



OHRAB ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2021

OHRAB Announces the Recipient of the 2021 OHRAB Achievement Award

The Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB) is proud to announce that the recipient of the 2021 OHRAB Achievement Award is the **Muskingum County Records Center**.

In 2019, the Muskingum County Records Center began a partnership with Family Search to preserve the historic records of the Muskingum County Common Pleas Clerk of Courts Office and make the records more accessible. These include the Common Pleas Civil and Criminal files from 1840 to the early 1900s and the Common Pleas Domestic Court files to the late 1980s. Prior to this project, the records could only be viewed at the Records Center. The lack of an index also hindered access to the documents, which were damaged by inadequate storage conditions. During the project volunteers contributed over 40,000 hours of their time to unfold, flatten, clean, image, and properly store the original historic documents. Once the records were preserved, the Records Center staff indexed the records, making the original records easily accessible to the public for the first time. Family Search then uploaded the records to its website where the images are now available for free to all researchers.

With this award, OHRAB also honors the memory of Muskingum County Common Pleas Court Clerk of Courts Todd Bickle. Mr. Bickle was a believer in the citizen's right to access public records. He spearheaded the creation of the Records Center and remained its champion. Mr. Bickle initiated the project with Family Search and his office purchased the materials needed to preserve the historic records. Due to his untimely death, he did not see the project's completion, but his efforts will continue to benefit all Ohioans.

OHRAB congratulates the staff and volunteers of the Muskingum County Records Center 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 archives, records offices, and research institutions. For more information on OHRAB and its Ohio Archives Grant Program, visit <https://ohrab.org/>.