

While one may regret some of the areas excluded, Stephens covers his chosen areas thoroughly, and his recommendations of sources are often paired with caveats about their limitations or ideas about how they might be used in conjunction with other sources. At the front of the book is a list of the ninety-nine sources he considers basic to community research, but there are references to literally hundreds more throughout the text. They range from those heavily used, including census records and city directories, to those apt to be unfamiliar to most researchers, such as mortgage records and obscure government document series.

Stephens presents his information in narrative form, necessitating very heavy footnoting. While many researchers might prefer an annotated bibliography, most will be more than satisfied with the wide range of materials the author discusses. The book has a few surprising oversights—such as a failure to mention John Reps's *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America* (1984) in a discussion of bird's-eye views—and includes some outdated addresses from which certain sources can be obtained. In addition, the price will prevent many from adding the book to their personal libraries. The book's defects are minor, however, compared to the excellent resource the author has provided for the study of local and community history.

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A Primer for Local Historical Societies. By Laurence R. Pizer. Second edition. (Nashville, Tenn.: American Association for State and Local History, 1991. Pp. x, 122. Illustrations, appendixes, index. Paperbound, \$16.95.)

For many who work in the vineyards of state and local history, Dorothy Weyer Creigh's *A Primer for Local Historical Societies*, published in 1976, was like a stone hitting the still waters of a quiet pond. The waves created by the impact of this small volume spread far and wide. The country was in the midst of a bicentennial, and many communities were looking at their own local heritage with an eye toward "starting a local historical society."

The Adams County Historical Society, Hastings, Nebraska, was in a similar quandary in the mid-1960s when a group of individuals decided to publish a centennial history of the county. Dorothy Weyer Creigh, a native of Hastings, stepped forward and agreed to serve as the project director. One project led to another, and before long the Adams County group began to receive recognition as a model for the preservation and promotion of its local history. The numerous calls from around Nebraska and across the

country prompted Creigh and other members of the society to put their experience in writing.

In the preface to the first edition Creigh writes, "This book is written for the historical society which, like ours, is short on money, but long on enthusiasm, imagination, and ingenuity." Laurence R. Pizer, author of this second edition, has happily continued this important format. Pizer, director of the Pilgrim Society, Plymouth, Massachusetts, who served as the first executive director of the Adams County group, has applied his administrative background as well as experience on the local society level to produce a text that is somewhat tighter and less folksy than the Creigh publication. Whereas Creigh, an editor by vocation, was writing from firsthand experience and felt a need to elaborate, Pizer, the administrator, is more straightforward and matter-of-fact.

Both authors walk the reader through the necessary steps from the first organizational meeting to the important matters of developing a mission statement, preparing the bylaws and constitution, and financing. Also covered are publicity, use of volunteers, and suggested "first projects" that can be started on a limited budget. Much of the remainder of the book discusses the variety of programs and projects that a local society may want to develop. These include: establishing a museum (almost always the first desire of a group), beginning an oral history program, erecting historical markers, planning tours, establishing a local history library, preserving buildings, and publishing.

Missing in this second edition are the suggested readings and technical how-to sources following each of Creigh's chapters. The tremendous changes that have taken place in the field of state and local history since the 1970s may well have occasioned this omission. Many of the technical leaflets mentioned in the first edition are either out of date or out of print. Pizer does add a brief conclusion that he titles "The History Connection," in which he stresses two very important points: the need for planning, as the key to success, and the need for maintaining professional standards. Three appendixes list names and addresses of state and provincial groups, regional branches of the National Archives, and criteria for placing sites or districts on the National Register of Historic Places.

The American Association for State and Local History, as publishers, and Pizer, as editor, are to be commended for revising this excellent and invaluable publication.

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