

## **Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown**

### **Protecting and Preserving the Ursuline Sisters Of Youngstown Historical Collection**

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#### **Project Summary**

The Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown Historical Collection OHRAB grant project objectives were to process and preserve records documenting the history of the Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown community, including letters, diaries, books and photographs that chronicle 150 years in the Mahoning Valley. This was accomplished by these artifacts being scanned, sorted and individually placed in acid free sheet protectors or boxes after being saved digitally. The originals were then organized in archival binders. Some were put back into our filing cabinets in archival folders while others were secured in archival boxes. Any personal records of deceased Sisters or historical records in non-archival file folders were put in archival file folders. A total of 305 images were scanned along with 48 documents.

USB drives were used to back these digital records and to provide a backup onto our server. The server is backed up on a daily basis onto a network attached storage hard drive. The USB drives are also a shared source for our archival research.

While the entire Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown/Ursuline Sisters Mission complex is over 120,000 square feet of space, the area where the archives were previously stored was approximately 175 square feet. The entire USM complex is currently undergoing construction and renovation. The new archival space is 450 square feet. This is where the archives now live, though some of the largest file cabinets containing material have yet to be moved. The renovation has enabled us to better store and highlight our collection, while the OHRAB grant has allowed us to better prepare the collection for public access. Our space now is accessible to the public and features period furniture and objects which complement the archival collection and allow the public, the Sisters and the residents of our attached Independent Living apartments to enjoy the collection in a comfortable and beautiful setting. For example, during this holiday season, we decorated a Christmas tree that featured a photograph of each deceased Ursuline Sister, the images and dates of service having been pulled from the collected files and images that the grant has helped preserved. These photographs and dates are now available to the public. Prior to this, this catalog was incomplete and only accessible in a dated, xeroxed booklet.

## **Self Assessment**

We are pleased we have been able to protect much of our collection with the grant funds. There has been great interest from our regular Ursuline Center visitors, family members, philanthropists, guests, staff and the Sisters. We have also been able to showcase our book about the Ursuline Sisters in our new archives area, the research for which comes from our collection. There remain numerous files, images and documents that require protection. The lighting also remains a challenge we need to work around as the existing fluorescent lights are not designed to accommodate protective filters. Also, our newly re-envisioned space does not have direct sunlight as we had initially thought, so we do not need to acquire filters for windows. We purchased additional protective sleeves, boxes and other materials instead of the filters. We are keeping the lights off except for indirect lamplight when not in use.

We look forward to promoting the archives more as springtime approaches and the entire renovation will be complete. The Open House to celebrate the completed renovation is scheduled for spring. In the meantime, the public has been encouraged to access the collection through public announcements and articles.

## **Project's Impact**

The project has improved public access to our historical collection. While we are not yet finished with construction, the archives room is now open to the public during our regular business hours. Guests at our holiday open house enjoyed the new archival room, particularly our collection of photographs and documents which we highlighted. We have also found the project to be a great development tool as we continue to seek funds for the ministries of the Sisters. Recently a funder sought information about her aunts who were Ursuline Sisters several decades ago. We were able to share our collection with her and provide additional genealogical information. We also plan to reach out to local schools who regularly volunteer for us to use our collection in their Ohio history projects.

## **Additional Initiatives**

The Catholic Diocese of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley Historical Society have both recently acquired additional space for their holdings, including an entire church for the Diocese archives. We hope to collaborate with the Diocese in showcasing both of our collections to invite the public to access them. Additionally, we plan to curate a new display each season, featuring images, records and documents that fit the occasion. For example, for Lent and springtime, we will be showcasing relevant historical photographs and letters, including our collection of letters regarding the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Pope Pius XII in 1956.

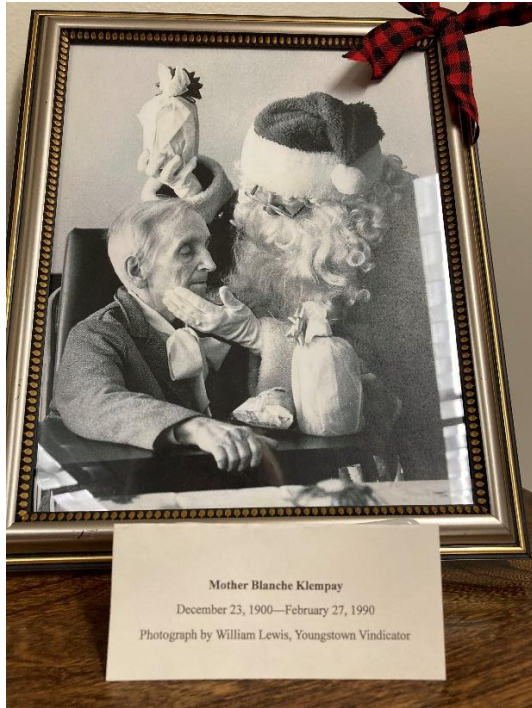
### **Coverage**

Images featured on our regular Throwback Thursday posts on social media were culled from our historical collection. Our local newspaper publicized the grant award. Our newsletters featured an article about the aforementioned funders, the Greenwoods, and our historical collection. A local television station (WKBN) did a feature about the Ursuline Sisters book release, featuring our archival collection. At our quarterly board meetings, the progress and status of our archives is discussed with our board members. At monthly development and funding meetings, we share the same with staff and leadership. We will write a press release for each new display inviting the public to use our archives. Our goal is to create displays that entice the public to explore our archives further.

### **Project Expenses**

One staff member worked 4 hours per week for 32 weeks with a total of \$ 3,488.45 . This was our matching fund. The material costs came to \$1, 536.35.

The project was completed by the deadline date and the agency will continue the archival process.



Photograph featured for holidays



Photographs in new album/box

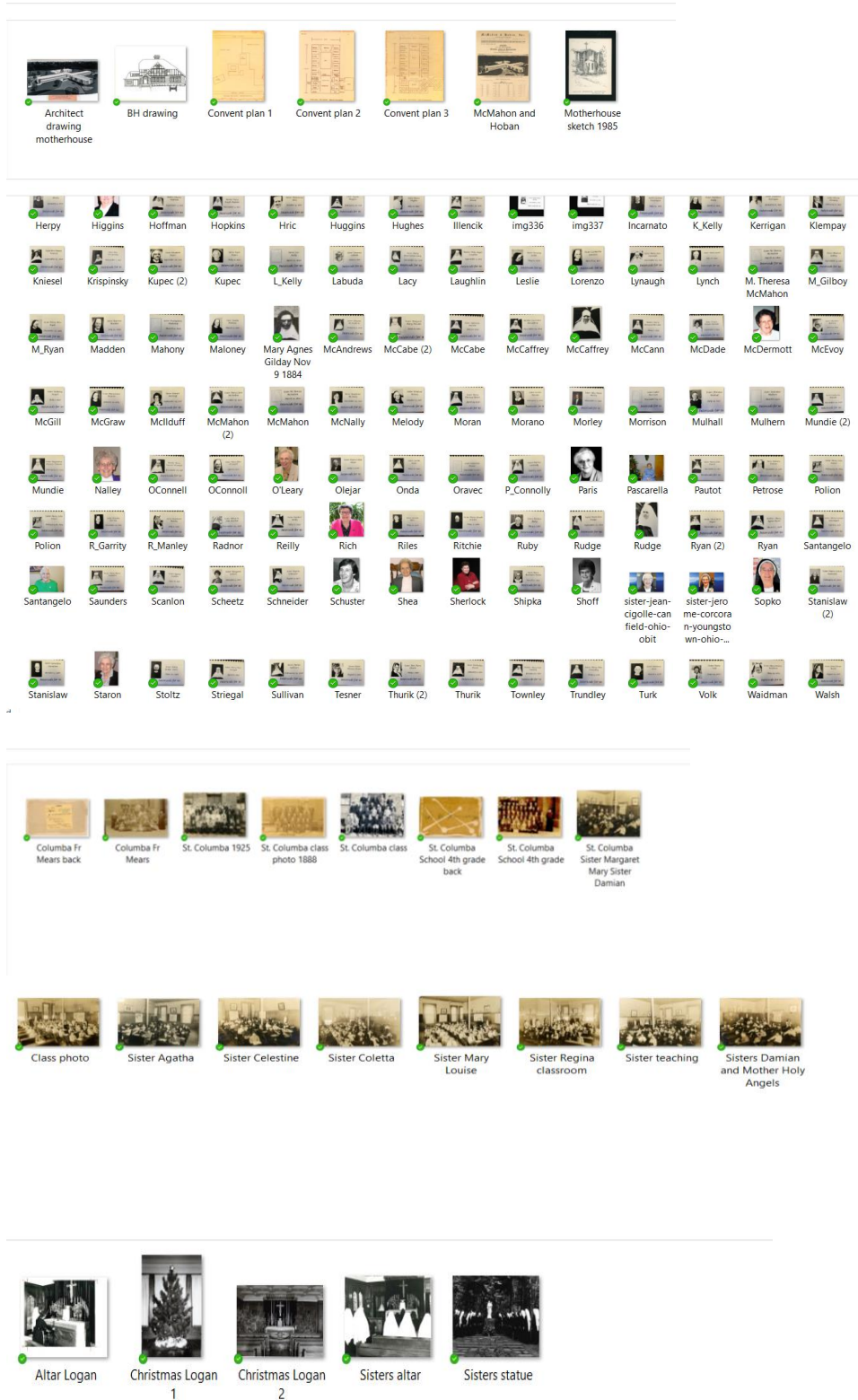


Left to right: Storage in previous archives space; Books protected in new space; Documents in boxes in new space.



Christmas tree in archives room

					Sort ▾		View ▾	...
A_Connolly	Cavanaugh	Fitzgerald (2)	Hayes	Lacy	McCann	Olejar		
A_Manley	Connolly	Fitzgerald	Herpy	Laughlin	McDade	Onda		
Beil	Conroy	Forristall	Higgins	Leslie	McEvoy	Oravec		
Bertaldo	Convery	Friedman	Hoffman	Lorenzo	McGill	P_Connolly		
Bosanac	Creag	G_Kelly	Hopkins	Lynaugh	McGraw	Pautot		
Braun	Creagan (2)	G_Manley	Hric	Lynch	McIlduff	Petrose		
Breen	Creagan	Ganofsky	Huggins	M_Gilboy	McMahon (2)	Polion		
Brindle	Croell	Gaspic	Hughes	M_Ryan	McMahon	R_Garrity		
Brown	Cullie	Gerlach (2)	Illencik	Madden	McNally	R_Manley		
Burford	Daley	Gerlach	Incarnato	Mahony	Melody	Radnor		
Burke	DeChello (2)	Gerrity	K_Kelly	Maloney	Moran	Reilly		
Butler	Deibel	Gettins	Kerrigan	Mary Agnes Gilday Nov 9 1884	Morano	Riles		
Byrne	Duffy	Gezic	Klempay	Mary Ellen Dean	Morley	Ritchie		
Calvey	E_Kelly	Gilboy (2)	Kniesel	Mary Ellen O'Connell	Morrison	Ruby		
Canavan	Edwards	Gilboy	Krispinsky	McAndrews	Mulhall	Rudge		
Carroll (2)	Eskay	Gilday	Kupec (2)	McCabe (2)	Mulhern	Rudge		
Carroll (3)	Eurell	Gorman	Kupec	McCabe	Mundie (2)	Ryan (2)		
Carroll	Fahy	Griffin	L_Kelly	McCaffrey	Mundie	Ryan		
Cassidy	Fickers	Grimes	Labuda	McCaffrey	O'Connell	Santangelo		



Screenshots of sample images and collection of Sisters available to publi



## PRESS and COVERAGE

[Author's book highlights history of Ursuline sisters in the Valley](#)

[www.facebook.com/UrsulineSistersMission](http://www.facebook.com/UrsulineSistersMission)

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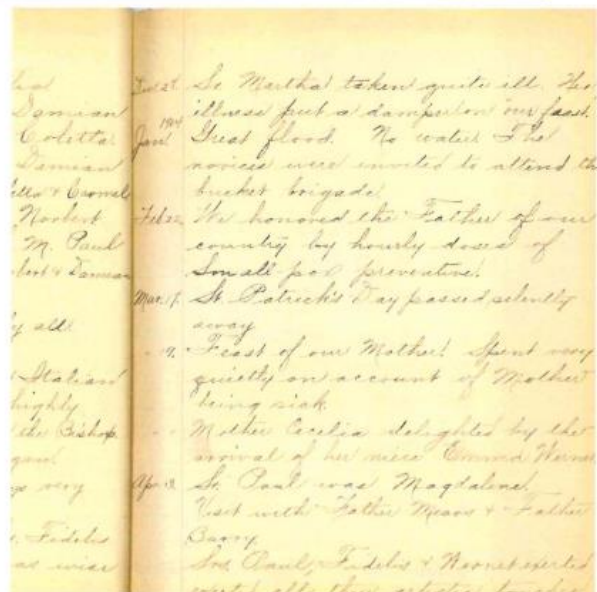
### Grant Awarded to Preserve, Digitize Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown Collection

Ursuline Sisters Mission received a \$1,541.58 grant from the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board to support the Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown Collection.

The funds were made available through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. We'll use them for preservation supplies and to digitize select archival holdings.

Researchers and the general public will soon be able to visit our historical collection at the Ursuline Center. Online access to these holdings will be available in the future through the Ohio Memory Project.

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board plans for the preservation and access to Ohio's historical records.



Diary entry of a novice, circa 1898.

## From Past to Present: The Greenwoods & The Ursulines

The genealogical research journey of Greg and Alice Greenwood led them to our door. We sat down with the Greenwoods, long-time supporters of Ursuline Sisters Mission, to discuss their family history, their connection to our ministry, and to share information from the Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown Historical Collection.

The Greenwoods' relationship to the Ursuline Sisters began in the early 1900s with Alice Greenwood's family. Two of her great-aunts, Kathleen and Eileen Kelly, were sisters who became Ursuline Sisters. They hailed from an immigrant Irish family who first settled near Pittsburgh.

These immigrants, Greg Greenwood notes, were "much like those whom you currently serve in a true way and who would have been trying to find jobs and opportunities."

The Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown Historical Collection houses biographical information on the Sisters, including photos and important dates that we shared with the Greenwoods.

Alice would often hear about the Kelly sisters while growing up, and said, "My dad always stopped at the Ursuline convent to visit his aunts when he passed through town."



General Superior Sister Mary McCormick and Alice and Greg Greenwood gather in our Archives Room.



Alice Greenwood stands next to a bookcase that belonged to her great-aunt, Sister Kathleen Kelly.

Greg remembers his father-in-law's regular prayers. "They were always about how grateful he was for the family, for his aunts, for the people we were about to share this meal with, and for those who are less fortunate. I could almost recite that prayer because I heard it so often from him."

Greg first learned about the Ursuline Sisters when he began selling cars in Youngstown. "I kept hearing about the work the Sisters were doing with immigrants, what they were doing in particular with women that were underserved and needed some protections."

The HIV/AIDS Ministry particularly impressed Greenwood. "Everybody was walking around on eggshells on this HIV thing. And all of a sudden the Sisters were willing to saddle up and go, 'You know what? I think some folks need some help here, and we can't just sit here and watch.' I was blown away by that. Who does things like that?"

The Greenwoods say they are thankful for USM's vision to continue carrying out the Sisters' gospel work, and they're excited by their historical link to us.

**"We have choices of what we do with our time, our talent, and our money, and what's really neat is when we're able to make a choice that makes you very grateful to be on the journey. Frankly, that's a gift to us." – Greg Greenwood**

We're grateful for supporters like the Greenwoods, who help us strengthen the connection between the past, present, and future of our ministries!



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#### Ursuline Archives Room Open to Public

CANFIELD -- The public is invited to visit the new Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown Archives Room at the Ursuline Center, 4300 Shields Road, and access its resources for research.

It's open by appointment by contacting Kelly Bancroft, USM Development, at 330-745-3147 ext. 346, or [kbancroft@ursulinesistersmission.org](mailto:kbancroft@ursulinesistersmission.org).

In spring 2024, the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board awarded the Ursuline Sisters funds to help protect, preserve and catalog their history, which includes letters, diaries and numerous photographs.

The grant enabled the purchase such archival quality supplies as photo albums and sleeves, tissue paper, boxes, a color scanner, acid-free file folders and bags.

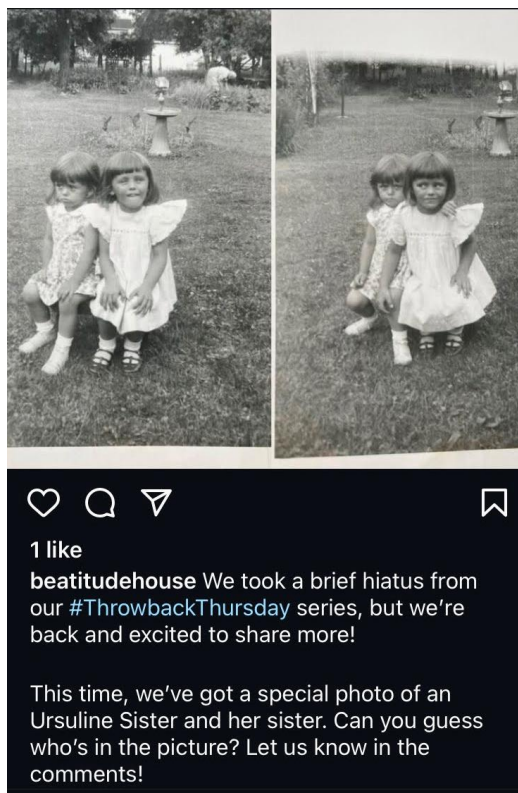
Building on the work that's been ongoing for decades, the Sisters have been able to protect [many of](#) historical documents.

The Archives Room features historical objects, furniture and artifacts from Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown's 150-year history in the Valley. Items in the historical collection include our articles of incorporation from 1882, original composition books from the Sisters, and hundreds of photos documenting religious life, all now properly protected thanks to the OHRAB funding.

Copies of the book "The Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown: Serving the Mahoning Valley since 1874," published in 2024 by History Press, are available to purchase for \$25 in the Archives Room.

OHRAB is supported by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The NHPRC promotes the preservation and use of America's documentary heritage essential to understanding our democracy, history and culture.

The Trumbull County Historical Society, Baldwin Wallace College and the International Women's Air & Space Museum were among the organizations that also received funding.



Throwback Thursday posts from Instagram