



COLUMBUS
METROPOLITAN
LIBRARY



Collecting History that's Happening Now

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Local History & Genealogy

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When does history begin?



Armistice Day?



V-J Day?



Kent State?



National Register of Historic Places?

How are Properties Evaluated?

To be considered eligible, a property must meet the [National Register Criteria for Evaluation](#). This involves examining the property's age, significance, and integrity.

Age and Integrity: Is the property old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and does it still look much the way it did in the past?

Significance: Is the property associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past? With the lives of people who were important in the past? With significant architectural history, landscape history, or engineering achievements? Does it have the potential to yield information through archeological investigation about our past?

Historic cars in Ohio?

Section 4503.181 | Historical motor vehicles.

Ohio Revised Code / Title 45 Motor Vehicles-Aeronautics-Watercraft / Chapter 4503 Licensing Of Motor Vehicles

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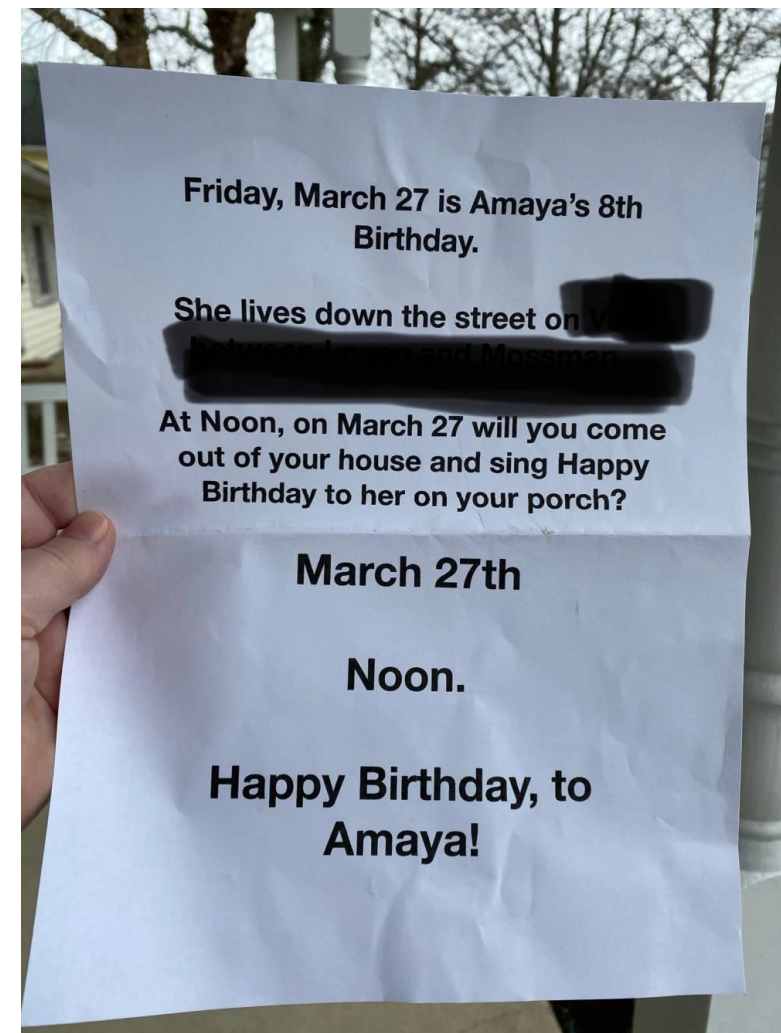
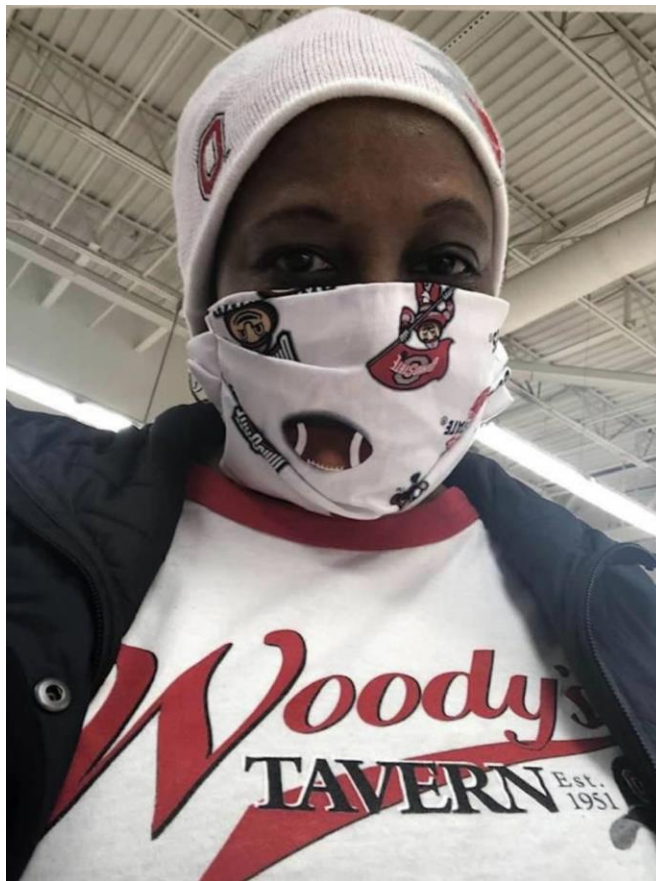
Effective: September 29, 2015 Latest Legislation: House Bill 64 - 131st General Assembly PDF: Download Authenticated PDF

(A) As used in this section, "historical motor vehicle" means any motor vehicle that is more than **twenty-five years old** and that is owned solely as a collector's item and for participation in club activities, exhibitions, tours, parades, and similar uses. A historical motor vehicle shall not be used for general transportation, but may be operated on the public roads and highways to and from a location where maintenance is performed on the vehicle.



Do you think my old
1997 Ford Escort should count?

You're a part of history



What will your successors wish you had saved?





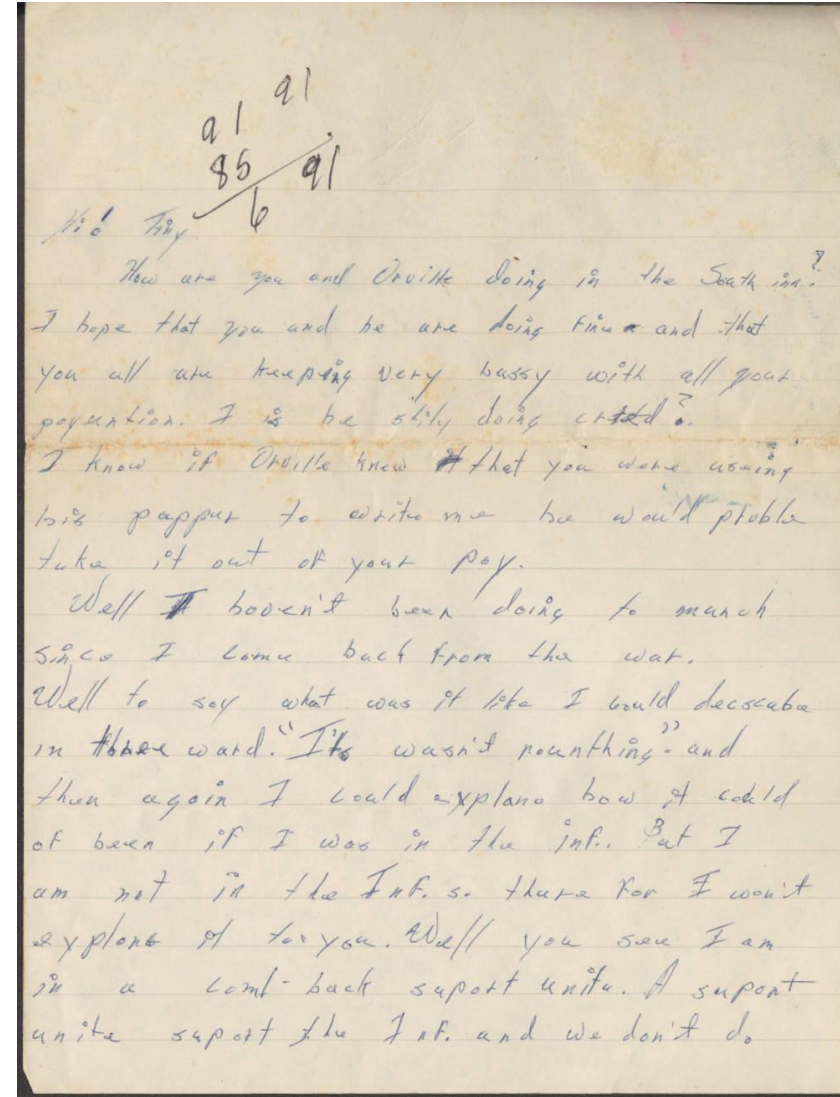
Convince people they matter

Because they do!!



Awesome collections

- Mary Willis, part of the Black Heritage collection
- Neal Coryell, News of the Columbus Gay and Lesbian Community
- Kojo Kamau, local photographer



...bring more awesome collections



- Spotlight program on Mary Willis's brother, another program hopefully in early 2025...
- All of Nicole's spotlight programs bring in new materials – images, documents, etc.
- Oral histories on LGTBQ experiences

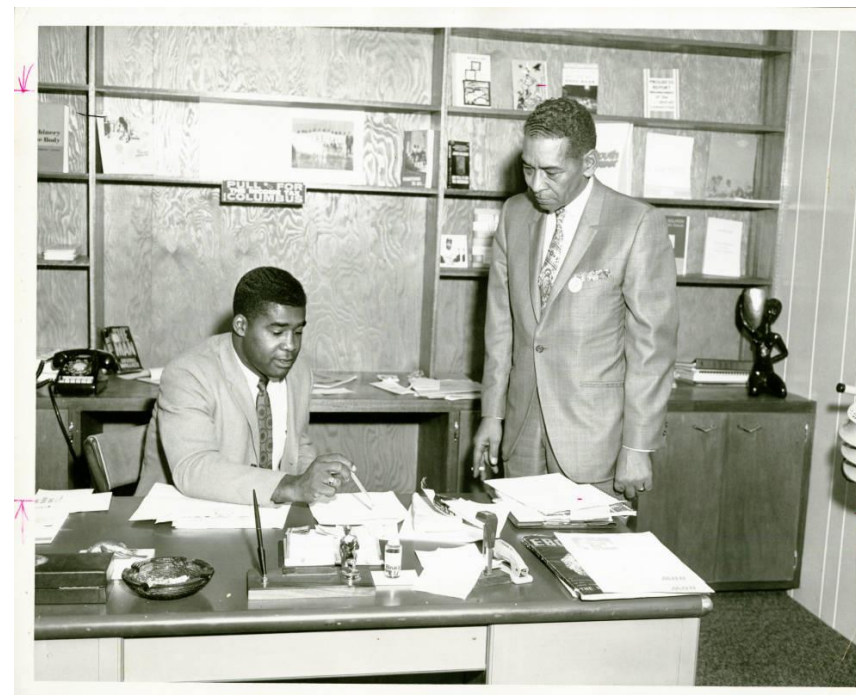
You can still say “No”

- Your archive is unlikely to need everyone’s baby pictures
- But you would be surprised how some customers describe their amazing photos!



Collection policy

- Ours:
 - “The Local History & Genealogy division is dedicated to preserving and providing access to local history and genealogy information of relevance to the people of Central Ohio.”
- If you don't have one, it's useful to create one
- This way you have something to blame if necessary and a clear idea of what you want to collect
- Many libraries and archives have theirs available online, if you're looking for inspiration



Donation forms and other legal matters



Just in case it needs to be said, you should have records of donors and their gifts, including signed documentation of their donation to your organization



What are we trying?



Oral Histories

- Smartphones make these really easy to record
- Microsoft Word creates a surprisingly good transcription
- We've trained staff at most of our branches on how to collect oral histories





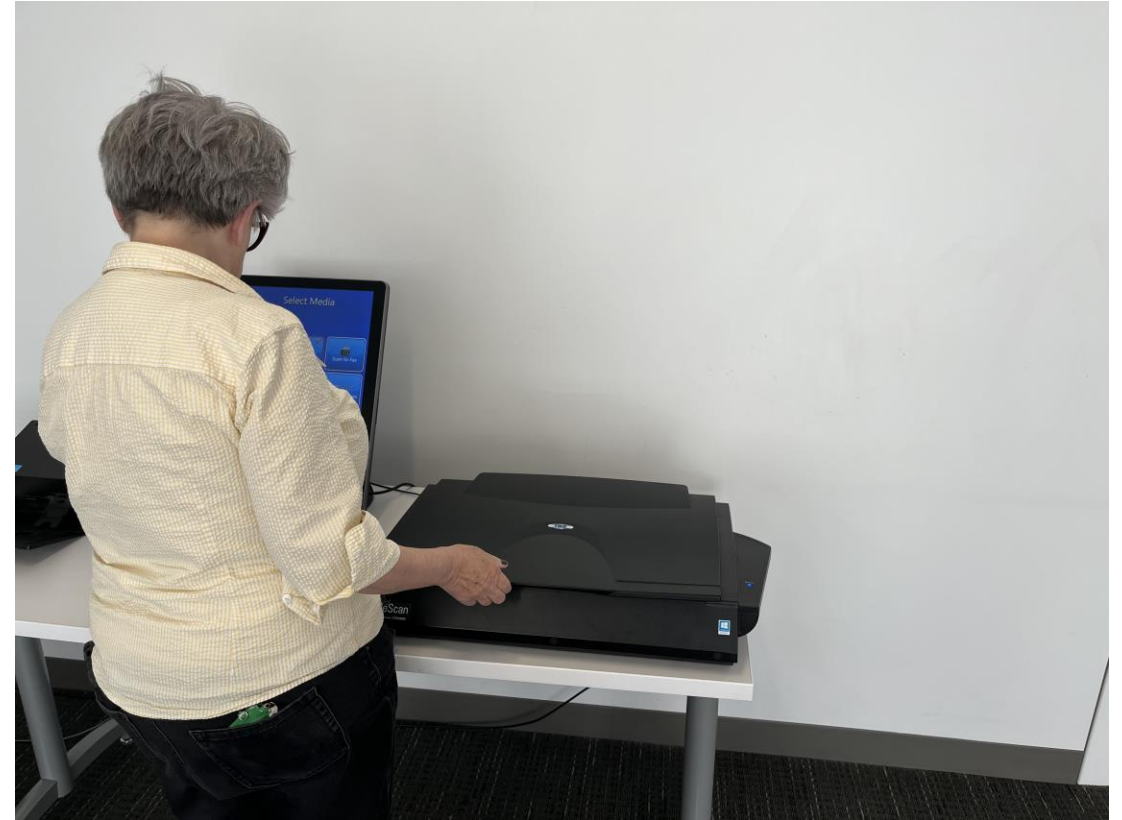
You can recruit people!

- My colleague Nicole Sutton reaches out to members of the local Black community to showcase their historic significance in her Black Heritage Collection Spotlight series
 - She gives a virtual program
 - ...which we record, creating an oral history!



Scan days

- We go to different branches and events with a portable scanner, and encourage people to bring their photos and documents
- These don't generally have high participation in the moment, but they raise awareness of what we do and what we're looking for – you!



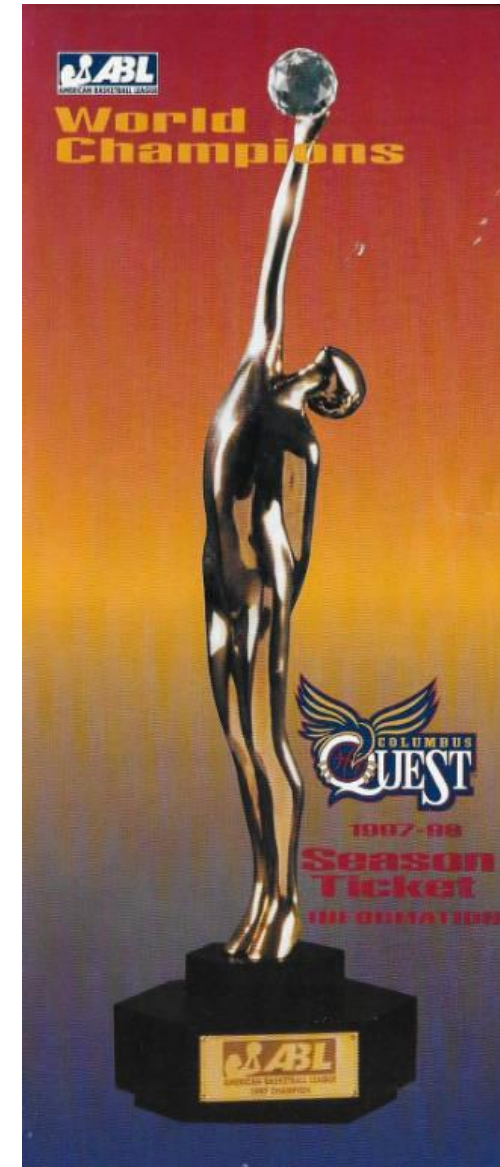


My Upload

- Thanks to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund, we were able to create an online tool to collect digitized donations from customers
- It's open source, and works in CONTENTdm, Omeka, Islandora, and other platforms
- The code is available here, and you are free to use it:
<https://github.com/buckeye-interactive/MyUpload>

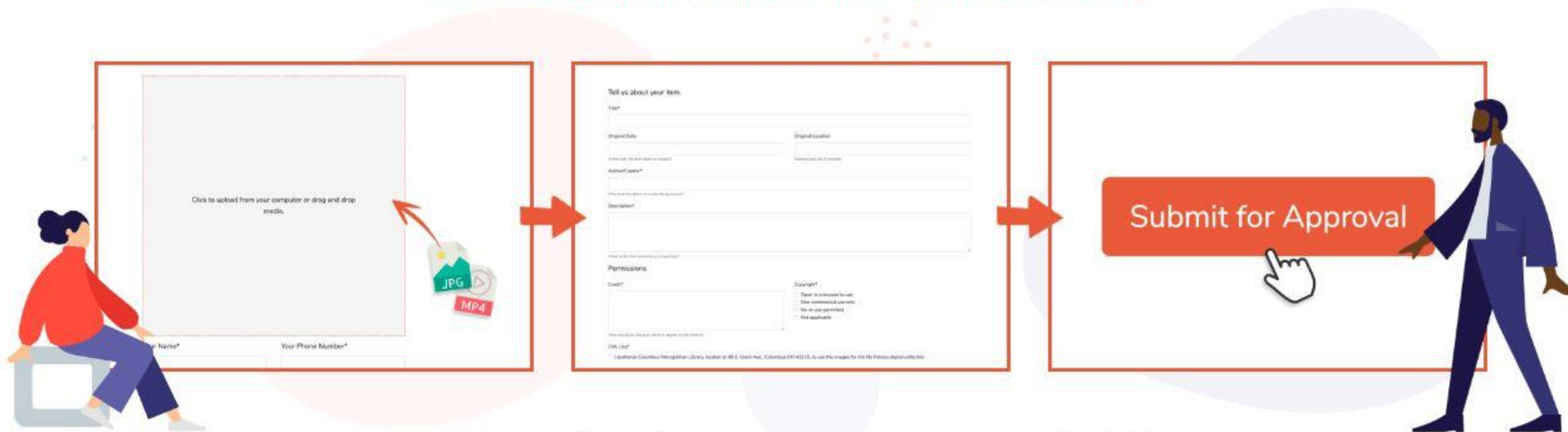
My Upload, continued

- Designed to be easy to use and understand
- Customers can upload, describe, and submit image, audio, and video files
- We get regular, but not overwhelming, donations



Welcome to My History Upload!

Help us document and preserve central Ohio's history.



Step 1:

Upload your items in the box above. Upload as many images/videos/audio files as you'd like. Accepted file formats are: .jpg .tiff .pdf .wav .mp3 .mp4 .doc .docx .m4a . The maximum uploaded file size is 200 MB. If your file is larger than 200 MB, please contact Local History & Genealogy staff at 614-645-2275.

Step 2:

Describe your items. Remember to hit submit after you upload your items in the box. The description screen will appear for each item.

Step 3:

Submit. A librarian will review your submission and let you know when it is approved.

Get Started



Panels and programs

We've had some success with programs that show the connections between the past and the present



Walking tours

We share laminated 11x17 photos of how things looked in the past as we walk. Our colleagues Tom and Doreen share how the history of a location has influenced its present.



Social media

My colleague Grace Freeman created an excellent series of “then and now” photos that we share on social media. She chooses some sites that feature more recent changes too.





Is history dying?

Where are the young people?





As our volunteer coordinator, no!

- We have interested volunteers of all generations
- One of our local high schools requires senior internships, and I get at least five emails a semester asking to work here – out of all the jobs not just in the library (23 branches), but in the entire city
- We have a waitlist for our volunteer opportunities, and it's always growing

History is for everyone



- Yes, there are many young people who love history and are willing to volunteer or work in history organizations – some might have trouble paying membership fees, though
- They sometimes have to work around class schedules, jobs, and families, but there are eager historians and/or they want to be a part of something that they think matters

Do they feel welcome?



- Would any part of their lives or experiences be eligible to be considered history by your organization?
- Who can see themselves in your archives?

Who is likely to be left out?

- Local LGBTQ movements and organizations are more likely to have formed after Stonewall (1969)
- Recent and not-so-recent immigrants and their children have valuable perspectives too
- Young people have seen some things too!





Attitudes towards change

- Which is better, the present or the past?



Keep your organization strong



- Whether this means new members, new visitors, or renewed interest
- Some history organizations are struggling because they don't have anyone to pass the torch to

Get people involved

- Reach out to other local organizations
- Can you go to your potential audience?
 - We're lucky to have foot traffic from people who are visiting the library for non-local history reasons
- Passion is contagious



Questions

