

## **Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Final Report, Grant RC-102703-19**

This is a report on the activities of the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) between January 1 and December 31, 2019, as funded by a grant of \$31,670.

### *Board Personnel*

On March 31, 2019 the following member left the board due to term limits, per OHRAB's bylaws:

Rhonda Freeze, Director, Butler County Records Center and Archives

Between January 1 and December 31, 2019 the Governor of Ohio appointed the following member to the board:

Robin Heise, Records Manager and Archivist, Greene County Archives and Records Center (Term: April 15, 2019 – March 31, 2022)

Between January 1 and December 31, 2019 the following reappointments were made to the board:

Meghan Hays, Local History Librarian, Shaker Heights Public Library (Term: March 31, 2019 – March 31, 2022)

Cindy Hofner, Clerk of Courts, Wood County (Term: March 31, 2019 – March 31, 2022)

Russ Pollitt, Genealogy Subject Specialist, Columbus Metropolitan Library (Term: March 31, 2019 – March 31, 2022)

Between January 1 and December 31, 2019 the following new appointment was made to the board:

Bill Modrow, Head of The Walter Havighurst Special Collections, Preservation & University Archives, Miami University (Term: August 23, 2019 – August 23, 2022)

The current board roster is available at <http://www.ohrab.org/members/>.

### *Board Meetings*

The board met on January 25, 2019 at the Ohio History Connection in Columbus. The board discussed its membership vacancies and received an update on the Ohio History Connection's Statehood Day event. Other topics of discussion included the board's regrant program and activities of the awards committee.

The board met on April 26, 2019 at the Ohio History Connection in Columbus. One of the board's 2018 Archival Fellowship recipients gave a presentation on her project to

locate and identify manumission records. The board also discussed its regrant program and how to promote it and OHRAB's 2020 grant application.

The board met on August 23, 2019 at the Ohio History Connection in Columbus. Board members discussed the deadlines for its various award programs and changes to its regrant guidelines for 2020. The board also assessed how it is meeting the goals of its strategic plan.

The board met on October 25, 2019 at the Ohio History Connection in Columbus. The board chose the recipients of the Archives Achievement Award. The board also discussed how it could measure the impact and effectiveness of its programs.

Copies of the minutes for these meetings are attached.

### History Day

On April 27, 2019 OHRAB presented two awards for the best use of Ohio's historical records in a History Day project. Andrea Harrison, Lauren Sheperd and Athena Vadnal were recognized in the senior category for their website *Jesse Owens and America's Discrimination* (<https://17084091.nhd.weebly.com/>). The awards committee cited Harrison, Sheperd and Vadnal for using primary sources from the Cleveland Public Library to create a stirring montage of the triumph and tragedy of Owens's life. Owens's memories and blunt words mix with searing images of Adolph Hitler, the 1936 Berlin Olympics and discrimination here in America to form a heartbreaking exposé of racism in the twentieth century.

The OHRAB History Day award recipient in the junior category was Ehren Collins for his paper *Collinwood's Call to Action: The Collinwood School Fire Tragedy and its Impact on Fire Safety*. Collins was recognized for using primary sources from the Cleveland Public Library and the Western Reserve Historical Society to create a moving moment by moment retelling of the March 4, 1908 fire that killed 172 children and three adults. Collins contrasts the tragedy of these events with the triumph of the improved school construction practices and regulations that followed.

### Archives Achievement Award

OHRAB awarded its Achievement Award during Archives Month in October. The award recognizes significant accomplishments in preserving and improving access to historical records in any format by an Ohio archival institution. This year the board recognized the City of Westlake Clerk of Council and the Lakewood Historical Society. The Clerk of Council for the City of Westlake digitized the city's meeting minutes and legislation dating back to 1831. The digital images were indexed and are now available online through the city's website. The original volumes and records were also rehoused in archival boxes. The Lakewood Historical Society was recognized by OHRAB for improving the storage of its archival collections. The Historical Society opened a new building which not only provides secure, climate controlled storage for its collections but it also provides an improved research room and accessibility for researchers.

### Electronic Records Rack Card

In 2019 board members produced and printed a rack card highlighting the threats to electronic records preservation and steps that can be taken to protect electronic records (see attached). The card has been shared with attendees of the 2020 Ohio Township Association Conference and the Ohio History Connection's 2020 Statehood Day advocacy event. It has also been shared with elected officials and with organizations such as the Ohio County Archivists and Records Managers Association, and the Ohio Municipal Clerks Association.

### Social Media Training

As part of its 2019 NHPRC grant, OHRAB received \$5,000 to work with the Ohio Electronic Records Committee (OhioERC) to develop an online training module (<http://go.osu.edu/ohioerc-socialmedia>) focusing on the management and preservation of social media records. This interactive training takes approximately 30 to 40 minutes to complete and guides participants through topics such as the government use of social media through both public and personal accounts, the capture, management and disposition factors of records created on social media and citizen interaction with government through social media. Members of the OhioERC and others volunteered 79 total hours in developing the training. It was launched on January 27, 2020 and was advertised to organizations such as the Ohio County Archivists and Records Managers Association, the Ohio Municipal Clerk's Association, Ohio County Commissioners Association, Ohio Recorders Association, Ohio Clerk of Courts Association, Ohio Township Association, Ohio School Board Association and the Ohio Municipal Attorneys Association. The training is available for free for up to 2,000 unique registrants. As of March 6, there have been 341 registrants including elected officials, records managers and archivists, government communications and IT staff, and municipal and county clerks.

### Regrant Program

As part of its 2019 NHPRC grant, OHRAB received \$20,000 for a regrant program. In early January 2019 OHRAB's Regrant Committee announced the regrant opportunity through Ohio archives and records management listservs and networks. In response to the grant announcement, OHRAB received 9 applications requesting a total of \$22,567.

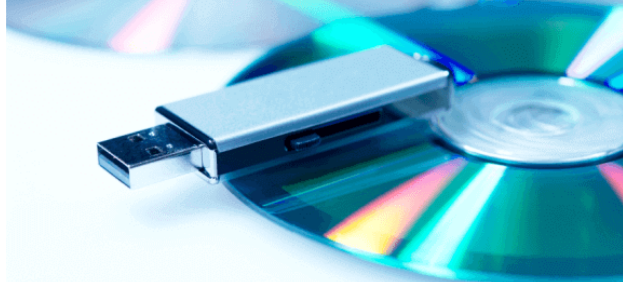
OHRAB's Regrant Committee reviewed the applications and chose the recipients via a phone conference. At the beginning of April eight projects received a total of \$15,321. Since the board did not distribute all of the available funds, in June it issued a second call for applications and received 11 applications requesting a total of \$27,167. OHRAB awarded five projects a total of \$6,679. OHRAB added \$2,000 of unspent travel and meeting funds to the \$20,000 grant. Members of OHRAB worked one-on-one with the grant recipients to provide oversight and guidance for the projects.

The institutions that received regrant funding are:

- **Belmont County District Library**, Martins Ferry, OH *Local History Scanning Station for Belmont County* (\$1,428)
- **Boardman Township Department of Planning and Zoning**, Boardman, OH *Digitization and Preservation of Zoning Department Records* (\$2,516)
- **Clark County Board of Elections**, Springfield, OH *Preserving Clark County's Election History* (\$1,022)
- **Clark County Historical Society**, Springfield, OH *Oral History Digitization Project* (\$1,043)
- **Cleveland Grays Armory Museum**, Cleveland, OH *Archiving the Archives: Finally Getting It Right* (\$2,341)
- **Fairfield County Heritage Association**, Lancaster, OH *Preservation, Organization and Digitization of Records from the Boys' Industrial School and the Fairfield County Chapter of the American Red Cross* (\$1,222)
- **Kent Historical Society**, Kent, OH *KHS Oral History Transcription Project* (\$650)
- **Laurel School**, Shaker Heights, OH *Blazing the Trail: 125 Years at Laurel School* (\$1,465)
- **Licking County Records Center**, Newark, OH *Cleaning and Rehousing Courthouse Attic Records* (\$1,226)
- **Ravenna Township**, Ravenna, OH *Grandview Memorial Park Cemetery Records Preservation* (\$3,400)
- **Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati**, Mount Saint Joseph, OH *Digitizing Rare Published Resources from the College of Mount St. Joseph and the Good Samaritan Hospital of Nursing* (\$2,299)
- **Village of Lockington**, Lockington, OH *Organization of Village Historical Records* (\$850)
- **Village of Sugar Grove**, Sugar Grove, OH *Preserving Sugar Grove's Legacy* (\$2,538)

Collectively the regrant projects processed more than 200 cubic feet of records, created more than 7,000 digital images and digitized more than 7,000 minutes of oral history interviews. Project final reports have been posted to OHRAB's website (<http://www.ohrab.org/grants/regrant/>) and some examples of projects are:

- The Licking County Archives and Records received \$1,226 to clean, catalog and rehouse historic records that had been stored in the courthouse attic. More than 100 cubic feet of records are now preserved, including court journals and dockets, tax duplicates and Auditor's property transfer records.
- The Clark County Historical Society received \$1,043 to digitize its collection of more than 100 oral history interviews. These interviews provide a first-hand look at life in the county in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and were only available on the original audio cassettes. As a result of this project, more than 7,000 minutes of recordings are now backed-up and more accessible.



## Electronic Records Preservation

How are you managing your electronic records? Are they kept per their retention schedules and disposed of accordingly? Have you planned for their long-term preservation? Have you even viewed your working computer files as records? These digital files that are critical to your office today will be the historical records of tomorrow. Electronic records also have different preservation challenges than paper records. Here are a few things to consider with your electronic records:

### Threats to electronic records:

- *Technology*, both hardware and software, changes quickly.
- *File formats* become obsolete, resulting in costly migration projects or issues in answering public records requests.
- *Decentralized recordkeeping* can result in losing track of all the copies of records and who is responsible.
- *Security is often lacking* on all the devices that records may be kept on, both public and private (laptops, mobile devices, flash drives, etc.).

### Steps to Take:

- *Be proactive!* Plan for managing the records at the start of projects, including the future costs of preserving the records.
- Be sure to *include all relevant parties* (records managers, IT, records creators and users, legal counsel).
- *Have policies* (social media, digitization, email, etc.) in place.
- *Use open file formats* (such as TIFF, PDF/A, etc.).
- Have a *migration plan* for obsolete formats and technology.



**To Learn More:**

Ohio Electronic Records Committee: [www.ohioerc.org](http://www.ohioerc.org).

Council of State Archivists Program for Electronic Records Training, Tools, and Standards: [www.statearchivists.org/pertts](http://www.statearchivists.org/pertts)

## **Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board**

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) preserves and provides access to the state's historical records.

Advocating on behalf of Ohio's archives, the board promotes the importance of the state's historical records. Board members represent Ohio's public and private archives, records offices, and research institutions. OHRAB is funded by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), a division of the National Archives and Records Administration. Administrative responsibility for the board rests with the Ohio History Connection.

More information about OHRAB is available at [www.ohrab.org](http://www.ohrab.org) or email [ohrab@ohiohistory.org](mailto:ohrab@ohiohistory.org). This card was funded by a grant received from the NHPRC.

