

1 December 1996-30 June 1997

From OHRAB

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board
Interim Report
1 December 1996- 30 June 1997

The board's activities during the reporting period included 4 meetings, the completion of the Historical Records Repository Survey, and plans for a new regrant proposal.

In December, the board met with Steve George, Executive Director of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission. George reported on the status of the Bicentennial Commission, and shared his thoughts on the direction the upcoming Bicentennial will take. George also stressed that he views OHRAB as an active participant in the Bicentennial, and expressed his interest in endorsing The Ohio 2003 Plan as part of the Bicentennial Commission's plans.

Also in December, the board heard from Deputy Coordinator George Parkinson on some of the ongoing projects involving the Ohio Historical Society. These include:

"Access Through Automation," an initiative that will result in a computerized library system that integrates all of the basic library functions of the Ohio Historical Society and the Western Reserve Historical Society into an online interactive system using a common database and access procedures. "Access Through Automation" fulfills The Ohio 2003 Plan's call for improved access through new technology, and for the automation of access to public records. and the recent grant proposal entitled

"The African American Experience in Ohio," a recent grant proposal awarded to the Society which when finished will present a digitized chronological collection representing the experiences of African Americans in Ohio from 1850 to 1920.

J.D. Britton of the Ohio Historical Society's Local History Office updated the board on the progress of the HRRS: 1000 forms had been sent out statewide. The board agreed to help with the distribution of follow-up calls and letters, as well as provide additional funds to cover the costs of a new mailing. Parkinson made a brief report on the rejection of "Homefront and Battlefront" by the NHPRC, and suggested that the board take up discussion on the status of the regrant proposal at the 23 January meeting.

The January meeting was held in conjunction with the "Access Through Automation" vendor demonstrations, to allow the board members the opportunity to attend the system demonstrations. Business addressed included an update on the "Homefront and Battlefront" regrant. The board heard from Parkinson that Dick Cameron of the NHPRC offered to have commission members read the regrant and provide feedback. With that in mind, the board has formally requested from the NHPRC that "Homefront and Battlefront" be withdrawn from consideration as a proposal until after the NHPRC response.

The board heard a brief report on the progress of the 1996 Historical Records Repository Survey's progress in Ohio; a second mailing resulted in more than 500 additional responses. The board also agreed to postpone the adoption of the revised The Ohio 2003 Plan. Parkinson reported that Steve George, Executive Director of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission, expressed great interest in several of the board's recommendations after meeting with OHRAB in December. George is keeping The Ohio 2003 Plan in mind as a possible key component of the

Bicentennial celebration.

The March meeting was held at the Toledo Museum of Art in order to recognize the recent completion of the museum's archives and records management program. The project was made possible through the cooperation of OHRAB and was funded by a \$53,392 grant from the NHPRC. The board heard from State Coordinator Gary Ness on the status of the Ohio Government Information Locator Service. Chief among his concerns was the impact of state funding on this project. Ness stated that he had seen little evidence that the Ohio House subcommittees are willing to give additional money to underwrite such initiatives. The board also heard from Parkinson on the recent meeting between OHS staff and network representatives. Issues discussed included organizational plans to get the Ohio Government Information Locator Service funded and updated. Board member Barbara Floyd also attended this meeting.

The board heard from Matthew Benz on the progress of the Historical Records Repository Survey. Benz reported that the data entry segment of the project was underway through the OHS Data Processing Department. Funds granted by NHPRC underwrote some of these costs. In order to allow the processing of the surveys, Vicky Walch, coordinator of the national survey, agreed to extend the deadline to 25 April.

Regarding the withdrawn regrant proposal, "Homefront and Battlefront", the board considered possible next steps. The decision was made to investigate what sort of projects are receiving NHPRC approval and funding with the intention of using a successful grant application as a model for a new regrant effort.

The board discussed revision of The 2003 Plan. It was decided that any changes made reflect changes made to the NHPRC plan. The board agreed to wait until the outcome of the NHPRC decision.

Parkinson informed the board that NAGARA (National Association of Government Archives & Records Administrators) would like to hold its 1999 meeting in Columbus. The board agreed to endorse this meeting, and passed a resolution of welcome and encouragement. The December meeting closed with a reception held in the Archives Department of the Toledo Museum of Art. Julie McMaster, the museum's Archivist, hosted the reception, where the board met with museum staff and invited local guests.

At the June meeting, business centered around the board's decision to move ahead with a new regrant proposal to replace Homefront and Battlefront". Discussion opened with a briefing on the status of the NHPRC plan. Based on their understanding of the proposed NHPRC plan, the board discussed preparing a regrant proposal that incorporates either electronic records or images. 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 develop it for further discussion. The board also discussed the recent completion of the board's support grant, which was submitted to the NHPRC before the 1 June deadline. This proposal will support board meetings over the next two years.

The board heard a report on the recent completion of the Historical Records Repository Survey. With the data entry finished, the results had been sent to Vicky Walch, project coordinator. She returned a status report which confirmed that Ohio had 414 completed forms. The board discussed the possibility of mounting the survey results on the OHRAB web page.

Respectfully submitted,

George Parkinson

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