



## OHRAB ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2025

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### **OHRAB Announces the Recipient of the 2025 OHRAB Achievement Award**

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) is proud to announce that the recipient of the 2025 OHRAB Achievement Award is the **Williams County Public Library Local History and Genealogy Center**.

The Williams County Public Library Local History and Genealogy Center is home to thousands of local history and genealogical resources. In the 1960s, the citizens of Bryan, Ohio, led by local historian Paul Van Gundy, collected hundreds of history books and photographs. By the early 2000s, the collection had outgrown its small space within the Bryan Public Library. The community came together to support the purchase of a historic bank building next door to the Williams County Public Library. The new building became the Local History and Genealogy Center department under the Williams County Public Library in 2009. Through generous donations, the collection has since expanded to include microfilm, maps, artifacts, and an extensive photographic archive.

Recently, the Local History and Genealogy Center has focused its efforts on digitization. The goal of this effort is to preserve the collection and to make it more accessible. The Center formed important partnerships to achieve this goal. First, working with Newspapers.com, the Center digitized all of its historic newspapers of Williams County. Seventeen different titles and a total of 690,052 pages were uploaded to Newspapers.com. The newspapers can be viewed for free at any Williams County Public Library branch.

The Center next formed a partnership with Ohio Memory, a statewide digital library program coordinated by the Ohio History Connection. The Center has scanned thousands of historic photographs in preparation for uploading the images to Ohio Memory. So far, the Center has uploaded over 900 digital images with new material being uploaded weekly. The Center's goal is to add its full photographic collection to Ohio Memory as well as maps, yearbooks, and newspapers. The digital collection can be viewed for free at:

<https://ohiomemory.org/digital/collection/p16007coll76>.

Jared Schnee, Local History and Genealogy Center Manager, says, "It is important to preserve this history so it can remain accessible to patrons across the globe. We are extremely grateful to have such a supporting community that maintains an interest in history."

OHRAB congratulates the Williams County Public Library for their accomplishments and wishes them continued success in their efforts to preserve the history of Ohio!

The Ohio Historical Advisory Board (OHRAB) is the central body for historical records planning in the state. The Board is funded by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Board members represent Ohio's public and private

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<http://www.ohrab.org>



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archives, records offices, and research institutions. For more information on OHRAB and its Ohio Archives Grant Program, visit <https://ohrab.org/>.