



Ohio History Fund Grant Recipients Year 5



By Andy Verhoff, Coordinator, Ohio History Fund, Local History Services, Ohio History Connection

The Ohio History Connection announced at Statehood Day, the recipients of a total of \$74,000 in grants from the Ohio 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 you, who support the program in three ways: by donating a portion of your state income tax refund to the Ohio History Fund (the "tax check-off"), by purchasing Ohio History "mastodon" license plates, and by making donations to the Ohio History Connection for the History Fund.

Your donation of a part of your Ohio tax refund this year is vital. The source of most of

the money the History Fund grants comes though the tax check-off, and most of that is generated during tax season, ending for many with the filing deadline of April 18. The goal of the Ohio History Fund tax check-off in 2017 is to raise \$88,000 – 10% more than last year. That breaks down to 9,800 donations of \$9, the amount of the average tax check-off gift. For the price of one lunch, you can support history in Ohio!

Since 2013, the History Fund has made 54 grants in 33 counties totaling \$522,000. Proving there is a strong need for funding for local history and preservation efforts, the History Fund has received 249 grant

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proposals and just under \$3 million in requests. The totals include this year's recipients:

1. Dayton Society of Natural History, Dayton

\$12,000 to build a changing exhibit space in the interpretive center at [SunWatch Village](#). The project will enable SunWatch Village to interpret aspects of the Ft. Ancient culture not otherwise exhibited in a re-created village setting. These include comparisons among pre-contact cultures over time. The new changing exhibits space will be in an underused, but accessible area of the center and will free up space in a multipurpose area currently used for exhibits. New, changing exhibits will encourage repeat visitation. Increased space in the multipurpose room will lead to more and varied programming. History Fund support will help cover exhibit case design and installation costs.

If you want to learn first-hand how to write a competitive grant, using the History Fund as an example, attend "How to Write a Good Grant" at the Region 1 (NW Ohio) meeting of the Ohio Local History Alliance. Go to www.ohiotha.org for regional meeting locations and to register.

The Youngstown Museum of Industry and Labor and the Ohio History Service Corps, an AmeriCorps program funded by ServeOhio, will be hosting an Information session about History Fund grants and grant writing on May 6 at 1 pm. Can't make that? The Ashtabula Foundation will host the same session on May 19 at the Ashtabula County District Library. Click on the links above and contact the hosts for more information.

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

2. Kent State University, Department of Anthropology, Kent.

\$2,500 to conduct an archaeological survey of the Berlin Lake Reservoir. The survey will provide information necessary to protect an important archaeological site in Northeast Ohio. Led by an academic archaeologist, the project will also provide field experience and training for students. History Fund support will be used to cover, in part, student stipends, materials and supplies, and travel costs. Review panelists were impressed that the grant request was small, given the expected impact of the project.

3. Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency, Lancaster

\$15,000 to repair and rehabilitate the original windows in the Rutherford House. The Rutherford House is the newer name of the Fairfield County Children's Home, built in 1886. Following the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#), the project will enable the agency and the Home's residents to better control heating and cooling costs. The History Fund review panel was especially impressed that a social service agency is taking steps to preserve and use a significant historic structure - a great example of adaptive reuse. History Fund support will pay half of the project's construction costs.

4. Peninsula Valley Historic & Education Foundation, Peninsula

\$14,000 to rehabilitate and return to its proper place the steeple of Bronson Church. The Bronson Church and its steeple are landmarks of the Peninsula's downtown historic district. The History Fund review panel recommends this project because the steeple is a landmark that, in conjunction with the other buildings in the district, draws visitors to the area, which is a part of Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The panel was impressed by how well-organized the project is and that it is part of phased effort to rehabilitate the church. History Fund support will pay a portion of the project's construction costs.

5. Seneca County Commissioners, Tiffin

\$3,000 to support strategic planning for the advisory board of the Seneca

County Museum. Thoughtful planning will enable the board to develop goals for the revived museum, which a new executive director would be tasked to meet. The project will also begin re-build support for the museum in the community and connect the museum's leadership to resources available from state-wide and national professional organizations. History Fund support will in part pay for the services of a strategic plan facilitator, personnel costs, and enrollment in professional development programs.

6. University of Akron, Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies, Akron.

\$12,500 to conduct a study of Hopewell period ceramic and stone artifacts. The study will illuminate the size of Hopewell interaction networks and enlarge our understanding of the world in which the Hopewell lived. The results will generate new interpretive materials and exhibits at sites that interpret Hopewell life. The project also supports the nomination of the Hopewell sites in Ohio for World Heritage status. History Fund support will cover a portion of the project's personnel and travel costs.

7. Westcott House Foundation, Springfield.

\$15,000 to repair the Westcott House's sleeping porches and pergola. Using as a guide the [Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#), the project will preserve original structures on a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The Westcott House is Wright's only Prairie-style house in Ohio and is a crucial link to understanding the development Wright's architecture. Repair of the sleeping porches and the flat roof section of the house's garage are necessary because of the wear and tear they endure from heavy visitation. Repair to the pergola is needed now because it is structurally compromised. The repairs are long-term solutions to issues previously addressed on an as-needed basis. History Fund support will pay for professional services and construction costs.

Congratulations to our grant recipients! ■