

When the Going Gets Tough: Confronting Difficult Subjects



By Jodie P. McFarland, Manager of Volunteer Initiatives, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati

Stepping out into the world of the provocative exhibition can be a scary experience if it is uncharted territory for you or your staff. The good news is, if done correctly, it can be a successful undertaking. More importantly, it might just be the most rewarding thing you ever do in terms of impacting your local community. Having worked on several exhibitions with varying degrees of controversy, I can honestly say that the reward far outweighs the negative feedback that may occur. The exhibition that set the tone for my understanding of the positive impact of difficult subjects was my first experience as an interpreter at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. The exhibition was a collection of photographs titled *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*, and it changed my outlook on how museums impact their communities. (Continued on page 4)



Alliance Annual Meeting -October 4&5

Save the date for the Alliance's 2013 Annual Meeting and Conference. This year it will be held on October 4 and 5 at the Holiday Inn Worthington. We are hard at work lining up a great program. Mark your calendars now!

Above: Visitors viewing the Without Sanctuary exhibition. Photograph by Thadd Fiala, courtesy of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

Left: Attendees at last year's Annual Meeting. Photo courtesy of the Ohio Historical Society.

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President's Message:

Networking and professional development are two things that Alliance members tell us they value. We take great pride in providing you with opportunities for both, which in turn empower you to do your work, be it paid or volunteer, even better. This spring and summer you have ample opportunities right here in your own back yard! Annual Ohio opportunities include the Heritage Ohio conference, Building Doctor clinics, Alliance Regional Meetings, and, of course, planning is underway for the Alliance Annual Meeting in

October. There are also some national opportunities for you to consider. The Association of Living History Farms & Agricultural Museums will host their annual meeting in northeast Ohio this June. If your travel funds are limited, this is an ideal time for you to attend a national meeting. You have likely been hearing more about the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Continuum of Excellence. If you want to learn more about it, there will be a series of free webinars offered by AAM. All of these opportunities are outlined in detail in this issue—be sure to check them out.

Ohioans working in local history do great work every day, year in and year out. You can recognize this great work by nominating projects or people for the Alliance's Outstanding Achievement Awards. Be sure to take a look the 2012 award

winners (found in the December 2012 issue of The Local Historian), and be thinking about projects you've completed at your organization that may be eligible for an award in 2013.

Maggie Marconi

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OHIO LOCAL HISTORY ALLIANCE
Inspire. Connect. Educate.

The Ohio Local History Alliance, organized in 1960 under sponsorship of the Ohio Historical Society, is composed of local historical societies, historic preservation groups, history museums, archives, libraries, and genealogical societies throughout the state involved in collecting, preserving, and interpreting Ohio's history.

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VA Policy Affects Local History Work

By Todd Kleismit, Director of Government Relations, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus

Not all of the Civil War soldiers who survived to return home enjoyed GAR parades or went on to political fame or business success. Many of them passed away anonymously many years after the war, penniless or still suffering from the wounds sustained on the battlefield. A significant number of these veterans were foreign-born, ethnic minorities, or African Americans, discriminated against despite their wartime service. These are the veterans most likely to have been buried in a scattershot of unmarked graves that exist in Ohio and perhaps every state in the nation.

For many years, veterans groups, historians, funeral professionals, genealogists, educators, and students have conducted research to learn more about these veterans in an effort to secure a headstone for them and to give them some brief recognition from a new generation that benefitted from their service. Most, but not all, of these headstones for unmarked graves are benefitting Civil War veterans. Some researchers have been just as interested in locating records and securing headstones for veterans from the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and other conflicts.

The groups that have found this volunteer work so rewarding have recently run into a major problem. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has for many years supplied the headstones once the researcher submitted the proper documentation. However, the VA recently began enforcing a policy first established in 2009 requiring that the proper documentation include authorization from the military member's next of kin.

While this sounds like a reasonable policy, many of these veterans are in unmarked graves because they may not have had any family ties at the time of their death. Or, the family may not have had the means for a proper burial. Sometimes, the genealogical records can trace the veteran's family from 75-100 or more years ago to today. Usually, there are no bright lines.

This is likely going to be the first summer in a generation or more that this VA policy will prevent more of our country's Civil War veterans from receiving a headstone and some long overdue recognition from these volunteers and students. A letter to the VA last December from the Ohio Historical Society, on behalf of several organizations, suggesting alternatives to the current VA policy was answered in March with little more than a restatement of the policy.

Several members of Congress have expressed interest in working with the Ohio Historical Society and other stakeholders to address this issue through legislation. Stay tuned.

Todd Kleismit is the Ohio Historical Society's director of community and government relations. He can be reached at tkleismit@ohiohistory.org or 614-297-2355. ■



Photo courtesy of the Ohio Historical Society.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Jennifer Lusetti is the new Assistant Archivist at the **Licking County Historical Society**. She has a B.A. in English from The Ohio State University and has previously worked as a research assistant and at the campus library. Besides her archival duties, Lusetti will also be writing articles for the Society's publications.

The **Cedar Bog Nature Preserve** in Urbana has a new part-time site manager. **Tracy Bleim** graduated from The Ohio State University with a B.S. in Natural Resources and has worked with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Soil and Water.

TECH TIP: QR Codes Demystified

By Maggie Marconi,
Museum Administrator,
Follett House Museum,
Sandusky



*A QR code
that leads to
the Alliance's
website.*

Maybe you have seen them around, those strange little black and white squares, or perhaps you have heard the term 'QR code' but did not know quite what it was referring to. Read on for answers to your questions and ideas on how to use QR codes in your institution!

A QR code is a Quick Response code. It was originally created for the manufacturing world and is similar to a bar code. What does it do? It reads the code and takes you to a link. Instead of typing a web address into that tiny screen on the phone, people with a QR code reader on their phone can scan the QR code and

go to the linked web page. With the advent and omnipresence of smartphones, QR codes are a fun tool to use in your museum.

Creating a QR Code

To create a QR code you use a QR code generator. You will find any number of them by typing 'QR code generator' into a search engine. Depending on which generator you pick, you may need to create a user account. Once you have done that, paste the web link you would like to use for your QR code into the box and it will automatically generate a QR code. That's it! The one above leads to the Ohio Local History Alliance web page. Of course, each QR code generator is a bit different—find one you like and experiment with it. Smartphone users will also need a QR code reader, available as a downloadable application for their phone. Many QR code generators and readers are free.

I Made a QR Code, Now What?

This is the fun part! The beauty of a QR code is that it whisks the smartphone user directly to a web page—think of the possibilities! Thinking about a new

advertising campaign? Include a QR code so that potential visitors can quickly visit your website. Wondering how you can make an exhibit that includes technology? Incorporate a QR code—maybe it will take the user to more in-depth information, or maybe it will take them to a short in-house video on the subject. At my organization, I incorporated QR codes into a cemetery walk brochure I designed. I selected twelve individuals from my annual thematic cemetery walk and created a unique QR code for each individual. The QR code links to a page on our blog that includes photographs and biographical information. The brochure includes a map on one side and the QR codes on the other, so that anyone can print it out, take it to the cemetery, and go on a self-guided cemetery walk. I did not have to hire any outside expertise. I generated the codes and created the two-sided sheet, which I saved as a PDF and had uploaded to our website: http://www.sandusky.lib.oh.us/follett_house/documents/CivilWarHeroesWalk.pdf

How will you incorporate QR Codes at your organization?

(Continued from page 1)

One of the greatest challenges we faced in *Without Sanctuary* was the concentration of disturbing images that awaited visitors: a sampling of death in an era before the Civil Rights Movement that is largely ignored by history books and classes. Why would anyone want to go through an exhibition like that?! It was enough to prompt one local editorial to ask whether or not we really needed to know this story. The answer was apparently an absolute YES, as 15,000 visitors experienced this provocative exhibition. Many found themselves asking what they could do to ensure something like this never happened again. Some visitors revealed that their families were involved in lynchings, either as the lynchers or the lynched. For those people, this exhibition provided an opportunity for healing and reconciliation.

Not every exhibition is on that level of controversy with its content, but if it is

controversial in your community, then it will feel like it is. There will be several challenges confronting you including managing the media, determining if there should be an appropriate age level, and convincing someone on your board that this is a good idea. Positive press releases and the importance of addressing the key points you want stressed in an interview are critical when attracting media exposure. Depending on the content, you may decide that the local 4th grade class may not be ready to view this exhibition, and you have to be prepared to explain why and defend your position. Board members can be a little trickier. But, if you can get them to understand the importance of this type of exhibition to the community, as well as the positive impact that will result, they will usually agree with limited resistance.

In the end, planning an exhibit on a difficult subject is no different than any other exhibition. There should be goals

and objectives for what the visitor should come away knowing about the subject. There should still be the story line of the exhibit and how it is to be interpreted. For example, it is up to you to decide if conspiracy theories should be included, or if it is better to stick with the official cause. Or, the decision on whether artifacts or text panels will provide the better interpretive information. It will take a great deal of effort to create an effective exhibition on a difficult subject that will fulfill the mission of your organization. But, keep in mind that as interpreters our job is to provoke, not merely inform. Confronting difficult subject matter, if done correctly, will stir the proper emotions and evoke constructive dialogue. The end result can be an impactful exhibition that provides a wonderful experience for the visitor. It can also reward you with the reminder that your work does indeed make a difference in your local community. ■

Why Don't People Smile in Old Photographs?

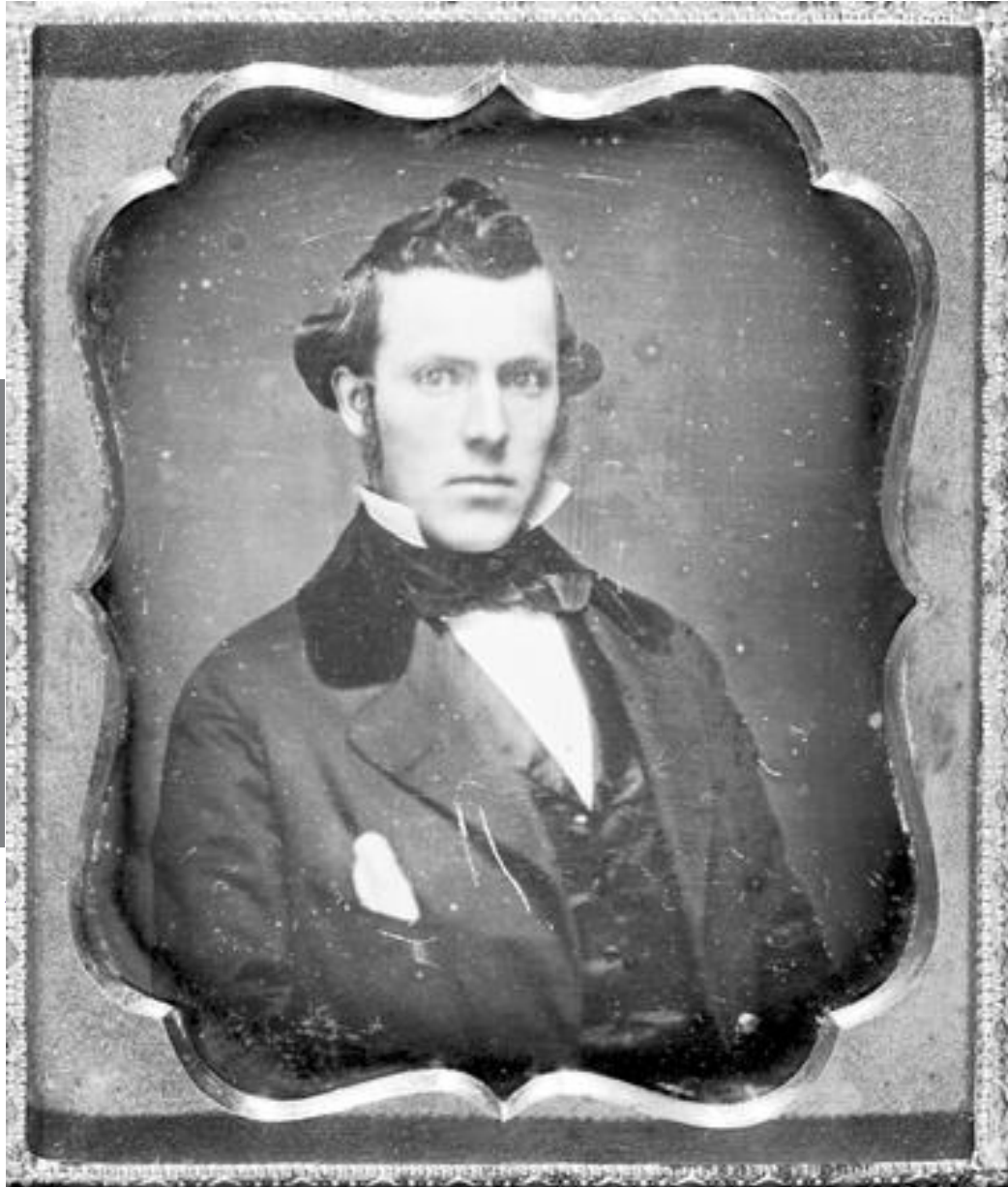
By Lisa Wood, Curator for Visual Resources, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus

[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared on the Ohio Historical Society's Collections Blog. You can find more articles like this one, and learn some behind-the-scenes information about OHS's collections at <http://ohiohistory.wordpress.com>.]

I was recently asked why in photographs taken in the 1800s people do not smile. It is sometimes difficult to interpret the motivations of people in the past, but I have a few ideas why we see so many serious faces staring back at us from photographs.

Long Exposure Times for Photographs

When daguerreotypes were first introduced in France in 1839, the exposure time for larger photographic plates could be up to 15 minutes, sometimes longer. In just a couple of years improvements in camera lenses and the chemicals used to expose the images shortened the exposure times to a minute or less, but to get clear images people had to sit still. Photographers even had head rests that held sitters' heads in place when they were having portraits made. Having to sit perfectly still for long seconds probably discouraged smiling.



A daguerreotype portrait of Emerson Opdycke, who is not smiling. Photo courtesy of the Ohio Historical Society.

Having Photographs Taken was Rare and Expensive

When photography was introduced in 1839, it required relatively expensive equipment and a degree of training to do. It was largely the realm of professional photographers. Even as photographic technology advanced in the 1850s and 1860s, it was still mostly the domain of professionals. For most people having photographs taken was not a common activity, but a rare luxury. They might only have their pictures taken a few times in their lives. People may have believed that serious expressions suited these special occasions. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, when cameras became lighter weight, more portable, and much easier to use, there is growth in the number of amateur photographers. Taking casual snapshots becomes possible and we start to see more smiles.

Poor Dental Care

My last theory is that people, particularly older adults, were not comfortable smiling because they did not have very attractive teeth. In the 1800s good dental care was not widely available. The dental practices like root canals and caps that allow us to keep our teeth today were not done. The cure for a decayed or broken tooth was often simply to pull it. People with missing or chipped teeth might have preferred to take pictures with their mouths closed.

These are the theories that I have developed after years of viewing old photographs. If you have any other ideas, please feel free to share at <http://ohiohistory.wordpress.com/2011/09/22/why-dont-people-smile-in-old-photographs/>. ■



Some of the community-contributed paper cranes on exhibit at the Quaker Heritage Center. Photo courtesy of the Quaker Heritage Center of Wilmington College.

As the curator of an on-campus museum, I am always looking for ways to get the off-campus community involved in the exhibits and programming at the Quaker Heritage Center of Wilmington College. Sometimes it seems like there is an invisible wall that surrounds our campus, and people feel like they are only allowed over that wall if they have a College ID card. That is definitely not the case! The Quaker Heritage Center may be ON campus, but the Center is not just FOR campus. So how do we get people across that wall?

During the school year, that is an easy task: our calendar is full of school field trips, Scout visits, and women's club tours. But during the summer – when the rest of the campus essentially shuts down – I am desperate for visitors! Luckily, last summer proved to be an exception to the

rule, thanks to some innovative thinking about our summer exhibit, *A Sky Full of Cranes*. The goal of the exhibit was to tell the story of how the Japanese people remember the atomic bombings of World War II...without depressing visitors. I wanted visitors to leave inspired by the themes of peace and reconciliation that flow through the stories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As such, the design included dozens of bold oversize photographs of remembrance ceremonies and memorials, surrounded by a “river” with brightly colored paper lanterns. Included in the exhibit was the story of Sadako Sasaki, whose life became an inspiration to people around the world to use the paper crane as an image for peace. That meant one thing: I needed cranes. Lots and lots of cranes. I folded cranes. Volunteers folded cranes. Family members folded

Origami Paper

+

Community
Involvement

=

A Great Exhibit!

By Ruth Brindle Dobyns,
Curator, Quaker Heritage
Center at Wilmington
College, Wilmington

cranes. But it still was not enough. That is when inspiration struck: make it a contest!

Through the cooperation of the local newspaper, we advertised our crane-folding contest, inviting members of the community to bring folded cranes to the museum for use in the exhibit. The person who contributed the most cranes would receive a free ticket to a Japanese-themed dinner planned at a local restaurant later in the summer.

The cranes poured in! Giant cranes, tiny cranes, cranes made from gum and candy wrappers, cranes mailed from other parts of the state, single cranes donated in honor of individuals – I was overwhelmed by the response. We ended up with more cranes than we knew what to do with, enough to make the exhibit truly beautiful and inspiring, enough to send visitors home with a crane, and enough to decorate the restaurant for the dinner. And best of all: we made connections with individuals of all ages, of all backgrounds, people who had never been to the Center before. Success!

What did I learn? If you want people to visit your museum, give them a reason to feel connected, give them a reason to feel invested in what you do. And if you can offer a prize...well, that helps too! ■

Awards



Scholarships Available for AASLH Annual Meeting

The American Association for State and Local History's Annual Meeting is September 18-21 in Birmingham, Alabama. This year's meeting, *Turning Points: Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things*, is held in partnership with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. The meeting is a perfect opportunity to examine questions facing any local history institution: how to tell the stories of ordinary people and their extraordinary lives, how to make history interesting and relevant today, how to encourage public participation, and how to turn challenges into successes.

AASLH's Small Museums Community is offering \$500 scholarships to any AASLH members who are full-time, part-time, paid, or volunteer employees of small museums. A small museum is defined as one with a budget of under \$250,000. Applicants must be either an individual member of AASLH or work for an institutional member. The scholarship will cover the cost of registration for the meeting, and any remaining funds can be used to offset the cost of travel or lodging expenses. The application deadline is June 15. For more information and to download an application, visit <http://www.smallmuseumcommunity.org/link-resources/scholarships/>.

Awards



Ohio Historic Preservation Office Now Accepting Awards Nominations

Do you know of great rehabilitation projects? A special person or group who should be recognized for a significant preservation effort? An effective program, event, or campaign that increased awareness of historic preservation?

Each year the Ohio Historical Society's Ohio Historic Preservation Office recognizes achievements in historic preservation by presenting awards in two categories: Public Education & Awareness and Preservation Merit. Public Education & Awareness Awards recognize activities that increase public awareness of historic preservation at the local, regional, or state level. Preservation Merit Awards are for projects that preserve Ohio's prehistory, history, architecture, or culture.

People, organizations, businesses, and public agencies are eligible for the awards. Anyone may submit a nomination for the awards. A selection committee comprising members of the governor-appointed Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board and Ohio Historic Preservation Office staff will choose recipients in each category. Nominations must be postmarked by June 1.

For more information and a nomination form, visit <http://www.ohiohistory.org/ohio-historic-preservation-office/ohio-historic-preservation-office-awards> or call 614-298-2000.

Awards

2013 Alliance Outstanding Achievement Awards

Nominate the amazing local history work being done in your community for a 2013 Ohio Local History Alliance Outstanding Achievement Award! The Alliance presents awards in two categories – Individual Achievement and History Outreach.

Individual Achievement Awards recognize those who have made outstanding contributions to Ohio's historical societies, history museums, or the understanding and appreciation of state and local history. Nominees must have been involved in a local history organization for at least five years and have demonstrated excellence in more than one area of that organization's operations. If the nominee is a teacher, he or she must demonstrate creativity in teaching methods and expertise in local and state history.

History Outreach Awards recognize outstanding local history projects. These projects must have educational content, contributed to the promotion and understanding of local or state history, and impacted the local community. Nominations will be accepted in the following categories: public programming, media and publications, and exhibits/displays.

Nominations must be post-marked by August 1, 2013. Watch your mail for a nomination form, or contact the Local History Office at 1-800-858-6878 or 614-297-2340. You can also email local-history@ohiohistory.org. **Good luck!**

Sad News

Charles Blakeslee, former president of the Ohio Local History Alliance, passed away on April 1 at the age of 102. Many of the accomplishments from his presidency have made the Alliance the organization it is today, including the creation of *The Local Historian* newsletter in 1984. In addition, Blakeslee was a co-founder of the Meigs County Historical Society and a past president of the Meigs County Library Board. The Alliance extends its sympathy to the family and friends of this champion of local history.

Professional Development

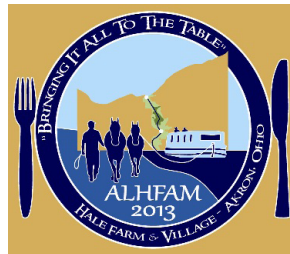


Heritage Ohio's 2013 Annual Conference, *Local Spirit 2013*, will be held in Columbus on May 21-23 at The Westin Hotel downtown. The conference is full of sessions of interest to the local history and historic preservation communities.

Sessions include "Ohio Grant Opportunities," with information on History Fund and Certified Local Government grants, and "TourismOhio," which will talk about how organizations can "tap into the Ohio Tourism Marketing Machine" and best practices in developing regional partnerships. The keynote speaker is Donovan Rypkema, a nationally known expert on the economic impact of historic preservation. He will also be leading three sessions on that topic. The conference also includes tours of historic Greenlawn Cemetery, German Village, and Mid-Century Modern Columbus.

For more information and to register, go to www.heritageohio.org.

Professional Development



The Association for Living History, Farm & Agricultural Museums will be meeting from June 14-18 at the University of Akron. The conference is sponsored by Hale Farm & Village, a site of the Western Reserve Historical Society. More than 100 sessions covering all museum disciplines will be explored. Many will cover topics of local interest. There will be two days of sessions, a day of field trips to Lake County, and exciting evening programs. Registration covers all meals and evening events. Attendees can stay in Spicer Hall dormitory. To view the entire program, visit www.alhfam.org. The registration deadline is June 1. For more information, contact Judith Sheridan at Sheridan@orwell.net.

Professional Development



AAM Core Documents Webinar Series

The American Alliance of Museums is holding a series of webinars on the essential documents that are fundamental for professional museum operations and that embody core museum values and practices. These documents are: a mission statement, an institutional code of ethics, a strategic plan, a disaster preparedness/emergency response plan, and a collections management policy. Together, they documents codify and guide a museum's actions, promote institutional stability and viability, and allow museums to better fulfill their educational, stewardship, and community roles. Upcoming webinars and documents covered are:

- June 19: Required Elements of a Museum Code of Ethics
- September 11: Museum Mission
- November 6: Institutional Plan
- All webinars are from 2-3:30pm. Registration fees vary based on AAM membership.

The Core Documents program is part of AAM's new Continuum of Excellence, a new assessment structure that also includes the Pledge of Excellence, the Museum Assessment Program, and Accreditation. For more information about the Core Documents program, go to <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs/core-documents>. To register for an upcoming webinar, visit <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/online-learning>.

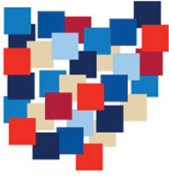
Professional Development

The Building Doctors of the Ohio Historic Preservation Office of the Ohio Historical Society are holding clinics in Hamilton, Port Clinton, and Xenia in 2013.

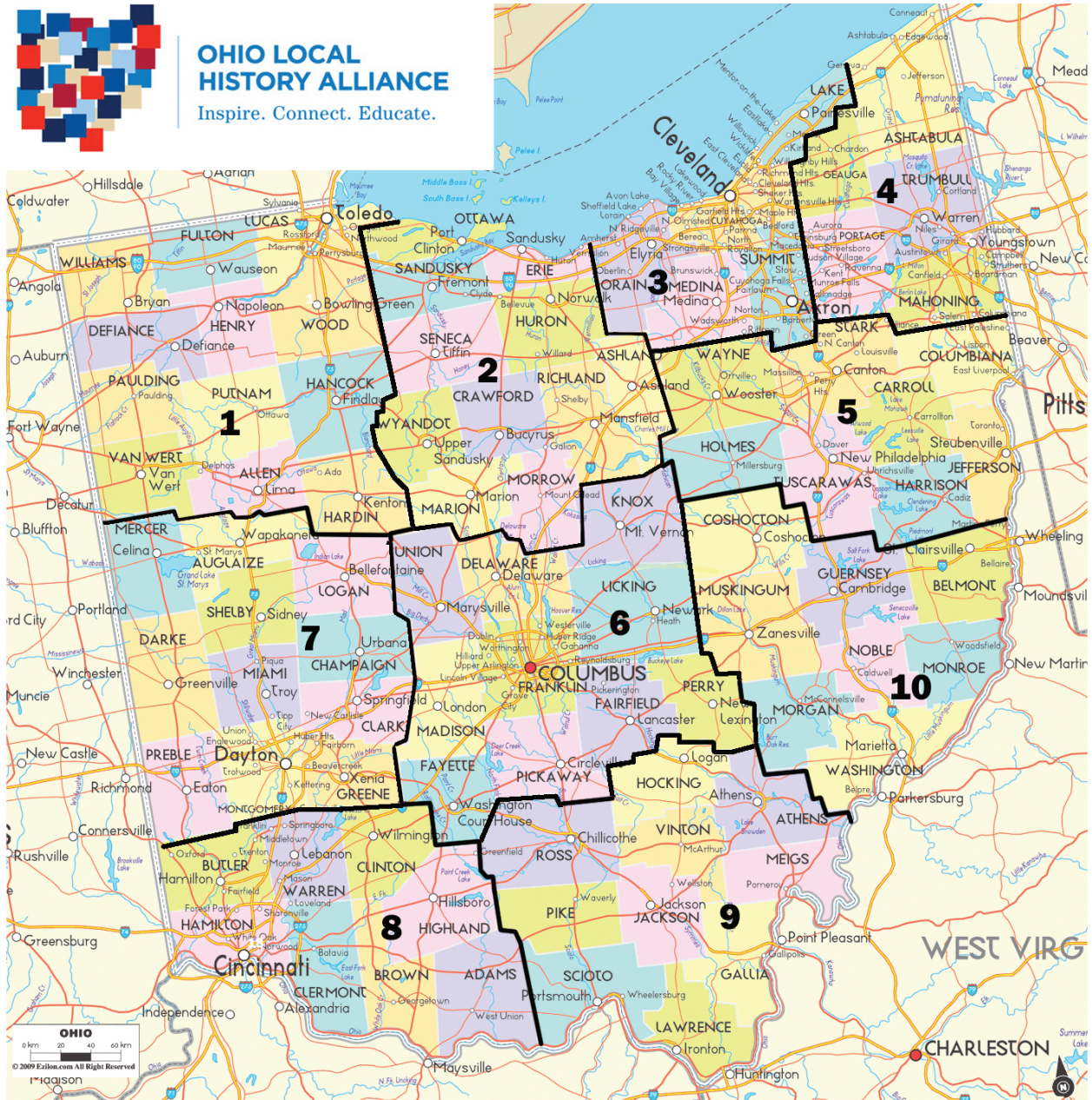
The "doctors" work in teams, teaching old-building owners how to recognize and solve some of the most common sources of problems in maintaining older buildings and how to make informed decisions about repairs and improvements.

Each Building Doctor Clinic begins with a free seminar on topics like peeling paint and failing plaster, wet basements, deteriorating masonry, windows, wood issues, and bringing buildings built before 1955 up to date without sacrificing historical integrity. On the following day, the Building Doctors make the rounds of ailing buildings within five miles of the city center where the seminar is held to examine problems and prescribe cures. Consultations are free, but you must preregister for an appointment and attend the seminar to qualify. The Building Doctors visit all kinds of pre-1955 buildings: schools, churches, factories, stores, offices, farm buildings, and homes.

For more information, including the dates of upcoming clinics, or to register for the clinic near you, go to <http://www.building-doctor.org>.



OHIO LOCAL HISTORY ALLIANCE
Inspire. Connect. Educate.



<u>REGION 1</u>	<u>REGION 2</u>	<u>REGION 3</u>	<u>REGION 4</u>	<u>REGION 5</u>	<u>REGION 6</u>	<u>REGION 7</u>	<u>REGION 8</u>	<u>REGION 9</u>	<u>REGION 10</u>
Allen	Ashland	Cuyahoga	Ashtabula	Carroll	Delaware	Auglaize	Adams	Athens	Belmont
Defiance	Crawford	Lake	Geauga	Columbiana	Fairfield	Champaign	Brown	Gallia	Coshocton
Fulton	Erie	Lorain	Mahoning	Harrison	Fayette	Clark	Butler	Hocking	Guernsey
Hancock	Huron	Medina	Portage	Holmes	Franklin	Darke	Clermont	Jackson	Monroe
Henry	Marion	Summit	Trumbull	Jefferson	Knox	Greene	Clinton	Lawrence	Morgan
Lucas	Morrow			Stark	Licking	Logan	Hamilton	Meigs	Muskingum
Paulding	Ottawa			Tuscarawas	Madison	Mercer	Highland	Pike	Noble
Putnam	Richland			Wayne	Madison	Miami	Warren	Ross	Washington
Van Wert	Sandusky				Perry	Montgomery		Scioto	
Williams	Seneca				Pickaway	Preble		Vinton	
Wood	Wyandot				Union	Shelby			

At this year's regional meetings, we got some questions about the boundaries of the Alliance's regions. Above is a map showing the regions by county. Feel free to print out as many copies of this map as you would like!

Welcome New Members

Organizations

Tiffin Historic Trust, Inc., Republic

Thank you Renewing Members

Organizations

Brewster-Sugarcreek Township
Historical Society, Brewster

Henry County Historical Society,
Napoleon

Jefferson County Historical
Association, Steubenville

Morgan Township Historical Society,
Shandon

Portage Lakes Historical Society,
Akron

Thank You!

This year's Alliance Regional Meetings were a success. Over 300 local historians from 140 organizations attended. The meetings would not have been possible without the great speakers and hosting institutions in each region.

- Ashland Historical Society
- Auglaize County Historical Society
- Cuyahoga County Soldiers' & Sailors' Monument
- Evandale Historical Commission
- Fairfield Heritage Association
- Hocking County Historical Society
- Magnolia Historical Society
- Mahoning Valley Historical Society
- Van Wert County Historical Society

News from the Regions

In 100 words or less, do you have outstanding news to share about your organization? Please email it to your regional representative for the next issue of *The Local Historian*. Contact information for the representatives in your region is on page 2 of this issue. Of course, you are welcome to forward your news directly to the editor of *The Local Historian* at arohmiller@ohiohistory.org. Rather than serving as a calendar of events, items for News from the Regions are chosen to inspire, connect, and educate the Alliance's members all over Ohio and celebrate notable and imitation-worthy accomplishments of Alliance members.

Region 1

Allen, Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Lucas, Putnam, Van Wert, Williams, and Wood Counties

Fort Meigs hosted an educator workshop on April 11 that launched a new outreach program, SimMarch 1812, an iPad app for students in grades three and four. The fort received a **Martha Holden Jennings** grant to develop the app, along with lesson plans and an outreach program, in partnership with faculty and staff at **Case Western Reserve University** and **Bowling Green State University**. The program covers Ohio Academic Content Standards for third and fourth grade social studies, science, and language arts, as well as teaching children about War of 1812 events in Ohio's history. To learn more, go to www.fortmeigs.org.

Region 2

Ashland, Crawford, Erie, Huron, Marion, Morrow, Ottawa, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, and Wyandot Counties

Region 3

Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, and Summit Counties

The **Summit County Historical Society** partnered with the **University of Akron** for a service learning opportunity. Sixteen students from the university constructed a replica of the Goodyear Blimp at one-tenth scale. The model will go in an updated outreach trunk for the Society. The project was funded by a service learning mini-grant from the University of Akron's Institute for Teaching and Learning. For more information, visit <http://summithistory.org>.

Region 4

Ashtabula, Geauga, Mahoning, Portage, and Trumbull Counties

The **Mahoning Valley Historical Society** hosted a successful fundraiser, "Cookie Table and Cocktails," celebrating the unique cookie table wedding tradition in Youngstown. A cookie baking contest drew over 80 entries in amateur and professional categories. Over 300 people attended the event. Takeout boxes of cookies were also very popular. The event also featured a silent auction. The event raised over \$8,000 towards the Campaign for the Mahoning Valley History Center. Visit <http://mahoninghistory.org/> to learn more.

Region 5

Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Stark, Tuscarawas, and Wayne Counties

The **Jefferson County Historical Association** recently finished a successful fundraising campaign. An anonymous donor pledged to match \$2,000 in donations if the society could raise an additional \$2,000 from its membership. Not only did the Association meet its goal, members exceeded it by over \$300. The Association's first purchase with the money was a laptop computer and a financial management software. The group will use the equipment to help them remain in good standing as a non-profit organization with the State Attorney General's Office and the Internal Revenue Service. For more information, visit <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ohjcha/>.

Region 6

Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Madison, Perry, Pickaway, and Union Counties

Region 7

Auglaize, Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Logan, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby Counties

The **Miamisburg Historical Society** has begun a project to make their extensive research files more accessible to the public. The Society is working on a comprehensive index of life in Miamisburg back to the city's founding in 1790. The books will be available to visitors in the Society's Sweny Research Room. In conjunction with this project, the Society is also creating a comprehensive timeline of events in the city, answering such questions as when the first train came through, when the first electric lights arrived, and where the first swimming pool was. Members of the Society are being asked to contribute any information they may have about the city's history as well. To learn more, go to http://www.miamisburg.org/miamisburg_historical_society.htm.

Region 8

Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland, and Warren Counties

The **Clinton County Historical Society** is participating in the Kroger Community Rewards program. Last year, the Society received over \$100 from the program. Members are asked to register their Kroger Plus card online and select the Society as their designated organization in the Community Rewards section. Then, every time members use their card, Kroger donates a portion of eligible purchases to the Clinton County Historical Society. For more information, visit <http://clintoncountyhistory.org/>.

Region 9

Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton Counties

Museums in Ross County joined together in March to commemorate Ohio Statehood Day in Ohio's first capital city. On Saturday, March 2, the **Lucy Hayes Heritage Center**, the **Ross County Heritage Center**, the **David Nickens Heritage Center**, and **Adena Mansion & Gardens** were all open to the public free of charge. Special exhibits were on view at all the sites, including displays about the Civil War and War of 1812, early Ohio statehood, papers from Chillicothe's first mayor, and the city's African American history. For more information, go to <http://www.rosscountyhistorical.org/>, <http://www.lucyhayes.org>, or <http://www.adenamansion.com>.

Region 10

Belmont, Coshocton, Guernsey, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, and Washington Counties

Museums in Region 10 have been working hard to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Great 1913 Flood in Southeast Ohio. The **Pioneer & Historical Society of Muskingum County** opened a new exhibit at the Stone Academy. The **Muskingum County Library System** hosted displays and panel session and talks about the flood and its impact. Local businesses sponsored a series of 90-second spots about the community's flood stories that aired on local television, **WHIZ**. To learn more, visit www.muskingumhistory.org. **Historic Roscoe Village** in Coshocton also commemorated the flood's centennial with special tours, displays, and lectures about the effects of the flood waters in Roscoe and the resulting economic decline. For more, go to <http://www.roscoevillage.com/>.

Join the Ohio Local History Alliance...

...or connect a sister organization to the Alliance and ask its leaders to join in one of the following categories:

Organizational Member

Get six issues of *The Local Historian*, save when you register for our Alliance regional and statewide local history meetings, receive periodic email updates, and save on Ohio Historical Society services for organization, including speakers and customized training workshops. **Best of all, when you join the Alliance as an Organizational Member, your membership benefits all of your organization's staff and members**—they will all qualify for discounts on registration for the Alliance's regional and statewide meetings and when buying Alliance publications.

Operating budget:

Over \$200,000 a year:
\$100 (\$190 for 2)
\$100,000-\$200,000 a year:
\$75 (\$140 for 2)
\$25,000-\$100,000 a year:
\$60 (\$110 for 2)
Under \$25,000 a year:
\$35 (\$65 for 2)

Individual Member

Get six issues of *The Local Historian*, save when you register for our Alliance regional and statewide local history meetings, receive periodic email updates.

Affiliate: \$35 a year (\$65 for 2)
Individual: \$50 a year (\$90 for 2)
Student: \$20 a year

Business Member

\$100 a year (\$190 for 2)

Join at <http://www.ohiohistorystore.com/Ohio-LHA-formerly-OAHSM-C120.aspx>

CALENDAR 2013

May 16-17

Building Doctor Clinic, Hamilton. Attend a seminar and schedule an appointment to see what the Building Doctors can do for your pre-1955 building. For more information, see page 8.

May 21-23

Heritage Ohio Conference. For more information, see page 8.

June 01

Nomination Deadline – Ohio Historic Preservation Office Awards. For more information, see page 7.

June 05

Image Permanence Institute Webinar – Dealing with Summer Heat and Humidity. Just in time for summer, learn about the effects of heat and humidity on collections and ways you can control those effects in this free webinar. To register, visit www.ipisustainability.org.

June 9-13

National History Day. Ohio's state winners will compete in National History Day held on the campus of the University of Maryland. For more information, visit www.ohiohistory.org/historyday.

June 14-18

ALHFAM Conference. For more information, see page 8.

June 15

Application Deadline – AASLH Small Museums Annual Meeting Scholarship. For more information, see page 7.

June 19

AAM Webinar – Required Elements of a Museum Code of Ethics. For more information, see page 8.

June 20-21

AASLH Workshop – Exhibit Makeovers. Hosted by the Milwaukee (WI) County Historical Society, this workshop will teach attendees the basics of exhibits, including planning, organization, text writing, and design. For more information, visit www.aaslh.org/workshop.

July 14-17

Association of Midwest Museums Conference. This year's theme is Locally Grown, Community Created. Conference is in Madison, WI. For more information, visit www.midwestmuseums.org.

August 01

Nomination Deadline – Ohio Local History Alliance Outstanding Achievement Awards. For more information, see page 7.

Calendar items are chosen on the basis of available space and applicability to the largest number of our readers. We cannot include events mainly of local interest; for these we suggest local newspapers, broadcast media, Ohio Magazine, 1-800-BUCKEYE, and, if arts related, www.ArtsinOhio.com

News from the American Alliance of Museums

By Burt Logan, Executive Director, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus

As another season of regional meetings ends, I thank the hosts, the meeting organizers, OLHA's leadership, and the OHS Local History Office for your many hours of planning, coordination, and execution. Your continued dedication to Ohio History is an inspiration for us all.

If you attended the meeting in Region 3, 4, or 5, you heard me explain several recent initiatives by the American Alliance of Museums. Just as the former Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museum several years ago rethought its name and the services it provides on behalf of Ohio History, so too the American Association of Museums recently reevaluated itself – the results: a revised name (modeled on the Ohio Local History Alliance), and a refocusing of efforts in two areas.

The first is membership. Previously, AAM membership was based on the size of the museum's budget – the bigger the budget, the higher the membership fee. This has been replaced by a three-tiered structure. At the upper two levels, the more a museum pays, the more services and benefits it receives. Realizing that many smaller museums have limited funds, AAM created Tier One – “pay what you can afford” – and this means exactly what it says.

If you are not already a member of AAM, I encourage you to join. You will connect with and learn from others in the museum field, get a subscription to AAM's e-newsletters, and receive other

benefits to help your organization fulfill its mission. I believe your museum will benefit greatly by joining AAM; so much so that if you join at Tier 1 (pay what you can afford) and find after your first year you have not gotten your money's worth, I will personally refund your Tier 1 membership fee. How is that for a money-back guarantee?

In addition to revising its membership program, AAM took another look at accreditation. Now, instead of being the sole indicator of excellence, as it was previously, accreditation is the culmination of AAM's new Continuum of Excellence. How, you may wonder, does this apply to my organization? We all want our institutions to be the very best, given the resources that we have. The Continuum of Excellence lays out a process that any museum can follow as it seeks to improve its operations and the services it provides.

The first step is to take the “pledge of excellence,” which states: “My museum pledges that, in fulfillment of its educational mission, it will strive to operate according to national standards and best practices to the best of its abilities and in accordance with its resources.” This simple action will reaffirm for your organization that your museum takes seriously its responsibility to care for the heritage entrusted to it to the best of your ability. When you take this pledge you will also be counted among the thousands of other museums across the country that have done the same thing. When AAM can demonstrate that thousands of museums are committed to excellence, it helps to influence key decision makers. ■

ON
THE
WEB

PastPerfect Software's YouTube Channel

<http://www.youtube.com/pastperfectsoftware>

PastPerfect Software has a YouTube channel full of how-to videos. The videos include recordings on webinars offered by PastPerfect on getting the most out of their software. These webinars are on topics like “Simplifying Inventories,” “Managing Volunteer Hours,” and “Add New Items and Search Data.” They also have videos on other collections topics like sharing your collections online and using Facebook and blogs to promote what you have in your collections. There is even a video on how to get the most out of attending a webinar.

Need to Contact Us? *We at the Local History Office love hearing from you.*

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