

1993 Interim Report

From OHRAB

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board
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This grant was made in November 1993 to the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board for a period of two years, beginning 1 December 1993, to revise and update its Statement of Priorities and Preferred Approaches. The board achieved its goal of sharing and discussing its new statement, The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan, with interested groups, as it will continue to do to ensure that it reflects the priorities and concerns of all Ohioans who value historical records.

An early goal was to blanket the state with preliminary information about the board's draft plan, that is, to reach the largest number of people as quickly as possible. To achieve that end, the board mailed The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan to the Ohio repositories listed in the Directory of Archives and Manuscript Repositories in the United States, the larger historical societies, university and public libraries, and professional associations during the summer of 1993. The plan appeared in Echoes and Preview, the Ohio Historical Society's monthly and quarterly newsletters and in the Society of Ohio Archivists' The Ohio Archivist. The board received favorable responses from this activity.

The board met in Columbus in January, February, March, and June 1994. The January meeting initiated a formal point by point discussion of The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan and developed a more detailed project timeline. The board passed a motion to invite a representative from the Ohio Genealogical Society to attend meetings in order to establish a link between the board and one of its largest beneficiary groups. Janet Kalven met with the board to discuss her preliminary draft of a proposal to process photographs in the Grail National Archives. The Grail is an international movement of Catholic laywomen begun in 1940 and established in Loveland, Ohio in 1944. The photos in their archives relate to topics identified by the board and the NHPRC as neglected, women's history and religious history. Board members suggested ways in which Kalven could improve her proposal in order to submit it against the 1 October 1994 deadline.

At the February meeting, the board divided into subcommittees to develop a workplan, or implementation schedule, which will suggest the order in which objectives will be addressed, assign costs and designate responsibility for carrying out the tasks. Board members volunteered to attend Chapter Conferences of the Ohio Library Council held in their respective regions of the state in April and May. Mary Bowman, President of the Ohio Genealogical Society, and Michael Lucas, the newly appointed Deputy State Librarian for Library Services, attended the meeting. Raimund Goerler of the Ohio State University Archives presented his idea for a grant proposal to fund a conference on electronic records issues. Board members worked with Goerler to draft a proposal which he submitted against the 1 June 1994 deadline.

In March, the board met with Robert J. Strauss, the consultant for the Ohio Statewide Preservation Planning Grant, which is funded by the National Endowment for the humanities and co-directed by the George Parkinson of the Ohio Historical Society and Michael Lucas of the State Library of Ohio. Mr. Strauss reviewed the status of the Ohio Model Preservation Action Agenda as it is evolving. Board members suggested possible revisions and discussed how the NEH and NHPRC planning efforts in Ohio might complement one another. The possibility of OHRAB's implementation schedule incorporating both planning efforts was discussed, particularly with regard to

the reformatting and preservation of historical records in Ohio which are identified as being vital to ongoing and anticipated research. Also in March, the board produced a draft plan brochure which includes the text of the draft plan, the project timeline developed in February, NHPRC deadlines, and the board roster; a copy is attached to this report.

In April and May, Board representatives attended the Ohio Library Council Chapter Conferences in Dayton, Columbus, Mount Sterling, Perrysburg, and Hudson. At each meeting, the representative board member or members made a brief introductory statement, distributed copies of the draft plan brochures and answered questions. The following board members participated in this activity: George Bain, Roland Baumann, Alice Cornell, Barbara Floyd, Dennis Harrison, and Mike Lucas. In addition, Barbara Floyd and George Parkinson attended the Local History Workshop at Bowling Green State University and draft plan brochures were distributed at the annual meeting of the Ohio Genealogical Society.

At its June meeting, the board met in a joint session with the Council of the Society of Ohio Archivists. In the morning, the two groups discussed how they might work together to shape the future of the Ohio Network of American History Research Centers and the other parts of the draft plan which call for collaborative efforts. In the afternoon, the board met alone to evaluate the joint session, share reactions to the draft plan which were received at the OLC conferences, and hear reports from each subcommittee on the progress of their implementation schedules.

There were several other collateral efforts not included in the grant proposal but which relate to board activities and goals. Board member Roland Baumann chaired an open session on the draft plan at the spring meeting of the Society of Ohio Archivists where the plan and its implementation were discussed at length. A quorum of the board and a good mix of Ohio archivists participated. Roland also chaired a formal session at the Midwest Archives Conference meeting in Chicago in May, "To Plan or Not to Plan," regarding the NHPRCs long-range planning work in the midwest. Session participants included David Haury, Assistant Director, Kansas State Historical Society and Deputy Coordinator, and Sandra S. Clark, Director, Michigan Bureau of History and State Coordinator, as scheduled speakers (representatives of the Indiana program were no shows). John Daily, George Parkinson, Gerald George, among others were unscheduled participants. Finally, Jonathan Dembo agreed to develop a program on gaps in Ohio's documentary record for the spring 1995 meeting of the Ohio Academy of History in order to focus OHRAB activities in terms of documentation strategies.

One board member, John Fleming, resigned due to conflicts with other commitments, and the terms of three board members, Diana Synadinos, Bill Crowley and Dennis Harrison, expired in April. Mike Lucas is expected to replace Crowley, and plans are for Harrison to serve another term. Two other appointments to the board are anticipated. Also new to the planning effort is Elizabeth Nelson, who prepares materials for board meetings, handles requests for information about the board and NHPRC, and helps manage grant related activities. Her vita is attached. In terms of costshare, her time replaces that of Jill Harris as specified in the grant proposal.

The board has accomplished the tasks outlined in its plan of work for the first six months of the grant period. Publications of the Ohio Historical Society and the Society of Ohio Archivists printed the draft plan. Members of the Ohio Genealogical Society, the Society of Ohio Archivists and the Ohio Library Council received copies of the board's new brochure and provided feedback. The board held four meetings, one more than planned. One meeting was held with the consultant to the statewide preservation project, and another was held jointly with the Council of the Society of Ohio Archivists. Board members attended the Chapter Conferences of the Ohio Library Council.

Work on the implementation schedule of the draft plan is underway, and the board has achieved goals and objectives outlined in The Ohio 2003 Draft Plan. It has endorsed the "Archives 101" workshops which the Society of Ohio Archivists offers to professional staff of historical and genealogical organizations who have no formal

archival training, but who deal with archival materials. Another program developed by the Society of Ohio Archivists, "Archives Week," mentioned in the draft plan as a means to raise public awareness of the benefits of historical documentation, was successfully launched in 1993. "Archives Week 1994," will focus on sports and recreation in archives and will coincide with the broadcast of Ken Burns' mini-series "Baseball" in September. The board met with the executive director of OhioLink, an online network serving Ohio academic libraries, to consider how historical records could be made accessible online. Two potential applicants brought ideas before the board which closely relate to the priorities identified in the draft plan. In addition, Dr. Deborah Van Broekhoven of Ohio Wesleyan University plans to work with the board in developing a project focusing on the antislavery movement in Ohio which might be included in the board's implementation schedule. Van Broekhoven is currently seeking funding for the project from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Lastly, the Ohio 2003 Draft Plan sparked an idea for creating an online network to link the catalogs of the Cincinnati Historical Society, the Western Reserve Historical Society and the Ohio Historical Society. This idea is in the preliminary planning stage.

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board made significant strides toward achieving its goals during the last six months, and it is progressing steadily toward the final goal, implementation of the Ohio 2003 Draft Plan.

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