

History Fund Grant Recipients Announced on Statehood Day, March 4

By Andy Verhoff, History Fund Grant Coordinator, and Emmy Beach, Public Relations Coordinator, Ohio History Connection, Columbus

The Ohio History Connection is pleased to announce that it has awarded 13 organizations History Fund grants. The History Fund is a competitive matching grants program that is one of four “tax check-off” funds found on Ohio’s income tax forms and funded entirely through Ohio taxpayers’ voluntary contributions.

“The History Fund helps us share and preserve Ohio’s story by supporting local projects and programs in communities throughout the state,” said Burt Logan, executive director and CEO for the Ohio History Connection. “The work of local history organizations is helping to strengthen our heritage and ensure Ohio’s story is told for years to come.”

The Ohio History Connection’s History Fund had \$130,000 to grant—\$20,000 more than last year—and awarded 13 grants to organizations throughout Ohio. The History Fund received 33 applications requesting a total of \$388,000 in grant-funding, underscoring the importance of the need for this grant program for history and preservation-related projects throughout Ohio.

The 13 recipients of the 2015 History Fund grants are:

Mahoning Valley Historical Society

(Youngstown) received \$4,526 to digitize microfilm copies of records from Republic Steel from the 1880s – 1960s, and scrapbooks compiled by former Youngstown mayor Charles P. Henderson, who cracked down on organized crime in the city in the late 1940s and early 1950s. This project will make these materials more accessible to the public, and better ensure the preservation of the original records.



The 2015 History Fund grant recipients pose with their “big checks” at Statehood Day. Photo courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.

Wyandot County Historical Society

(Upper Sandusky) received \$2,945 to create a traveling exhibit about the history of the Wyandot tribe in Ohio, from the formation of the Wendat Confederacy in the 1650s, through the tribe’s time on reservations in Ohio in the early 19th century, to the four Wyandot nations today. The organization will form partnerships with Wyandot tribes in several states and Canada to tell the tribe’s story and create the exhibit.

Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative, Kent State University

(Cleveland) received \$9,000 to produce a user-friendly, how-to guide for the rehabilitation of historic and traditional housing stock in areas of Cleveland and northeast Ohio that have experienced disinvestment and decline. The guide will describe and advocate for low-cost and high-quality solutions that are based on the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The guide will promote historic preservation by helping property owners rehabilitate a neighborhood’s historic fabric to encourage community investment and preservation.

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The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum (Cleveland) received \$14,500 to make available the papers and notes of Cleveland Plain Dealer reporter Jane Scott. Scott's beat was rock and roll. She covered the scene and its musicians from the mid-1950s to the early 2000s. She witnessed music history as it was made at a time when few others were documenting the rise of artists that are now household names, including Bruce Springsteen. This project will allow researchers to study the development of rock and roll artists and the music industry through her nearly 50 years of reporting.

Junior League of Columbus/Kelton House Museum & Garden (Columbus) received \$3,000 to share the house's history with more visitors at one time. The grant will allow the Kelton House to purchase 10 additional hand-held, recorded audio tour units. More units means the house will be better able to meet the demand for its popular tours, including stories of the Underground Railroad and high Victorian-era living in Columbus.

Southington Township Board of Trustees (Southington) received \$11,000 to stabilize a section of National Register-listed school building. Completion of the project will enable this small Trumbull County community to continue its plan to rehabilitate the much-loved and history-filled building, turning it into a community center. The school building serves as another example of how small communities "recycle" their historic buildings and preserve what makes their places special.

Union Literary Institute Preservation Society (Dayton) received \$17,900 continue stabilization of the James and Sophia Clemens Farmhouse. The Clemens' farm is located in Longtown in Darke County. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the farm is one of the oldest and last remaining agricultural resources in one of the state's earliest African American settlements, one of at least 70 in pre-Civil War Ohio. Because of its condition, the house is not open to the public. The successful completion of this project will bring that goal closer, making it possible for Ohioans to learn more about the state's African American pioneer heritage.

Massillon Heritage Foundation (Massillon) received \$17,900 to begin interior restoration of Five Oaks. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Five Oaks is an 1890s Gothic, Tudor and French Renaissance-style mansion. It's one of the few remaining examples of the work of Cleveland architect Charles Schweinfurth, who designed many of the houses along Cleveland's "Millionaire's Row," Euclid Avenue. The grant will repair plaster in Five Oak's music room, library and parlor.

Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education (Cincinnati) received \$17,500 to share and preserve the experiences of Cincinnati-area Holocaust survivors with local schools and adult groups. The grant will establish a formal speakers' bureau of survivors and eyewitnesses, and create multi-media portfolios for area educators with maps, reproductions of artifacts and documents and videotaped testimonials. An element of the project will share stories of how survivors rebuilt their lives and thrived after settling in the Cincinnati area.

The City of Olmsted Falls received \$5,000 to raise awareness about the Olmsted Falls National Register Historic District and instill pride in the city's history. The grant will lead to creation of signage throughout the district to highlight its location in the city. The grant and the project will also increase awareness of how a commitment to historic preservation and to National Register Historic Districts can improve a community's overall quality of life.

Fayette County Historical Society (Washington Court House) received \$14,000 to complete the repair of windows in the county's history museum. Repair of the windows, following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, will allow for better control of temperature and humidity levels in the museum and enable the organization to better preserve and share the history entrusted to their care.

Dairy Barn Arts Center (Athens) received \$10,000 to repair the gable ends of the barn, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a popular venue for cultural and arts events in southeast Ohio. Repairs to these hard-to-reach sections of the barn will enable it to continue achieving its popular mission and stimulate further fundraising efforts for the facility.

Belpre Historical Society received \$2,730 upgrade and provide training in the use of PastPerfect. PastPerfect is the standard in software used for the inventory and cataloging of history museum collections. By using PastPerfect, the Belpre Historical Society will be better able to manage and preserve its collections of artifacts and improve accessibility for the public. ■