the Kentucky Room and our public in Daviess County as well as I do. Standards become artificial when not viewed in light of real situations. To dismiss the volume of my work and say that is not even worth a minute part of a "contact hour" credit seems quite unjust.

I have one reassuring thought. Once my librarian's certification expires and my employment terminates, my presence will continue at the DCPL. My work will continue to assist our patrons in countless ways for years to come. For most librarians their work ceases once they depart. Few will have the solace that their work will continue in such a salient manner.

Yours truly,
Jerry Long
Kentucky Room
Daviess County Public Library



e-mail to Jerry Long from Christy Temple (ctemple@dcplibrary.org), 20 June 2013:

Jerry,

This is the response I received from Beth Milburn today from KDLA about your certification questions. Please see below:

Here is what I am needing to know:

- Did we turn in anything on Jerry Long last year? **Jerry's 2012 Annual Summation was used for his renewal.**
- Also, he would like to know why it is that some of his items didn't count for certification purposes when they directly deal with genealogy and what he does on a daily basis as part of his job duties. **The answer to this is in the Certification Manual which was updated in 2010. One of the updates was which published material can be accepted and which cannot. This is why some of his stuff cannot be counted any longer.**

(5) The board shall accept self-directed learning activities, beyond expected job duties, as follows:

(a) Writing reviews of library materials or library-related books, articles, or chapters that are published in statewide, regional, or national publications and selected through an editorial process;

(b) Writing or editing an article for a library publication with statewide, regional, or national distribution and selected through an editorial process.

(c) Writing a book on a library-related topic selected for publication by a publishing company and published following an editorial process.

Thanks, Christy T.



25 June 2013 e-mail : From Jim Blanton (jblanton@dcplibrary.org), Director Daviess County Public Library, Owensboro, KY:

Hi Jerry, Thank you for checking in, I wasn't aware of the issue. I completely understand your feelings and motivation for sending the message. I have no problem with you sending it, but I'd like to make a second attempt at persuading those reviewing the certification to reverse their decision first. It may be that I fare no better, but I feel strongly that your case is legitimate and want to make that known. Although I have only been here a short time, it was plain to me from day one that your contributions to the Library have been extraordinary. We can meet to discuss the matter tomorrow in detail. Thank you for everything you do, we are very fortunate to have you at DCPL! Best, Jim, James Blanton, Library Director, Daviess County Public Library, 2020 Frederica Street, Owensboro, KY 42301, (270) 691-1880, jblanton@dcplibrary.org



Application for re-certification of Jerry Long was declined by the KDLA



I (Jerry Long) on a subsequent visit by Wayne Onkst, director of the KDLA, to the Daviess County Public Library, gave him a tour of the Kentucky Room. I highlighted some of what I had compiled for the Kentucky Room. Mr. Onkst informed me that what I had created for the Kentucky Room was not part of the goals of the KDLA. I gave no rebuttal. He apparently was not aware of the guidelines set forth when the Kentucky Room was opened in 1976 by virtue of a grant obtained by then Kentucky Governor, Wendell H. Ford.



D C P L

Kentucky Room
Daviess County Public Library
Owensboro, KY