

# ARCHIVE ANNEX RENOVATION PROJECT COMPLETED

By John Kiener, Associate Editor  
[jkienner@heraldandtribune.com](mailto:jkienner@heraldandtribune.com)

A major renovation to the Washington County Archive Annex was recently completed. The \$350,000 project to the former county jail at the rear of the Washington County Courthouse in downtown Jonesborough now provides a secure, climate-controlled storage space for county records.

Currently, older records from 13 different county office and departments are housed in the Archive Annex, including records from the county mayor's office, bookkeeping, Circuit Court Clerk, Clerk and Master (Chancery Court), Register of Deeds, and Trustee, among others. "The Archive Annex provided the space for all the county records formerly stored at the Downtown Center in Johnson City, along with additional records from other offices," County Archivist and Records Manager Ned Irwin said.

"County officials always have access to the records. They are their records and they can have access whenever they need them," County Archivist and Records Manager Ned Irwin said. He consults regularly with office holders on records disposal and retention. State law specifies that certain county records must be kept on a permanent basis, while others can be disposed of after a certain time period.

The construction project included installation of a new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system; electrical upgrade; new lighting; and the enclosure of 100 exterior windows to help insure a proper climate for the storage of records. In addition, a new roof was installed to handle the six heat pumps as part of the HVAC system. The Archive Annex contains approximately 10,000 square feet of storage space and houses several thousand boxes and volumes.

Johnson City architect Thomas Weems designed and supervised the project that began on November 13, 2018 and was completed on March 19<sup>th</sup> of this year. Preston Construction Company of Johnson City was the general contractor. Kingsport Armature was the electrical sub-contractor, and S. B. White Company of Johnson City was the HVAC sub-contractor. Morristown Roofing was the roofing sub-contractor.

The annex, originally constructed as a county jail, has excellent security. "It was a secure place to house prisoners, and it makes a secure place to house records. It is solidly built and access is very limited," Irwin said. "Now that we have proper air and lighting, we and our volunteers will be able to work in the space, which we haven't been able to do before." Irwin noted that the Archive Annex is strictly a records storage facility. Researchers wanting to use county records should come to the archives building located at 103 West Main Street, two doors west of the courthouse and directly across the street from the International Storytelling Center.

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