

# OHRAB Final Report

*“Preserving Films from the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio”*

January 23, 2019

**Institution:** Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Archives

**Project Director:**

Veronica Buchanan, Archivist

5900 Delhi Rd.

Mount Saint Joseph, OH 45051

Phone: 513-347-5348

E-mail: [veronica.buchanan@srcharitycinti.org](mailto:veronica.buchanan@srcharitycinti.org)

## Summary of Project Activities and Accomplishments

This project has resulted in the digital conversion of 41 films, 10 16 mm and 31 8 mm, from the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio. Although one film was discovered to be unusable due to deterioration, 41 individual item records were created in the Ohio Memory digital repository through the creation of a separate access MP4 for one of the longest films converted. Visual examples of the final product of this project in both Vimeo and Ohio Memory can be viewed in Appendix B.

The landing page for the entire collection in Ohio Memory can be accessed in the link below:

<http://www.ohiomemory.org/cdm/search/searchterm/vincentian%20sisters!vincentian%20sisters%20of%20charity%20of%20bedford,%20ohio/field/all!creato/mode/all!all/conn/and!and/order/nosort/page/1>

A direct link to a sample record in Ohio Memory from the series, “Cleveland Archbishop Edward Hoban’s Residence, Sisters Retreat film, ca. 1950”:

<http://www.ohiomemory.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p16007coll72/id/1816/rec/7>

A direct link to a sample record in Vimeo from the series, “Villa San Bernardo Motherhouse Bell Tower Steeple Raising film, July 25, 1978”:

<https://vimeo.com/274951705>

One other major accomplishment that has taken place in the span of the grant was the processing for and creation of an EAD finding aid for the [Villa San Bernardo collection](#), spanning the years 1931 to 2010. Permanent links to the EAD were included in the respective item records in Ohio Memory. Conversely, links to the digitized content in Ohio Memory are included in the related material field for the collection EAD.

Through OhioLINK's EAD creation tool and repository, the finding aid is available through nearly every major search engine, enhancing access to both the collection and the material that has been digitally preserved through this grant.

After examining the project narrative outlined in the original application, all of the benchmarks outlined were met in the time frame provided. The only challenges we faced that we had not originally anticipated was the overwhelming dark nature of the films and the possibility of not being able to digitally preserve a film due to deterioration. The access copies were sent to Sister Joyce Brehm, our in-house digitization expert and long-time archives volunteer, who utilized video editing software to enhance the resolution and brightness of the films before the uploading process began.

We had also outlined using the existing Community Vimeo account that had already been established by the Communications department. Once the films were digitized and ready to upload, I found that the project was too substantial for the existing community account and would consume the remainder of their storage space. Therefore, I created a series of Vimeo accounts for the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati archives and linked them together through channels, tags, and shared profile statements. The separated series would be collated into one cohesive collection in the Ohio Memory interface. Each video was uploaded with a bevy of metadata describing the history of the Vincentian Sisters of Charity, the significance of the specific film in question, and a statement formally acknowledging OHRAB's role in preserving the entire collection.

Once a workflow was established with Ohio Memory for this specific project, each film was uploaded again into their system using the same title and description fields, adding appropriate LOC subject headings along with required fields outlining specific date, place, and file format information that feed into the multi-faceted search interface. This process went along as smoothly as our previous OHRAB grant-funded project and was finalized much more quickly due to our past experience and training in their interface.

The final phase of the project centered on promotion. The Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Communications team were notified of the project and shared an update with Sisters and Associates through the community's website and Facebook page with the article "[Uncovering History in the Archives](#)". On July 26, a "film premiere" event was held at Mother Margaret Hall, the community's nursing facility, offering both Sisters of Charity as well as former Vincentian Sisters the opportunity to see excerpts from the collection on a 70" flat screen. A handout was produced with screenshots denoting each clip, which provided additional Sisters the opportunity to write about their memories or identifications of Sisters depicted in the respective clip.

For the Fall 2018 Newsletter of the national organization Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR), an article entitled "Charism in Motion: Preserving the Films of the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio". The ACWR article can be viewed in Appendix C.

Vimeo stats recorded in December 2018 show that we had over 470 views of the entire film collection. In the final quarter of the year (October 1-December 31), Ohio memory analytics revealed over 430 page views from 83 sessions, 56.6 percent of which were new visitors to the site. We received referrals from Ohio History as well as our local Delhi Historical Society. The analytics also demonstrated the breadth of interest in the collection throughout Ohio, with visitors noted from Columbus, Dayton, Cleveland, as well as Cincinnati.

Given that the project was primarily promoted internally and in the women religious archives community, it's surprising to see a strong showing of unique users to the collection through Ohio Memory in the past six months. By increasing awareness of both the archives and the institutions represented in the digital collection and the ease of use generated by the digital preservation of these rare and valuable resources, both the archives department and the Leadership team agreed that this project was an overall success. In the Fall of this year, conversations have formed with our sponsored ministry Mount Saint Joseph University to continue pursuing grant opportunities to digitize a portion of their archive as well as our collection on the College of Mount Saint Joseph, its earlier incarnation, in anticipation of the institution's centennial celebration in 2020. Therefore, we hope to use and expand the model outlined for this grant in initiatives we have outlined for 2019.

# APPENDIX B

1)



## Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha Investiture Ceremony and Reception film, ca. 1951

3 months ago | More

 Veronica Buchanan [+ Follow](#)

▶ 49   ♥ 0   🗨 3   💬 0

[Share](#)

Search results for "vincentian sisters"

Autoplay next video



Shrine of Our Lad...  
Veronica Buchanan



Villa San Bernard...  
Veronica Buchanan

2)

 **SISTERS OF CHARITY OF CINCINNATI**  
COLLECTION

[Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Home](#)   [Browse All](#)   [Ohio Memory Home](#)


Search  [Search](#)    Exclude full text sources   [Advanced Search](#)

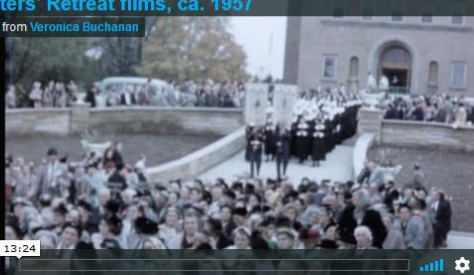
[Home](#) > [Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati](#) > Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha Processions, Christmas in the Original Motherhouse Chapel, and...


[References URL](#)   [Save to favorites](#)

## Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha Processions, Christmas in the Original Motherhouse Chapel, and Sisters' Retreat films, ca. 1957

[View Description](#)

 **Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha Processions, Christmas in the Original Motherhouse Chapel, and Sisters' Retreat films, ca. 1957**  
from Veronica Buchanan



13:24   

Description

**Title** Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha Processions, Christmas in the Original Motherhouse Chapel, and Sisters' Retreat films, ca. 1957

**Subject** Convents -- United States -- History  
Monasticism and religious orders for women -- Catholic Church -- History  
Catholic Church, Diocese of Cleveland (Ohio)

- 1) [Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha Investiture Ceremony ca. 1951 \(Vimeo\)](#)
- 2) [Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha Processions ca. 1957 \(Ohio Memory\)](#)

# APPENDIX C

1)

 **Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious** ...  
Published by Veronica Buchanan [?] · October 11 · 🌐

ACWR member Veronica Buchanan will be sharing an article for the upcoming Fall Newsletter about her experiences digitizing the complete moving visual record of the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio through an Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board grant.

If you've completed a recent project with your community's collection or were inspired to form an initiative from our recent conference, we encourage members to submit an article for the Fall Newsletter. The deadline is Tuesday, October 16th.



OHIOMEMORY.ORG  
**Ohio Memory, a product of the Ohio History Connection and the State Library of Ohio**

149 People Reached      12 Engagements      [Boost Post](#)

  Yuko Matsuzaki Nagai, Jacqueline Romero and 4 others      1 Share

2)

**Charism in Motion: Preserving the Films of the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio**


This past February, I received a call from a Sister based in the Cleveland area sharing her discovery of "some films stored in the basement" of their house. When they arrived to the archives in Cincinnati, "some films" turned into 41 8mm and 16mm films from the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio (VSC), a community that merged with the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati (SC) in 2004. In consulting our inventories for the existing VSC archive, I was surprised to find that we did not receive any other film footage over the past 14 years. Therefore, this new discovery would serve as the only moving visual record of the VSC Community's entire history.

By the time the films were received in Cincinnati, the window to pursue an Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Grant was less than a week. This state-level grant awards up to \$5000 to "archival institutions to preserve and/or provide access to Ohio's historical records." In 2017, The SC archives had received this grant to digitize a collection of newsletters from our groundbreaking Santa Maria Institute as well as excerpts from a Civil-War era patient ledger. Thankfully, the team at Scenesavers, industry leaders in film and legacy a/v format conversion and preservation, responded and provided an estimate for the project in one business day! The following month, the SC archives was notified that our application was approved and we could move forward with the project.

For those unfamiliar with the history of this Community, the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio first began on September 4, 1928, when five Sisters arrived from Pittsburgh in response to an invitation from Cleveland's Archbishop Joseph Schrembs. The Sisters who arrived were originally members of the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Pittsburgh (founded in 1902), but received the full support of the community to embark on this new spiritual journey in Bedford. The Community did not officially become an autonomous congregation until February 19, 1939. On that day, 44 Sisters took vows as Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio. The Archbishop requested that this diocesan community focus on ministering to Cleveland's Slovak community. At its height, the community had 150 members in 1965 and, at that time, were involved in over 20 schools, hospitals, and community organizations.

The films preserved through this initiative span the years 1942 to 1978 and demonstrate the community's distinct Slovak culture, interactions with the local community, especially through processions and other ceremonies at the Shrine of Our Lady of Levocha, and the evolution of the Villa San Bernardo Motherhouse campus through the years. In attending our ACWR Triennial this year, an overarching theme seemed to emerge in nearly every session, the idea of sharing the story in every way possible to demonstrate the value of our archival holdings and its vital need for long-term preservation. Although funding opportunities are severely limited to women religious archival collections, an unfortunate fact that has been shared by communities across the US at both the Triennial and the Boston College conferences, this project demonstrates the value of pursuing any and all grants, regardless of the monetary amount. With less than \$2000, the archives was able to preserve and encapsulate a Community's entire history in a highly engaging medium, the moving image.

Veronica Buchanan, [veronica.buchanan@archbcb.cinti.org](mailto:veronica.buchanan@archbcb.cinti.org)



Scenes from the Vincentian Sisters of Charity film collection (above and right)

6

- 1) Facebook excerpt from the ACWR page (published October 11)
- 2) ACWR Newsletter excerpt (published on ACWR website November 2018 and circulated through the list-serv for the group)

## Project Cost

- **Summary of Expenses**

- Digitally converting 10 16 mm films and 31 8 mm films (See Appendix A) \$1876

Subtotal **\$1876**

Purchased with matching funds:

- Annual Subscription to Ohio Memory \$250

Subtotal **\$250**

In-Kind Cost Match:

- Amount of staff time spent on the project

15% of archivist's time \$5244.48

Subtotal **\$5244.48**

**TOTAL: \$7406.85**