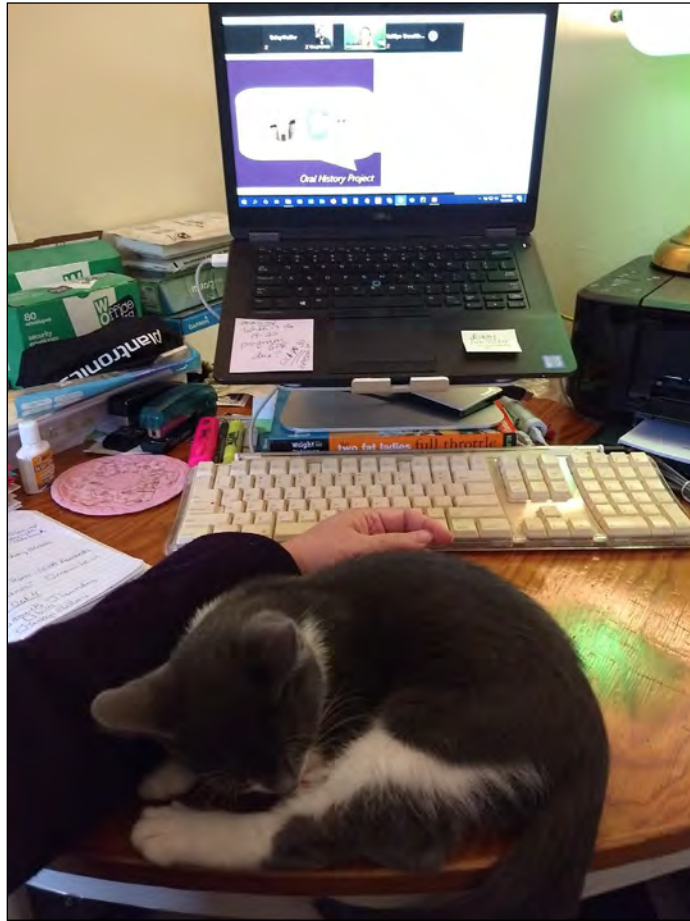


## Challenge Accepted: Overcoming Obstacles to Hold Regional Meetings



Executive Secretary hosting an Annual Meeting session with the help of co-worker James Tiberius Cat, then 3 months old. Attend a Regional Meeting for the chance to see how much he's grown since October!

Every year, the Alliance's Education Committee chooses a theme for our professional development that year, including the Regional Meetings and the Annual Meeting. We typically talk about this in the August board meeting of the previous year—so, our 2020 theme, "History is Happening Now," was chosen in August of 2019. Little did we know how apropos that was going to turn out to be.

For 2021, we wanted a theme that would both acknowledge all our efforts to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic as well as allow us to embrace a more inclusive idea of history. Hence our 2021 theme: "Challenge Accepted: Overcoming Obstacles."

The Committee recognized that adopting this as our theme and inspiration for the year meant that we had to model the overcoming of obstacles and hold Regional Meetings in some format. And so we shall!

As you read in the November/December issue, we will hold 5 meetings this spring, for all 10 regions. We are combining two regional meetings into one virtual meeting each weekend.

Virtual meetings will continue to function similarly to in-person regional meetings with a business meeting, elections, two content presentations, sharing time, and a "tour" of the host sites. Each Region will go into a "breakout room" for the Business Meeting, including the election of Regional Representatives. All meetings will begin at 9 am and adjourn at 12:30 pm. We will leave the meeting open until 1:30 for those who may wish to chat informally with colleagues over lunch.

The schedule and content sessions for the 2021 meetings are:

### March 6: Regions 5 & 10

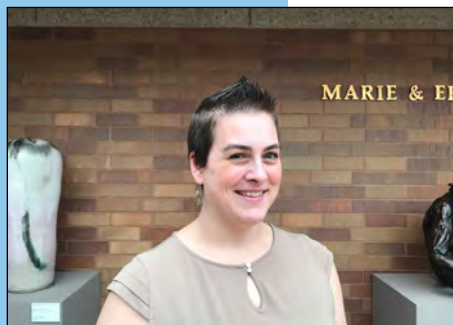
- *Building and Maintaining a Relationship with Your Downtown and Community* with Judy Bratten and Paul Zuros, Historic Fort Steuben

*(continued on page 4)*

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

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| <b>5</b> Best Practices for Self-Guided Tours  | <b>15</b> News from the Regions          |
| <b>7</b> Tax Time is Ohio History Fund Time    | <b>17</b> Members   Calendar             |

## President's Message:



As the late great basketball coach, John Wooden said, “Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out”. 2020 was a certainly a year full of unique challenges and disruption for many in the museum industry to put it mildly. The start of a new year is typically met with reflection on the previous year and recognizing ways in which to build upon what was accomplished and maintain that momentum. 2021 comes with a new insight for everyone as I feel so many priorities and plans have shifted and adapted coming off of the past year as we’ve all been forced to think on our feet and outside the box. We have all found new ways to continue to serve our communities during all of the struggles of the past year.

It can be easy to focus on all the difficulties we’ve faced within our organizations. However, I challenge you to reflect on the past year and recognize how you and your organization have had areas of growth. I’ve seen so many organizations share virtual or socially distanced program that was never offered previously and are so uniquely creative and fascinating. I’ve seen staff and volunteers step up to challenges and learn new skills to support the mission of their organization and enhance outreach to visitors that can’t be on site. Take a moment and reflect on those areas and all that was accomplished.

This past year, the Ohio Local History Alliance Annual Meeting was held virtually as will our Regional Meetings this spring. While it was a difficult decision to make, it was the best choice for the safety of everyone. It was a new challenge for our Education Committee to navigate how to make that happen and how to best serve you as our members. I am confident our Regional Meetings this spring may produce some of the best conversations yet due to the ability to combine regions and expand the connection between organizations. Some of our best resources are each other.

If there is anything OLHA can do to better serve you or your organization, please do not hesitate to reach out. Stay safe and healthy.

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•*How to Handle Angry Visitors: COVID Edition* with Wendy Zucal and Jacob Masters, Dennison Railroad Depot Museum

### March 13: Regions 3 & 4

•*Cover Your ASSETS: Be Prepared* with Mary Plazo, Akron-Summit County Public Library; Leianne Neff Heppner, Summit County Historical Society; and Greg Palumbo, Lakewood Historical Society

•*Adapting Your Programming to an Online Audience* with Rebecca Urban, Peninsula Foundation; Melissa Karman, The Sutliff Museum; and Barbara Piscopo and Jenn McManamon, Lorain Historical Society

### March 20: Regions 8 & 9

•*Building an Internship Program to Involve Young People in Your Organization* with Brad Davis, Southeast Ohio History Center

•*Overcoming Obstacles to Historic Preservation in Your Community* with Tom O'Grady, Southeast Ohio History Center, and Carrie Rhodus, Ohio History Service Corps

### April 10: Regions 2 & 6

•*Overcoming Obstacles for the Preservation of Poindexter Village* with Reita Smith, James Preston Poindexter Foundation

•*Grants for Your Institution: Where to Find Them and How to Get Them* with Ron Davidson, Sandusky Libraries

### April 17: Regions 1 & 7

•*Online Educational Programs for a Pandemic and Beyond* with Michael McMaster, Wood County Museum; Chris Moynihan, Armstrong Air and Space Museum

•*Storytelling as Research: Reaching Underserved Communities* with Jo Ann Burkhardt, Defiance College

Registration for the Regional Meetings will look a little different this year, because we're using Eventbrite rather than the Ohio History Store. Everyone will register online with Eventbrite, regardless of whether you're paying with credit card or by check. This allows us to make sure we receive all registrations in a timely manner, despite challenges with mail delivery. The registration deadline will be the day before each meeting.

Though we would be very grateful if you're able to register at the normal Regional Meeting price of \$30, we also understand that this has been a difficult year financially, so you will be able to choose the amount that you can afford (as low as \$1).

Registration is available from our website at [ohiolha.org/what-we-do/regional-meetings/](https://ohiolha.org/what-we-do/regional-meetings/). As always, we encourage you to attend not only the meeting for your region, but any others that interest you.

# Statehood Day 2021

by Todd Kleismit, Director of Community & Government Relations, Ohio History Connection

The annual Statehood Day advocacy event for Ohio history will be held virtually on the state's birthday, March 1. The free online event will be hosted by the Ohio History Connection in two segments beginning at 1:30 pm via Zoom. Event planners will focus on advocacy issues for Ohio history for the first 75 minutes. Following a break, the second portion of the event will focus on the annual Ohio History Fund grant award announcements as well as a special announcement of the Paul Bruhm Revitalization grants to several Ohio Main Street programs, awarded by Heritage Ohio and the Ohio History Connection's State Historic Preservation Office.

This year marks the second year of funding for the National Park Service grant program and the first since the program was renamed in honor of the late Paul Bruhm, the former executive director of the Preservation Trust of

Vermont. These federal re-grant awards will be awarded to Ohio's Main Street communities for the rehabilitation of historic commercial, industrial and former school buildings.

Statehood Day is a joint effort among the Ohio History Connection, the Ohio Museums Association, Heritage Ohio, the Ohio Local History Alliance, the Ohio Travel Association, Ohio Humanities, the Ohio Genealogical Society, the Society of Ohio Archivists, the Ohio Archaeological Council, the Ohio Academy of History, the Ohio Council for Social Studies, the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board, Preservation Ohio and the Capitol Square Review & Advisory Board.

The event is free, but registration is required by February 26. Visit [www.ohiohistory.org/statehoodday](https://www.ohiohistory.org/statehoodday) for more information and to register online.

# Benchmarking Best Practices for Self-Guided Tours:

A Study by the Oberlin Heritage Center



By Amanda Manahan, Museum Education & Tour Coordinator for the Oberlin Heritage Center, based in Oberlin, Lorain County, Ohio.

**T**he Oberlin Heritage Center—like many small historic house museums throughout Ohio—faces the ongoing challenge of operating with limited staff and volunteers while offering guided tours. This traditional model of having a docent direct the visitor experience is anticipated and enjoyed by many guests but can be off-putting, or worse,

“Almost weekly, someone stumbles across our museum and asks if they can ‘just look around.’ And the answer is never simple or satisfying.”

inaccessible to others. Clearly, not all visitor needs are being met through this one type of experience.

Unsure of how to address these needs while balancing its own concerns about safety of its patrons and collections, the Heritage Center staff knew they needed to better understand how to implement changes sustainably and responsibly within the organization. In 2019, it set out to benchmark self-guided experiences of historic house museums to document successful alternatives to the guided tour.

The study began by inviting consultant Ken Turino of Historic New England and co-editor of the 2019 anthology *Reimagining Historic House Museums* to assess the Oberlin Heritage Center’s tour programming and offer insights into alternative historic house programming. Simultaneously, a staff member anonymously visited five Ohio institutions of varying sizes, budgets, and types of self-guided tours (with advance approval from organizational leaders): Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens, Historic

Prospect Place, Kelton House Museum & Garden, Spring Hill Historic Home, and Piatt Castles.

Post-visit interviews of site managers revealed a trend among house museums and the choices made to provide an enriching visitor experience. The study unsurprisingly found the most significant challenge is being open for visitation with limited staff and volunteers. Most museums in the study still offer a guided version of their house tour, but this was usually reserved to a few hours a week, by group appointment, or during a special event. Declining finances,

inadequate human resources, and irregular visitation patterns are ongoing issues that small museums face daily. Interpretive programming must change to address these issues.

Such methods, depending on an institution’s size and

budget, could include:

## Interpretive Labels and Guides—\$-\$\$

### PROS:

- The easiest and (perhaps) most cost-effective measure
- Can be discreet or conspicuous and created in-house
- Can provide limited guidance, give context to an object or space, and explore basic interpretive content
- Printed guides can serve an additional purpose of fulfilling the need for a “take away” item and connect visitors to other activities of the museum.

### CONS

- Text should be limited so as to not overwhelm
- Initially may be cheapest option, but printing costs for handouts can creep up over time
- Does not replace the

need for visitor orientation and may not appease visitor questions or interests

## Formal Exhibits & Displays—\$\$-\$\$\$

### PROS:

- Can be a convenient way to rotate new or difficult-to-convey content into the museum
- May be used in spaces not outfitted to the same period as the rest of the historic house
- Special exhibits may attract both new and repeat visitors
- Provide an opportunity for visitors who like to engage in a way more typical to a history or art museum

### CONS

- Development can be costly and time-prohibitive
- May require more specialized equipment, such as computer programming, display cases, barriers, and stands



Hands-on experiences, such as this “Please Play” station, can be found throughout Piatt Castle Mac-A-Cheek.

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The Sutliff Museum, thanks to funding from the Ohio History Fund, launched a guided tour through OnCell, which can be utilized on personal devices in the museum or at home, or be accessed through an iPad within the museum. Photo Courtesy of The Sutliff Museum



At the Kelton House Museum & Garden, staff invested in an audio tour that takes visitors through each room of the historic house, allowing each individual the opportunity to pick and choose what content they want to hear.

- May feel disjointed in comparison to period-furnished spaces
- Can feel static quickly

### Tactile Exploration—\$-\$\$

Examples: replicas or toy versions of historic objects, creating or utilizing a teaching collection in which original objects may be handled by the public, creating games or puzzles that demonstrate a historical activity, and building in sounds, smells, and perhaps even taste into appropriate spaces.

#### PROS

- In spaces that are traditionally viewed as “hands-off,” tactile and sensory experiences are welcome
- Studies have shown that the more sensory an experience is, the more memorable it becomes
- By encouraging visitors to play, create, and feel, museums can connect people of all ages to the past

#### CONS

- Creating a teaching collection requires additional space and resources, and may result in the destruction of the item
- Creating unique hands-on experiences can take much trial and error
- One cannot simply rely on the standard hands-on experiences that can be found at any historic site

### Technology and digital media—\$\$-\$\$\$

#### PROS

- Content can be shared in many ways, including audio, text, and video, which may be more accessible to some visitors
- The experience is driven by visitor choices and is easily adaptable
- Depending on the format and app used, content can be changed and updated as needed
- May be more appealing to certain demographics that are not as engaged with traditional methods

#### CONS

- Upfront costs can be burdensome for most small museums and will require special funding initiatives
- Depending on apps and programs used, there may be monthly subscriptions and

additional fees not apparent at the time of purchase

- Some apps are not editable by staff and the museum may need to pay a fee to the host company to have changes made

The biggest lesson taken from this study is that the only way to create successful visitor experiences is to gather feedback from staff, volunteers, and the public. While it’s still a “work in progress,” the Oberlin Heritage Center has greatly benefited from this benchmarking project and conversations with professionals across the country. The staff now feels it has enough information to justify shifts in our tour operations and will be piloting its first self-guided tour in April 2021.

#### SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- OLHA 2020 Annual Meeting Panel “Self-Guided Tours and Alternatives to Historic House Museum Experiences” recording: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufmE5pfV\\_wQ&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufmE5pfV_wQ&feature=youtu.be)
- Turino, Kenneth, and Max van Balgooy. *Reimagining Historic House Museums: New Approaches and Proven Solutions*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.
- Harris, Donna Ann. *New Solutions for House Museums: Ensuring the Long-Term Preservation of America’s Historic Houses*, Second Edition. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2020.

*This project was made possible in part by the Ohio History Fund, a grant program of the Ohio History Connection. The*

*Ohio History Fund is made possible by voluntary donations of state income tax refunds, sales of Ohio History “mastodon” license plates, and other donations.*

*This project was also made possible through funding by the Ohio Humanities through its monthly grant program.*

# Tax Time is Ohio History Fund Time



By Andy Verhoff, Ohio History Fund & Outreach Manager, State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection, Columbus

**T**he Ohio History Fund is the state's only competitive matching grant program exclusively for history projects. There's only one challenge: the grants are made from money donated to the Ohio History Connection, so the money that the History Fund has to grant fluctuates from year to year. The more donations the History Fund receives, the more and larger grants the History Fund can make. Case in point: in 2020, the History Fund had \$85,900 to grant. In 2021, we have \$130,900.

The \$130,900 we have is because of the pandemic. Tax filing deadlines were pushed back to July from April and extension gave tax check-off donors more time to give. As we have discovered, some chose to give to the Ohio History

Fund. We're grateful for the help. Forty-nine History Fund grant proposals are currently under consideration, totaling nearly \$680,000 in requests.

As we enter 2021 with best wishes for a better year, the need for grant support will remain, if not increase.

To help your organizations and others like it, we ask you to share news about the Ohio History Fund tax check-off during tax season. We also ask you to donate yourselves. See "Help the History Fund-and It Can Help You!" below.

When you give via the History Fund tax check-off, you support the work of local history in Ohio. See a great



Annie Oakley, U.S. Grant, Oliver Hazard Perry, and the Wright Brothers team up to promote donations to the Ohio History fund tax check-off in 2018. Promotional materials are available digitally in a variety of sizes for your social media, newsletters, and website at [www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund).

example elsewhere in this issue from the **Oberlin Heritage Center**. Half of the History Fund's 80 recipients are Alliance members and you collectively have received approximately \$390,000 in grants. For a complete list of Ohio History Fund recipients, go to: [www.ohiohistory.org/preserve/local-history-services/history-fund/recipients](http://www.ohiohistory.org/preserve/local-history-services/history-fund/recipients)

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### Help the History Fund and It Can Help You!

Here's what you can do between now and that red letter tax-filing deadline of April 15 to support funding for History Fund projects for Alliance members like you and history organizations across Ohio:

Share some of your state income tax refund with the History Fund, line 26a, "Ohio History Fund" on the 2020 Ohio IT 1040 Individual Income Tax Return. Tell your history-loving family and friends about it, too. Find "talking points" and other materials listed below at "[Promote the Ohio History Fund](#)"

Reprint in your newsletters an article about the History Fund, found [here](#). (That's one less article you'll have to write for your newsletter! Adapt and edit as needed.)

**The Wright Brothers**—"Taking deductions without receipts? That will never fly."

**Oliver Hazard Perry**—"All hands on deck" (Give to the Ohio History Fund on Your State Tax Return.)

You can find images of Anne, Orville and Wilbur, Ulysses, and Oliver promoting the History Fund [here](#). Because of pandemic-caused, restricted hours of operation of historical organizations and libraries, where we usually share History Fund materials, we're only distributing "digital swag" this season.

Besides the tax check off, there are other ways to support the History Fund: the Ohio History "mastodon" license plate and direct, tax-deductible donations to the Ohio History Connection designated for the History Fund.

## How the Tax "Check-Off" Works\*\*

Although we call it a "check-off," on your tax form, you won't find a box to check.

Toward the end of your individual Ohio state income tax return, after you've calculated the amount of your refund (if you are receiving a refund), you'll find line 26 that asks "Amount of line 24 to be donated."

One of the six options is "Ohio History Fund," line 26a.

Under "Ohio History Fund," fill in the amount that you'd like to contribute. Last year's average contribution was \$9.86. A small donation can make a big difference—but if want to round it up to special year, please do—for example contribute \$20.03 for the year of Ohio's bicentennial, or for significant year in your community's history.

The amount you contribute to the Ohio History Fund through your Ohio state income tax return supports the History Fund grant program. Since 2013, the History Fund has made 78 grants across our state for a total of \$738,826. The Fund supports local history projects in communities throughout Ohio—all because of donation from generous history-minded Ohioans like you. Thank you!



Forward emails and share social media posts about the Ohio History Fund tax check-off from the Ohio History Connection and the Ohio Local History Alliance.

Digitally distribute fun promotional materials about the Ohio History Fund. They feature:

**Annie Oakley**—"Oh shoot! My taxes are due!"

**Gen. Ulysses S. Grant**—"I wonder if I can deduct Union Army headquarters as my home office"

Twenty dollars from the sale of each set of Ohio History license plates benefits the History Fund grant program: [www.bmv.ohio.gov/vr-sp-organization.aspx](http://www.bmv.ohio.gov/vr-sp-organization.aspx)



You can also make a donation directly to the Ohio History Connection for the

History Fund, visit [www.ohiohistory.org](http://www.ohiohistory.org) and click on "Give." Be sure to designate your gift this way: "For Ohio History Fund."

**The more the History Fund receives in donations, the more grants the History Fund makes back to us.** Since the Ohio History Fund began in 2012, it has made 78 grants across our state for a total of \$738,826. Proving

(continued on page 9)



that there's a great need for the History Fund, however, it has received 437 grant applications totaling more than \$5.3 million in requests!

Applications for grants for the 2020-2021 cycle are currently under review. Recipients will be publically announced at the virtual Statehood Day event, March 1. For more about Statehood Day, go to: [www.ohiohistory.org/statehoodday](http://www.ohiohistory.org/statehoodday)

The deadline for applications in 2021 will be posted in June on the History Fund's website: [www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund). The application deadline is not scheduled yet, but will likely fall around Labor Day. The website also includes information about eligible projects and applicants, grant amounts, and instructions for applying. Or, contact Ohio History Fund & Outreach Manager Andy Verhoff at 614-562-4490 or [averhoff@ohiohistory.org](mailto:averhoff@ohiohistory.org).

**The tax check-off supports the History Fund.  
The History Fund supports you!**

I wonder if I can deduct Union Army headquarters as my home office?

GIVE TO THE  
**Ohio  
History  
Fund**  
ON YOUR  
**State Tax  
Return.**

An easy way to support  
*your* community!  
Your donation funds local  
history grants in Ohio.

[ohiohistory.org/historyfund](http://ohiohistory.org/historyfund)

**OHIO  
HISTORY  
CONNECTION**

Learn about Ulysses S. Grant at  
[usgrantboyhoodhome.org](http://usgrantboyhoodhome.org) and  
[ohiohistory.org/grantbirthplace](http://ohiohistory.org/grantbirthplace)

Feel free to cut and paste this sample newsletter article and insert it in your organization's newsletter. For other fun promotional materials, visit [www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund)

## SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

# Ohio History Fund— Support History in Your Community

The Ohio History Connection's History Fund grant program is one of the few grant program in the state just for history, pre-history, and historic preservation projects—and it needs your help to grow. If you receive a refund on your Ohio income taxes, consider donating a portion of it to the "Ohio History Fund" on line 26a of your state tax return.

Your donation with those from your friends, relatives, and thousands of other history lovers makes possible grants for local history projects throughout Ohio. Since the Ohio History Fund began in 2012, it has made 78 grants across our state for a total of \$738,826. Proving that there's a great need for the History Fund, however, it has received 437 grant applications totaling more than \$5.3 million in requests! For a list of grant recipients, visit: [www.ohiohistory.org/preserve/local-history-services/history-fund/recipients](http://www.ohiohistory.org/preserve/local-history-services/history-fund/recipients)

Not receiving a tax refund? You can still help: buy an Ohio History mastodon license plate. Twenty dollars from the sale of each set of plates benefits the History Fund grant program. To learn more, visit: [www.bmv.ohio.gov/vr-sp-organization.aspx](http://www.bmv.ohio.gov/vr-sp-organization.aspx)

You can also make a donation directly to the Ohio History Connection for the History Fund, visit [www.ohiohistory.org](http://www.ohiohistory.org) and click on "Give." Be sure to designate your gift "for Ohio History Fund."

**The more you give to the Ohio History Fund, to more grants it can make to organizations like yours that preserve history in our state.**

Questions? Visit [www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund) or call Andy Verhoff, Ohio History Fund & Outreach Manager, State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection, [averhoff@ohiohistory.org](mailto:averhoff@ohiohistory.org) or 614-562-4490. Thanks!

# Ohio Outdoor Sculpture Project

**P**artners wanted! The Sculpture Center (TSC) wishes to collaborate with institutions in seven regions of the Ohio Local History Alliance for the purpose of identifying works of public art for the on-line Ohio Outdoor Sculpture (OOS) inventory and subsequently monitoring their conservation needs. This spring, six interns from the library school program at Kent State will be seeking undocumented sculptures in twenty-three counties that are underrepresented in the OOS and we would like to hear from people in those counties about candidates for inclusion.

The OOS is Ohio's response to a 1990s federal project, Save Outdoor Sculpture (SOS!), targeting the deterioration of the nation's public art. TSC, in Cleveland, assumed this responsibility and has built an on-line database to track the state's works. Seen here—[oos.sculpturecenter.org](http://oos.sculpturecenter.org)—it currently lists over 1,500 sculptures and related cultural objects, but they are clustered in the major cities and too many counties are not yet represented. This spring's project will address those counties lacking entries in the OOS, and local assistance would be greatly appreciated.

The targeted counties are Hardin (Region 1); Ashland, Crawford, Marion, Morrow, Richland and Wyandot (Region 2); Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison Holmes Jefferson, Stark, Tuscarawas and Wayne (Region 5); Knox, Perry and Union (Region 6); Logan (Region 7); Athens, Hocking and Meigs (Region 9); Coshocton, Guernsey, Morgan and Muskingum (Region 10). While these particular counties are targeted for this project, anyone knowing of a sculpture anywhere in Ohio that is either missing from the OOS database, or is inaccurately listed, may report it also. Thank you!

To participate, email Bill Barrow, at [oos@sculpturecenter.org](mailto:oos@sculpturecenter.org), or call (216) 408-0906.



Harvey Rice, "The Father of Public Education in Ohio," was memorialized in a large bronze work by James G. C. Hamilton, in 1899. Here is a detail from it. Moved twice, due to major renovations to the Cleveland Art Museum, it was re-installed in the Nord Family Greenway in 2020. This peripatetic history isn't entirely unheard of for statues and the OOS attempts to track the history of their movements.



Thomas Edison was a famous son of Milan, Ohio, where a pair of statues were erected: one of him as an inventor and one as a young man with his mother. Towns all over Ohio may have had local people famous enough to memorialize with sculpture and finding them all is a goal of the Ohio Outdoor Sculpture project.

## International Women's Air and Space Museum



The International Women's Air and Space Museum is excited to welcome **Sara Fisher** as its newest Executive Director. Sara joins the museum after serving two years as an AmeriCorps/Ohio History Service Corps Local History Member in both southwest and northeast Ohio. In 2018, while serving at the Oberlin Heritage Center, she visited the Museum

after meeting both Heather and Katherine at her "Introduction to Collections Management Workshop" and was quickly impressed with the incredible history and dedication of the organization to fulfill its mission! Most recently, Sara was the AmeriCorps Manager and Local History Services Coordinator at the Ohio History Connection where she oversaw two federal grants totaling over \$300,000 each, and over 20 AmeriCorps members stationed throughout the state. Since 2013, Sara has engaged and assisted over 40 local history organizations and museums build capacity with strategic and long range planning, collections management, audience research and community engagement, building community partnerships, governance compliance, volunteer program development and recruitment, and daily operations. Through her extensive experience with museum and non-profit best practices, Sara assisted more than six local museums earn over 10 AASLH StEPs certificates and recognition for their work to incorporate best practices. She has worked as Curator and Collections Manager at the Lakewood Historical Society, project lead for the Quaker Heritage Center of Wilmington College's collections assessment and reorganization, WWI Coordinator for the Ohio History Connection, and as the Co-Team Lead for the American Association for State and Local History's StEPs Enhancement Project for Impact, Relevance and Engagement. She is an active member and collaborator with the Ohio Local History Alliance, creating the template for their continuing education programming and membership drives, and actively engages with colleagues at AASLH, NCPH, NEOIMC, and SOA. Sara holds a B.A. in History with a Women & Gender Studies certificate from Ohio University, and an M.A. in History concentrating in Public History from Wright State University.

## Dennison Railroad Depot Museum

**Jacob Masters**, Director of Museums, was recently elected Secretary of the Ohio Museum Association, and **Wendy Zucal**, Executive Director, was voted onto the Ohio Travel Association Board of Trustees as a Trustee at Large. Wendy will also be taking on the President's role of the Economic Development and Finance Alliance Board of Trustees, which is Tuscarawas County's Port Authority.

## Cincinnati Observatory

**Craig Niemi**, Director of the Cincinnati Observatory, successfully completed an eight-week online course "Caring for Museum Collections" offered by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). Each week covered one or more of the most common agents of deterioration; light exposure, temperature and humidity, dissociation, physical damage, fire, theft, vandalism, risk assessment/emergency response planning and integrated pest management/housekeeping. Five objects from our own collection were the subjects used for each week's assignment. He found the course very helpful and signed up for the online course in Collection Management which begins at the end of January.

The Observatory has made a commitment to apply the best practices of small museums and to make available the staff, consultant(s) and financial resources needed as we begin a two-year project to properly inventory, catalogue, manage, and make available our object, library and archives collections.

## Clark County Historical Society



After more than thirty-one years with the Clark County Historical Society, Director of Collections **Virginia Weygandt** officially retired on December 30, 2020. In all her years with the society, she helped to build a world class museum, grow and care for the collections, and make sure the stories that make up the area's history are preserved for future generations to enjoy and learn from. In addition to her work with the society, Virginia served on the Board of Trustees of OAHSM (now the Ohio

Local History Alliance), taught numerous classes in museum administration and collections care as an adjunct professor at Wright State University, and taught local classes and workshops in collections care. Over the years, between moving artifacts from the historical society's former homes at Memorial Hall, 818 N. Fountain, Thompson Avenue, and many times around the Heritage Center, she always joked that she needed a shirt that said, "Clark County Historical Society: A Moving Experience." Upon her retirement, her colleagues finally made that a reality! Between dealing with collections care and management following a major water disaster at the Heritage Center in 2019 and a global pandemic in 2020 it may not have been the ideal way to wrap a long and rewarding career, but Virginia's love and care for the collection and its stories will always be evident.

## Wesaw Named Director of American Indian Relations



Alex Wesaw has joined the Ohio History Connection as director of American Indian relations.

Wesaw is a citizen of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, a federally recognized tribe in southwestern Michigan and northern Indiana. In his role as director of American Indian relations for the Ohio History Connection, Wesaw

works to promote knowledge and understanding of the role of American Indians in Ohio history and fosters a collaborative relationship between the history institution and federally recognized American Indian tribal governments with historic ties to Ohio.

Wesaw will serve on the Ohio History Connection's leadership team and his position reflects one of the organization's greatest strategic priorities of addressing structural inequalities and ensuring representation, access and inclusion.

Wesaw is a Ph.D. candidate in city and regional planning at The Ohio State University. He holds a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in communication studies from Ohio University.

Among his many accomplishments, Wesaw was one of the tribal leaders who advised Mayor Pete Buttigieg's presidential campaign in the development of its initial national policy for Indian Country, titled *Achieving Autonomy for Tribal Nations and Enhancing Opportunities for Native People to Thrive*.

In July 2020, Wesaw was re-elected to a second term on the Pokagon Band's Tribal Council (the Tribe's governing body) and Pokagon Gaming Authority (the board of directors of the Tribe's Four Winds Casino Resorts).

For more information on American Indian Relations at the Ohio History Connection, visit [ohiohistory.org/americanindianrelations](https://ohiohistory.org/americanindianrelations).

*Originally published in the Ohio History Connection's Echoes Magazine, January & February 2021*



## Ohio History Day Call for Judges

Calling all educators, historians, museum professionals, and anyone with a love of history and community! We need your help to ensure this year's virtual [Ohio History Day](#) is a HUGE success for Ohio's students.

[Ohio History Day](#), an affiliate of National History Day, gives students in grades 4-12 the chance to become historians. Based on their own research and aligned to the [annual theme](#), students create exhibits, documentaries, performances, websites and academic papers, and present their findings at competitions. Thousands of students take part in Ohio History Day competitions across the state each year.

**To ensure the safety of our students, teachers, judges and staff, this year all ten (10) regional contest and the State Contest will be held virtually.** This means you can judge from the comfort of your own home! Ohio History Day students are some of the most dedicated, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic in the state, and by volunteering as a virtual judge you are playing a vital role in helping them continue their learning journey.

Interested in learning more? Check out Ohio History Day's [Judge Page](#) for helpful videos, resources, and testimonials from previous judges. To find an Ohio History Day contest and register as a virtual judge, please visit our [Sign Up! page](#).

Got questions? We have answers—feel free to contact us at [historyday@ohiohistory.org](mailto:historyday@ohiohistory.org). We hope to "see" you soon at a virtual Ohio History Day Contest!

## A special call to underserved audiences



The Ohio Historical Marker program is seeking marker applications that represent underserved audiences throughout Ohio. In particular, we are asking for Ohio stories about: people of color; immigrant communities; women; LGBTQ+; under-represented faith-based communities; and, people with disabilities. Additionally, counties with fewer than 12 markers

will be considered as an underserved area and given a spot to tell their stories during this application cycle.

Applications will be due May 1, 2021. Details about the program—along with applications, price lists, grant information, and sample submissions—can be found online at [www.RemarkableOhio.org](http://www.RemarkableOhio.org).

During this “Special Call,” only applications addressing the requested topics will be considered. The next OPEN application deadline will likely be May 1, 2022.

Please help the Ohio Historical Marker Program get the word out about this marker special call. Rack Cards and pdf announcements will be available soon. Contact Laura Russell, Historical Markers Coordinator, at [lrussell@ohiohistory.org](mailto:lrussell@ohiohistory.org) and she will happily answer questions about the call and get promotional materials to you.

## Call for Session Proposals

OLHA is now accepting session proposals for our 2021 Annual Meeting! We haven't yet determined whether the meeting will be held online or in person, but mark your calendars for the beginning of October, regardless.

Do you have a great idea you'd like to share with the local history community? The Alliance is now accepting session proposals for the 2021 Annual Meeting. This year's theme is *Challenge Accepted: Overcoming Obstacles*.

It is our hope that the theme will inspire proposals that reflect a variety of ways that individuals have experienced obstacles. We encourage sessions that address the creative ways your organization has overcome the pandemic or other obstacles. We also hope to include content sessions about individuals or groups who overcame the obstacles of racism, sexism, economic insecurity, religious discrimination, or other barriers to full participation in American society. We also welcome sessions on any aspect of public history theory and practice.

**Submissions are due February 16, 2021.** Download the proposal form at [www.ohiolha.org/what-we-do/alliance-annual-meeting/](http://www.ohiolha.org/what-we-do/alliance-annual-meeting/).

## 2020 OHRAB Achievement Award Winners

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) is proud to announce that the recipients of the 2020 OHRAB Achievement Award are the **Clark County Historical Society** and the **Toledo Lucas County Public Library**.

In 2019, the Clark County Historical Society confronted every archivist's worst fear: an overhead water pipe that bursts in the middle of the night. The pipe burst severely damaged the ceiling over the archives and genealogy library. Staff and volunteers worked courageously to save the collections. By acting quickly, the Society saved the entire collection. Following this experience, the Society's staff has reached out to other institutions and professionals to teach the value of disaster planning and preparedness, using themselves as an example of how quick thinking and preparation can save an archive from disaster. OHRAB honors the Clark County Historical Society for their fortitude in saving the Society's

collections and for their resulting commitment to teaching others about the necessity of disaster planning and preparedness.

The Toledo Lucas County Public Library possesses an enormous collection of architectural records. For decades, the staff of the Local History and Genealogy department have worked to organize and preserve the records donated to the library by local architecture and engineering firms. The records, which includes hundreds of thousands of drawings, pertain not only to buildings in Toledo but also to buildings in the entire Midwest. To make the records more accessible, the library has created the Architecture of Northwest Ohio ([tlcplarchitecture.omeka.net/](http://tlcplarchitecture.omeka.net/)), a digital library that allows researchers to search and browse images from the collection. This website gives researchers an unrivaled view into the architectural past of the Midwest. OHRAB applauds the Toledo Lucas County Public Library for

their continuing efforts to preserve their vast architectural records collection and to make it accessible to all through the Architecture of Northwest Ohio digital library.

OHRAB congratulates the Clark County Historical Society and the Toledo Lucas County Public Library for their accomplishments and wishes them continuing success in their efforts to preserve the history of Ohio.

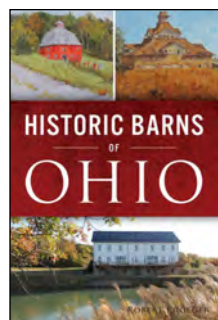
The Ohio Historical Advisory Board (OHRAB) is the central body for historical records planning in the state. The Board is funded by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Board members represent Ohio's public and private archives, records offices and research institutions. For more information on OHRAB and its Ohio Archives Grant Program, visit [ohrab.org/](http://ohrab.org/).

**Tina S. Ratcliff**  
Chair, OHRAB



## Historic Barns of Ohio by Robert Kroeger to be released March 22

### ABOUT THE BOOK



From the glacier-flattened northwest to the Appalachian hills and valleys to the east and south, barns dot the Ohio landscape. Built with wooden nails and mortise-and-tenon joints and assembled with beams hand-

hewn from nearby trees, some of these magnificent structures have witnessed three centuries. Many display the unique carpentry of masterful barn builders, including "mystery" wooden spikes and tongue-and-grooved two-inch flooring. Sadly, many of these barns risk crumbling any day. Join the author in viewing his paintings of old barns in Ohio's eighty-eight counties and read essays about each one, depicting gritty, whimsical, and historical revelations.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Robert Kroeger, a native of Youngstown, graduated from Ohio State University's College of Dentistry and served four years of active duty in the U.S. Navy, ending with the rank of lieutenant commander. He practiced general dentistry in Cincinnati from 1977 to 2010, when he retired. He and his wife

Laura enjoy spending time with their nine grandchildren.

Dr. Kroeger is a second-generation artist, although unlike his father, Francis, who held an art degree from Notre Dame, his professional art career blossomed later in life. Although he did not immediately follow in his father's footsteps, Kroeger's career as a dentist allowed him to study color values and facial aesthetic principles in smile design.

A prolific author, Dr. Kroeger has published two books on dentistry, a book on vitality and seven books on golf in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland. This is his first book on old barns but hopefully not his last.

### FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Dr. Kroeger is offering to provide a book event as a fundraiser for local historical societies. The fundraiser will feature a book signing, the author telling a few barn stories, a few paintings for auction, and perhaps a palette knife demo painting for raffle. I donate half of the proceeds. He can bring a supply of books to sign or the society may order them directly from the publisher, Arcadia Press, who offers a risk-free deal for a book signing. For more information on these events, contact the author contacted via the website [www.barnart.weebly.com](http://www.barnart.weebly.com).

## Digitization Grants Available

### Introduction

The Ohio Local History Alliance (OLHA) will award a total of **up to \$7,500** to preserve local history collections through digitization. The grant is given yearly to OLHA members. The maximum award to be given to a single institution is \$2,500. The collections selected for digitization should be important to the history of the area represented by the applicant and/or to the history of Ohio.

Grant recipients will receive an Ohio Memory collection to publicly display their digital content. Each collection will be branded with the grantee's logo and organization information. For more information about the Ohio Memory Program, please visit [www.ohiomemory.org](http://www.ohiomemory.org).

### Application

Applications are online only. Applicants must be an OLHA member and have either a Federal ID number or a State of Ohio Certification of Continued Existence number to apply. You can check on your membership status by contacting the OLHA Executive Secretary, Dr. Betsy Hedler, at 614-297-2538 or [ohiolha@ohiohistory.org](mailto:ohiolha@ohiohistory.org).

### Deadline

Applications are due February 15th each year. Grantees will be notified by April 1st with projects beginning May 1st. Projects should be completed 12 months after start date.

For more information and to apply, visit [www.ohiolha.org/what-we-do/grants/alliance-digitization-grants](http://www.ohiolha.org/what-we-do/grants/alliance-digitization-grants).

## Region 1

Allen, Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Lucas, Putnam, Van Wert, Williams, and Wood Counties

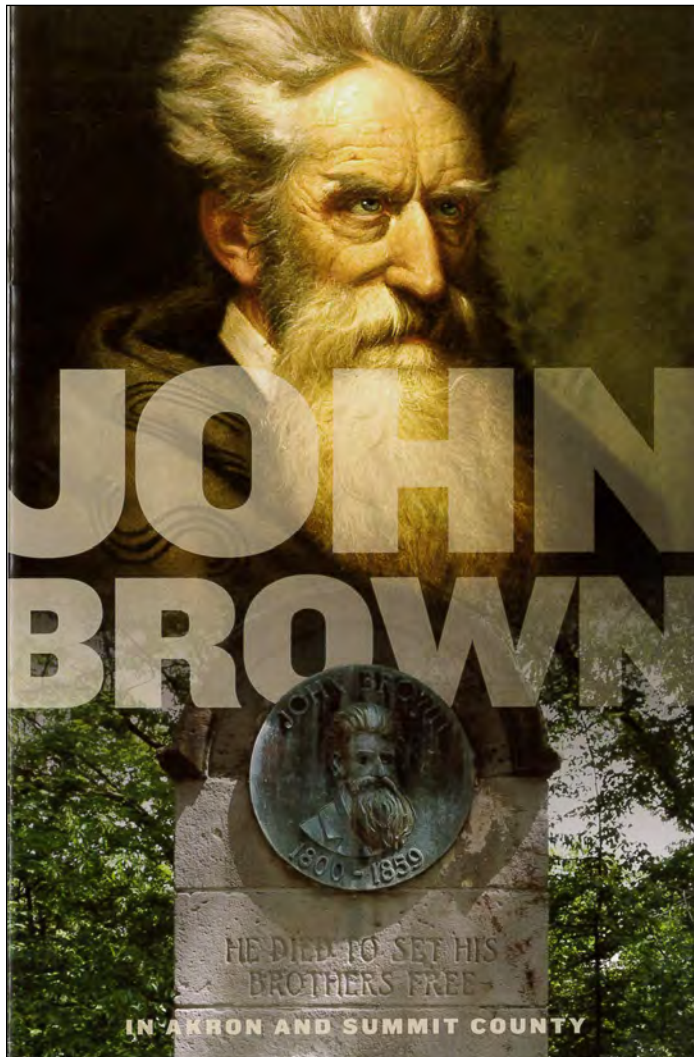
## Region 2

Ashland, Crawford, Erie, Huron, Marion, Morrow, Ottawa, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, and Wyandot Counties

## Region 3

Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, and Summit Counties

The **Summit County Historical Society** of Akron, OH found out that the legacy of abolitionist John Brown is as pertinent today as it was in 1859, the year he led a raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry trying to end slavery in the United States, when the agency hosted a July 4th hike to the John Brown Monument in collaboration with the Akron Zoo. The result was an updated John Brown booklet publication. It was paid for by local companies APV Engineered Coatings and Oriana House with free design assistance from American Printing. This coincided with the placement of a new Ohio Historical Marker, sponsored by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, and the ShowTime series release of *The Good Lord Bird*, both featuring Brown.



## Region 4

Ashtabula, Geauga, Mahoning, Portage, and Trumbull Counties

## Region 5

Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Stark, Tuscarawas, and Wayne Counties

The **Dennison Railroad Depot Museum** received \$300,000 from the recent State Capital Budget for the next phase of construction at the new Museum of Clay Folk Art and Industry site. This museum is one of the three museum sites operated by the Dennison Railroad Depot Museum. The new site is a former department store in downtown Uhrichsville.

## Region 6

Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Madison, Perry, Pickaway, and Union Counties

The **Licking County Library** and **Worthington Historical Society** have created virtual tours using website and app Pocketsights. If the Pocketsights app is downloaded, then it will recommend tours based on geographic proximity. The Library's are *Newark Downtown* and *Prehistoric Earthworks and Mound*; the Historical Society's are *African-American History in Worthington* and *Walnut Grove Cemetery Walking Tour*. Below is a link to see all virtual tours offered for Ohio: [pocketsights.com/tours/location/United-States/Ohio](http://pocketsights.com/tours/location/United-States/Ohio)

## Region 7

Auglaize, Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Logan, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby Counties

Thanks to the CARES Act, the **Champaign County Historical Society** was able to update their restrooms, adding touch-free towel dispensers, soap dispensers, faucets, and light switches. They were also able to replace their doors to push out and have a foot device to open and make the main museum entry handicap accessible with a touch free trigger.

## Region 8

Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland, and Warren Counties

The Board of Trustees of the **Clinton County Historical Society** (History Center) alongside Executive Director Shelby Boatman are pleased to share they are in the process of developing a five-year strategic plan to better serve the community and assess the organization, since its incorporation in 1948. They recently conducted an internal SWOT analysis and have developed a public survey to gather community feedback. The Society is inviting the community to share their opinion on topics such as membership, activities, programming, future communication, and more. To learn more about the survey visit [www.clintoncountyhistory.org/strategic-planning-survey/](http://www.clintoncountyhistory.org/strategic-planning-survey/).

As Covid-19 continues to have an adverse impact on in-person programming, the **Cincinnati Observatory** is expanding online programming for K-12 students, adults and our members.

We are also using these times to undertake facility updates and repairs that are often hard to schedule in more normal times. In February we will shut down for nearly 3 weeks to sand and refinish all the hardwood floors in the 1873 Samuel Hannaford designed observatory and the 1904 observatory.

The **Warren County Historical Society** has been busy with a variety of projects! The foundation for the Beedle Log Cabin has been dug and concrete poured. Reconstruction is planned for Spring, 2021. At the Harmon Museum, they're building and furnishing a Mid-Century Modern Apartment. Their Archeological exhibit received a face-lift and pre-historic artifacts have been given new life with updated displays. The agricultural collection, in the Farm Heritage Gallery, has been thinned and organized to better showcase the items on display before rotating new items in from storage. And they'll be able to welcome guests into it all through the Broadway entrance with newly redone front steps. The Glendower Historic Mansion may be closed for the season but the upper floor's wings have been opened up to show the Maid's Quarters and Work Room to better convey the life of those that also lived in the home.

## Region 9

Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton Counties

## Region 10

Belmont, Coshocton, Guernsey, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, and Washington Counties

Brandon McAfee, BSA Troop 501, Caldwell, Ohio, recently completed his Eagle Scout Project at the Ball-Caldwell Historic Barn owned by the **Noble County Historical Society**. For his project, he put in lighting in the lower level of the Barn, and set up numerous displays about 19th century farm equipment. Braden and his team of scouts cleaned and restored many pieces of vintage equipment, including things that had been stored outside and were worn from the weather. The project took 729 hours to complete. Noble County Historical Society thanks and honors this local young man for this important addition to the Society.

*In 100 words or less, do you have outstanding news to share about your organization? Please email it to your regional representative for the next issue of The Local Historian. Contact information for the representatives in your region is on page 2 of this issue. Of course, you are welcome to forward your news directly to the editor of The Local Historian at [ohiolha@ohiohistory.org](mailto:ohiolha@ohiohistory.org). Rather than serving as a calendar of events, items for "News from the Regions" are chosen to inspire, connect, and educate the Alliance's members all over Ohio and celebrate notable and imitation-worthy accomplishments of Alliance members.*



Joined or renewed between  
October 21, 2020 and January 12, 2021

## Welcome New Members

### ORGANIZATIONS

Ashtabula County Covered Bridge Festival, <i>Jefferson</i>	Randolph Township Historical Society, <i>Englewood</i>
---	---

## Thank You, Renewing Members

### INDIVIDUALS

JoAnn Bertram, <i>Cincinnati</i>	Carl T. Engel, <i>Painesville</i>
Jarrold D. Burks, <i>Columbus</i>	Diana M. Redman, <i>Gahanna</i>

### ORGANIZATIONS

Auglaize County Historical Society, <i>Wapakoneta</i>	Kent State University Library, <i>Kent</i>
Avon Lake Historical Society, <i>Avon Lake</i>	Lorain Historical Society, <i>Lorain</i>
Bedford Historical Society, <i>Bedford</i>	Madog Center for Welsh Studies, <i>Rio Grande</i>
Belmont County Historical Society, <i>Barnesville</i>	Massillon Heritage Foundation Inc, <i>Massillon</i>
Chester-Shade Historical Association, <i>Chester</i>	Miami University McGuffey House and Museum, <i>Oxford</i>
Columbus Metropolitan Library, <i>Columbus</i>	Miamisburg Historical Society, <i>Miamisburg</i>
Grand Rapids Historical Society, <i>Grand Rapids</i>	Powell Liberty Historical Society, <i>Powell</i>
Granger Historical Society, <i>Medina</i>	Preble County Historical Society, <i>Eaton</i>
Highland County Historical Society, <i>Hillsboro</i>	Strongsville Historical Society, <i>Strongsville</i>
Hilltop Historical Society, <i>Columbus</i>	Ursuline College, <i>Pepper Pike</i>
Hinckley Historical Society Inc, <i>Hinckley</i>	Vermilion Area Archival Society, Inc., <i>Vermilion</i>
Indian Lake Area Historical Society, <i>Russells Point</i>	Watt Center for History & the Arts, <i>Barnesville</i>
Kelleys Island Historical Association Inc, <i>Kelleys Island</i>	Whitehouse Historical Society, <i>Whitehouse</i>
Kelton House Museum and Garden, <i>Columbus</i>	Willoughby Historical Society, <i>Willoughby</i>
	Yellow Springs Historical Society, <i>Yellow Springs</i>

### FEBRUARY 16:

Session proposals due for 2021 Annual Meeting. For more information, see page 13.

### MARCH 6:

OLHA Regional Meeting, Regions 5 & 10. For more information, see pages 1 & 4.

Ohio History Day Regional Contests, Regions 2, 7 & 9 For more information, see [ohiohistoryday.org](http://ohiohistoryday.org).

### MARCH 13

OLHA Regional Meeting, Regions 5 & 10. For more information, see pages 1 & 4.

Ohio History Day Regional Contests, Regions 1, 5, 6 & 8 For more information, see [ohiohistoryday.org](http://ohiohistoryday.org).

### MARCH 20:

OLHA Regional Meeting, Regions 3 & 4. For more information, see pages 1 & 4.

Ohio History Day Regional Contests, Region 10. For more information, see [ohiohistoryday.org](http://ohiohistoryday.org).

### MARCH 27:

Ohio History Day Regional Contests, Regions 3 & 4 For more information, see [ohiohistoryday.org](http://ohiohistoryday.org).

### APRIL 10:

OLHA Regional Meeting, Regions 2 & 6. For more information, see pages 1 & 4.

### APRIL 15:

Income Tax Returns Due! Support the Ohio History Fund. For more information, see page 7.

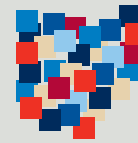
### APRIL 17:

OLHA Regional Meeting, Regions 1 & 7. For more information, see pages 1 & 4.

### MAY 1:

Ohio Historical Marker applications due. For more information, see page 13.

# Join the Ohio Local History Alliance...



**OHIO LOCAL HISTORY ALLIANCE**  
Inspire. Connect. Educate.

...or connect a sister organization to the Alliance and ask its leaders to join in one of the following categories:

## Organizational Member

Get six issues of *The Local Historian*, save when you register for our Alliance regional and statewide local history meetings, receive periodic email updates, and save on Ohio Historical Society services for organization, including speakers and customized training workshops. **Best of all, when you join the Alliance as an Organizational Member, your membership benefits all of your organization's staff and members**—they will all qualify for discounts on registration for the Alliance's regional and statewide meetings and when buying Alliance publications.

## Operating budget:

Over \$200,000 a year:	\$100	(\$190 for 2)
\$100,000-\$200,000 a year:	\$75	(\$140 for 2)
\$25,000-\$100,000 a year:	\$60	(\$110 for 2)
Under \$25,000 a year:	\$35	(\$65 for 2)

## Individual Member

Get six issues of *The Local Historian*, save when you register for our Alliance regional and statewide local history meetings, receive periodic email updates.

Affiliate:	\$35	(\$65 for 2)
Individual:	\$50	(\$90 for 2)
Student:	\$20	

## Business Member:

	\$100	(\$190 for 2)
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## Join at:

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The Ohio Local History Alliance, organized in 1960 under sponsorship of the Ohio History Connection, is composed of local historical societies, historic preservation groups, history museums, archives, libraries, and genealogical societies throughout the state involved in collecting, preserving, and interpreting Ohio's history.

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