

# 1996 Annual Report

## From OHRAB

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board  
Annual Report  
1 July 1995-30 June 1996

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) met four times in fiscal year 1996, in August and December of 1995, and in April and June of 1996. In accordance with the board's established policy of holding at least one meeting each year in a location other than Columbus, the August meeting was held at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, and the June meeting was held at Edison State College in Piqua. While at Piqua, the board conducted an open house discussion of issues facing county and local historical societies of Ohio. Among the participants were Ray Schuck from the Allen County Historical Society, Melinda Gilpin from the Marion County Historical Society, and Sarah Sessions and Katie Blatt from the Montgomery County Historical Society.

In April, the board heard from Deputy Coordinator George Parkinson that the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) did not fund its regrant project "Homefront And Battlefront: Ohioans Serve the Nation." The board agreed to revise and submit the proposal in October 1996. The board also reviewed three grants submitted to the NHPRC against the 1 October 1995 deadline. One was submitted by the Toledo Museum of Art, one by the Ohio Historical Society, and the third by the Cincinnati Art Museum. The Toledo Museum of Art received a grant of \$54,392, and the Ohio Historical Society proposal, "Establishing the Ohio Electronic Records Archives" received only \$10,000 of the \$206,400 originally requested. The Cincinnati Art Museum grant was not funded.

At the December meeting, the board learned that the Cincinnati Historical Society finished its NHPRC grant to support a two-year processing project.

Proposed revisions to The Ohio 2003 Plan were discussed at the December meeting. In April, the board briefly considered the revisions to the NHPRC strategic plan, upon which The Ohio 2003 Plan is modeled. Following the NHPRC's intention to create a plan that is clearer, more realistic, more focused on the commission's priorities, and more reflective of the importance of technology, the board decided that the proposed revisions to The Ohio 2003 Plan should accomplish these goals as well. The revised Ohio 2003 Plan is to be printed and distributed in January of 1997.

Throughout the year, the board continued to implement many of its objectives, as outlined by The Ohio 2003 Plan. At the August meeting, Barbara Floyd reported on the Ohio State University's electronic records project "A Cooperative Approach to Electronic Records and Information Management at Colleges and Universities in Ohio."

Also at its August meeting, the board endorsed the creation of the Interim Preservation Office, in fulfillment of a recommendation in To Outwit Time.

In June, Mike Lucas informed the board about the Government Information Locator Service Initiative (GILS). This initiative, a joint project with the Ohio Historical Society, is a system designed to identify public information resources of Ohio Government, to describe the information available in those resources, and to provide assistance in obtaining the information. Development of GILS will also result in the formation of an information policy for the

state. Lucas also reported on the dedication of the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN) held in Columbus on 12 June 1996. At the dedication, Governor Voinovich promised that all Ohio libraries will be connected to the state's communications backbone by the end of the calendar year.

In April, the board considered the Ohio Historical Society's proposal to create the Ohio Local Government Information Locator System, which will use modern technology to improve upon Local Government Records Program. Emphasis will be placed on creating online resources and services that provide information local government officials need and that streamline procedures which are currently time-consuming and paper-intensive. A Local Government Information Locator System will be created, which will be a World Wide Web home page that will identify, describe, and provide assistance in obtaining local government information. The home page will include a schedule of workshops, and detailed instructions on how to schedule, preserve, and dispose of records. A functional records manual will be created to replace manuals currently in use with one that is more comprehensive, yet also more flexible and easier to update. In addition, the home page will include brief county histories and a profile of each local government office or unit. The Fact File will provide context for the records, helping users understand the structure of local governments, their responsibilities, and the records they produce. The Ohio Historical Society will seek funding to support this effort.

Also in April, the board heard a report on the Ohio Historical Society's NHPRC electronic records consultant grant. Through this grant, the Society retained Margaret Hedstrom, Associate Professor at the School of Information at the University of Michigan. Hedstrom will submit a report of her recommendations for developing an electronic records program in Ohio at the end of the grant period in August.

At the June meeting, Parkinson reported to the board that funding included in the state capital bill will provide The Ohio Historical Society's Archives/Library with \$1.5 million to establish an electronic records program and to support ongoing automation projects. Furthermore, in conjunction with the Cincinnati Historical Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society, the Ohio Historical Society released a request for proposal for an integrated library and information system.

Parkinson also summarized the goals of the Society's Ohio Vital Information for Libraries Center project (OVIL). Under this project, various public records, documents, collections and informational resources will be converted to electronic format and made available through the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN) and the World Wide Web. The Society received \$100,000 in LSCA grant funds through the State Library of Ohio and \$50,000 from OPLIN to support the project. The OVIL will implement objective C1 of The Ohio 2003 Plan: "through OhioLink, or similar online networks, improve access to historical records in Ohio."

This year also saw the creation of an Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board World Wide Web home page, designed to increase awareness of the board, its activities, and the NHPRC grant program (URL <http://www.ohiohistory.org/ohrab/>). The home page also includes hypertext links to NHPRC's new home page.

With such ongoing projects as the aforementioned, fiscal year 1996 was indeed a year of action. The next year will see the continuation and growth of many of these initiatives, as well as the revision and resubmitting of "Homefront And Battlefront." The board also agreed to do the national Historical Records Repository Survey (HRRS) in the coming year, and board members will continue to meet with interested parties across the state to publicize the board's activities and encourage grant applications.

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board  
Annual Report  
1 July 1994-30 June 1995

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board met four times in fiscal year 1995, in September and December of 1994, and in February and May of 1995. In accordance with the board's established policy of holding one meeting each year in a location other than Columbus, the September meeting was held at the Cincinnati Historical Society's headquarters in conjunction with the fall meeting of the Society of Ohio Archivists. The board gained three new members on 24 August 1994, when Governor George V. Voinovich appointed James Oda of the Piqua Historical Society, Carol Tomer of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, and Michael Lucas of the State Library of Ohio to the board. The new members replaced John Fleming, Diana Synadinos, and William Crowley who left the board during the previous year. Dennis Harrison was reappointed to a three-year term on the same date. The terms of Jonathan Dembo, Barbara Floyd, and James Oda expired on 31 March 1995. They were reappointed on 26 June 1995 to three-year terms expiring on 31 March 1998.

The board reviewed two grants submitted to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) against the 1 October 1994 deadline. One was submitted by the Grail, an international women's movement, and the other by the Toledo Museum of Art. Neither received funding. Two representatives of the Toledo Museum of Art attended the board's May meeting to discuss improving the museum's proposal for resubmission in October 1995. The Ohio Historical Society submitted an electronic records proposal, "Establishing the Ohio Electronic Records Archives," to NHPRC against the 1 June 1995 deadline. Because Deputy Coordinator George Parkinson is the project director and cannot review the proposal, Barbara Floyd acted in his stead to collect and summarize board members' reviews.

At its December meeting, the board adopted a resolution in support of Archives Week. Coordinator Gary Ness and Deputy Coordinator George Parkinson carried the proposal to the February 1995 meeting of the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators in Washington, D.C., where it was accepted by the council. Most of the board's efforts, however, went toward refining its strategic plan, now called The Ohio 2003 Plan, and achieving its objectives. The word "draft" was dropped from its title in February when the board officially adopted the plan. In November, George Parkinson and Barbara Floyd presented a session on the plan at the annual meeting of the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums. This session underlined the need to include smaller historical organizations in the board's efforts. Also in November, Ohio Historical Society staff member Elizabeth Nelson distributed the board's plan at the annual conference of the Ohio Academic Library Association.

Throughout the year, the board achieved many of the objectives of The Ohio 2003 Plan. Work began on the board's first regrant proposal, "Homefront and Battlefront: Ohioans Serve the Nation," which will accomplish Objective A2 of the plan. The board fulfilled Objective A3 by encouraging the continuation of two successful programs organized by the Society of Ohio Archivists: Archives 101, which teaches archival skills to non-professionals, and Archives Week, which puts some of the treasures maintained by Ohio repositories on display to increase public awareness of the importance of archives. The board also furthered Objective B2 by supporting the Ohio Historical Society's grant proposal, "Establishing the Ohio Electronic Records Archives," which was submitted in June 1995.

Additionally, the board adopted as one of its objectives the implementation of To Outwit Time: Preserving Materials in Ohio's Libraries and Archives, a preservation action agenda that resulted from a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The Statewide Preservation Planning Committee (SPPC) that oversaw the work of the planning effort was not a continuing entity and did not have the authority to implement its recommendations. Because OHRAB is a permanent board appointed by the governor to act as the central body for historical records planning in the state, and because the NEH project co-directors are members of the board, it is the logical inheritor of the SPPC's work. The actions suggested in the action agenda were added to the board's own goals and objectives. In May 1995, The Ohio 2003 Plan and To Outwit Time were printed jointly in an effort to achieve cost savings and to underscore the interrelation between the two plans.

To date, nearly two thousand copies of the joint publication have been distributed to libraries, archives, historical societies, museums, participants in the NEH planning effort, and State Historical Records Coordinators. Copies were also mailed to members of the Society of Ohio Archivists and Ohio lawmakers.

The end of fiscal year 1995 decisively marks the end of OHRAB's planning period. Fiscal year 1996 will be a year of action for the board. A regrant proposal for "Homefront and Battlefront: Ohioans Serve the Nation," which will focus on records documenting the wartime experiences of Ohioans, will be submitted to NHPRC against the 1 October 1995 deadline. The board will also work to implement the actions recommended in *To Outwit Time* by establishing an Interim Preservation Office supported jointly by the Ohio Historical Society and the State Library of Ohio. In addition, board members will seek to meet with interested groups throughout the state to publicize the board's activities and encourage grant applications.

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The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board  
Annual Report  
1 July 1993-30 June 1994

In December 1993, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) awarded a planning grant of \$18,524 to the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board, which enabled the board to share The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan with all Ohioans concerned with preserving historical records. The beginning of the grant period sparked an intensification of board activities. The board met four times in 1994, in January, February, March, and June. In the spring, the board produced an informational brochure, which includes the draft plan, a time line of grant activities, NHPRC application deadlines, and the board roster. Board members distributed approximately 2,000 of the new brochures at the six regional Ohio Library Council's Chapter Conferences, the Ohio Genealogical Society's Annual Meeting, the Local History Workshop at Bowling Green State University, and the spring meeting of the Society of Ohio Archivists. In addition, the brochures were distributed to libraries, archives and historical societies

together with the Preservation Action Agenda written by the consultant to the NEH-funded Statewide Preservation Project.

The draft plan appeared in the Society of Ohio Archivists' *Ohio Archivist* (Spring 1994), the Ohio Historical Society's *Preview* (Winter 1994) and *Echoes* (October 1993), and the Ohio Academy of History Newsletter (Winter 1994). Distribution and publication of the draft plan increased awareness of the board's activities, and also inspired several projects related to the board's goals--one to electronically link the catalogs of the three largest historical societies in the state, and another to focus on Ohio's anti-slavery movement.

One board member, John Fleming, resigned from the board, and the terms of William Crowley, Dennis Harrison and Diana Synadinos expired. After the reporting period, Governor Voinovich reappointed Dennis Harrison to serve another term and appointed Carol Tomer, James Oda, and Michael Lucas to fill the vacancies left by Syandinos, Fleming, and Crowley. Lucas, who began attending board meetings in February, replaces Crowley as the representative from the State Library of Ohio. In addition, at the board's invitation, Mary Bowman, President of the Ohio Genealogical Society, began attending meetings in February. The board seeks to foster closer ties with genealogists, who represent one of its largest beneficiary groups, and whose interest in preserving Ohio's documentary heritage makes them vital allies in the board's efforts to implement its plan.

The board divided into subcommittees to develop an implementation schedule for each goal of The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan.

- George Bain, Mary Bowman, and Barbara Floyd will focus on Goal A, "To assure the preservation of Ohio's documentary heritage through collaborative efforts."
- Roland Baumann and new board members Carol Tomer and James Oda will focus on Goal B, "To assure citizens of Ohio an accessible documentation of both common and diverse elements of their historical experience."
- Jonathan Dembo and Michael Lucas will focus on Goal C, "To achieve progress in the preservation and use of original source material in Ohio."
- Dennis Harrison and Alice Cornell will focus on Goal D, "To generate public support for an accessible historical record."

Two grant applicants brought draft proposals before the board to receive comments and suggestions: Janet Kalven has prepared a proposal to process photographs in the Grail National Archives against the 1 October 1994 deadline, and Raimund Goerler submitted, and the board reviewed, a proposal to organize a conference on electronic records issues in colleges and universities against the 1 June 1994 deadline.

The board implemented several objectives of the Ohio 2003 Draft Plan during the period of this report. The board met with Robert Strauss, the consultant to the Statewide Preservation Project, and with the Council of the Society of Ohio Archivists to explore possible avenues of collaboration. With the Council the board discussed how the two groups might work together to expand upon SOA's Archives 101 Workshops, launched in April. The board also encouraged Raimund Goerler to develop his grant proposal, which carries out recommendations of the Working Meeting on Research Issues in Electronic Records. Additionally, board members expressed interest in founding regrant projects focusing on antebellum reform movements, military/social history, 20th-century Ohio history, women's history, religious history and the history of minority groups.

In the next year, the board will build on the groundwork accomplished during the fiscal year 1994. Encouraged by the success of the Society of Ohio Archivists's first Archives Week in 1993, board member George Bain, who initiated and organized the program, expects greater participation in and public reaction to Archives Week 1994, to

be held in September. The board agreed that this year's theme, "Sports and Recreation in the Archives," should capitalize on the interest in sports history generated by Ken Burns' miniseries Baseball. In November, George Parkinson and Barbara Floyd will chair a panel discussion on the Ohio 2003 Draft Plan at the annual meeting of the Ohio Association of Historical Societies & Museums. The board will continue to explore ways to fund a regrant program, possibly coordinating its efforts with those of the Statewide Preservation Project Committee. Jonathan Dembo will develop a session devoted to gaps in Ohio's documentary history for the spring 1995 meeting of the Ohio Academy of History. Lastly, the board will work to finalize The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan, to develop a specific work plan to accompany it, and to translate its goals into action.

Respectfully submitted by  
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OHRAB Deputy Coordinator

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