



## 2023 SPRING MEETING RECAP

# Forward Together: Community Partnerships and Public Service

**O**N MAY 11TH AND May 12th, 2023, SOA held its first hybrid Annual Meeting at the main branch of the Dayton Metro Library. Forward Together, this year's theme, was inspired by the idea of making connections and emphasizing how archives are vital community partners.

The conference kicked off with two virtual sessions on Thursday - with one presenter zooming in all the way from Georgia. The in-person portion of the meeting opened on Friday morning with a welcome address from SOA President Amy Rohmiller and a Morning Keynote from Mackensie Wittmer, Executive Director of the [National Aviation Heritage Alliance](#) - all live streamed for the very first time. Mackensie gave a rousing welcome to Dayton before embarking on a discussion about what Heritage Areas are, what the National Aviation Heritage Alliance is, and many lessons learned about forming and working through collaborations, both with traditional cultural heritage organizations and non-traditional partners.

This was followed by a general networking session - with time to explore the wonderful Dayton Metro Library - and poster presentation from Kent State University. Next up was the first concurrent session of the day, details and synopsis below, followed by lunch and the business meeting. During the meeting, Merit Awards were given to Adam Wanter of the MidPointe Library System and to the Warren County Records Center, accepted by Jennifer Haney Conover and Jenifer Baker; A New Professional scholarship was

awarded to Paige Kinzer, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, University of Kentucky; Student Scholarships were awarded to Kirsten Dilger, Wright State University, and Jacob Stickel, Wright State University; and the Ohio Preservation Council Scholarship Award was given to Colleen Badenhop, Kent State University.

The afternoon then began with the aptly named Afternoon Keynote presented by Miami Valley native Rosemary Flynn, Principal Librarian and Archivist at the Energy & Environmental Research Center Library, University of North Dakota - who drove all the way in with her son. Rosemary provided a compelling look at the current state of the archival field and who or what is an archivist. She then wrapped up with an analysis of the A\*Census II survey, specifically looking at the educational barriers to entry in comparison to the wages earned in the field.

The meeting was then closed out by another round of concurrent sessions before a few brief closing words. All-in-all a jammed packed and successful first hybrid conference with nary a technical hiccup (by all accounts, all the presenters could be heard during the live streams!). The meeting welcomed 87 total attendees, 63 in-person and 24 virtual. Thank you to this year's Educational Programming Committee members: Adam Wanter, MidPointe Library System (Co-Chair); Matt Francis, Ohio Northern University (Co-Chair); Rachael Bussert, Dayton Metro Library; Betsy Hedler, Ohio History Connection (SOA/OHC

*(continued on page 3)*

## Inside This Issue

**1**..... Spring Meeting Recap

**2**..... The President's Message

**4**..... SOA News

**8**..... Features

**10**.... DEIA

**12**..... Climate Control

**14**.... Digital Discussion

**15**.... News & Notes

**18**.... Editor's Note |  
Connect with SOA



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## The President's Message



Dear SOA Members,

I am honored and privileged to serve as your president for the 2023-2024 term. I began my career not as an archivist, but as an archaeologist. The archaeological field has flaws, but that education and experience taught me that diversity enriches society and allows a better understanding of our world's countless people, cultures, and traditions. It provides insight into our past, both individually and collectively, which is vitally important in the digital age. This ideology still guides me today

as a public historian and information professional.

We see injustices in our society every day. Many within our profession are working tirelessly to fight the status quo, stand up for what is right, and provide a platform for the historically ignored and underrepresented to tell their stories. SOA leadership recognizes that we are not exempt from the call to action. We've drafted statements on problematic legislation, in support of social justice issues, and just recently, our spring conference focused on the theme of "Forward Together," with many sessions discussing work done with local communities to create a platform for these communities to tell their stories (session synopses in this issue). However, we can do more.

There have been many discussions within the leadership about what we can do to be more equitable and transparent in our policies and practices. One way of doing this is with our strategic plan. By the time the newsletter is published, the plan will be approved and accessible to all members. Not only will our goals be visible online, but our progress also will be updated regularly.

Earlier this year, we transitioned the Social Justice and Black Lives Matter Task Force to a standing committee - the Justice, Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (JEDAI) Committee. One of the first goals of the JEDAI Committee is to work with leadership and the other committees to find ways they can assist in creating better practices and equity throughout the SOA organization. Work toward this goal will require an in-depth examination of our bylaws and mission of the organization and committees, and by taking the necessary steps to ensure we exemplify the values we endorse as an organization.

Lastly, I would like to welcome our newly elected officers: Matt Francis – Vice President/President-Elect; Kristen Newby – Council Member; and Shelby Beatty – Secretary. We also have several new committee co-chairs: Sara Beth Mouch – Chair of the Educational Programming Committee; Jim McKinnon – Co-Chair of the Advocacy and Outreach Committee; Jane Wildermuth – Co-Chair of the Marketing and Communications Committee; Helen Conger – Co-Chair of Membership and Awards Committee; and Nicole Sutton and Penelope Shumaker – Co-Chairs of the JEDAI Committee. I'm looking forward to working with this amazing group of archival professionals!

Our work is never finished, but we are making strides as a profession and organization. I encourage our members to find ways to be the change we speak of so frequently, no matter the scale. I'll leave you with a famous quote by anthropologist Margaret Mead: "A small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Be well.

**Melissa Dalton**

## SOA Mission

*Founded in 1968, the Society of Ohio Archivists' mission is to improve the state of archives in Ohio by promoting the archival profession and providing professional development and networking opportunities for Ohio's professional and aspiring archivists.*

Liaison); Sasha Kim, Denison University; Riza Miklowski, Akron-Summit County Public Library; Bill Modrow, Miami University; Sara Mouch, University of Toledo; Nathaniel Ricks, Student; and Michelle Sweetser, Bowling Green State University.

### SESSION SYNOPSIS

## Finding the Un(der)represented in Civil War Letters: Description Remediation and Subject Headings

Presenters: **Greta Suiter**, Ohio University; **Camilla Stegall**, Ohio University & University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

## 25 Years in Community Service: Background, Current Directions, and Prospects for the Toledo's Attic Project

Presenter: **Arjun Sabharwal**, University of Toledo

Synopsis by **Sara Mouch**, University of Toledo

Arjun Sabharwal is the Digital Initiatives Librarian at the University of Toledo. Since 2009, he has administered Toledo's Attic, a virtual museum focusing on the commercial, industrial, and social history of the Maumee Valley region in Northwest Ohio, predominantly Toledo. He took attendees through the development of Toledo's Attic since 1997, when it began as a site developed by a team of History students at the University of Toledo, using the Wayback Machine to load early pages of the site. Despite several site crashes, missing exhibitions and essays, and the challenges of single-person administration, Toledo's Attic provides an important service to the community, including reference assistance and community outreach. As Sabharwal looks towards Toledo's Attic's next 25 years, he would like to expand cultural diversity, explore emerging technologies, reinforce public humanities aspects, expand towards digital humanities, explore digital storytelling, and explore multi-modal literacies for digital history.

## Advocating for Your Own Slice of the Pie

Presenters: **Sarah Aisenbrey**, Sisters of the Precious Blood; **Kayla Harris**, University of Dayton; **Collette McDonough**, Kettering Foundation

## America 250: How Can We Highlight the Importance of Archives & Records?

Presenters: **Todd Kleismit** & **Chris Hurtubise**, Ohio Commission for the U.S. Semiquincentennial

Synopsis by **Melissa Dalton**, Preserve It, LLC

Todd Kleismit and Chris Hurtubise, both of the Ohio Commission for the U.S. Semiquincentennial, discussed the Commission's plans to commemorate the 250th anniversary of our nation and how archival institutions in Ohio could participate.

Todd and Chris spoke of the creation of the Commission and how they hope to pull together people and institutions from throughout the state to create unique events, programs, and partnerships to

amplify and promote the archival collections that tell the story of Ohio. The Ohio Commission acknowledges that there are many underrepresented people in Ohio, and that Ohio's story began long before European contact. They encouraged attendees to consider how their collections may highlight these individuals and groups.

As the Commission is in the early stages of planning and preparation, they asked the attendees to share ideas for events and programs. The main discussion was creating a space online to connect stories and collections, emphasizing that if the Commission created such a space, it would need to be maintained and preserved long after the dissolution of the Commission.

The Commission will have grant funding available to assist institutions with events and programs commemorating America 250; however, the amount of funding and distribution has yet to be determined.

Todd and Chris encouraged attendees to contact them as they would appreciate any ideas and feedback as they move forward with planning. You may visit the [Ohio Commission for the U.S. Semi-quincentennial](#) for more information (please watch for an updated website in the coming months).

## A Journey of Understanding: A Century in the Harding Archives

Presenter: **David McDevitt**, Ohio History Connection

Synopsis by **Michelle Sweetser**, Bowling Green State University

David McDevitt is the Harding Project Archivist at the Ohio History Connection (OHC) and described in his presentation both the complicated history of the Warren G. Harding papers and the work in which he is currently engaged (funded through an NHPRC grant) to improve access to over 900 boxes of Harding material held by the OHC.

After Harding, the nation's 29th president, died in San Francisco in 1923, his wife, Florence, destroyed many of his papers. Harding's secretary, George Christian, organized some Harding material that was discovered in 1929 in the White House basement; another group of Harding papers had been stored in the offices of the Marion Star. Ultimately, these materials of mixed custodial history came to be held by the Harding Memorial Association and were inaccessible to the public for nearly 40 years before they were donated to the OHC (then the Ohio Historical Society) in 1963.

A 1968 grant funded archival processing and microfilming; the current grant has allowed McDevitt and colleagues to refolder and rebox the papers, create more robust descriptive metadata (with subject and agent tags for correspondents and topics), and an awareness campaign surrounding the collection. Access the [completed finding aid online](#).

Attendees were particularly intrigued by the story of Harding's love letters – written to his mistress, Carrie Fulton Phillips – which were secretly microfilmed by OHC manuscripts curator Kenneth Duckett, became the subject of lawsuits, and ultimately became the property of the Library of Congress ([the letters](#) were finally opened in 2014).

## OHIO LOCAL HISTORY ALLIANCE 2023 ANNUAL MEETING:

# History as Necessity

**Quest Conference Center  
Columbus - October 6-7, 2023**

**SOA Track - October 6, 2023**

The annual [Ohio Local History Alliance Annual Meeting](#), with an SOA track of sessions, will take place October 6-7, 2023. The meeting will be in person at the Quest Conference Center, just north of Columbus in the Polaris area. This year's theme is History as Necessity, and the SOA track will run on October 6. Please join us!

**SOA Track Includes:**

### Crucial Conversations: Under-told Stories and Working with Community Groups

*Presenters: **Nicole D. Sutton**, Columbus Metropolitan Library; **Mandy Altimus Stahl**, Massillon Museum*

Description: Crucial Conversations: Under-told Stories and Working with Community Groups will focus on community-based outreach programs and how the panelists are using their own archives and collections to tell new and less visible stories. SOA's JEDAI Committee (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Access, and Inclusion), presents a session of two panelists who are actively engaged in community partnerships and public service.

### Diversity Audits: A Digital Collections Case Study

*Presenter: **Janet Rhodes**, Supervisor, Digitization Services, Toledo Lucas County Public Library*

Description: The call for equity in the collections of libraries and archives extends beyond the physical collection and into the digital. Who does your digital collection serve? Learn how Toledo Lucas County Public Library's Digitization Services has begun to identify and confront inequity in their own Digital Collections.

### Advocating for Your Own Slice of the Pie

*Presenters: **Sarah Aisenbrey**, Sisters of the Precious Blood; **Kayla Harris**, University of Dayton*

Description: As archivists, we often give our support and advocacy to others, but we frequently don't do the same for ourselves. That has got to stop. We must advocate for our slice of the pie before we can be true activists for others. In this panel discussion, three archivists from different types of organizations will dish up personal stories of how they advocated for themselves.

And a to-be-announced session from the [Ohio Preservation Council](#).

SOA would like to thank the [Ohio Local History Alliance](#) for continuing to allow SOA to partner with them in their fall meeting. For more information about the meeting, visit the [Annual Conferences](#) page on the SOA website.

[SOA Educational Programming Committee](#)

## JEDAI Committee Announcement

In 2020, the Society of Ohio Archivists established the Social Justice and Black Lives Matter Task Force in response to social justice crimes and issues. This task force has moved to an SOA committee: the Justice, Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (JEDAI) Committee. The JEDAI Committee exemplifies SOA's enduring commitment to addressing inequalities and ethics within the profession of archives and special collections. The Committee identifies, promotes, develops, and educates on relevant resources, efforts, and actions for SOA Council, committees, and membership.

The JEDAI Committee seeks to fulfill the following goals:

- Identify and develop sustainable ways to incorporate JEDAI into the work of SOA Council and its committees.
- Identify and develop ways SOA can make use of its platform(s) to responsibly give voice to historically underrepresented communities.
- Identify and share resources to educate Council and membership on JEDAI - with an emphasis on applications to archival and information work.
- Identify and develop ways to continually engage the membership about the JEDAI Committee.

Additionally, the following principles guide the Committee as it seeks to complete its mission:

- Create a committee culture focused on JEDAI initiatives, strategies, and goals through intercommunity awareness.
- Create a safe and equitable space for all underrepresented communities.
- Center underrepresented voices.
- Be cognizant of privilege.
- Be mindful of the origins of stories.

The Committee is composed of the following:

- The president shall appoint the two co-chairs of each standing committee, the appointments to be confirmed by a majority of the council. Each co-chair will be appointed every other year and will serve a two-year term.
- Committee Members (approximately 6) - volunteers who step forward from general membership and are approved by the Chair. Non-SOA members from outside professions will be eligible to join upon Council approval.

[SOA Justice, Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion \(JEDAI\) Committee](#)



## Archives Month Poster

This year the theme of the [Archives Month poster](#) is Land, Water, & Air: Transportation in Ohio. We had another online reveal event on September 7th a few weeks ahead of [Archives Month](#) in October. Keep your eyes peeled on Facebook and the website for more.

For Archives Month, A&O will be creating blog posts featuring organization with collections that relate to transportation. On Halloween, we will also have a post featuring the creepy and scary materials, but don't worry – it shouldn't be too scary.

View our [posters in Pinterest](#) and see blog posts tagged [Archives Month](#).

In other news, we would like to welcome Jim McKinnon as our new co-chair. Jim is a great addition to our amazing committee.

[SOA Advocacy and Outreach Committee](#)

## Ohio History Day Awards

SOA sponsors junior and senior division awards for Ohio History Day who demonstrate exceptional research and use of primary sources. Students must cite their primary sources accurately, and they must physically visit at least one research institution that houses the sources used. Award recipients receive a certificate and a \$100 cash award per winner (individual or group) in both the junior and senior divisions. To learn more and see a list of past winners, visit the [SOA History Day Awards page](#).

The National History Day in Ohio state-level competition was held on Saturday, April 22, 2023, at Ohio Wesleyan University.

The junior division award was given to **Sofia Sideris** for her junior individual exhibit, "Dorothy Fuldheim, Blazing a Trail for Women in Broadcasting." Sofia visited the Western Reserve Historical Society and the Kent State University archives. Her primary sources included photos, clippings, and correspondence, and she used online sources.

The senior division award was given to **Omar Elbadawy** for his senior paper, "The Northwest Ordinance: Forging a Frontier Republic and a Path to Freedom in the Ohio Country." Omar visited the Western Reserve Historical Society and researched the journals of Manasseh Cutler, a member of the Ohio Company. He also used many online primary sources including treaties, letters, and maps from the National Archives, Marietta College, and other sites.

SOA thanks Janet Carleton, Devhra Bennett-Jones, and Cate Putirskis, for their work as judges for this year's awards. Thank you also to Amy Rohmiller for presenting the awards at Ohio History Day.

## SOA Merit Awards

Each year at the SOA Spring Meeting, the SOA Merit Award is presented to an individual or organization that has, by excellence in deeds, actions, or initiatives, improved the state of archives in Ohio over the past year. This year SOA was pleased to honor two outstanding winners for their dedication to the archival profession: Adam Wanter and the Warren County Records Center & Archives.

**Adam Wanter** is honored for his outstanding service and dedication to ensuring that the Society of Ohio Archivists thrives. For the past several years, Adam has gone above and beyond to lead SOA through challenging times. Elected as Vice-President/President Elect in 2019, Adam stepped up to serve as president for an additional year when the current president resigned. In his first year, Adam shepherded SOA through a transition in its leadership structure. In 2020, he directed SOA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the murder of George Floyd. Under his watch, SOA pivoted to an online conference, increased its free offerings to members, began its hardship program, and oversaw the creation of the

Social Justice Black Lives Matter Task Force. After finishing his extended term as president and time as past-president, Adam co-chaired the Educational Programming Committee which planned the 2023 Annual Meeting.

**The Warren County Records Center & Archives** is honored for its work to make vital records such as birth, death, Commissioners' Journals, and Common Pleas Court indexes available to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Working from home, staff cropped, transcribed, and added metadata to these records, ultimately making well over 30,000 records accessible. Once back in the office, staff added metadata and images to the first twenty-four Commissioners' Journals, which are key records to understanding the history of Warren County. They also finished a multi-year project to place all the Old Common Pleas Estate Packets online, a collection which included over 90,000 searchable images and is frequently requested by researchers. You can view the County's records at <https://www.co.warren.oh.us/recordscenter/Default.aspx>.

## SOA SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

## Jacob Stickel, Wright State University Public History Program

Thank you SOA for awarding me the Student Scholarship! I'm grateful to have attended the SOA conference at the Dayton Metro Library and to have an honorary membership. My grandfather and father while not in the Public History sphere gave me the passion to pursue this career. I took in each documentary they had thrown at me. By the time I graduated high school I knew that I wanted to help people using my knowledge of history.

While I thought I would end up in a museum rather than the archives, I gradually found myself involved in the archives as I pursued a higher education. Like many I went from Sinclair Community College to Wright State University, and I took my time going through college. For around two years I worked two part-time jobs and studied American Sign Language at Sinclair and history at Wright State. I had to choose one or the other, so I ended up leaving the ASL interpreting program in favor of completing my BA in history.

I started my MA concentration in Public History at Wright State in Fall of 2021. I started my internship at Sinclair Community College Archives and Records Center six months later. Before I knew it, I had processed my first collections and started my capstone in the spring of 2023. The purpose of my capstone was to take in and process hundreds of photos for the ASL Interpreter program. I was given the opportunity to give back to a program I left prematurely.



**Jacob Stickel**  
... work at a museum.



Now, I have graduated, and I feel fortunate to be able to network and connect with professionals. Being a recent graduate, I've found it a little daunting being a newcomer but since attending the SOA conference I've felt less intimidated networking with archivists. I was able to talk to attendees about their discoveries in their local collections and how they've been able to work with other departments within their own respective institutions. Through the conference I was able to learn what is moving the archival world. I plan bring my newfound knowledge into my career. Thanks again to the SOA!

## SOA SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

## Paige Kinzer, Assistant Archivist, Archdiocese of Cincinnati



As a graduate student, new to my position, and new to the archive field in general, I would like to thank the SOA for awarding me one of the

New Professional Scholarships! Thanks to this award, I was able to attend my first SOA conference, where I was able to meet an abundance of new people, network with other professionals, and learn more about what is going on in the field. This opportunity came at a great time as I finish my last semester of graduate school and have stepped into my first professional position. I know that I can utilize the information and skills both in school and as I begin my career. I am lucky to have been able to get involved with SOA so early in my career, so that I can continue to attend

future conferences for years to come, so that my skills continue to develop as well.

As a new professional, my skills and experience are derived from my current position in which I spend most of my time processing new collections as well as aiding in reference work. It was exciting to see how much can be done in the archival profession and what other skills and experience I need to gain to be a well-rounded professional. There are a lot of different jobs and opportunities in this field, and people who do a wide variance of jobs, than I would have thought; so, I appreciate being able to see this early on. Those who work in an archival setting, no matter the organization, are a close-knit community, and it was nice to be able to meet others in the field, network with them, and learn what their work is like.

Both keynote speakers were enthusiastic presentations that were both entertaining and informational. I learned so much

from both. From the first one, I took away that archivists could work in a variety of settings and are not always sitting behind a desk or in the stacks. The second one was eye opening in that our wages for the profession have not kept up with inflation, leading to most of us being underpaid in terms of education and experience requirements. And with wages not reflecting inflation and price of living, it is not surprising that some people would choose to leave the field for better opportunities. However, it shows that we love what we do if we experience this and stay.

Overall, this was a wonderful opportunity and by the end of the day I felt reinvigorated and excited to continue on my career path. And as a new professional, and first-time attendee, I felt supported by those around me, and I hope to continue to attend these conferences for years to come!

## SOA SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

## Kirsten Dilger, Wright State University Public History Program

As a recent graduate from Wright State University, I was so excited to get the opportunity to go to the SOA Annual Meeting this year! Especially because it was in my hometown of Dayton, Ohio. I knew from my professors, archivists at Wright State, and former supervisors that I would have a wonderful and enriching experience there.

Before the in-person meeting began, I wanted to experience the conference as a whole, and so I participated in the online-only sessions the day before. The first was about the Civil War letters held by the Ohio University (My alma mater!) Special Collections and Archives, and the second session was about Toledo's Attic Project. Both sessions gave me insight on projects that I didn't know were happening in Ohio, and it made me excited to see the future of both.

At the beginning of the in-person day, we had an amazing morning keynote speaker. Mackensie Wittmer talked about the importance of collaboration within her role in the National Aviation Heritage Alliance. From working at the archives at Wright State University, I knew vaguely about the National Aviation Heritage Alliance but not what it does, so Mackensie's talk allowed me to learn more about it, and how I can collaborate with them in my future positions.

The online sessions made me so excited to wake up the next day and go to the in-person events. Keynote speaker Rosemary Pleva Flynn gave such an amazing talk on what it means to be an archivist and the way that the role has changed and is changing more and more. It was so refreshing to hear about all of this, especially since I am early on in

my career and can see it change so much even from when I started my graduate program. Rosemary also did a great job answering questions from the crowd and providing more information and insight on this.

From there, we separated into different sessions. I decided to go to the session about the 250th anniversary of America and how archives can be a part of it. It was amazing hearing from the people who are a part of the Ohio Commission for the U.S. Semi-quincentennial, and hearing from them what their plans are for the future, even if they were early in the process. In this session, we were also able to network and brainstorm with other people in the room about what they would want to do for this anniversary. Overall, this gave me a great foundation for all my positions because many organizations are already planning for the 250th.

The final session did not fail to impress me. It was done by David McDevitt of the Ohio History Connection talking about his experience with the Harding Archives. This was an entertaining and fun talk about the archives, their history, and what David learned while doing this. In my opinion, it was the perfect way to end such a great annual meeting.

Overall, I loved every moment of the Annual Meeting. Talking to people new and old in my life, learning more about the field, and just having fun makes this conference so worth it. I am so excited for other students to come to this event, and it is all made possible through the scholarship that I received.

## OHIO PRESERVATION COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

## Colleen Badenhop, MLIS Student, Kent State University

On May 11-12, 2023, I attended the Society of Ohio Archivists Annual Meeting for the first time. I would like to thank SOA and the Ohio



Preservation Council for making this opportunity available to me through the Student and New Professional Scholarship Program. The theme of this year's meeting was Forward Together: Community Partnerships and Public Service. The word "together" seems appropriate because this event provides great opportunities for networking and camaraderie with fellow archivists from across the state. This was also the first hybrid

conference that SOA has ever presented, which made it possible for people to be "together" in a virtual space, even if they could not attend in person. I attended the two webinars that were presented on the first day of the conference. The first was presented by Greta Suiter and Camilla Stegall of Ohio University, who described a grant-funded reparative description project they had recently undertaken with Civil War letters in their collection. This presentation helped me to think about how assigning a variety of subject headings can dramatically improve access, but it also demonstrated the challenges of finding the

resources required for creating such rich descriptions. The second webinar, by Arjun Sabharwal, described the mission and history of Toledo's Attic, a website that engages the public with the local history of Toledo and Northwest Ohio. It was eye-opening to look back on how the website first looked and operated at its launch in 1997! The possibilities for engaging the public with this kind of site are exciting, but this presentation also increased my awareness of the technical difficulties inherent in web-based service. The keynote presentations and concurrent sessions on the second day of the conference were thought-provoking. I especially enjoyed the panel presentation on advocacy presented by Sarah Aisenbrey, Kayla Harris, and Collette McDonough. Their personal experiences led them to offer valuable advice for professional archivists: to make our work visible to others, to consider the different kinds of value that can indicate success, and to surround ourselves with trusted friends and colleagues that can support us through trying times. Truly, I found the opportunity for interacting with so many archival professionals to be the most valuable part of the conference. The conference planning committee even included an icebreaker bingo game to encourage conversation (which is how I won this SOA t-shirt)! I expect I will learn a lot by being involved in SOA this year, and I look forward to next year's conference!

REFERENCE TODAY, ARCHIVAL TOMORROW:

# In Defense of the Vertical File

Emily Ahlin, Director of Archives, Diocese of Cleveland

I AM CERTAIN I AM not the only archivist who regularly receives various kinds of “stuff” from well-meaning persons who want to help preserve history, but perhaps misunderstand the importance of provenance, or don’t realize that archives organize things by fonds given from one particular creator (whether that is an organization or a person). I would be lying if I said that receiving such material didn’t get on my nerves. Often, I find it difficult to know what to do with this material that comes in one small piece at a time from various sources. Yet, I feel as though the solution to this issue is probably very obvious to many reading this – the vertical file.

The vertical file is certainly not a new concept. The earliest citation of this term, according to [SAA’s Dictionary of Archives Terminology](#), was 1947. Currently, the same dictionary defines a vertical file as “materials comprised as an artificial collection, often of an ephemeral nature and used for ready reference.” Yet, despite this long history of the concept, it didn’t occur to me until recently that perhaps the vertical file was the solution for all of the random things that were piling up on my desk and around my office that I didn’t quite know what to do with and didn’t have the heart to say “no, thank you,” to.

One of the articles that the SAA dictionary cites under its definition of vertical file is [“Hidden Collections within Hidden Collections: Providing Access to Printed Ephemera.”](#) In this article, authors Rebecca Altermatt and Adrien Hilton detail the process that New York University’s Tamiment Library underwent to process a 650 linear foot collection of printed ephemera pertaining to labor and left politics.<sup>1</sup> The collection was put

together in 1912 after Scott Nearing and Charles Beard of the Rand School of Social Science asked their students to bring in the various items being distributed at picket lines so that they could be discussed in class. Afterwards, the collection created by the class was placed in the library at the school. When the library was acquired by NYU in 1963, the collection came along with it. At the time of processing, the full collection was split about 60/40, with the higher percentage of material sitting at an off-site storage area as backlog and the lower percentage as a functional vertical file on site.

The article details the process that the library underwent to process the material, and they lend some time to discussion of whether or not they will continue to add to the printed ephemera collection, since it is an “artificial collection,” meaning that it has no discernible creator, as all archival collections do.<sup>2</sup> They decide that, to maintain the difference between printed ephemera and a vertical file, vertical files containing “reprints, newspaper clippings, items printed from online resources, [and] papers written by students,” among other non-archival materials will be maintained separately in vertical files by individual archivists, but that any printed ephemera that comes in can be integrated into the collection that was processed.

As I read this article and thought more about vertical files, I found their experience particularly interesting to me because in the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Archives, I have a similar collection that began as a vertical file and has since taken on a life of its own as its own collection. One of our most used and most useful collections is a newspaper clipping and photograph collection that was put together as reference files by and for our now defunct Diocesan

newspaper, *The Catholic Universe Bulletin*. My predecessor, the former Director of Archives for the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, often refers to it as “a million dollar collection,” because all the original newspaper photographs we got as part of that collection are simply not present in any other collection we have received. It is used on an almost daily basis, pretty much any time someone comes to me with a question, and it has proven its worthiness time and time again.

I have made multiple digital exhibits, our communications team has used photographs for still shots in both print and AV communications, and researchers access them almost every time they come for in-person appointments. It’s no secret that these former vertical files are our most heavily used collection. Altermatt and Hilton concur with the amount of use the collection got before and after their processing, noting that after more robust finding aids (twenty-six in total) were created, the collections they described were used “almost immediately.”<sup>3</sup>

I know I was very much getting hung up on the material coming in piecemeal at random times and getting frustrated about how non-archival it was, but as I thought about this some more and read about others’ experiences, I realized that there is nothing wrong with a solid vertical file. As we continue to move forward into the future, and the archivist as collector becomes a more mainstream concept, a vertical file is not a bad way to organize all of our collections that contain stellar material but perhaps are acquired one piece at a time and donated by various people who are trying to help in the best way they can. By no means does this mean that we stop educating on the importance of provenance, respect des fonds, or any of

<sup>1</sup> Rebecca Altermatt and Adrien Hilton, “Hidden Collections within Hidden Collections: Providing Access to Printed Ephemera,” *The American Archivist* 75, no. 1 (2012): 171–194, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.75.1.6538724k51441161>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 193–194

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 183

(continued)



our other foundational principles that archivists rightfully hold dear. But if we turn up our noses at these little misfits coming across our desks that don't practically fit in anywhere else and maybe didn't come in the most perfect way, we'll start to have gaps in our histories that otherwise would have been filled.

Much like NYU treats their collection as its own thing and maintains separate

files, I no longer add to the collection I have from *The Catholic Universe Bulletin*. Right now, I do have a proper vertical file collection that comprises material gathered from each of our parishes in the Diocese of Cleveland, and the current plan is to expand on this file and use it to gather material from larger diocesan events that aren't parish based, as well as information on communities of religious in the diocese,

among other things. Whatever it will be will depend on what kinds of things I pick up, and what makes its way across my desk in one way or another. Today, it's a simple reference, but in the future, as the worship aids, parish histories, photographs, headlines, and other pieces of ephemera pile up and tell the story of the Diocese of Cleveland, the vertical file, finally archival, will prove its worth once again.

# I'm sorry, can you repeat that?

## Navigating Archives while Hard-of-Hearing

*Michelle Ganz, Director of Archives, Dominican Sisters of Peace*

*Reprinted from the [Issues & Advocacy Blog](#)*

Hard of Hearing (HoH) covers everything from not being able to hear certain vocal ranges or pitches to only being able to hear with the help of hearing aids or cochlear implants. Every HoH person's condition, and therefore experience, is different. Everyone has different coping techniques and strategies to navigate the world we live in and the environments we move through. I'd like to share my experience and how that has informed how I have navigated my professional life as a lone arranger.

I was born deaf in my left ear and have slightly diminished hearing in my right ear, especially in the higher tonal ranges. Until a few years ago I managed without a hearing aid but as I have gotten older the efforts to hear became exhausting and I decided it was time to get help. Before the hearing aid I spent a lot of time completely panicking that I was missing critical information at school, at work, and anywhere that wasn't home. After the hearing aid everything is louder, but that doesn't translate to easier to hear. If a room has a lot of white noise, electronics, or cross-talk all I hear is a cloud of indistinguishable sound. When I was first transitioning to the hearing aid, I would often have to flee from group situations to sit in a dark room until I could calm down from the overstimulation coupled with even less understanding. Those moments have passed, but I still have problems every day with basic vocal interactions, even in seemingly quiet spaces. Having an invisible disability can make an already challenging situation feel insurmountable.

The type of active listening and hyper-awareness of my surroundings that I have to engage in every day is exhausting, stressful, and isolating. Some days are better than others, but what really adds to the load is the constant reminders to others: of my disability, of the best ways to communicate with me, or the concessions that need to be made for me. At best this sets me apart from the rest of the team, and at worst I'm seen as a disruption to the normal flow of work. People require regular assertions that I am not making things up to take advantage of perceived 'perks.' I feel like I constantly have to apologize for being a 'burden' for requesting special accommodations or basic courtesies. This means that I don't always tell people that I can't understand them. It means I spend a lot of time wondering if I misunderstood something or completely missed something I should have heard. It means when I ask people to repeat things, sometimes I have to ask so many times they just give up and walk away. It means I've sat in meetings and wondered what the heck was going on because everyone mumbled, and the pace was too fast for me to ask for everything to be repeated.

Wearing a hearing aid has helped tremendously, but it doesn't fix all my problems. It is paired with my cell phone (which is awesome) so phone calls stream directly to my ear, but conventional

phones are nearly impossible for me to use. Listening to webinars on my computer, participating in conference calls, and other routine uses of technology can be difficult or outright impossible. Regular interactions with my colleagues in our kitchen are always a struggle, especially when the coffee machine is doing its very loud fresh-grind thing. People get uncomfortable with being asked to repeat an offhand anecdote or comment so it's just easier for me to smile and nod rather than try to figure out what they said. Meetings can be totally derailed by requests to repeat something, or even worse, having to have someone else repeat what was said. My boss is quiet and often mumbles and does not like to repeat himself. I have spent hours trying to figure out what I missed from one of our meetings. When I used to do teaching sessions, questions from students were the most difficult part of the class. At my last archive I had to conduct a lot of reference interviews over the phone with researchers who were often elderly or had difficult-to-distinguish local accents. This was frustrating for the patrons, who just wanted quick answers, and frustrating for me since it often derailed outreach efforts.

I understand that the vast majority of people will go their whole lives without knowingly interacting with someone who is HoH. But hearing loss affects millions of people (many of whom don't even realize they have issues) and hearing issues are going to become a more prevalent issue in archival spaces and in everyday life. Our world is filled with white noise; even reading rooms have a lot of 'noise' not noticeable to most people. If I deeply engrossed in my work and there's a fan on, I will not hear you unless you get my attention first.

I also understand that people can't grow and change if they a) don't realize they are doing something wrong and b) if they don't know where to start. To that end here are some of the things that I would like everyone to know.

The recommendations I'm laying out here are ones that I believe you should adopt with everyone. I believe that if you use the same sort of approach with everyone you will move the onus of service back onto yourself. Take a look at the resources I've listed below like the diversity work group page as well as the access statement on disabilities currently being updated. But mostly, use common sense. None of the things I lay out here are complicated, costly, or even time consuming. They just take practice to become part of how you approach every interaction.

### Make eye contact

It's easier for me to know you are talking to me and not someone else in the room if you make eye contact before you start to speak. It's also an important way for you to tell that I'm actually listening.

*(continued)*

## Don't cover your mouth / Make it easy for your mouth to be seen

Lip reading doesn't work like in the movies. You can only catch about 40% of what someone is saying and it's really hard to figure out since your mouth makes the same motions for a lot of different words. BUT we do use lip reading to confirm that what we are hearing is matching what your mouth is doing.

## Speak clearly / use a microphone

If you speak clearly and enunciate your words, it will be much easier for me to understand you. If there is a microphone in the room, please use it. See the great blog post by Jessie Ramey (link below) on this very topic. She addresses the issue of people who don't use microphones.

## Have an alternative method of communication via digital or physical notepad

There is nothing more frustrating than a communication barrier. Have an alternative method like the notepad on your phone or a piece of paper. For many hard of hearing people, the higher registers and tones of a woman's voice can be difficult to understand; don't be insulted if we ask to speak with someone with a lower voice (and yes, this often means a male voice). And don't assume that I know sign language. Most hard of hearing people do not.

## Be understanding of involuntary noise or levels of loudness.

Hard of hearing people are loud. We usually don't realize that we are making a ruckus or causing a disruption. I have no idea how loud I am, especially in a quiet room or if I've been intently working on something. I use outside stimuli to determine my own levels of noise; often I have grossly misjudged but don't know until people around me react like a bomb went off. Be polite and we'll do our best to keep it down.

## Don't assume, ask

I would rather you ask me a hundred times what I'd like you to do than you assume and get it wrong. Assumptions (or even worse, asking the person with me) are infantilizing and marginalizing.

I've spent my whole life dealing with being HoH, I spent my childhood hiding it, my college years learning how to advocate for myself, and my adult life working so that today's and tomorrow's kids don't have to hide. But at the end of the day none of my efforts mean anything if able-bodied people don't acknowledge invisible disabilities and take steps to ensure that they are treating everyone with respect.

## Resources:

### • [Working Group on Accessibility resources](#)

The group has completed its task but the microsite has a ton of great resources and links to additional information.

### • [Guidelines for Access Archives for People with Disabilities](#)

The Approved guidelines for access. This is great resource to help you develop policies and to provide support with administration.

### • [A Note From Your Colleagues With Hearing Loss: Just Use a Microphone Already](#)

A fantastic blog post about the importance of things like microphones to HoH people.

### • There are a number of deaf and hard of hearing people on YouTube who have a ton of really great videos about their experiences. They explain a lot of things that HoH people deal with and review things like assistive technologies. I'm a big fan of [Jessica Kellgren-Fozard](#) and [Rikki Poynter](#).

# Documenting our Watersheds

Eira Tansey, Memory Rising, LLC

**W**ELCOME TO CLIMATE CONTROL! This is a new column for the SOA newsletter dedicated to exploring the role of archives and archivists in addressing climate change and environmental issues.

Climate change is impacting every aspect of our lives. In Ohio, the **main impacts of the climate crisis** will be increased heat and humidity, an increase in extreme rain events, and the possibility of more severe drought. Such events will impact our professional work as well as our personal lives. For example, more humidity could lead to more mold outbreaks in our collections, extreme rain events could lead to combined sewer overflows and building flooding, and severe heat events could exacerbate chronic health conditions.

Given that the climate crisis is impacting virtually every aspect of modern life, how should archivists go about ensuring that these transformational changes are reflected in our holdings? Where would we even start with such an enormous challenge? One possibility could be exploring a new kind of documentation project that builds off the existing strengths of Ohio's archives.

American archivists have a rich tradition of documentation projects. Documentation projects have typically been efforts that attempt to identify as many archival records about a particular subject area as possible. Documentation projects were especially popular between the 1970s and 1990s. Although they are not as prevalent today, documentation projects still exist and have significant importance for increasing access and awareness of specific topics. A notable example is **Project STAND** (Student Activism Now Documented), with its efforts to identify student activist archives at US colleges and universities.

One of the most comprehensive documentation projects focused specifically on Ohio was the Ohio Labor History Project. The Ohio Labor History Project started in 1975 with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities as a collaborative effort between the Ohio Historical Society, the Ohio AFL-CIO, the Ohio Network of American History Research Centers and the Labor Education and Research Service of The Ohio State University. The project sought to identify as many labor union records and labor activist papers as possible within the state, as well as recording oral histories. Many of these collections were eventually transferred to the **Ohio Network repositories**. Since collections were typically accessioned into the nearest Ohio Network center, this means that those institutions have labor union records that often reflect some of the major local industries. For example, Ohio University has extensive holdings related to the United Mine Workers, and the University of Cincinnati has related to printing, typography, and paper. The Project published **an extensive guide in 1980** with details about all of the known collections, and a bibliography of printed resources on Ohio's labor history.

What if we tried to replicate the Ohio Labor History Project as say,

the Ohio Climate Change Archives Project? What could this look like? First, we should consider one of the major challenges with environmental policy, which affects not just climate change but also issues like habitat destruction, air pollution, land use, and access to clean water.

One of the greatest challenges in addressing environmental issues is that environmental problems routinely cross political boundaries like cities, counties, states, and even countries. Political jurisdictions rarely map onto the boundaries created by nature, and even when they do (such as borders made up by rivers), nature's boundaries have a tendency to shift. For example, the Mississippi River has famously changed courses over eons, until the **Army Corps of Engineers** engaged in a series of river control projects meant to keep the river from migrating. Nature shows us over and over how arbitrary and artificial our political boundaries are. To address climate change and environmental injustice, we need to think more holistically and expansively. One of the ways we can expand our imagination is to shift our thinking towards watershed-oriented solutions and problem solving.

Watersheds are defined as areas in which all water eventually drains into a specific hydrological feature. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) divides the country into **21 major watersheds**, and within each major watershed are many smaller watersheds. To find your local watershed and learn more about local water issues, you can visit the USGS website **Science in Your Watershed** or the Environmental Protection Agency's website **How's My Waterway**.

Ohio's history, economy, and culture is shaped by its two major watersheds: the Great Lakes watershed and the Ohio River watershed. What if a climate change documentation project went beyond our state's political jurisdiction, and was instead organized around our two major watersheds? Of course, we share both of these watersheds with other states and in the case of the Great Lakes, another country. Fortunately, archivists have a long-track record of cooperation across institutions and political jurisdictions. We do not have to be limited by thinking only about our state, and in fact, working across state lines might even make the work of a major documentation project easier.

What would this look like in practice? Let's sketch out what it might look like for the Ohio River watershed. We may think of the Ohio River watershed as including only the states that are bordered by the river - Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois. In reality the watershed includes portions of **several other states** (Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and New York).

The first step might be for the State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) in each state to develop a partnership agreement for an Ohio River watershed documentation project (such a step might be the good basis for a major planning grant to facilitate this work). The SHRABs might create a coordinating committee with representatives from each of the watershed states. The

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representatives would include archivists, but also scientists, environmental policy experts, and community activists. The coordinating committee could come up with a standardized survey instrument for each of the Ohio River watershed's [14 smaller subregions](#).

This survey might try to examine the existing scientific records for each subregion, as well as what collections exist related to human-environment interaction, such as agricultural use, land use, transportation, and urban planning. Given that each subregion is likely to have varying concerns related to environmental justice issues, each subregion could identify specific issues that warrant a closer look. For example, which activist groups may be working on the buildout of petrochemical facilities upriver in southeast Ohio and West Virginia, or the issue of combined sewer overflows in the greater Cincinnati region? Do they have archival records they wish to have preserved?

The survey should look both at records already safely preserved in each watershed's existing repositories, as well as records that are currently held outside of archival institutions. For the latter,

additional grant funding for implementation may be needed to designate certain archives within each watershed as a potential "receiving institution" for the transfer of collections, if groups or individuals with important documentation are interested in transferring their records. Given that there may be important archival records held within communities that may understandably wish to keep their records under their own stewardship, this phase could also include [post-custodial](#) supporting activities such as training workshops and the hiring of traveling archivists to assist communities as needed.

Such a project would be ambitious and require major resources, but the lasting contribution to the historical record cannot be overstated. Archival records have played an important role in helping us understand the trajectory of climate change - from agricultural harvest records, to scientific measurements of pollution levels, to [repeat photography projects](#) of glaciers. Investing in documenting climate change as it unfolds across our watersheds would be a profound contribution that archivists can make towards tackling the climate crisis.

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS &amp; WIKIMEDIA EDITING:

# Shining a new light on your Copyright Free Digital Collections

*Penelope Shumaker, Library Consultant, State Library of Ohio*

**I**N 2020, THE DIGITAL Public Library of America (DPLA), launched an initiative to allow metadata contributors the opportunity to include their copyright free digital items in DPLA. With this initiative DPLA has become one of the largest contributors to Wikimedia commons and digital collection stewards have increased the visibility of their collections. Several Ohio institutions have taken advantage of this work and their items are now available for Wikimedia editors, as well as general discoverability.

## What is The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA)?

First to begin, what is DPLA? DPLA's goal is "empowers people to learn, grow, and contribute to a diverse and better-functioning society by maximizing access to our shared history, culture, and knowledge." One of the ways DPLA achieves this goal is through its online portal which combines the digital records of hundreds of libraries, archives, and museums from across the United States into one easy to search portal. This portal, located at [dp.la](https://dp.la), allows researchers from as young as elementary students to family genealogists to discover resources in one easy to use platform. DPLA only publishes the metadata for each digital item with a thumbnail image and a link back the institution's website. Users who wish to view the item in more detail with then be able to explore it on the museum or library's digital asset management site such as CONTENTdm, Omeka, or Bepress. This method of sharing resources means that the institution can share materials that are in copyright or have other sharing restrictions as only a thumbnail is republished.

## What is the Ohio Digital Network?

Since DPLA collects resources from so many different institutions, they use a hub model to collect metadata from their partners. To collect metadata from even the smallest institutions, DPLA has hubs combine metadata from several libraries and archives into one location to easily send it to DPLA. Most of the hubs are one state, or a small collection of partnered states to effectively gather the metadata for DPLA. Ohio Digital Network has been a service hub for DPLA since 2017, and first contributed metadata from Ohio libraries and museums in 2018. The Ohio Digital Network is a project hosted at the State Library of Ohio and is run by State

Library staff. More information about the project can be found at [ohiodigitalnetwork.org](https://ohiodigitalnetwork.org). Currently, Ohio boasts nearly 400,000 items from 40 Ohio libraries that can be discovered through DPLA's online portal.

## How Do Collections land in Wikimedia Commons?

So far, we have discussed the general business of DPLA and the Ohio Digital network, but what about Wikimedia Commons? When DPLA launched the Wikimedia initiative, it required more information for each record, as Wikimedia commons publishes images in full that are free to use and out of copyright. DPLA already had a strong framework for identifying records that were free of copyright as it requires a Rights Statement from RightsStatements.org or Creative Commons license for each record. This requirement allows for easy filtering of records by rights status. DPLA then requested the full IIIF manifest for each eligible item, that libraries and archives wanted to send to Wikimedia. In the case of the Ohio Digital Network, many content management systems such as CONTENTdm, already this information in their OAI feed so it is easy to add for DPLA. This means it is easy for libraries, archives, and museums to add copyright free materials to Wikimedia Commons. All staff members need to do is to let the Ohio Digital Network Staff know which collections to include in the project.

## What does this mean for Contributors to DPLA and Wikimedia Commons?

After digital items are added to Wikimedia Commons, these collections benefit from increased visibility and use. Archivists can hone their Wikipedia editing skills and add their digital items to Wikimedia entries. To support Wikipedia editing DPLA has created a [Wikimedia Working Group](#) to continue to educate date providers and others about Wikimedia and Wikipedia editing. So, the materials that are discoverable through Wikimedia Commons attract a wide audience from Wikipedia editing to students working on projects. Institutions that contribute to Wikimedia Commons benefit as their collections are presented to an even broader audience than those who visit their digital collections website, or even DPLA.

## Individual Member News

**Samantha Martin** is the new Temple Buell Associate Curator of Architecture for History Colorado in Denver. We thank Samantha for her contributions to Ohio archives and wish her all the best!

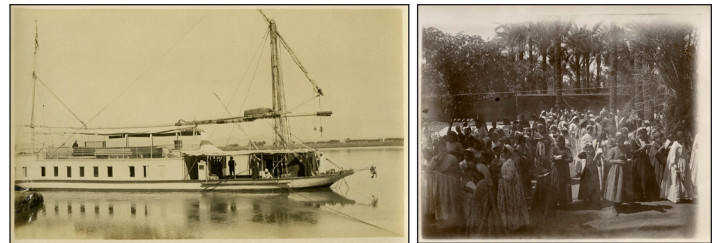
**Gino Pasi** is the new Special Collection and Archives Librarian at the Macdonald-Kelce Library, University of Tampa. We thank Gino for his contributions to Ohio archives and wish him all the best!

## Institutional Member News

The **Center for Archival Collections** at Bowling Green State University is pleased to announce the digitization of select portions of the **Dora E. Giffen papers** (MS-0309) and the **Grace McClurg Carson papers** (MS-0243). The project was supported by an **LSTA Metadata Mini-Grant**.

Dora E. Giffen, born to American missionaries in Egypt in 1897, returned to Egypt as a missionary from 1920-1926 under the auspices of the United Presbyterian Church of North America. She corresponded regularly with family members, describing her work and daily life as well as activities occurring in a nation that was increasingly mobilizing under anti-colonial nationalists. Similarly, Lima native Grace McClurg Carson was assigned as a foreign missionary by the Methodist Church to Hinghwa, China, serving as teacher and supervisor of the girls' boarding school from 1912-1926. She corresponded regularly with family members and supporters in a period immediately following the 1911 Revolution, when the nascent Republic of China was subject to fragmentation and competing provincial military leadership.

Visual images depicting rural and urban locations throughout Egypt and China, as well as missionaries and residents engaged in daily activities, complement the correspondence. A total of 861 items (1489 image/page scans) were posted online through the efforts of CAC staff and graduate assistant Alannah Graves.

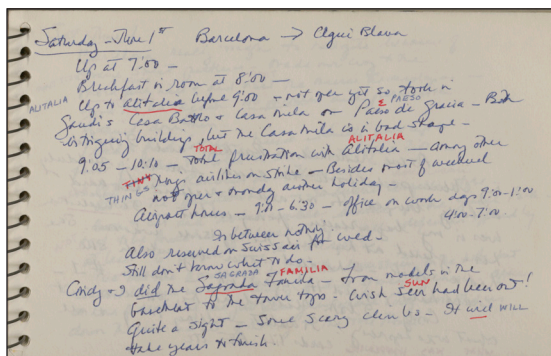


Top left: View of "The Witness," one of the boats used in mission work in Luxor and along the Nile River, November or December 1922. Top right: Pressly Memorial Institute schoolyard, Asyut, Egypt, circa 1920. Bottom: Students, American Mission Girls' School, Fayyum, Egypt, 1925. All images: Dora E. Giffen papers (MS-0309), Center for Archival Collections, University Libraries, Bowling Green State University.



Left: Drawings and Sketches of Peru, Machu Picchu, Tikal, and Uxmal, 1972, Frances Prindle Taft Collection, Cleveland Museum of Art Archives.

Right: Zurich, Spain, Malta 1974 Travel Journal, 1974, Frances Prindle Taft Collection, Cleveland Museum of Art Archives.



**Maddie Rehrman**, Digitization Intern at the **Ingalls Library and Museum Archives, Cleveland Museum of Art**, has been working on digitizing a selection of travel journals from the Frances Prindle Taft Collection.

Taft (1921-2017) was an art historian with deep ties to the Cleveland area and the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA). One of her major research focuses was Pre-Columbian art and she travelled extensively, taking nineteen trips to Mesoamerica throughout her life. She documented these travels in sketchbook journals, taking detailed notes and sketching various locations she visited, often in gorgeous watercolor illustrations.

The journals I've worked with this summer document some of her trips to Mexico, along with trips to Europe, and domestic trips with her family.

A notable element of Taft's travel sketchbooks is the mark of editing throughout. The pages in many of her journals contain what can be assumed as later editions and clarifications to the text. The covers of the journals also frequently include detailed notes on their contents. From this scrupulous documentation and editing, it's clear that Taft wanted her journals to be readable in the future. Taft's travel journals are available to view in the [CMA digital archives](#).



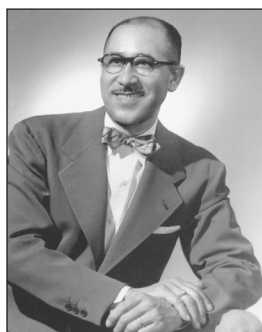
**Dayton Metro Library** is honored to share its *Through His Lens II: A Capsule Collection of Edward B. Taylor* exhibit throughout its system.

Born in Savannah, Georgia, Mr. Edward Butler Taylor (1908-1999) is popularly referenced as being the first African American commercial photographer of Dayton, Ohio.

Pursuing an educational opportunity to improve his life, he relocated to “The Gem City” in 1929. Mr. Taylor became interested in photography and his continuous training and commitment to excellence led him to serve as a photo lab technician at Highlight Studio and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Mr. Edward B. Taylor is most fondly remembered by many for his vibrant visual representation of life in the Black community of Dayton from the 1950s until the 1980s. Spanning nearly four decades, his chronicle of people, events and gatherings memorialized the diverse realities of African Americans that were all too often intentionally omitted from mainstream audiences. His range of subjects included anniversaries, birthdays, church productions, civic functions, fashion shows, formal balls, family reunions, graduations, sports outings, social affairs, and weddings. The moments that Mr. Taylor vividly captured on film readily engage viewers, as his images portray beauty, commitment, dignity, joy, love, power, pride, and unity.

*The Capsule Collection* is representative of an extensive cache of negatives and photographs graciously gifted to Special Collections of Dayton Metro Library by Mr. Taylor’s daughters, Lynnette Taylor Heard and Lisa Taylor. This exhibit is on display in the Dayton Room of the Main Library, June 1st – August 31st, 2023.



Top left: Mr. Edward B. Taylor, no date. Top right: Unidentified bride, groom, and family members, no date (ebt 0684). Bottom: Willard School Queen 1954 (ebt 0387). All images gifted by the Taylor family to Special Collections, Dayton Metro Library.



**The Glenmary Home Missioners** have created an exhibit space at their National Headquarters located in Fairfield, OH, just north of Cincinnati. The small museum room depicts the life of the founder, Fr. William Howard Bishop, and his plan to serve the spiritually and materially poor in the No-Priest-Land areas of the United States.

The museum was the result of years of planning and a much-anticipated office renovation. Completed in April 2023, the museum offers a space for students, members, and donors to reflect on the spirit of the Founder and be inspired by the courage to realize his dream. Visitors can read his writings, see his furnishings and personal chalice, and understand how his experiences led him to found the Home Missioners of America.

The museum is open for visitors during office hours daily. Admission is free. For further information, please visit [The Glenmary Home Missioners](https://www.glenmary.org) online.





**Kent State University Libraries** has been awarded a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for a project to digitize sketchbooks and pressbooks from award-winning couturière designer Pauline Trigčre. The project, *Pauline Trigčre: Fifty Years of American Fashion Entrepreneurship and Design*, will be led by Virginia Dressler, Digital Projects Librarian, and Edith Serkownek, head of Kent State's acclaimed Fashion School. The grant, totaling \$165,947, will be used to purchase a high-resolution scanner (Zeutschel OS Q1) and fund student positions to assist with the digitization and will run July 2023-December 2024.

In 1942, Trigčre started her own label and quickly found success, establishing herself as one of the country's leading designers of women's high-end, ready-to-wear fashion. For the next 50 years, her work would be sold in department stores and boutiques across the country and worn by many of America's most prestigious women. The digitization of Trigčre's 106 sketchbooks housed at Kent State will provide researchers of material culture and consumer studies, as well as historians of dress, design, and business, with online access to the life's work of this important 20th century designer. The content of the Trigčre collection is both deep and rich in terms of its time span and its ability to illuminate the work of an important individual designer working in the American fashion industry during a period of intense change and cultural and economic ascendancy.

**#FaithInFocusCLE: History, the Arts, and Engaging Dialogues about Religious Diversity**, a 2023-2024 program series, will include exhibitions in the **Western Reserve Historical Society's Mr. Henri Pell Junod, Jr. Center for History Education**, guest speakers, book discussions, poster exhibitions from the Smithsonian Institution's Traveling Exhibition Services (SITES); and banner and web-based oral history exhibitions related to a community partnership with Cleveland's East Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Dr. Regennia N. Williams, Distinguished Scholar of African American History and Culture, will serve as the program director. The series begins on Thursday, October 19, 2023, with the 6:30 PM Opening Reception for *Sisters: Portraits of Women Religious from St. Adalbert / Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church and School*, a special exhibition of recent works by photographer Herbert Ascherman, Jr. At 7 PM, Ascherman will deliver an illustrated talk on "Religious Cleveland: A Photo Documentary." The address for the Western Reserve Historical Society is 10825 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio, 44106. Admission to this event is free for WRHS members and other guests with paid museum admission or guest passes.

Ascherman's presentation will include photographs that he contributed to *Images from the Heart: A Bicentennial Celebration of Cleveland and Its People*. He described his contribution to this book project as a portrait study of the approximately 65 religious communities in Cleveland. The photographer went on to say that he shot on location and produced a portrait of a representative of each of the various religions.

Having closed his studio in 2009, Ascherman donated his "legacy" photography collection to the Western Reserve Historical Society. A fourth-generation citizen of Greater Cleveland, his WRHS Library collections includes 6,000 black and white portraits taken over the course of his 45-year career. The photographer states that his camera has taken him to 43 states and 36 countries. Today, he works from his home-based studio in Shaker Heights and remains committed to the health and welfare of Cleveland, a community that he describes as "the greatest little gem in the country."

The Ascherman exhibition, which includes portraits of Sisters born in Kenya and Tanzania, will continue through December 2023. The complete schedule of related program activities will be available in October, which is National Arts and



Sr. Zenais Tarimo (Herbert Ascherman, Photographer, 2022.)

Humanities Month, and online at [wrhs.org](http://wrhs.org). For more information, please contact [Dr. Regennia N. Williams](mailto:Dr.Regennia.N.Williams@wrhs.org), Distinguished Scholar of African American History and Culture, Western Reserve Historical Society, and Member of Cleveland Archival Roundtable.

## Editor's Note

Hello, Ohio!

I am very pleased to introduce two more new assistant editors! Please join me in welcoming Penelope Shumaker and Eira Tansey to the *Ohio Archivist*.

**Penelope Shumaker** is a Library Consultant at the [State Library of Ohio](#) in the [Library Programs and Development \(LPD\) Division](#). She coordinates [NASA@ My Library and Solar Eclipse for Libraries \(SEAL\)](#) programs as well as the [Reimagining School Readiness](#) workshop. In addition to these programs, she coordinates the [Ohio Digital Network \(ODN\)](#) and [Digital Public Library of America \(DPLA\)](#). Penelope guides ODN member institutions in preparing their metadata for ingest into DPLA. She also coordinates the [LSTA Metadata Mini-Grant](#) and assists on other [LSTA grant initiatives](#). Penelope is co-chair of SOA's JEDAI Committee. She received her BA in Philosophy from Cedarville University and her MILS from Kent State University. Penelope enjoys hiking, reading, writing, and knitting.

**Eira Tansey** is an archivist, researcher, and consultant based in her hometown of Cincinnati/the Ohio River watershed. She is the founder of [Memory Rising](#), which provides research, consulting, and archival services with expertise in climate change, environmental and labor movements, and Ohio Valley regional history. She previously worked as an archivist at the University of Cincinnati and Tulane University. Eira's research on archives and climate change has been profiled by [Yale Climate Connections](#), [VICE](#), and [Pacific Standard](#), and has been [honored](#) by the Society of American Archivists. Her most recent publication is [A Green New Deal for Archives](#).

For the most up-to-date information on SOA including ways to get involved, please visit the [website](#) and join us on the [SOA listserv](#). Thank you, Ohio!

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy fall and winter,

Jessica



Penelope Shumaker, Library Consultant, State Library of Ohio



Eira Tansey, [Memory Rising, LLC](#)

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