

1 July 1993-31 August 1997

From OHRAB

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board
Final Report
1 July 1993- 31 August 1997

This report is a summary of the entire grant period, from July 1993 through August 1997. For more complete details, please see the OHRAB minutes and annual reports. Reactivated in 1991, the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board held its first meeting of the newly appointed board in June of 1992. The board has been holding regular meetings at least four times a year since then.

In December of 1993, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) awarded a planning grant of \$18,524 to the board. This enabled the board to begin work on revising the state plan. The result was The Ohio 2003 Plan, modeled after the NHPRC's strategic plan and aimed toward the Ohio Bicentennial Celebration in 2003. The draft version first appeared in the Spring of 1994. Subsequent distribution and publication of the draft plan increased awareness of the board's activities. The draft plan appeared in The Ohio Archivist (Spring 1994), the Ohio Historical Society's Preview Magazine (Winter 1994) and Echoes (October 1993), and the Ohio Academy of History Newsletter (Winter 1994). An implementation schedule for The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan, adopted in 1994, resulted in the completion of several objectives of the draft plan.

In February of 1995, the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board officially adopted The Ohio 2003 Plan, and the word "draft" was dropped from the title.

Additionally, the board adopted a preservation action agenda for Ohio, To Outwit Time: Preserving Materials in Ohio's Libraries and Archives. Funded in January of 1993 by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), To Outwit Time was a preservation plan for the state of Ohio. Though the fact that the NEH grant and the NHPRC planning grant to OHRAB were both awarded in 1993 was at first a coincidence, OHRAB took the opportunity to not only adopt To Outwit Time, but also to coordinate the two plans. In May of 1995, The Ohio 2003 Plan and To Outwit Time were printed jointly. Five thousand copies were printed and distributed to libraries, archives, historical societies, museums, participants in the NEH planning effort, and state historical records coordinators. Copies were also mailed to the members of the Society of Ohio Archivists and Ohio lawmakers.

During the course of the grant period, the board achieved many of the objectives of The Ohio 2003 Plan. Work was completed on the board's first regrant proposal "Homefront and Battlefront: Ohioans Serve the Nation." Though currently withdrawn from NHPRC consideration, the board has continued to look for ways to support this proposal. Toward the end of the grant period, the board began work on a new regrant proposal. The board has prepared a draft proposal that will emphasize preservation and access to thousands of images which represent 200 years of Ohio history and which will be made readily available through Ohio's online networks. A committee made up of Jonathan Dembo (chair), Michael Lucas and James Oda was formed to organize the board's approach to the regrant proposal and to develop it for further discussion.

The board fulfilled Objective A3 of The Ohio 2003 Plan 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 through advocacy increases public awareness of historical records. A proven success, Archives Week has been celebrated every year for the past four years.

The board advanced the goals found in Objective B2 of The Ohio 2003 Plan by supporting the Ohio Historical Society's grant proposal "Establishing the Ohio Electronic Records Archives," which was submitted in June of 1995. Initially, this plan called for a grant from the NHPRC to support a two-year project. The impetus for this project was the Ohio Electronic Records Initiative. The NHPRC declined to fund the full amount, opting instead to award a \$10,000 consultant grant to be used to help the society refine its electronic records program and to create the Electronic Records Archives. The grant also called for recommendations for the most appropriate methods for achieving the State Archives' goals. In March of 1996, the society retained as consultant Margaret Hedstrom, Associate Professor at the School of Information and Library Studies at the University of Michigan. Her Draft Report was finished in August 1996. This report was based on Hedstrom's review of the original grant proposal and visits with State Archives staff. In February of 1997, the Ohio Historical Society received \$1.5 million in Capital II funding from the state; money earmarked for establishing the electronic records program and to support ongoing automation projects. Hedstrom's final report will reflect this funding. Another initiative that advanced goals articulated in The Ohio 2003 Plan is "Access Through Automation: A Technology Plan for the Archives/Library Division of the Ohio Historical Society." Begun in March of 1996, this is a six year project designed to facilitate public access to the society's research and archival collections, as well as link the collections of the Ohio Historical Society, the Western Reserve Historical Society, and perhaps the Cincinnati Historical Society into the statewide information infrastructure.

Other projects fulfilling The Ohio 2003 Plan's call for improved access through new technology, and for the automation of access to public records:

The Ohio Vital Information for Libraries Center project (OVIL). Begun in July of 1996, and supported by an LSCA grant and through funds provided by the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN), this initiative will develop and evaluate processes for converting public records and society information resources to electronic formats for distribution through the OPLIN and the World Wide Web. In addition, the project will provide Ohio materials for the National Digital Library.

The African American Experience in Ohio. In April of 1997, The Ohio Historical Society received a \$72,844 grant for the proposal The African American Experience in Ohio. One of only 10 proposals in the country to be awarded a grant by the Library of Congress/Ameritech National Digital Library, this project will present a digitized chronological collection representing the experiences of African Americans in Ohio from 1850 to 1920.

In 1996, OHRAB established a website and home page on the World Wide Web (URL <http://www.ohiohistory.org/ohrab>). In their ongoing efforts to implement The Ohio 2003 Plan, the board has continued to participate in the planning and support of various projects, including the Historical Records and Repository Survey (HRRS). A project of the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators, this national survey was sponsored and coordinated in Ohio by the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board.

In December of 1996, the board met with the Executive Director of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission. He reported on the status of the Bicentennial Commission, and shared his thoughts on the direction the upcoming Bicentennial will take. He also discussed the anticipated role OHRAB will have in the Bicentennial, and expressed his interest in working with the board to implement The Ohio 2003 Plan as part of the Bicentennial Commission's plans.

Throughout the grant period, the board reviewed grants submitted to the NHPRC by Ohio historical organizations.

In addition to the \$10,000 the Ohio Historical Society received for "Establishing the Ohio Electronic Records Archives," the following grants were funded through the NHPRC: the Cincinnati Historical Society, which received a \$97,786 grant for work on the Nippert Collection of the German Methodist Church, the Toledo Museum of Art, which received a grant of \$54,392 to complete its archives and records management program, and the Ohio State University Archives, which received a grant of \$18,446 to fund the proposal "A Cooperative Approach to Electronic Records and Information Management at Colleges and Universities in Ohio."

In June of 1997, the board discussed the recent completion of the board's continuance grant proposal, which was submitted to the NHPRC before the 1 June deadline. This proposal will support board meetings over the next two years, and allow for continued implementation of The Ohio 2003 Plan.

The past four years have been a time of action and growth for the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board. While the next few years will see the continuation of many of the initiatives and programs supported by the board, it will also see the rise of new goals and challenges as Ohio moves toward its Bicentennial year of 2003.

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- This page was last modified on 5 October 2009, at 00:53.