



**Literary and Cultural Heritage Maps Project
Instructions and Information for Authors:
Revised and New Feature Articles**

Adopted February 2023

Checklist of Key Guidelines:

- Consult with the Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#), before writing any feature article.
- Download and use our [Feature Article Submission Template](#).
- The Feature Article should be approximately 2,000 words, not including Sources.
- Use Times New Roman font, 12-point, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins.
- Emphasize the topic's connections to Pennsylvania.
- Use MLA 9th edition for formatting the Sources section.
- To submit your feature article, use [our online submission system](#). Do not e-mail work to the Administrator. If you have technical difficulties, contact [Ellysa Cahoy](#) for assistance.

Introduction

Thank you for volunteering to write a feature article for the Pennsylvania Center for the Book's (PACFTB's) Literary and Cultural Heritage Maps project! These instructions supplement the brief directions included on the [Feature Article Submission Template](#). Below, we offer guidelines for [revising existing feature articles and preparing to write feature articles](#) and [preparing to write a feature article](#). We also provide instructions for specific parts of the template, including [Topic and Title](#), [Pennsylvania City, County, and Recommended Geographer Marker](#), [Sources](#), [Images and Captions](#), and [Image Credits/Sources](#). If you still have concerns or questions after reading this information, please contact the project's Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#).

The [Literary and Cultural Heritage Maps of Pennsylvania](#) is a digital humanities project developed and maintained by the [Pennsylvania Center for the Book](#) (PACFTB). PACFTB's mission is to "study, honor, celebrate, and promote books, reading, libraries, and literacy" in Pennsylvania. The feature articles published on the project's website promote awareness of contributions Pennsylvanians have made to literature and culture. The project also supports school coursework and pedagogy by providing substantiated information about Pennsylvania, and by offering meaningful authorship opportunities to writers. To learn more about the project, see our [About](#) page.

Before Revising or Writing a Feature Article

Contact the Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#), to find out whether your topic meets the project's [Inclusion Guidelines](#) and to ensure that a feature article about the same topic isn't already in production. The Administrator will share your idea with at least 2 Editorial Board members before authorizing you to proceed with writing. Final acceptance of your work is contingent upon successful peer review and revision. Submissions may be rejected after 2 unsuccessful rounds of revision.

Your feature article will be evaluated according to 7 criteria of equal importance, which are explained in more detail within our [Instructions for Reviewers for Feature Articles](#):

- Accuracy
- Authority/Quality of Research/Use of Sources
- Completeness/Development
- Currency
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Pennsylvania Connections/Purpose/Relevance
- Quality of Writing/Organization/Style

The feature articles in the Literary and Cultural Heritage Maps of Pennsylvania project represent various phases of this evolving project. Not all of them represent our current writing standards. If you are looking for a good model, see our feature article for the [Yellow Fever Epidemic](#).

Because we aim to offer feature articles that are informative and unique, we expect you to use information sources beyond what are easily available through the open internet. Penn State University Libraries' [research guide for the Pennsylvania Center for the Book](#) recommends various websites and databases as starting places for primary and secondary source research. Other college and university libraries offer similar guides and databases. If possible, visits to [public libraries](#), [county and local historical societies](#), museums, and other Pennsylvania institutions relevant to the topic are strongly recommended. Be mindful of the sources you are using and keep a good record of relevant citation information. This will be essential in building the "Sources" section of your article.

Revising an Existing Feature Article

If you have been assigned to revise an [existing feature article](#) on our site, all the instructions in this document will apply to your work. The project's Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#), will send you a Microsoft Word version of the document and you will be expected to use Word's "Track Changes" feature within that document so that she can review your edits and rewrites. Even if you are writing the revised feature article entirely from scratch, we expect you to list the original in your "Sources" section, with a notation that it has been superseded, and citing a relevant URL from the [Internet Archive/Wayback Machine](#) (for example, see the citation to Amanda Royer's work, cited in the Sources section of our [revised biography of Gary Fincke](#)). This enables previous authors to be acknowledged for their contributions to the project.

One concern is how much you should edit the existing feature article, versus write an entirely new one. When you are initially assigned, the Administrator will suggest either light editing or a full re-write, but a better choice may become clearer after you read more recent material about the topic and determine whether the facts and interpretations in the original article are still correct. Please keep in contact with the Administrator to discuss what you've learned from your sources and any change of plans you would recommend for the revision.

Based on your final product, the Administrator will propose either a "revised by" line, or primary authorial credit. Very generally speaking, a revision author who simply corrects, updates, or adds a few simple items (such as adding a death date; replacing an older photograph with a newer one; adding some recent Sources; and/or correcting some minor spelling and grammatical errors) will receive a "revised by" credit at the top of the article. In other words, the original author's name will remain at the

top of the feature article as the primary author. However, if the revision involves substantial research and re-writing, the Administrator may decide that you deserve more credit.

Determining whether you or the previous author should be named as the primary author for the revised feature article is a complex decision. Currently, there are no clear guidelines for humanities projects like ours. Guidelines in other disciplines are evolving. In making a determination, the Administrator will consider best practices articulated by publishing organizations such as the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#); scholarly organizations such as the [American Psychological Association](#) and [American Sociological Association](#); reputable publishers such as [Taylor & Francis](#); and independent efforts such as [CRedit](#). If you disagree with the Administrator's proposal, however, please vocalize your concerns. Assignment of authorial credit is a negotiated process, and we want everyone concerned to be treated fairly.

Writing the Feature Article

Please download and use the project's [Feature Article Submission Template](#) which begins with various short-answer questions so that important metadata related to your topic can be captured and used to map your work on our sites. The template includes brief directions for each question, then provides space for Topic, Title, and other elements. Save all your writing as a single file (.doc or .docx) and use the topic name in the file name – for example, YellowFeverEpidemic.docx. Below are some additional tips.

Topic and Title

The Topic and Title of your feature article are related, but slightly different from each other.

The topic is typically a 1-3 word noun that will represent your work in PACFTB's [list of feature articles](#). Think of it as a keyword that information seekers might type if they were searching Google or another tool. An example of a feature article topic is "Yellow Fever Epidemic."

The title is a literary phrase of approximately 7-10 words that will appear at the beginning of your feature article. It should describe your topic in a bit more detail, including any city or year that is strongly relevant. Your title may also convey a message or theme related to your topic. Think of your title as a way to engage readers and help them decide if they want to read your work. An example of a good title is "Philadelphia Under Siege: The Yellow Fever of 1793."

Pennsylvania City, County, and Recommended Geographic Marker

If applicable, include the city/cities, borough(s) or township(s) that are most strongly associated with your topic. Then select the county/counties that contains those municipalities. If possible, also recommend at least one street address, building, or other specific location we should use as a mapping point. In the absence of a specific location, we sometimes choose the center of town, the town hall, or the public library.

If your topic pertains to various locations in Pennsylvania, or to the entire state, weigh several factors including:

- Any existing [historical markers of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission](#).
- Places that are most commonly associated with the topic.
- Sites associated with persons related to the topic.
- Where important events related to the topic took place.
- Headquarters or prominent locations of organizations or businesses relating to the topic.

Accurate city and county names are essential to our project. Please double-check spellings and county locations. One helpful verification method is to Google the city name, adding the words “Pennsylvania county” to your search. For example, if you search "Middleburg Pennsylvania county," Google will tell you that Middleburg is in Snyder County. Some common mistakes:

- Berks County vs. Bucks County (both in Eastern Pennsylvania)
- Franklin County vs. Fulton County (both in Central Pennsylvania)
- Lewisberry vs. Lewisburg vs. Lewistown (municipalities in Central Pennsylvania)
- Middleburg vs. Middlesex vs. Middleton vs. Middletown (municipalities in Central Pennsylvania)
- Northampton County vs. Northumberland County (both in East-Central PA)

Particularly if you are writing about a topic that took place before 1878, another potential complication is historical changes in county borders. We use current Pennsylvania maps for all our digital projects, so please determine which county a historic city would be located in today. The [Genealogical Map of the Counties](#) and [other maps](#) available from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission can help you figure this out.

Finally, note that several historic Pennsylvania cities lie in 2 counties, including Adamstown (Berks/Lancaster), Bethlehem (Lehigh/Northampton), Ellwood City (Beaver/Lawrence), and Shippensburg (Cumberland/Franklin). In such cases, [Google Maps'](#) street-level maps can be helpful for determining the correct county.

Feature Article

Please use the appropriate space within the [Feature Article Submission Template](#) to submit your work. Save all your writing as a single file (.doc or .docx) and use the topic name in the file name – for example, YellowFeverEpidemic.docx.

In terms of writing style, our feature articles are intended for the general public and are used to support middle school and high school curricula. With that in mind, your article should be approximately 2,000 words (not including sources). Use clear, simple prose in the active voice. For spelling questions, use the [Merriam-Webster online dictionary](#). For capitalization, punctuation, and other grammatical questions, use the MLA Handbook, 9th edition. Some additional PACFTB rules include:

- The first time you mention a person, include their full name. After that, use only the last name (surname) unless you are discussing two or more people with the same last name.
- The first time you mention an organization, use the spelled-out version of the corporate name, followed by an acronym in parentheses. After that, use only the acronym.
- Focus on the most important events relating to the topic. In other words, you do not need to mention everything—just the items of highest interest.
- Provide details that connect to Pennsylvania —especially how the topic was influenced by Pennsylvania geography, resources, culture, institutions, people, etc.
- Use past tense for deceased persons and for past activities. Avoid using “would” plus present-tense verbs, unless some action took place long after other discussed events.
- When writing about books, movies, television shows, or other published works, include the year of release in parentheses or somewhere else in the text.
- Do not use underlining, bolding, or other font changes to emphasize text.

- To ensure your feature article remains accurate over time:
 - Use phrases such as, "at the time of this writing ... " or "as of 2023 ... " instead of words like "currently" or "today."
 - Do not use terms like "latest" or "new" when describing recent events.
- When appropriate, insert links to other PACFTB [biographies](#), [feature articles](#), and [awards/programs](#).
- When quoting material verbatim or when using someone else's evaluative/subjective commentary, use straight quotes and include an in-text citation in MLA format at the end of the sentence. For our project, you do not need to include in-text citations for straightforward facts that you have summarized and reworded. However, any book, article, website, or other item that you draw information from should be listed in the "Sources" section of your article.

One of the guiding principles of our project is to center diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in all our operations. When describing someone's race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other elements of their personal background, a key consideration is how the person would describe themselves. When writing about a historical person, another important consideration is how the person's group wishes to be known today. This comes into play particularly with American Indian/Indigenous/Native American persons (for example, consider Lenape, who are referred to as "Delaware" in historical documents). Please note that published style guides may not be up to date in terminology pertaining to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. With this in mind, three general resources to consider are the American Psychological Association's [Bias Free Language](#) site, EDUCAUSE's [Inclusive Language Guide](#), and [The Conscious Style Guide](#), online resources that are updated more frequently than printed manuals. In addition, please seek advice from relevant, reputable journalism and advocacy organizations. Some examples are the HRC Foundation's [Glossary of Terms](#) (for writing about LGBTQ+ people), the [National Association of Black Journalists' NABJ Style Guide](#), and the [Native American Journalists Association's Reporting Guides](#).

We expect you to use terminology that is respectful, inclusive, and current. It is acceptable to break traditional rules of grammar to do so. For example, to include LGBTQ+ and non-binary persons, it is acceptable to use "they" (a plural noun) rather than gendered binary terms like "he or she" or "him or her" when referring to a single person (see many examples throughout this document).

A final note: plagiarism – copying others' writing and not acknowledging them – is not allowed and plagiarized submissions will be rejected. If you reuse another author's phrasing, sentences, or evaluative/subjective commentary, please indicate the speaker within your text and place the wording in quotation marks (""). For guidance, see the [MLA Handbook](#). Also, feature article submissions to our project must not be previously published elsewhere (either in print or on the internet), nor should they be submitted to other publishing projects without requesting permission from the Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#).

Sources

All feature articles for our project must conclude with a list of the information sources that you used. We prefer books, journal articles, and other scholarly sources whenever they are available, but authoritative magazine articles, news articles, websites, and other sources are acceptable. In some cases, especially for recent topics, you may need to conduct interviews as well. Please list your sources in alphabetical order at the end of your text.

We use the *MLA Handbook*, 9th edition, for formatting such references. Importantly, MLA citations include the particular document or item that is being referenced, plus any “containers” (the larger encyclopedia, periodical, database, website, archival collection, etc.) within which the cited document is found. Also, MLA style requires you to describe the precise edition you used – print and online versions are cited differently. For these reasons, proper MLA citation can be challenging. MLA offers a "[Quick Guide](#)" that serves as a helpful tutorial. Numerous college/university tutoring centers, including the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#), offer straightforward advice and examples. Below are examples of some (but not all) of the types of materials that are cited within our project. If you are unsure how to render something in MLA format, please contact the Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#).

- Examples:
 - Entry within an online encyclopedia or database:
 - Last Name, First Name (if available). "Entry Title." *Title of Encyclopedia or Database*. Publisher, Date, URL. Accessed NN Mon. YYYY.
 - Finger, Simon. "Yellow Fever." *Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*. Rutgers U-Camden, 2011, <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/yellow-fever/>. Accessed 31 Jan. 2022.
 - Book (in paper format):
 - Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, YYYY.
 - Whitaker, Mark. *Smoketown: The Untold Story of the Other Black Renaissance*. Simon and Schuster, 2019.
 - Book chapter (in paper format):
 - Last Name, First Name. "Title of Chapter." *Title of Book*, edited by First Name Last Name, Publisher, YYYY, pp. NNN-NNN.
 - Klepp, Susan E. "Encounter and Experiment: The Colonial Period." *Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth*, edited by Randall M. Miller and William A. Pencak, Penn State UP 2002, pp. 47-100.
 - Online journal or magazine article:
 - Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, vol. NNN, no. NNN, YYYY, pp. NNN-NNN.
 - Richwine, Lindsay. "Comity at the Crossroads: How Friendships between Moravian and Native Women Sustained the Moravian Mission at Shamokin, 1745–1755." *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, vol. 89, no. 1, 2022, pp. 74-101.
 - Online newspaper article:
 - Last Name, First Name (if available). "Title of Article." *Title of Newspaper*. NN, Mon. YYYY. URL. Accessed NN Mon. YYYY.

- Elber, Lynn. "Bob Saget, Beloved TV Dad on 'Full House,' Dead at 65." *Los Angeles Times*, 9 Jan. 2022.
<https://www.latimes.com/obituaries/story/2022-01-09/bob-saget-beloved-tv-dad-of-full-house-dead-at-65>. Accessed 31 Jan. 2022.
- Web page within a larger website:
 - Last Name, First Name (if available). "Title of Web Page," *Title of Website*, URL. Accessed NN Mon. 2022.
 - "Shoofly Pie." *Gastro Obscura*,
<https://www.atlasobscura.com/foods/shoofly-pie-amish>. Accessed 31 Jan. 2022.
- Interview that you conducted yourself (either oral, e-mail, or other form of communication):
 - Interviewee Last Name, Interviewee First Name. Personal interview. DD Mon. YYYY.
 - Novotny, Eric C. Personal interview. 22 Jan. 2022.
- Published interview (either print or audio broadcast):
 - Interviewee's last name, Interviewee's first name. Interview with Name of Interviewer. MLA citation to book, journal, website, or radio program, as appropriate.
 - Beckman, Phil. Interview with Bernadette A. Lear. "Made Free and Thrown Open to the Public," 11 Oct. 2021, *PA Books*,
<https://www.iheart.com/podcast/256-pa-books-on-pcn-31158196/episode/made-free-and-thrown-open-to-87879515/>. Accessed 29 Jan. 2022.

Note that users of our websites do not have the same access to online databases, scholarly journals, and e-books that you have at your own institution. So, when listing the URL for an online resource that is not freely available, do not copy and paste the URL from your web browser. Instead, link to the publisher's top-level URL, a doi number, or a "permalink" that is shareable across institutions. For example, Penn State authors should strip "ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu" from any URLs they would like to cite. If you have questions, please consult with your librarian and/or with [Ellysa Cahoy](#), the Administrator.

Image and Captions

Please include at least 1, but no more than 7, photographs, maps, or other illustrations that are relevant to your feature article. If you are using our [online submission system](#), you will upload them within the system as separate files. The files should be in .jpeg format at 300 dpi resolution. Be aware that many images automatically downloaded from other websites are typically low resolution. Choose high-resolution downloads whenever available.

Note that even if you find an image that is freely accessible on the internet, we still need permission to re-publish it on our site. For this reason, we suggest you begin your search for images in [OpenVerse](#) (formerly Creative Commons) because images in OpenVerse come with clear permissions statements indicating whether and how the images may be reused. Another helpful resource is the [Digital Public](#)

[Library of America](#), which contains millions of images from public libraries across the United States. DPLA's records of these images often include information about permissions and allowed uses. The [Library of Congress's Digital Collections](#) are another good option.

If you scan and submit a photograph from a book, journal article, other publication, or archival collection, you are responsible for obtaining permission from the author, publisher, institution, or photographer that owns the copyright to that image. Please consult with the Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#), if you have questions about obtaining the required documentation.

For each image, please provide a caption of 1-2 sentences that explain the image and what it demonstrates about your topic. For examples, see the captions about Philosophical Hall, mosquitoes, and other images within our article about the [Yellow Fever Epidemic](#).

Image Credit and Image Source

We must include proper acknowledgment for any and all images republished on our sites. On our Feature Article Submission Template, the "Image Credit" acknowledges the contribution of the photographer, illustrator, or organization who created the image. Please include the creator's full name or corporate name if you know it.

The "Image Source" field assists PACFTB in verifying and answering follow-up questions about the photograph or illustration. It acknowledges a previous publisher – the book, article, or website where you found the image.

Submitting the Feature Article

We use an [online submission system](#) hosted by Penn State and Open Journal Systems to keep track of incoming feature articles, peer review, and revision. Please use our system—do not e-mail any articles to PACFTB or its employees. The system will require you to register to receive a username and password. Then you will proceed step by step through the submission process. When you have completed your submission, you will receive an e-mail which confirms that your article has been received.

Editorial and Production Process

After you submit your feature article, it will be peer-reviewed by at least 2 Editorial Board members who will offer suggestions for improvement. Watch for follow up e-mails from the Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#). After you revise your work and it is accepted, it will be edited, proofread, and prepared for publication. This process may require additional work or feedback from you. In other words, submitting a feature article to the Literary and Cultural Heritage Maps project may feel like the "end" of the writing process from your perspective, but it is actually the beginning of the production process from our perspective.

Overview of the authorial, editorial, and production process:

1. Author consults with the Administrator about writing a revised or new feature article. In turn, the Administrator consults with at least 2 Editorial Board members about the proposed feature article.
2. If Editorial Board members and Administrator agree to proceed, the Administrator authorizes the Author to begin writing and conveys any initial suggestions from the Editorial Board.
3. Author writes and submits the feature article.

4. Administrator conducts a “desk review” to determine whether the feature article is ready for peer review.
 - a. If the feature article contains obvious inaccuracies or omissions, the Administrator returns the feature article to the Author with suggestions for improvement.
 - b. [If needed] Author revises and resubmits the feature article.
5. Administrator shares the feature article with at least 2 Editorial Board members.
6. Editorial Board members provide feedback, including suggestions for improvement and recommendations for acceptance or rejection.
7. Administrator reconciles and shares feedback with the Author and provides coaching for revision.
8. Author revises and resubmits the feature article.
9. Administrator decides whether to accept the revised feature article.
 - a. If the feature article needs further revision, the Administrator returns the feature article to the Author and provides further coaching.
 - b. [If needed] Author revises and resubmits the feature article.
 - c. [If needed] Administrator shares the revised feature article with at least 2 Editorial Board members. Editorial board members provide feedback, including recommendations for acceptance or rejection.
10. If peer review is successful, Administrator accepts the feature article and places it in the project’s production queue.
 - a. However, if there have been 2 rounds of unsuccessful peer review, the Administrator may reject the feature article and it will not move forward.
11. Administrator and/or PACFTB proofread the feature article and make grammar, stylistic, and other changes as needed. Author assists in resolving any production concerns.
12. Feature article is published on the project website and is included in relevant maps.

Please watch your e-mail for further communications about the status of your work and reply promptly. If you haven’t heard any news within 4 weeks, you are welcome to contact the Administrator, [Ellysa Cahoy](#).

Thank you again for submitting content to our project! We look forward to reading your material!