

THE Local Historian

OHIO LOCAL HISTORY ALLIANCE

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Ohio History Fund Gives Fourth Year of Grants

This year's History Fund grant recipients. At Statehood Day 2016, the Ohio History Connection announced 14 new grant recipients and grants totaling \$100,000. Photo courtesy Ohio History Connection

By Andy Verhoff, History Fund Grant Manager, Ohio History Connection, Columbus

At the March 1 Statehood Day celebration, the Ohio History Connection announced the recipients of a total of \$100,000 in grants from the History Fund. The History Fund is a competitive matching grant program administered by the Ohio History Connection's Local History Services department. Money for the grants comes from individual Ohioans who support the program in three ways: by donating a portion of their state income tax refund to the Ohio History Fund on their state tax return (the tax check-off), by purchasing an Ohio History license plate, and by making donations directly to the Ohio History Connection for the History Fund.

Your donation of a part of your Ohio tax refund this year is especially vital. Ninety-nine percent of the money for History Fund grants comes from the tax check-off. To remain on Ohio's tax return, the check-off must generate a minimum of \$150,000, which is a tax check off donation of \$9 from approximately 17,000 Ohioans. Approximately 3.6 million Ohio tax filers received state tax refunds and the average refund was \$356. For the price of one lunch out a year, you can support history in Ohio!

Including the 14 new recipients below, since 2013 the History Fund has given a total of 47 grants in 33 counties in the amount of \$448,000. Proving there is a strong need for funding for local history and preservation efforts, in this same period the History Fund has received 225 grant requests totaling \$2.7 million!

Of this year's 14 grant recipients, five are members of the Ohio Local History Alliance. A total of 23 Alliance members have received History Fund grants since the program's inception in 2012. A ☆ denotes an Alliance member.

2015-2016 History Fund Recipients

Auglaize County Historical Society, *Wapakoneta*

\$4,074 to improve collections management at the Auglaize County Historical Society's museums. This project will enable the society's part time administrator and volunteers to act on the findings of a recent American Alliance of Museum's Museum Assessment Program report, commissioned by the society. The report calls for the society to address a common challenge small museums face – developing efficient methods of cataloging their collections of artifacts. With guidance provided by experienced collections management consultants, training, and the help of a graduate-level student in public history, society volunteers will develop efficient work process and collections policies to catalog approximately 2,000 objects over the life of the project. It is intended that the project will serve as a model for other organizations as well as insure good stewardship of the county's history.

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Canal Fulton Heritage Society, *Canal Fulton*

\$6,000 to replace the roof of the William Blank House. The project will enable the society to replace the roof on this 1901 house, which is one of four historic properties this all-volunteer organization cares for in the city and a contributing structure to the National Register-listed Canal Fulton Historic District in Stark County. The Blank House is the repository of the society's archives and artifact collections. Repairs to the roof will protect the building and the collections inside. The house is also in a historic location in the community, adjacent to the Ohio-Erie canal that brought prosperity to the area in the mid-19th century.

★ The Friends of James A. Garfield National Historic Site, *Mentor*

\$3,577 for a travelling exhibit about President James A. Garfield and the Garfield National Historic Site. On the eve of the 2016 Republican National Convention in Cleveland, the friends group of this National Historic Site will produce a series of portable exhibits, which will be hosted at locations throughout northeast Ohio. The exhibits, consisting of interpretive banners and artifacts, will share the life of President Garfield and encourage visits to his family's home in Mentor. Increased visitation will not only enlarge the economic impact of the site in Lake County and Northeast Ohio, but also increase viewers' and visitors' understanding of President Garfield's life and legacy.

Fort Recovery Historical Society, *Fort Recovery*

\$17,500 for an archaeological field school and ground-penetrating radar survey at Fort Recovery. A newly discovered 1793 map of Fort Recovery and a ground-penetrating survey of the area around the fort will guide archeological excavations at a field school. These efforts will likely revise current understandings of the fort and of the two battles that occurred in what is now southwestern Mercer County during the Ohio Indian Wars of the early 1790s. The project will share those new conclusions within the field of historical archeology, as well as area school groups and the public during the 225th anniversary of the community in 2016.
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Green Lawn Abbey Preservation Association, Columbus

\$3,450 for the restoration of a stained glass window in Green Lawn Abbey. A product of Rossbach Art Studio, an important producer of high quality stained glass in early 20th century in Columbus, the window is the last of series of six to be restored in the Abbey's parlor. Once complete, the parlor will be highest profile and most often used area for programs and tours. The project is important step in renovating and preserving the Abbey, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The project also advances the all-volunteer association's larger goal of saving and sharing Columbus's local history, as reflected in the structure, and inspiring visitors with programs on classical architecture, of which the Abbey is an outstanding example.

Heartland Earthworks Conservancy, Hillsboro

\$10,000 for a magnetometer survey of Steel Earthworks, Ross County. A magnetometer detects magnetic fields in the earth's surface and is used in archeology to non-invasively look for archeological phenomena, such as magnetically charged "ghosts" of prehistoric mounds and evidence of structures gone for hundreds of years. The project will enable the Conservancy to perform a magnetometer survey on the remaining 35 acres of an archeological site, which has remained untouched below the plow line of agricultural use. The survey will reveal the remainder of the site's archeological resources and enable the Conservancy to prepare detailed maps. This information will allow any future excavations to be carefully targeted, preserving a record of life in the area thousands of years ago.

✦ Lakeside Heritage Society, Lakeside

\$10,000 for the renovation of the exterior of the Lakeside Heritage Society Museum. The project will enable the society to replace the roof, make repairs to the vestibule and exterior of the building, and paint the entire structure. Built c. 1875 as a Methodist chapel, the building is on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing structure to the Lakeside Heritage District in Ottawa County. The building is the headquarters of the society, the site of

public programs for children and adults during Lakeside's summer season, and the repository of its artifact and archival collections about Lakeside, the Marblehead Peninsula, and the Chautauqua Movement. Work to the building now will forestall more expensive repairs later and protect the collections therein.

Milton-Union Public Library, West Milton

\$3,000 to purchase a microfilm viewer/scanner/printer. A microfilm reader is a basic tool for historical and genealogical research at any library. The current unit at this small town library in southern Miami County, near Dayton, is so obsolete that parts for it are no longer available. Consequently, local historical records on microfilm sought by patrons are not conveniently available. The grant from the History Fund, matched by another grant from the Miami County Foundation will give researchers at the library better access to the records they use to piece together their understandings of the past.

✦ Noble County Historical Society, Caldwell

\$3,900 to replace the furnace in the Ball-Caldwell House. The end of the useful life of the house's 30 year-old furnace inspired this all-volunteer organization to write a History Fund grant to replace the unit with a new, more energy and money-efficient model. The c. 1832, National Register of Historic Places-listed house in southeast Ohio is a museum featuring the society's collection of furniture, decorative arts, and quilts and textiles. A reliable furnace will be cheaper to operate and enable the society to stabilize the temperature in the building year-round, and preserve its plaster walls, woodwork, stenciling, wall-paper and the collections displayed inside. Because the house will have reliable heat in colder months, the society also plans to schedule more programing there.

Poland Township Historical Society, Poland

\$6,327 to rehabilitate the eight windows of the society's Little Red Schoolhouse. The project will retain the building's historic appearance and windows while making it energy-efficient and less expensive to operate and maintain. The school is the historical center of Poland Township in Mahon-

ing County and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The structure has changed little since it was built in 1858, and it is a site for this all-volunteer society's school and public programs. Rehabilitating the windows will help to maintain the building; maintaining the building ensures that it can continue to spark an interest in area history for generations to follow.

The Ted Lewis Museum, Circleville

\$6,000 for the "Ted Lewis Record Collection Preservation and Digitization" project. The grant will enable this Pickaway County museum to catalog and re-house approximately 378 historic 78 RPM records and transcription discs as well as to digitize 197 records. The one-of-a-kind record collection documents the Circleville native's long career from 1919 to 1967, including radio broadcasts, unissued takes, and historic interviews. The unique collection recordings of Ted Lewis are in danger of deterioration beyond use and could be lost if not addressed soon.

✦ Warren County Historical Society, Lebanon

\$3,972 for the "In Honor & Remembrance Oral History Project." The society will collaborate with the county veterans' services office to collect approximately 40 oral histories from area vets. The society will share the histories on its website and in an exhibit at the Warren County Historical Society's museum. It is expected that in the retelling of their experiences, veterans will be able to help their families and their community understand the nature of their service. It is anticipated that the oral histories will become a resource and teaching tool for students, so they may discover the stories of these veterans' service and the impact it had on their families and communities.

✦ Western Reserve Fire Museum & Education Center, Cleveland

\$19,200 for a window replacement and rehabilitation project in the museum. The project will continue the rehabilitation of the Western Reserve Fire museum, formerly the Cleveland Alarm Office and Fire Station #28, to its original 1926 appearance. The work on this city-ordinance designated Cleveland Landmark (Continued on page 5)

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will replace ten damaged glass block windows with near-reproductions of the original windows, as documented by period photographs and documents. The project will advance the overall goal to re-open previous uninhabitable areas for use as museum galleries, public program space, and event rental facilities, as well as return the historic landmark site to its original appearance.

The Works: Ohio Center for History, Art and Technology, Newark

\$3,000 for the conservation of a historic map of Newark. The grant will enable the center to conserve a large but damaged c.1890 map of Newark, which shows a bird's eye view of this city in Licking County. The conserved map will be the centerpiece of a new exhibit about a nationally-regarded stock farm in Newark that imported draft horses from Europe and will be used in programs to highlight the contrasts between the city now and 125 years ago. The map conservation project and related exhibit will be a part of the center's 20th anniversary celebration in 2016 and is anticipated to become the focal point of the institution's education and community programs because of the contrasts between "then" and "now" that it reveals.

Congratulations to our grant recipients. To learn more about the Ohio History Fund, how you can help promote the Fund's tax check-off, and how to apply for a grant, visit: www.ohiohistory.org/OHFund, or contact the Local History Services department of the Ohio History Connection, 614-297-2341 or averhoff@ohiohistory.org ■