

Congratulations 2014 Alliance Award Winners!



Recipients of the 2015 Ohio Local History Alliance Outstanding Achievement Awards pose with their certificates. Photo courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.

By Christie Weinger, Executive Director, Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center, Fremont

On Saturday, October 4 members and friends of the Ohio Local History Alliance gathered for the annual Awards Luncheon. Always one of the most anticipated events of the Annual Meeting, this luncheon celebrates the outstanding local history projects that are happening statewide through the presentation of the Alliance's Outstanding Achievement Awards.

History Outreach Awards recognize outstanding local history projects in three categories: media and publications, exhibits/displays, and public programming. Individual Achievement Awards recognize those who have made outstanding contributions to Ohio's local history organizations or to the understanding and appreciation of state and local history. This year's 14 recipients are inspiring examples of innovative ways to connect all Ohioans with their history.

HISTORY OUTREACH AWARDS: MEDIA AND PUBLICATIONS

Bicentennial Book, Cuyahoga Falls Bicentennial Book Committee, Cuyahoga Falls: As Cuyahoga Falls approached its 200th anniversary, representatives from a number of community organizations decided a bicentennial book was a

great way to inspire interest in local history, enable newer residents to learn more about their city, help former residents reconnect, and provide long-time residents a chance to reminisce. This compilation of over 600 striking photos, stories, and information was gathered from over 100 sources. The book is a testament to community partnership.

Bonnets to Boardrooms: Women's Stories from a Historic College Town, Oberlin Heritage Center, Oberlin: Oberlin Heritage Center board member Eugenia Poporad Vanek became fascinated by the Center's collection of little-known, but amazingly rich, series of oral history interviews. She pored over hundreds of pages of interviews and extracted extraordinary, powerful, and heartwarming accounts of women's varied lives in Oberlin. The profiled group includes teachers, mothers, administrators, wives, concerned citizens, and community activists born between 1895 and 1959.

Under the Baton: Music at Old Cedar Point, Sandusky Library, Sandusky: Although today Cedar Point is best known for its thrill rides, early visitors were drawn to the resort for its music. This 26-minute documentary explores the growth of the middle class, the increase in leisure time and leisure time activities, including concert band music, and how this all shaped and affected Cedar Point. The purpose of this documentary is to preserve the history

of traditional American band music at the park and to educate viewers about the economic and social factors that gave rise to the middle class and amusement parks during the late 19th century. To complement the documentary, programs were developed on aspects of life during this era.

HISTORY OUTREACH AWARDS: EXHIBITS AND DISPLAYS

Streetscape, Historic Perrysburg, Perrysburg: Utilizing the themes "The Way We Were" and "History Happens Here," a research committee collected historic photographs and developed scripts for use on eight large, permanent plaques that were installed in the grassy area of Perrysburg's downtown historic district. The plaques detail the previous occupants and businesses.

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Privy to History: Civil War Prison Life Unearthed, Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center, Fremont: Developed in collaboration with Dr. David R. Bush of Heidelberg University's Center for Historic and Military Archaeology, this exhibit provided the Hayes Presidential Center an opportunity to share materials from its extensive holdings of original manuscripts related to Johnson's Island Confederate Officers Civil War Prison. This exhibit is the most recent, and perhaps most comprehensive, exploration of the physical evidence of human experience and events that occurred at the island prison since 1965.



Photo courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.

Sauder Village Grist Mill Renovation and Exhibit, "Grain: From Field to Flour," Sauder Village, Archbold: Imagine learning about history, agriculture, technology, sustainability, and business in one 19th century structure! Time had taken its toll on the grist mill building that was donated to the Village in 1979. An extensive renovation was conducted on the mill, and a new exhibit was installed to enhance the building's interpretive message. It is now handicapped-accessible, and the exhibit provides hands-on, live-action experiences that all visitors can enjoy. The restoration of the mill has also impacted the Village's foodways program, which now uses freshly ground, period-appropriate grains.

HISTORY OUTREACH AWARDS: PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War, Shelby County Historical Society, Sidney: Each year the Shelby County Historical Society selects a theme on which to base their programs. This year featured the Civil War. Kicking off the program year was the opening of a new Civil War exhibit that featured a recruitment center, a surgical tent, an en-

campment, and a parlor on the homefront. Supplemental programs included a dinner with period foods served by historically costumed volunteers and a first-person interpretation of an emancipated slave. At another program, Abraham Lincoln put in an appearance and was introduced by his political rival Stephen Douglas. A cemetery tour, lecture series, and Civil War day held at the fairgrounds completed the suite of programs.

Ohio History: Warren City's Historic District, Upton Association, Warren: The curiosity of several women saved a structure about to be demolished when they

discovered it was the home of suffragette Harriet Taylor Upton. The restored home gave the Upton Association an opportunity to bring school children and adults to the site to learn significant history, enjoy the house, and walk the gardens. In collaboration with area schools, the tours have been expanded to include City Hall, the Upton Home, Warren Women's Park, and the Edwards House. The purpose of the tours is to teach the history of Ohio and Warren, but students are also taught about cleaning up litter, pulling weeds, and raking leaves. Students not only understand and appreciate their history, but transfer their experience into the beautification of their neighborhoods.

Woodsfield Civil War Living History Event, Woodsfield Civil War Living History Event Planning Committee/Monroe County Historical Society, Woodsfield: Through a series of three living history weekends held annually between 2011-2013, Monroe County residents could experience events as local people had during the Civil War. The first program, "To the Colors," was inspired by an article in an 1861 local newspaper that noted an event

where local troops were presented with a silk flag by the people of Monroe County. For the second program, "On to Richmond," visitors were given passes to enter the camp of the local unit, while they were encamped in "Richmond" and volunteers showed visitors how to put together care packages for the soldiers. The final program, "Aftermath," shared the tragic story of the 25th OVI's heavy losses at the Battle of Gettysburg by creating a frighteningly realistic field hospital.

Alliance Pride, Alliance City Schools, Alliance: A discussion about getting students out of the classroom and experiencing history firsthand led to an innovative idea and a partnership between Alliance City Schools and the Alliance Historical Society. The collaboration resulted in the creation of a textbook that included documents, maps, timelines, and photographs relating to the history of Alliance. Another component of the program resulted in "treasure chests" of historical artifacts that students, wearing white gloves, could handle and examine up close. The last piece of the puzzle was the opportunity for students to take a field trip to visit several of the city's historic sites.

2014 Family Day, International Women's Air and Space Museum, Cleveland: The mission of the International Women's Air and Space Museum is to preserve the history of women in aviation and space and to document their contributions today and in the future. In 2014, the annual Family Day event centered around Jerrie Mock, a resident of Columbus, who was the first woman to fly solo around the world. Ten activity stations symbolized the numerous countries where she stopped along the way. For example, in Morocco Mrs. Mock experienced ice build-up on her plane, so attendees experimented with molding play-dough on toy planes to see how different weights affected the way they flew.

The Wood County Lunatic Asylum, Wood County Historical Center & Museum, Bowling Green: Ten years ago in 2004, the crumbling Lunatic Asylum, an original building located on the Wood County Historical Center & Museum, formerly the Wood County Infirmary, was restored and opened to the public. To commemorate the tenth anniversary of this event, the Historical Center received a (Continued on page 7)

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nationally recognized photography exhibit, *Asylum: Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals*. In addition, the interpretation committee organized a free panel discussion and mental health fair on the museum's grounds. The panel highlighted the history of mental illness and current trends in mental health. These exhibits and programs serve to address this controversial subject matter in objective ways that invoke a visceral and emotional experience.

OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Walter Edling, Oberlin Heritage

Center, Oberlin: Edling made a big impact on the Oberlin Heritage Center with his “can do” attitude and willingness to roll up his sleeves, dig right in, and find creative solutions to any vexing problem. He has held many leadership roles at the Center, always bringing his unflappable good humor to every situation and his cheery optimism that the problem will be solved one way or another. Through his work with the Oberlin Heritage Center, Edling has perfected a number of skills: property management, roof repairs, lead paint abatement, storm water and flood control, and even sewer easement negotiations.

Sandra Halem, Kent Historical So-

ciety, Kent: When Halem became a board member of the Kent Historical Society in 1974, she was the first woman to join the board. During the past 40 years, she has brought her talents and creativity to every area of the Society's service and operations. In 1990, Halem proposed and founded the Kent State Shootings Oral History Project, which collects and provides access to personal accounts of the May 4, 1970 shootings and their aftermath. In 1998, she was commissioned by the Massillon Museum to write a play based on the letters between a 19 year-old boy and his family and friends from the time he served as a Marine in World War I until his body came home from France in 1921. Halem has written other short plays based on original documents and has supervised the publication of other works relating to local history.