



SOCIETY OF OHIO ARCHIVISTS & MIDWEST ARCHIVES CONFERENCE

Joint Annual Meeting 2026: Find It Here!

The Midwest Archives Conference and the Society of Ohio Archivists will hold a joint [2026 Annual Meeting](#) on May 14-16, 2026, at the [Ohio Union](#), Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Founded in 1870 as the Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College, THE Ohio State sits a few miles north of downtown Columbus. A city unto itself with an enrollment of over 65,000, Ohio State is known for its top-ranked academic programs in engineering, agriculture, and business, its world-class research endeavors, and, of course, football. For more information about the host and the conference, see [the meeting website](#).

From 2015 until 2023, Ohio's tourism slogan was "Find it Here." As a slogan, it raised the obvious question, "Find what here?"; but as an archives motto...well, to "Find it Here" is an archivist's greatest hope for anyone exploring their collections. Join us as we explore the myriad ways in which archivists and memory workers make their

collections accessible, discoverable, and usable.

Follow the conversation online at #soaam26 on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

[Program PDF](#) (includes all sessions). The most up-to-date, full program details, including all sessions are [available via Sched](#).

Registration

Note: All registration is for in-person attendance, there is no virtual option for this conference.

Registration is now available! To register, see the program, and for more information, visit www.midwestarchives.org/2026-annual-meeting.

NOTE: You do not need to be a MAC member to create an account to register. SOA members receive the MAC member rate at registration.

**SOA MEET-UP
THURSDAY, MAY 14**
During the meeting, SOA will host a meet-up on Thursday, May 14, 2026, from 11:30a to 12:30p in the Third Floor Lounge. Meet and greet your fellow SOA members before the conference starts. See who's in town or meet new friends before heading off to lunch on your own or with a group.

Advance registration rates
(register on or by April 14, 2026):
\$200 for MAC/SOA members
\$250 for non-members
\$50 for students

Regular registration rates
(after April 14, 2026):
\$235 for MAC/SOA members
\$285 for non-members
\$50 for students

Rate for one-day registration:
\$125 for MAC/SOA members
\$150 for non-members

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Ohio Archivist is designed and published for the Society of Ohio Archivists by the Ohio History Connection.

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Jessica Heys, 2022-2025

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Kettering Foundation

& Cincinnati Museum Center

The President's Message



Dear SOA members,

This year, SOA Leadership and committee members have worked to further connection—among SOA members, with professional organizations, with underrepresented archivists, and with an eye to the future.

We are excited about the upcoming Midwest Archives Conference/Society of Ohio Archivists Joint Meeting on May 14-16, 2026, at The Ohio State University. SOA Educational Programming Committee members have embraced new experiences in leading and serving alongside MAC members while preparing for this meeting. Please join us for this rare professional development opportunity for SOA and MAC members to learn, network, and grow together in our own backyard. SOA-specific opportunities include an SOA Meet-Up as the conference begins, a Silent Auction to raise money for SOA scholarships, and the SOA Annual Business Meeting for members to connect. For more MAC/SOA Joint Meeting opportunities, please see the [SOA & MAC Joint Annual Meeting 2026](#) webpage. We hope to see you there!

In anticipation of the MAC/SOA Joint Annual Meeting, the SOA Membership and Awards Committee and SOA Leadership increased the scholarship amounts for SOA's student, new professional, and JEDAI scholarships to cover meeting expenses. In addition, the JEDAI and the Membership and Awards Committees have worked extensively to create SOA's first identity-based scholarship—the Justice, Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (JEDAI) Scholarship—a historic effort to help diversify the archives profession in Ohio.

Along with the JEDAI Scholarship, SOA continues to look to the future through advocacy, archivist development, and organizational planning. This year, SOA collaborated with OHRAB, OPC, and CARMA to support Ohio History Connection staff and inquire about the effect of OHC staff reductions on Ohio archives. At the request of SOA members during the 2025 Spring Annual Meeting's Crucial Conversations session, SOA created the Mentorship Task Force with a charge to survey SOA mentorship needs and help develop an SOA mentorship program. Vice President Kristen Newby has initiated the next Strategic Planning process to guide SOA's organizational development during the next few years, while the Nominating Committee is actively pursuing the election of new SOA leaders.

With new experiences comes the need for stability to anchor us as we grow. The Marketing and Communications Committee and our Ohio Archivist newsletter editors simultaneously improve and provide a steady stream of news, opportunities, and information to connect SOA members. The Advocacy and Outreach Committee continues to promote and connect Ohio archives through informative blog posts and SOA's Archives Month celebration. Council members Jim DaMico and Darrell Blevins, Jr. have facilitated connection through Coffee Chats. A huge thank you to SOA Secretary Shelby Beatty and Treasurer Sophia McGuire as they have helped support and guide SOA this year.

I am grateful to SOA officers, committee chairs, and committee members for their dedication and willingness to engage in new experiences during a time when we are increasingly met with challenges in our professional and personal lives. I am also grateful to past leadership—we could not build without the foundation of their work—and am excited to see how SOA will grow next.

How would you like SOA to grow next? How would you like to develop as an archives professional? We need you! Come join us in shaping and supporting the archivists of Ohio. Best wishes,

Jennifer Long Morehart

President, Society of Ohio Archivists

Reception guest registration:

\$5 for a child (under 8 guest attendee)
\$50 for an adult attendee

Venue: Conference workshops, sessions, and meetings will be held in the [Ohio Union](#) on the campus of The Ohio State University. Hotel accommodations and the reception will be held at the University's hotel, [The Blackwell Inn](#).

Parking: See the MAC Local Arrangements Committee blog, [Transportation Options](#), for parking and travel details.

Sponsors: Thank you to the MAC/SOA 2026 Annual Meeting sponsors! See a full list of sponsors and exhibitors on the [MAC Annual Meeting website](#).

Hotels: MAC/SOA has two room blocks available for attendees at the Hilton Garden Inn and the Blackwell Inn.

[The Hilton Garden Inn](#) has rooms available Thursday through Saturday nights. The room rate is \$199.00 per night and includes free parking. The room rate is available until April 14, 2026. The hotel is located at 3232 Olentangy River Road. [Click here to book a room](#).

[The Blackwell Inn](#) still has rooms available Friday and Saturday nights. The room rate is \$175.00 per night for either a king or double queen room. (Please note that the rate with taxes and fees is \$207.00 per night.) The hotel does not charge a deposit at the time of booking. They do, however, require holding a credit card on file when booking.

To reserve a room:

Click on [theblackwell.com/](#)

1. Click the red BOOK NOW button in the upper right corner
2. Select desired dates in the Reservations box (anytime between May 12–17, 2026)
3. Click BOOK NOW
4. Under the section with Guests, Check-In, Check-Out: Click SPECIAL CODES OR RATES
5. Click Corporate/Promotion Code; select Group Code from the dropdown
6. Enter MACMAY26; click APPLY
7. There will be a mixture of queen double beds or single king beds; select your desired room type and continue with the reservation.

You can also use the link [MAC Conference May 12–17, 2026](#). (Please note that this link automatically applies the conference code and rate. It also auto-fills the dates; however, you can adjust these to your desired dates so long as they fall within the May 12–17, 2026 window.

TRANSPORTATION FROM HOTELS:

MAC/SOA will provide free transportation via shuttle bus on a loop between both hotels and the Ohio Union at set times during the day:

Thursday:

- 12:00pm-1:00pm [two loops for an hour before the plenary]
- 5:00pm-6:00pm [loops between the Ohio Union and the Blackwell Inn for the reception]
- 7:30pm-8:30pm [loop between the Blackwell Inn to Hilton Garden Inn]

Friday:

- 7:30am-8:30am [two loops for an hour before first sessions]
- 5pm-6pm [two loops for an hour after the sessions]

Saturday:

- 7:30am-8:30am [two loops for an hour before first sessions]

LOCAL AMENITIES MAP

See the MAC Local Arrangements Committee blog, [What to do while in Columbus](#).

SILENT AUCTION

Each year SOA offers [four scholarships](#), two to current students and two to recent graduates, using funds from our raffle / silent auction. The scholarships consist of conference registration (including lunch), a one-year membership to SOA, and a \$100 travel stipend. The funds raised from the silent auction are critical to SOA's support of students and new professionals. This year we are putting together a fun group of items. You will be able to bid on the silent auction items **in person on Friday**.

COMMITTEES

Midwest Archives Conference Local Arrangement Committee Members:

- Stacy Chaney-Blankenship, Ohio Wesleyan University (representing SOA)
- Michelle Ganz, Dominican Sisters of Peace
- Kayla Harris, University of Dayton
- Steve Hausfeld, Nationwide Insurance
- Stefanie Hunker, Bowling Green State University
- Mandy Jennings, Nationwide Insurance
- John Joseph, Nationwide Children's Hospital
- Kristen Newby, Columbus Metropolitan Library (representing SOA)
- Dan Noonan, Ohio State University (representing SOA)

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The SOA [Educational Programming Committee](#) members have been working hard to bring you an amazing conference. Thank you to our committee members:

- Nora Blackman, Case Western Reserve University
- Stacy Chaney-Blankenship, Ohio Wesleyan University
- Meghan Crawford, Capital University
- Matt Francis, Ohio Northern University (SOA Past President)
- Betsy Hedler, Ohio History Connection (SOA/OHC Liaison)
- Riza Miklowski, Akron-Summit County Public Library (2022-2024)
- Jennifer Long Morehart, Bowling Green State University (SOA President)
- Sara Mouch, University of Toledo (2021-2023; cochair 2025-2027)
- Kristen Newby, Columbus Metropolitan Library (SOA Vice President)
- Dan Noonan, The Ohio State University
- Adam Wanter, MidPointe Library System (**cochair** 2025-2027)

Questions? Contact the Committee Cochairs
[Sara Mouch](#) and [Adam Wanter](#).

OHC Director Megan Wood's Letter to SOA

In late 2025, OHRAB Chair Tina Ratcliff invited SOA to join OHRAB, CARMA, and OPC in expressing support for OHC's mission, and concern about recent staff reductions, by sending a letter to Ohio History Connection's CEO, Megan Wood. SOA Leadership overwhelmingly supported accepting the invitation. Megan Wood agreed to meet with OHRAB, CARMA, OPC, and SOA representatives for further conversation. During the meeting, Megan Wood graciously volunteered to submit a letter to SOA's Ohio Archivist, communicating about OHC staffing/ structural changes and the impact on services. Please read Megan Wood's letter below:

Dear SOA Members,

It is an understatement to say that 2025 came with challenges. As the Executive Director & CEO for the Ohio History Connection, I was faced with a convergence of several situations that called for tough decisions. If you are like me, you went to graduate school with a passion for history, archives, public history, museums, and to serve the public and make a difference. This past year we were tested and I found myself trying to center purpose while needing to carefully balance a variety of unprecedented external factors.

My goal in writing to the SOA membership is to contextualize changes at the Ohio History Connection with staffing and structure.

During the Great Recession, the Ohio History Connection took a 40% budget cut from the State of Ohio. While we took mitigating measures to reduce our operating expenses immediately in those years, we never reduced our responsibilities. Since then, the state has slowly increased our funding, but that increase has never reached in real dollars where we were in 2003 and has not been matched for inflation. That means that we depleted our rainy-day funds or had to use different debt strategies to cover all the operating costs that arise.

This year we saw the loss of federal funding sources, the delay of federal funding sources, and the end of Covid relief dollars all at the same time.

As a leader, I also could not responsibly project that future years would have more income to build a business model and we had to take measures to reduce our staffing and make changes across our structure; we consolidated and eliminated positions across the organization.

We continue to operate our research room, electronic reference, state archives, and our work with SOA. We continue to have our Ohio Memory project. But there will certainly be changes, or different timing in our services. We have made changes across our entire organization because we had to build an operating budget that was realistic within our means.

Today is not the reality of forever. We continue to work with our partners at the State of Ohio on what it takes to do this work, and I continue to be optimistic, while I also must be the responsible steward of the organization's resources.

I was asked why we did not preview this information before we made any changes, and my answer is simply that we had to deal with sensitive, internal workings and information before sharing any news with stakeholders, and that board-approved direction had to come before anything was communicated to impacted staff.

We will certainly continue to change and react to our world. But here is what I am confident about – we have existed since 1885, we have survived multiple world wars, economic crises, pandemics, and cultural changes. We may have to shift and change, but we will be here and continue to do our best as one of your partners in this work.

Sincerely,

Megan Wood

Executive Director & CEO, Ohio History Connection

New SOA Mentorship Task Force

In August 2025, the SOA Council opened discussions about what it would mean to formally support a mentorship program for the Society of Ohio Archivists. This led to the creation of a task force charged with surveying the membership and exploring possible formulations for a mentorship program that meets the needs of the member base. The task force met in November 2025 and January 2026, and includes the following members: John Dewees, Natalie Fritz, Michelle Ganz, Savannah Gould, Jennifer Long Morehart, Kristen Newby, Katharine Nusbaum, and Cate Putirskis.

A survey is currently being drafted with a target widespread distribution window in the weeks leading up to the SOA Annual Meeting held May 14-16, 2026. Please be on the lookout for that when it hits your inbox and be sure to complete it to let the task force know your thoughts about how SOA can best support mentorship for its members!

Make All the Meetings Accessible!

Let's make 2026 the year that all our meetings are accessible! Regardless of whether we are holding a one-on-one meeting in our office, an organization-wide meeting, or an event in an auditorium, everyone should be able to engage and participate equally.

General recommendations

Make eye contact with the participants if you are the speaker. A wide range of people with disabilities use eye contact to help gauge what is being said, the emotions of the speaker, how they should react to a statement, etc. Those of us who are hard of hearing rely on eye contact to know if we are being directly spoken to.

Speak clearly; it is critical that people be able to understand what is being said. Mumbling, speaking quietly, barely moving your lips, covering your mouth, turning away from the audience, and other masking behaviors make it so much harder for people to hear what is being said.

If there is a microphone you MUST USE IT. If the room has more than 4 people in it, make sure a microphone is available. No one can project as clearly as a microphone. Regardless of how well you think you are projecting, the people in the back cannot hear you. If there is any white noise in the room, like the HVAC system, un-microphoned speakers will be drowned out. If a meeting is recorded the microphones are the only way the sound will be picked up by the recording equipment. Microphones are the number one accessibility tool for meetings.

Captions help everyone; PowerPoint can create real-time captions that can run on a blank screen or above/below the slide. These are AI generated, which is not as good as ones done by a person, but they are far better than nothing at all. Many organizations choose to bring in ASL interpreters to ensure access for D/deaf people. Interpreters are extremely important for D/deaf people to communicate with their peers but may not be the right solution for an informational meeting. Consider captions as an additional tool that works with ASL interpreters and other accessibility tools.

Be conscious of your meeting site

Try to find spaces that are situated in a quiet area that discourages people gathering outside of the room.

If the meeting room has doors, close them. This will reduce the ambient noise and distractions.

If the meeting requires participation think about how the space is set up. Does the seating make it easy to see who is speaking or will people have to turn around in their seats? Will someone with mobility issues be able to navigate to where they choose to sit? Creating a separate disabled seating section is not equitable.

If there is a stage, have a ramp on at least one side. If there are stairs, include a handrail.

Online meetings

Make sure captions are enabled; this almost always needs to be turned on by the meeting organizer for participants to utilize the feature.

Ask participants to turn off their camera if they are not speaking. This helps reduce distractions for everyone.

Virtual backgrounds are a standard feature people like to use to ensure that their spaces remain private. But these backgrounds often make people's faces distorted, blurred backgrounds are a bit better, but if possible do not use a background at all.

Virtual meeting platforms provide a suite of accessibility options; make sure they are available to participants. Google meet does a great job of having these available regardless of who starts the meeting. Zoom and WebEx requires the meeting host turn these features on.

PowerPoint Presentations

Presentation slides need to be uncluttered, in large enough font to read (no smaller than 18-point font) sans-serif fonts are easiest to read overall, white background with black text.

Do not put everything you want to say on the slide. Slides should provide enough information for participants to follow along with the presentation. Slides are not a script that you read directly from. If large amounts of information must be presented, then consider creating handouts or secondary materials that provide the full information while keeping only key information on the slides.

Encourage presenters to have slides that deliver information in writing (not just amusing pictures). Ask presenters to make presentation available for download at the beginning of the session.

This is just a small sample of things that we should all think about when we plan meetings. There are a multitude of resources to help you learn more about making meetings accessible. Below are a few that I turn to regularly.

[Digital Library Federation Code of Conduct](#)

[SAA created Tips for Speakers for the 2019 annual meeting](#)

[ALA has a guide on meeting rooms, exhibit spaces and programs](#)

[Katy DiVittorio wrote a wonderful article for NMRT May 2013 V 42 No 4 Conducting Concise, Effective, and Relevant library meetings](#)

["Happy Meetings for Everyone." Zoom.](#)

["Accessibility Best Practices for Zoom Meetings." Usability & Web Accessibility \(Yale\).](#)

["Zoom Accessibility." DLF Wiki.](#)

["Creating Accessible and Interactive Online Presentations." DLF Wiki.](#)

Fifteen Years/Miles on the Erie Canal

Previously published on *Seneca Strolls*, Oct. 16, 2025.

Today Ohio has a plethora of scenic railroad trips one can take or sections of a canal where you can ride, but in the days when these modes of transportation were some of the only ways for people to access Northwest Ohio, they weren't as sensational of rides as visitors experience today. Before the canals and railways were built, travel in the area we today call home was quite treacherous.

The Seneca County Digital Library has multiple accounts of early settlers' harrowing journeys to reach Seneca County.

Just a few years after Seneca County was established in 1824, the canals opened additional tracts and habitation by immigrants flourished. The plans for a tract that was supposed to run straight through Seneca County (which would have made travel to this location even easier back in those days) fell through after various routes for that track were considered.

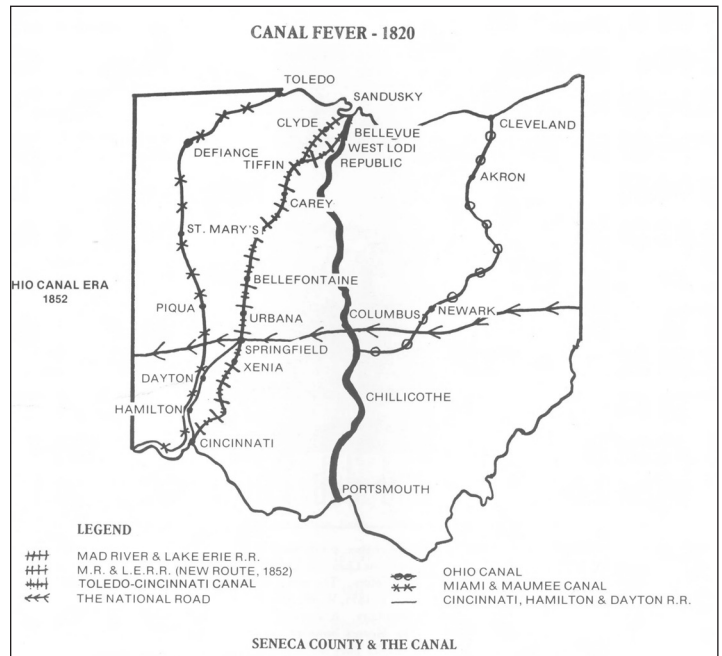
The proposal was serious enough that some of the newly granted land was purchased by the canal companies. The Miami and Dayton Canal, which planned to connect Lake Erie to the Ohio River, had bought land in section 5 of Reed Township in May 1828.

Settlers up to that point had been utilizing the existing Erie Canal, which opened in 1825, and provided access from as far as New York City via the Hudson River. Those coming from the east would be able to reach as far as Buffalo, New York, where they would ride boats on Lake Erie to Sandusky.

One resident recalls the journey, which is recounted in a Stemtown News newsletter:

"We were all children when we came to Ohio. We started the 12th of September, 1831, from our home. Came to Ithaca, took the boat at the inlet ... We took the canal to Buffalo then took the steamboat to Sandusky City. Sent the goods up to Fremont on the boat. Father hired a man to bring the family up to what is now Fort Seneca. We got here the 21st which took us 10 days to go where we can (now) go in 24 hours."

At this point, "Ohio caught canal fever." Besides the Miami and Dayton Canal, the Miami-Maumee Canal further west of Seneca County, used the Maumee River to connect to Cincinnati. (This is the canal system in which Grand Rapids, Ohio belongs, a popular tourist site for canal enthusiasts). Likewise, the Wabash and Erie Canal tract was an extension of the Erie Canal, which allowed prospective new landowners to reach Indiana. Seneca County residents were certainly optimistic for the plans of a canal tract running through the county. In January 1832, the Ohio Legislature passed a bill to allow land surveys to be conducted to garner the financial estimates for construction. According to the "The What, How and Who of It: An Ohio Community", a book of a collection of local newspaper articles from the 1800s, the canal



A proposed canal (bold line) was scheduled to be built in eastern Seneca County and would have traveled straight through Republic, but it never materialized.



Canal fever in Ohio was quickly replaced by railroad construction. For a short time, though, the canals and railroads helped in tandem connect immigrants to their final destinations throughout the state.

cost \$7,177 per mile and from 1826-1835 until plans for the local canal fell through, residents paid a canal tax. (Records show that the amount collected reached a peak at \$553.64 in 1832 which converts to \$20,427 in today's money).

Besides bringing in settlers, the canals aided business owners and tradesmen to sell their wares and product beyond the local community. Wheat farmers sent their yields through the canal systems to lake steamers at ports along Lake Erie that shipped commodities to other states. Another major commodity produced in Ohio and sent elsewhere via the canals, especially during the years when Seneca County saw major increases in settlers who needed to clear the land to build houses, was excess lumber. In the

(continued)

1850s, Seneca County resident Henry Zahn sent his black walnut to as far as Germany.

The canals additionally helped transport coal, oats, wool, pork, cheese, and whiskey to eastern markets. On the flip side, major imports, which had seemed like luxuries before, were American-made cotton fabric, coffee, sugar, fine china and baking powder. The canals also produced jobs. Over 1,000 miles of canals were built in Ohio between 1825-1847, resulting in 294 new lift locks, 44 new aqueducts, and other required functional components. The man power required to build these systems was crucial so the pay was excellent. Many Irish and German immigrants from the area took the opportunity, despite the hard working conditions. In the "History of Seneca County from the Close of the Revolutionary War," the author describes,

"it was a sad parting when the father left his little ones in the care and charge of the pioneer mother to go sixty miles or more from home and be gone for months at a time to work on the canal and himself become subject to malarious diseases. They were even more prevalent along the canals than elsewhere because they were constructed through dense forests, along the most sluggish streams and the most level ground."

Wages for the canal-men who hollowed out the canal trenches, cleared the trees, and performed other strenuous tasks were \$5 per month, plus room and board for the duration of work, and daily rations of whiskey.

When plans fell through, however, for a local canal, the attention shifted to the newly developing railroads. As early as 1825 when the Erie Canal opened, the building of the Sandusky and Mansfield Railroad commenced. By 1832, at the same time that plans for a prospective local canal was still in the works, Seneca County residents were also buying stock in the yet-to-be finished Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad (Later on, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroads would be added to the list).

The booming railroad era even had its beginnings with ties to the canals. The first locomotive used in this area, the "Sandusky," was constructed in New Jersey and shipped to Sandusky by way of the Erie Canal.

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For further information:

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- [Ohio History Connection. "Ohio Canal Plat Map Collection." Ohio Memory.](#)
- [Kilbourn, John. "Public documents concerning the Ohio canals which are to connect Lake Erie with the Ohio River." 1828. University of Pittsburgh Library by way of Internet Archive.](#)
- [Canal Society of Ohio.](#)

2026 Alumni Achievement Awards celebrate distinguished Wright State community members



Jen Haney Conover receives the Wright State University Graduate School Outstanding Alumnus award.

During Wright State University's Homecoming in February, Greene County Director of Records and Archives, **Jen Haney Conover**, was the recipient of the Wright State University Graduate School Outstanding Alumnus award.

A passionate advocate for public history, the award honors not only the excellence that Jen has shown in the records and archives field but also her continuing contributions to the Wright State University community. According to Greg Sharer, executive director of

alumni relations, award winners' "accomplishments and leadership reflect the very best of Wright State". Jen is a 2008 graduate of the Public History program and currently sits on the inaugural Public History Advisor Board.

Ohio Archivists Involved in New Publication

A Practical Guidebook to Trauma-Informed Archival Practice: Best Practices and Case Studies explores trauma in archival work from the archivists' perspective. It examines how trauma can manifest not only when processing collections but also in donor relationships, researcher interactions, and professional practices. This guide offers strategies for creating policies and workflows to reduce harm and foster trust throughout the archival process.

The authors highlight practical approaches to minimizing trauma across archival work, including:

- Supporting grieving donors throughout the donation process
- Identifying trauma in archival workers, support staff, volunteers, and students before, during, and after exposure
- Understanding the effects of trauma on the body and brain and offering short- and long-term solutions

This book is a practical guide for archivists seeking to implement trauma-informed practices that benefit everyone who engages with archival materials.

The Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum

Mike Costill Memorial Archives is excited to take the next steps in our journey as a new archives. We have fully organized our research library and are starting on the large and sensitive collections. Thanks to recent donations, once we have them properly



Age of Steam Roundhouse Museum, Winter 2026

accessed, sorted, and preserved, we will be one of the leading repositories for the Buffalo, Creek, and Gauley (BC&G) Railroad. One of the steam engines which was operated by the BC&G, No. 13, was purchased by our founder, Jerry Jacobson, and now resides in our collection. We have also taken in some extremely rare and sensitive documents from the Conotton Valley Railway, a now-defunct local line. These documents came from the now-demolished railroad depot in Baltic, Ohio. We have also received smaller collections, or individual donations, related to other Ohio railroads, growing both the reference and preservation arms of our archives. The opportunity to be the stewards of such information is incredibly exciting for us as we strive to be world-class preservationists of our new and future donations and acquisitions, as well as preserving and carrying on the legacy of our founders, Jerry and Laura Jacobson, and Mike Costill, after whom the archives are proudly named.

We Too Sing America! The Legacy of Charity's Children & The Charity's Children Project Commemorate Our Nation's 250th Year



As our nation approaches its 250th anniversary, [The Legacy of Charity's Children \(TLCC\)](#) and [The Charity's Children Project \(CCP\)](#) gather to affirm a truth long carried forward by generations:

(continued)

we, too, sing America.

Rooted in Dayton, Ohio yet reaching far beyond it, our work honors Black families, women, artists, and visionaries whose lives are inseparable from the American story. In 2026, we will relaunch our award-winning podcast with new and updated episodes, present special public programs and commemorative events, and premiere a major exhibit that brings forward untold histories with renewed clarity and purpose. Together, these initiatives mark a powerful season of remembrance, restoration, and visibility.

At a time when families across the country are working to reclaim histories erased from the record, this documented lineage — spanning from the American Revolution to the present — offers a rare and enduring testament to perseverance and contribution.

We invite you to stand with us — to gather, remember, and bear witness as we honor the lives and legacy that have always sung America into being.

We need you.

- We are seeking assistance with exhibit display materials (easels, cases, platforms, stanchions), advisory support, and connections to sponsors and partners.
- Listen, like, and share [The Legacy of Charity's Children award-winning podcast](#).
- [This work cannot continue without your commitment](#).

The University of Akron Archives and Special Collections is pleased to announce the completion of the grant project titled “Digitizing Historical Resources on the Ohio & Erie Canal.”

The grant, which was awarded by the Ohio & Erie Canalway Strategic Initiatives Program in the amount of \$7,963.00, allowed the Archives to digitize, catalog, and upload to their digital repository 3,724 historic and contemporary photographic prints, negatives, slides and maps of the Ohio & Erie Canal from 1832 to 1993. Also, substantial progress has been made on their grant project titled “Digitizing the Photographs of Horace and Evelyn Stewart, 1897-1978,” which was funded by a Council on Library & Information Resources (CLIR) “Digitizing Hidden Collections:



Left: Colorized photograph of a state boat on the Ohio & Erie Canal by Wilson's Mill near Sagamore Hills in Summit County, Ohio, ca. 1896. From the Canal Society of Ohio Collection, The University of Akron Archives and Special Collections.

Right: Black and white negative of Black nurses handing out Clark bars to Black draftees in Akron during World War II, 1942. From the Horace and Evelyn Stewart Photographs, The University of Akron Archives and Special Collections.

Amplifying Unheard Voices” Grant in the amount of \$190,517. To date, nearly 45,000 negatives that document the Black community have been digitized and approximately 37,000 have been uploaded to their digital repository. Additionally, the Archives curated an exhibit for Akron’s Bicentennial that features 50 of the historic images digitized as part of that project titled “Our Contribution to the City: Black Life in Akron in the 1930s and ‘40s, as Seen through the Lens of Horace & Evelyn Stewart.” The exhibit is on display in the Dr. Shirla R. McClain Gallery of Akron’s Black History & Culture on the UA Campus through June. The images digitized with funding from these grants are available online on [Archives and Special Collections’ digital repository](#). To learn more, visit the [Ohio & Erie Canalway](#) and [CLIR](#) and follow CLIR on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

University of Cincinnati

[announces the Daniel S. Young Medical Illustrations](#) digital collection. Available online via [JSTOR](#), the collection contains 83 medical illustrations from the Daniel S. Young Archives held by the [Henry R. Winkler Center for the History of the Health Professions](#) at the [Donald C. Harrison Health Sciences Library](#). The collection was scanned and digitized by the UC Libraries Digital Initiatives Team.

The Dennis B. and Patricia L. Worthen travel award / Worthen Travel Grant for Research

is to support research work conducted at the [Henry R. Winkler Center for the History of the Health Professions at the University of Cincinnati](#). The travel grant provides up to \$5000 to researchers whose work would benefit from in-person access to the Winkler Center’s collections.

*This is the first annual award so check the links for future application information.

Wright Library’s Preservation of the Oakwood Village Record: Village Life of the Early Twentieth Century

When Karla Schlageck began her role as Adult Services Librarian at [Wright Memorial Public Library](#), she quickly found herself immersed in the past. One of her first assignments was to review the library’s local history collection — not simply to catalog it, but to safeguard it. Her mission was clear: identify the oldest and most fragile materials and determine how best to preserve them for future generations.

What she uncovered was a remarkable piece of Oakwood’s story.

Tucked within the collection were eight issues of *The Oakwood Village Record*, a short-run newspaper published in Oakwood from 1912 to 1913. Supported by John H. Patterson, then president of the National Cash Register Company (NCR), the paper chronicled early

(continued)

twentieth-century village life. Its pages captured the rhythms of daily living, the voices of residents, and defined regional events — including the devastating Great Dayton Flood of 1913.

Although additional issues survive at the Oakwood Historical Society Archives, Wright Library's copies are rare — and time had taken its toll.

To ensure Oakwood's story would not fade, conservation became essential.

With support from a 2024 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant awarded by the State Library of Ohio through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Schlageck partnered with the Northeast Document Conservation Center to carefully conserve and rehouse the eight issues spanning from August 1912 to October 1913.

"The issues were bound together in 1974, regardless of size," Schlageck explained. "Larger pages were vulnerable to wear-and-tear, many were torn, and the binding had covered some of the content." Through meticulous work, NEDCC staff cleaned and repaired damaged pages, then placed each issue into buffered archival folders and housed them in a protective archival box —



Left: An issue of the *Oakwood Village Record* before conservation. Photo courtesy of Wright Memorial Public Library. **Right:** Librarian Karla Schlageck examines an issue of the *Oakwood Village Record*. Photo courtesy of Wright Memorial Public Library.

preserving both structure and story.

Though *The Oakwood Village Record* had a brief lifespan, its influence endured. In March 1917, a successor publication, *The Oakwood Record*, debuted with a tribute on its front page acknowledging its origins and the vision of John H. Patterson. The earlier paper, the editors noted, had fulfilled "the need to know more about our neighbors" — a timeless expression of community connection.

To Mr. John H. Patterson, the far-seeing president of the National Cash Register Company, thanks are due from the entire Oakwoo[d] Record committee. It was Mr. Patterson's ideal of community self-expression which inspired the publication, beginning nearly five years ago, of the Oakwood Village Record. ... When publication stopped, the sincere regret of the subscribers proved that the paper had met a real need - the need to know more about our neighbors, with whom we carry on so much of the business of life. ... It is right that our outside friends, as well as we ourselves in Oakwood Village, should recognize that it is Mr. Patterson's idea which is taking concrete form in this first issue of the Oakwood Record.

Now, more than a century later, that same spirit continues.

With the issues conserved and safely rehoused, they can once again be thoughtfully shared. A new local history display at Wright Library will rotate the eight issues of *The Oakwood Village Record* alongside engineering books from the personal library of Orville Wright and a special collection of WPA ceramics created by Ohio artists and acquired by the library in the 1930s.

Through this exhibit — and the outreach surrounding it — Oakwood's early stories will once again be visible, connecting today's community with the voices and vision that helped shape it.

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.

Editor's Note

I hope you enjoyed this issue of *Ohio Archivist*. As always, feel free to contact me with suggestions, criticisms, or interest in being included in an issue. We are also always looking for regular contributors. If you or someone you know may be interested in being an assistant editor or trying your turn as Editor-In-Chief, please contact me.

Thank you to everyone who helps make the *Ohio Archivist* possible. For the most up-to-date information on SOA, including ways to get involved, please visit the website and join us on the listserv. Thank you for your readership!

Wishing everyone a peaceful season,

Jessica

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Ohio Archivist is designed and published for the Society of Ohio Archivists by the Ohio History Connection.