Akron-Summit County Public Library

Special Collections

Scene from Fantasy in F Minor*, 1990. Photo by J. J. Prekop Jr., Ohio Ballet Collection, Summit Memory.*

In this issue

History of the Ohio Ballet
by Rebecca Larson-Troyer, Librarian

In 1966, German-born dancer and renowned choreographer Heinz Poll visited Akron for the first time, setting in motion a series of events that would bring world-class professional ballet to the city for decades to come. For 38 seasons, the Ohio Ballet conveyed Poll's creativity and passion, along with the talents of a long line of brilliant dancers and behind-the-scenes masters, to audiences throughout the region and beyond.

The genesis of the Ohio Ballet in Akron was almost accidental. By his own admission, Poll accepted an invitation to the city after looking at a map and seeing Akron's relative proximity to his home in New York City. There he had a full life with partner and celebrated lighting designer Thomas Skelton, as well as a host of friends and colleagues. Surely none foresaw that a four-week stint teaching students at the University of Akron in the summer of '66 would give way to four decades in the Rubber City.

Repeated visits to Akron, new friendships and growing professional relationships led Poll and Skelton to cofound the Chamber Ballet in the city in 1968. (The Chamber Ballet became the professional "Ohio Chamber Ballet" in 1974, then simply "Ohio Ballet" in 1976, continuing in residence at the University of Akron.) Poll began traveling weekly between the east coast and Akron, choreographing new dances and working with students often late into the night. Breaking with convention, Poll created an expanded program with 10 pm and midnight performances at the University's Kolbe Hall, attracting full audiences of students with ballets set to classical and rock music.

Poll's idea to bring ballet to all audiences through free outdoor performances, a lasting tradition of the Ohio Ballet, began with the 1970 summer festival debut downtown on Main Street. The company performed at festivals throughout the summer, both in and around northeast Ohio, as well as cities around the country, filling the calendar with shows that brought audiences to their feet. After an appearance at Brooklyn College in 1979, *New York Times* writer Anna Kisselgoff described the Ohio Ballet as "the best news in dance [that] season." The following year, the company was invited to perform at a summer festival in Italy, and in 1986, Ohio Ballet completed a tour of Central and South American cities. All the while, the company continued to "crisscross the country from the north to the

south and from the east to the west coasts, including Alaska and Hawaii," as Poll once wrote.

Dance was not only popular in the 1970s and '80s, but well funded through federal and foundation grants and community support. By the early 1990s, cuts to the National Endowment for the Arts, which affected the availability of federal grants and impacted funding of arts organizations such as the Ohio Arts Council, changed the dance festival landscape. Fewer tour dates, declining audiences, waning membership and ill-managed finances were taking their toll on the Ohio Ballet. The loss of Poll's partner of 30 years and Ohio Ballet cofounder Thomas Skelton in 1994 was significant. Poll described the way "only Tom was able to convert a gymnasium into a temporary theater." Skelton's accomplishments in the field of lighting design had earned him several Tony Award nominations, and his association with esteemed institutions such as the New York City Ballet and Yale University lent an additional air of prestige to the Akron company. Poll's own retirement from the University of Akron and the Ohio Ballet in 1999 closed the decade with some uncertainty for the company's future. Poll had choreographed over 60 original works and steered the artistic direction and guiding principles of the Ohio Ballet for 31 years.

The Ohio Ballet was fortunate in its continued partnership with the University of Akron, but the transition to new artistic director Jeffrey Graham Hughes was far from smooth. Despite his commitment, his vision for the company was questioned at times by critics, fans and even dancers, and he was taking the helm of the operation in challenging times. The Ohio Ballet had long relied heavily on the dedication of patrons and volunteers, as well as the sponsorship of local corporations. These things proved in short supply in an economically challenged city with a population that had declined by more than 20% since the Ohio Ballet's inception. Compounded by financial woes, the division amongst board members, uncultivated relationships with donors and failing to capture the interest of younger audiences were all cited as contributing factors in the eventual demise of the Ohio Ballet. In August 2006, Ohio Ballet closed its final, truncated season with farewell performances in front of more than 1,500 at Goodyear Heights Metro Park. The company's 38th season ended just months after friends, colleagues, students and fans grieved the death of Heinz Poll at age 80.

In 2007, with the support of the City of Akron, financial support from local foundations and the tireless work of a few Ohio Ballet champions, the Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival debuted, keeping the tradition of free summer ballet performances for the public alive and well in Akron. Four consecutive weekends in the summer, outdoor performances bring ballet to Akron's parks and plazas through the accomplished dancers of four different ballet companies. While named in Poll's honor, the festival exposes audiences to the choreography and artistry of other companies while still preserving Poll's legacy. Poll's original works continue to grace the festival stage, recreated with exactness through the help of dancers who worked closely with Poll, some to whom he bequeathed rights to several of his works. The Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival marks its twelfth year this summer, continuing a 45-year tradition of free dance in Akron's parks. For more details about the festival and scheduled dates, visit http://akrondancefestival.org.

The Ohio Ballet enriched the region for four decades and left behind a legacy of producing classical ballet for everyone, charming both critics and novices alike. The company did so without condescending or "play[ing] down" to audiences, as Poll called it, remarking about a performance that had industrial workers "using words like 'Balanchine' and 'pointe shoes' as if they were lifelong ballet fans." Ohio Ballet's tenure as an artistic force in the city has been preserved through the multitude of performance films, tens of thousands of photographs, an exhaustive collection of programs and archival records that capture the company's history from beginning to end. Donated to Special Collections in the early 2000s, the expansive Ohio Ballet Collection remains one of our premier collections, one we are honored and privileged to have occupy our shelves.

Company at Cascade Plaza, 1971. Photo by Ott Gangl, Ohio Ballet Collection, Summit Memory.

Ohio Ballet in DPLA

In 2017, Special Collections received a grant from the John S. Knight Foundation to digitize over 2,000 Ohio Ballet photographs for inclusion in the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA). DPLA is an all-digital library that serves to make historical materials from America's cultural institutions – photographs, books, maps, news footage, oral histories, personal letters, museum objects, artwork, government documents, and more – available online and searchable in one place. More than 20 states are already participating in DPLA, with Ohio launching the Ohio Digital Network this past spring. The Ohio Ballet Collection in DPLA joins the millions of items already available digitally, bringing a local treasure to national and international audiences. The collection includes images selected from approximately 180 linear feet of materials pertaining to the history, performances and operations of the Ohio Ballet from 1968-2007, as well as additional photographs selected from the Ott Gangl Ohio Ballet Collection, a collection of approximately 20,000 negatives, contact sheets and photographs, 1968-1992. The stunning photographs in this digital collection include the work of photographers Ott Gangl and J. J. Prekop, Jr. We are grateful to the State Library of Ohio, the Ohio Digital Network, and the John S. Knight Foundation, as well as Mr. Gangl and Mr. Prekop, for helping to make the digitization of Ohio Ballet photographs possible.
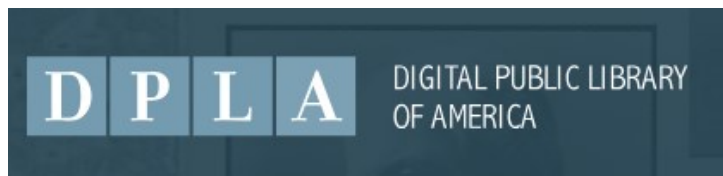
Getting to Know...Heinz Poll and Thomas Skelton
by Cheri Goldner, Librarian

Akron's first professional dance company, Ohio Ballet, was the collaboration of two talented men who were born on different continents and met on a third.

Heinz Poll in the 1980s. Photo by Ott Gangl, Ohio Ballet Collection, Summit Memory.

Heinz Poll was born in Oberhausen, Germany on March 18, 1926. At the age of 16, he left home to serve two years in the German Navy during World War II. He'd hoped to study theater at Folkwang School in Essen after his service, but upon visiting the school just after the war's end, he learned that teachers and classes were still being determined. Not wanting to leave without some indication of acceptance, Poll decided to audition for the dance division that very morning. "I would have become a janitor in the theater, anything," he once said in an interview. Dance was perhaps more fitting for Poll since he had been a figure skater as a child. When his family could no longer pay tuition after six months, the school awarded him a full scholarship, allowing him to move away from home and focus on his studies.

That focus paid off, with Poll's career spanning decades and crossing continents. He was a soloist in the Municipal Theatre in Goettingen and Berlin State Opera Ballet in Germany; a principal dancer, teacher and choreographer for the National Ballet of Chile; a dancer, choreographer, and ballet master at Ballet de Jeunesse Musicales de France; and a teacher at the National Academy of Ballet in New York City. It was during his eleven years dancing with the National Ballet in Chile that Poll met acclaimed lighting designer Thomas Skelton, who would become both his life and creative partner.

Born September 24, 1927 in North Bridgton, Maine, Thomas Reginald Skelton, Jr. earned a B.A. from Middlebury College Theatre Department in 1950. After moving to New York, he studied dance with Martha Graham and José Limón. He started his lighting career serving as an apprentice to Jean Rosenthal at the American Dance Festival and later worked as lighting designer and stage manager for Robert Joffrey's new

dance company.

Throughout his career, Skelton also designed lighting for the America Ballet Theater, New York City Ballet, Paul Taylor Dance Company, Boston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, the Ray Ballet of London and Ballet Folklorico of Mexico. He was known as well for his work on Broadway, where he lit stars such as Katherine Hepburn, Claudette Colbert, Lena Horne, Rex Harrison, Angela Lansbury and Richard Burton and received Tony nominations for his work on *Indians*, *All God's Chillun Got Wings* and *The Iceman Cometh*. He shared his knowledge by teaching at Yale University and New York Studio and Forum of Stage Design and by publishing "The Handbook for Dance Stagecraft" in *Dance Magazine* between October 1955 and December 1956.

While the couple was living in New York, Poll was invited to teach at the University of Akron. In 1967, he and Katherine B. Firestone founded the Dance Institute of the University of Akron as a training school. He later founded the Ohio Chamber Ballet, an eight-member student ensemble, that in 1976 became the Ohio Ballet. Under Poll and Skelton's leadership, this Akron dance company would eventually visit nearly all of the United States and at least eight countries. Poll himself choreographed 62 works for the company, and Skelton designed lighting for them all.
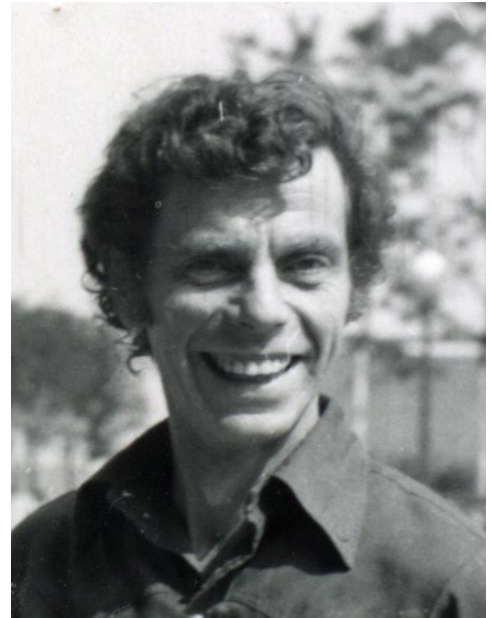
Undated photo of Tom Skelton by Ott Gangl from the Ohio Ballet Collection.

Skelton died of lung cancer on August 9, 1994 at the age of 66. Poll carried on without him for five more years, retiring in the spring of 1999. He spent his retirement living in Cleveland Heights in a small house at the back of Ohio Ballet colleague Barbara Schubert's property and writing his memoir, for which Schubert served as his editor. He continued work on it up until his death of renal disease on April 30, 2006. *A Time to Dance: The Life of Heinz Poll* was published by the University of Akron Press in 2008.

DNA and Genetic Genealogy Featuring CeCe Moore

Join us on Saturday, July 28 in the Main Library Auditorium for an informative all-day program of lectures on DNA and genetic genealogy! CeCe Moore is an independent professional genetic genealogist and media consultant who is considered an innovator in the use of DNA for genealogy and unknown parentage research. She has been the genetic genealogy expert and scriptwriter for the PBS Television documentary series *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* since 2013. She is the founder of The DNA Detectives, the co-founder of the Institute for Genetic Genealogy, and, as a leading educator in her field, she is an instructor for a number of courses and conferences throughout North America.

CeCe collaborates regularly with ABC's *20/20*, showcasing her cutting-edge work reuniting individuals of unknown parentage with biological relatives through genetic genealogy. She has also appeared as a genetic genealogy expert on *CBS This Morning, Nightline, Good Morning America, The Dr. Oz Show, Sunday Today with Willie Geist, The Doctors* and *Finding Your Roots*.

Program Schedule:
9:30–9:45 Introductions

9:45–10:45 The Power of DNA: Genetic Genealogy Basics
Understanding the basics of the four types of DNA and three types of genetic genealogy tests is essential to successfully applying genetic genealogy to furthering your research. Explore the power of DNA to discover more about genealogy and extend family tree branches. This presentation helps to lay the foundation for genealogists interested in adding genetic genealogy to their skill set.

10:45–11:15 Break

11:15–12:15 Who Am I: Exploring Ethnicity Estimates
Addressing the question of "Who am I?" through DNA testing that provides ethnicity percentages is becoming a popular research tool for genealogists and even a pastime for the general public. It is important to understand the strengths and weaknesses of this aspect of DNA testing and the reasons behind them. Attendees will learn how to better interpret and analyze these results and what they can and cannot tell you about your family tree.

12:15–1:30 Lunch on your own

1:30–2:30 I Have My Results, Now What?
Receiving your DNA results can be overwhelming and leave you wondering what to do next. We will discuss how to navigate the sites, interpret the results from the three major companies, understand key genetic genealogy terms and the steps to determining the relationships with your DNA cousins.

2:30–3:00 Break

3:00–4:00 Breaking Through Genealogical Brick Walls with DNA
Genetic genealogy has tremendous potential for resolving age-old genealogical questions and extending our pedigrees. Learn how to use your DNA results to enhance your documentary research. We will explore the most successful techniques for identifying your lost ancestors.

Co-sponsored by the Special Collections Division and the Summit County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society, the program is free and open to the public, and parking is free in the High-Market parking deck. To register or for more information, contact the Special Collections Division at 330-643-9030 or speccollections@akronlibrary.org.
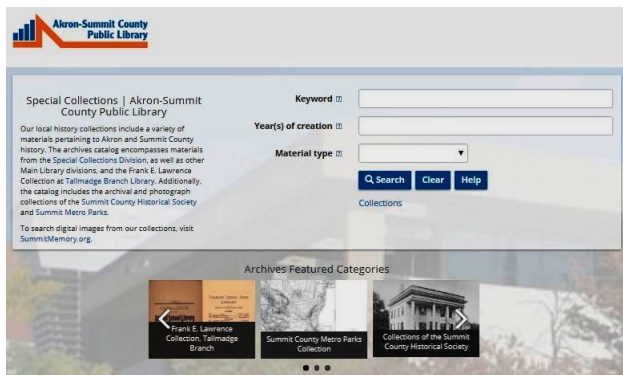
## Special Collections Debuts New Archives Catalog
by Cheri Goldner, Librarian

For more than ten years, researchers from around the world have been able to search archival collections held by ASCPL using the Local History Database. The Local History Database had its roots in the 2002 Lawrence Collection Indexing Project, in which a small group of volunteers led by Jim Mackey began entering records for materials within the Lawrence Collection at Tallmadge Branch Library into an Access database.

Library staff and volunteers then began adding records for items held in Special Collections at Main Library, including the collections of the Summit County Historical Society of Akron, Ohio and Summit Metro Parks. The database went "live" in 2007 and has appeared among our list of "Genealogy & Local History" research

databases ever since. After more than fifteen years of use, we have retired the Access database and are excited to announce the new Archives Catalog. The Archives Catalog uses Eloquent Archives, a mobile-friendly archives collections management system by Eloquent Systems, Inc. that streamlines collections processing for staff and makes materials more quickly accessible to the public. Users access the Archives Catalog just as they did the old database, using the database links under the Research tab that appears at the top of most library webpages.
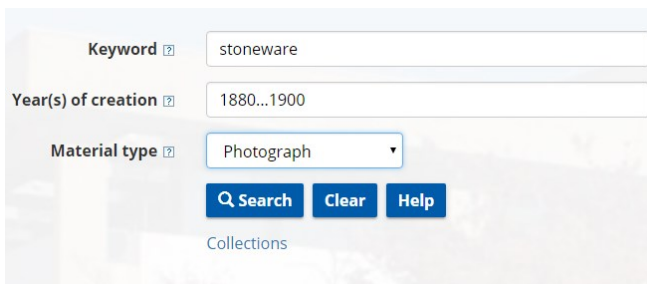

The Archives Catalog allows users to search by keyword, year(s) of creation, material type or any combination of these. (Be sure to click the question mark to the right of the year field to see the correct format to use.) The blue "Help" button under the search boxes provides further search tips, such as using an asterisk in the keyword field to do a wildcard search or putting words within quotes to do an exact phrase search. A small "Collections" link under the blue buttons allows users to browse an alphabetical list of our larger collections.

Unlike our old database, users are notified when a search does not return any results. When they do get results, the Archives Catalog functions much more like our library catalog, allowing users to save items to a list or browse other items associated with the same name or subject headings with the click of the mouse button. Finding aids for larger collections are also more easily accessible, with links provided within the database records for those collections. Researchers can use the icons found in the lower right of each record to share a link to the record via email or social media or use the "Request" link in the upper right corner to send an email to Special Collections staff requesting more information about the item or collection.
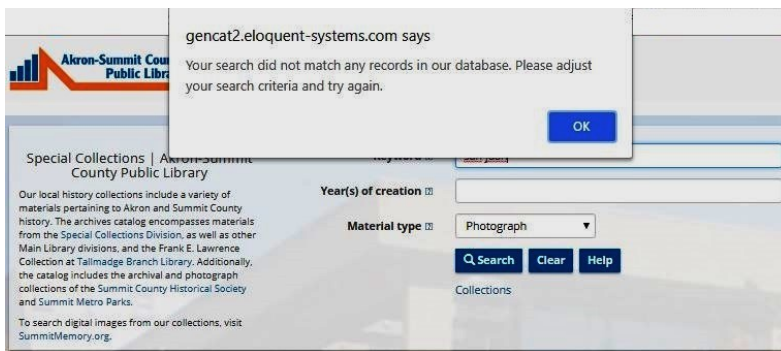
We are very excited about this new resource and encourage researchers to give it a try. As always, if you have any questions about using it, give us a call or send us an email.
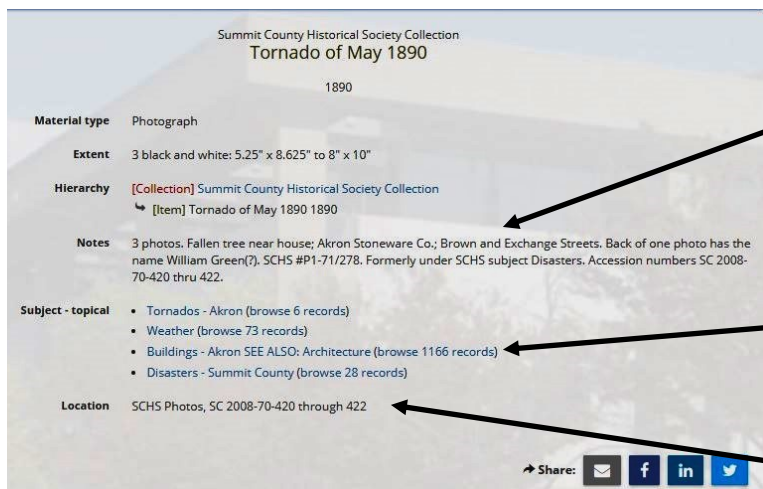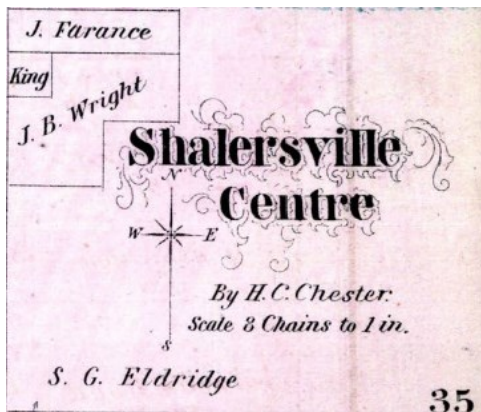

The "Scope and Content" or "Notes" fields will often have a description of the item that will help you decide if you'd like to view the original. It may also have archival identifiers helpful to our staff.

Click on subject headings to find other related items of interest.

The location tells us where we'll be able to find it in our archival storage area.

Shalersville Centre, *from* Combination Atlas Map of Portage County, Ohio, *1874*.

Online Resources For Mahoning and Portage Counties

by Iris Bolar, Librarian

Mahoning and Portage counties have a number of online records and guides for genealogists. This article will share some of the free online resources available.

The Mahoning County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society has created a directory of cemeteries by city on its website. While the directory doesn't link to burials, it does indicate which of the society's publications include a cemetery's burial listings. The website also includes a page dedicated to military veterans who served before World War I listed by burial location. Poland Township offers researchers searchable burial listings in Poland Center Cemetery and Lowellville Cemetery. Graves in Tod Homestead Cemetery can also be searched online. The blog of the Melnick Medical Museum provides information about Base Hospital 31, which was organized in Youngstown in 1917 and staffed by volunteers of the Youngtown area medical community. The complete photo album about the hospital is on the Youngstown State University Archives and Special Collections Facebook page.

Youngstown State University also offers online access to transcribed interviews of its Oral History Collection and to the profiles and oral histories on Steel Valley Voices. The Oral History Collection preserves the narratives of northeastern Ohioans on a variety of topics, while Steel Valley Voices, a project of the university's Center for Working-Class Studies, consists of eighteen collections related to the ethnic communities of Mahoning Valley. Lastly, an independent personal website, The Youngstown Genealogy Website, offers various transcribed records.
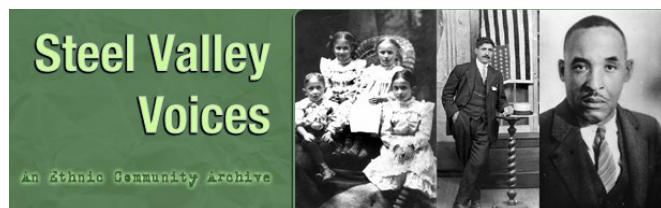
The Portage County Historical Society's Scrapbook Index helps researchers locate individuals found in over 180 scrapbooks. The society also has an index to a scrapbook of newspaper clippings of Portage County marriages, currently covering up to 1898, and a list of county cemeteries. The Kent Historical Society and Museum provides brief biographies of the city's pioneer women, biographies of the Kent Family and digitized images from its archive. During World War II and other wars, the Ravenna Arsenal (officially the Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant) employed many area civilians. Newsletters with employee news and a plant photo album are digitized online. Kent State University also has genealogy resources. The university yearbook, *The Chestnut Burr*, is digitized from 1914 through 1985. Although the following Portage County records are not digitized online, researchers should know that they are housed in the Special Collections and Archives at Kent State University: directories for Portage County, Kent, and Ravenna (1918-2015) and Portage County schools (1936-1993/94); several Portage County high school yearbooks (1931, 1953-1967); and regional history collections.

Several Mahoning and Portage newspapers have been digitized and can be accessed for free online through Ohio Memory and Chronicling America: *The Kent Tribune* (1917-1929), *The Mahoning Dispatch* (1877-1881 and 1908-1921), *The Ohio Star* (1852-1854), *The Portage County Democrat* (1859-60, 1863-64), *The Portage Sentinel* (1845-54 and 1861-62), *The Weekly Portage Sentinel* (1854-1861), and *Youngstownske' Slovenske' noviny =Youngstown Slovak News* (1920-1936). The *Youngstown Vindicator* from the 1890s to 1980s is on Google News Archive. Internet Archive is a source for a few directories and county histories such as the *Farm Journal Farmers Directory of Portage County, Ohio* (1915), *Youngstown City Directory* (1886-7), *Portage Heritage* (1957), *History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley* (1921), and *History of Portage County, Ohio* (1885).

200 Years of Norton Township
by Barbara Leden, Librarian

The childhood home of Frank A. Seiberling, founder of Goodyear, in the former hamlet of Western Star (now Norton). Also called the Pillar House, it was built in 1831. Photograph from the Summit County Historical Society Collection, Summit Memory.

A celebration is in the works to commemorate 200 years of Norton Township. This bicentennial celebration will be held primarily during the week of July 22-29, with parades, games, tours, music, and fireworks all a part of the festivities. Many events will be held at Columbia Woods Park.

While the schedule of events will help the community celebrate today, the township also has a rich history worth remembering. It was named after Birdseye Norton, a wealthy merchant from Goshen, Connecticut who was also a cousin to David Hudson, founder of Hudson. While he never lived here, he was the principal landowner of the township. Lucius V. Bierce's *Historical Reminiscences of Summit County* notes that this area was originally part of Wolf Creek Township, which included parts of Medina County. The first two pioneers, James Robinson and John Cahow, settled on the land in 1810. Norton Township was established in 1818 and was said to have the finest land for agricultural purposes. In 1825, the area's first coal mine began operation in the southwestern corner of the township near the hamlet of Sherman. In the nineteenth century, Norton Township was comprised of seven hamlets: Norton Center, Western Star, Loyal Oak, Hametown, Sherman (also known as Dennison Station), Johnson's Corners, and New Portage.

Before European settlers arrived, Native Americans had a route through this area called the Scioto Trail. Also known as the Great Trail, it was used for trade, migration and warfare by these first inhabitants. The trail ran through the northeast corner of the township to Johnson's Corners. Early settlers utilized stagecoaches for travel, but with the emergence of the Ohio and Erie Canal, travelers and supplies had a water route. The railroad, with a station stop in the New Portage area, provided an even speedier mode of transport.
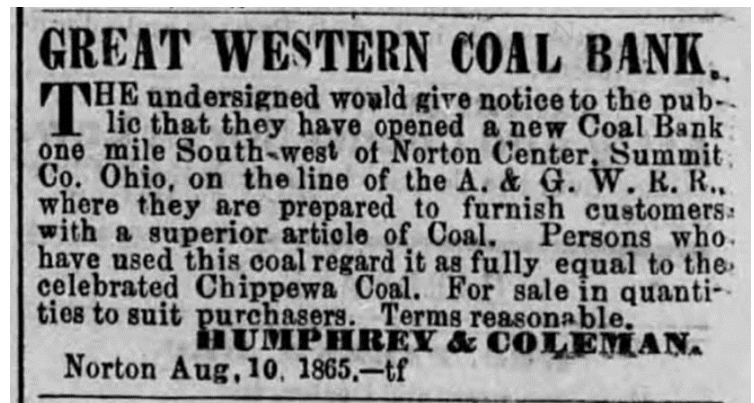
Summit County Beacon, August 24, 1865.

The township's first settlers practiced farming and started businesses such as sawmills, gristmills, tanneries, and blacksmith shops. One of these settlers, Nathan Seiberling, bought land on what is now Greenwich Road, built a farmstead and later started a sawmill. His sons, Frank and Charles, also had mechanical ingenuity and would go on to become successful in the industrial world. In 1898, they organized the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, which would grow to be one of the largest rubber companies in the world. Another local entrepreneur, Edwin Young, would go on to use his inventive skills to devise machinery to manufacture valves and paper products, eventually starting the Ohio Match Company in Wadsworth.

The Knecht Cider Mill, 1962. From the Akron Beacon Journal Photograph Collection, Summit Memory.

Several historic buildings still stand in Norton Township. They include the L.V. Bowers General Store (1828), the Pillar House or Seiberling Farm (1831), Wolf Creek Tavern (1840), Knecht Cider Mill (1867), Grace United Church of Christ (1885), and Trinity Lutheran Church (1885). The Norton Historical Society has more information on these historic locations.

Norton Township became a village in 1961 and a city in 1969. Today, Norton is primarily a residential community with hints of the past in its country and farm atmosphere. It is close to the amenities of two larger cities which offer cultural and economic opportunities.

Be sure to check out Norton Bicentennial Celebration on Facebook to keep up with event developments.

MyHeritage Library Edition: Another Tool in the Genealogy Toolbox
by Victoria Ramey, Public Service Assistant

You may have recently noticed a change in our genealogical databases. No, your eyes aren't fooling you, WorldVitalRecords has been replaced with MyHeritage Library Edition. MyHeritage Library Edition, which is available from home with a valid ASCPL card, gives patrons access to more than 6 billion historical records from around the world. These records include census records, vital statistics, marriage records, directories, yearbooks, newspapers, and much more. It also includes access to millions of family trees created by MyHeritage members and FamilySearch's unified, collaborative Family Tree. These may help provide information to fill in the missing gaps in your own trees. As always, when looking at online trees created by other researchers, check sources to confirm the information that they have collected.


An example of a transcribed baptism record in MyHeritage Library Edition.

MyHeritage Library Edition can be searched with relative ease by using a basic search or an advanced search with more options to limit by type of event, family members' names, or keywords. You can also begin by choosing a specific geographical location by using a clickable map. Once a name search is underway, you can further refine it by stating what kinds of records you are looking for, such as census records or newspapers. When a filter is chosen, it will give you records that fall only into that specific category.

The major genealogy databases such as Ancestry, FamilySearch, and MyHeritage offer access to a wide range of records and information. There's a great deal of overlap between them, but they also offer unique content. Using multiple databases when doing research is a good strategy. One may not have access to a specific record, and another may.

The Special Collections Division is here to help you learn how to navigate MyHeritage Library Edition or any of our online genealogy databases.

Akron-Summit County Public Library

New Books
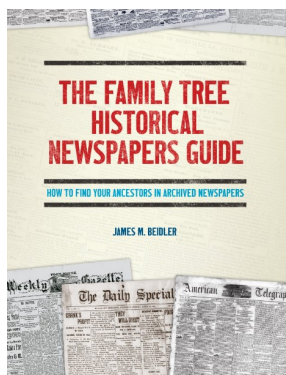
Historical newspapers are a unique and unparalleled source for information on individuals and families. These valuable chronicles are becoming easier to find and use. Let James M. Beidler lead you through the research process in *The Family Tree Historical Newspapers Guide*.
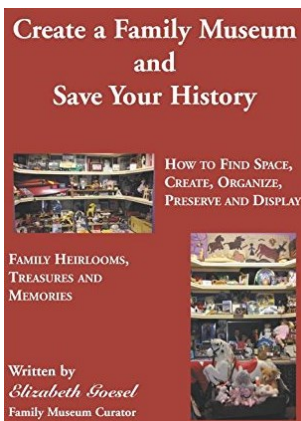
Elizabeth Goesel puts her experience as a fine arts dealer, proprietor of an art gallery, and docent of a fine arts museum into *Create a Family Museum and Save Your History*. It's filled with advice and resources to help you organize and preserve family heirlooms while giving them the display space they deserve.

For more recently added titles, be sure to see the current New Books list on our website.

Remembering 1968

When Akron's History of Race Relations Went into the Streets: The Wooster Avenue Disturbances
Tuesday, July 17, 6 pm
Odom Boulevard Branch Library

Ten years ago, we observed the 40th anniversary of this pivotal episode in Akron's history with an article in *Past Pursuits* recalling the harrowing events.

This July, we will recognize the 50th anniversary with a special program at the Odom Boulevard Branch Library featuring a lecture by former chairman of the board of the Summit County Historical Society, Dave Lieberth. We invite you to stay afterward for discussion and to share your memories of this time.

For more information, contact Theresa Boware, Manager, Odom Boulevard Branch Library, at 330-434-8726 or odom@akronlibrary.org.

Summit County OGS Events

For more information, see http://summitogs.org.

Beginner's Luck
Presented by Mary Ann Horak
Saturday, September 15, 1:30-3:30 pm
Main Library
Summit County OGS Vice President Mary Ann Horak will lead us through her own *Who Do You Think You Are?*-style journey uncovering interesting ancestors and forgotten stories. Mary Ann will share what she discovered and some of the research tools she used.

Woman with Ohio National Guard troops, July 18, 1968. Photo from the Akron Remembers 1968 Collection, Summit Memory.

Looking for the Special Collections Main Library class schedule?
Download our July-December class flyer for current listings and descriptions.

Akron-Summit County
Public Library

Dave Lieberth Video Collection to be Digitized
by Mary Plazo, Division Manager

Thank You

Earlier this year, the Akron-Summit County Public Library received over $12,000 in grant funding from the Akron Community Foundation (ACF) to digitize an important video collection donated to the Special Collections Division by Akron historian Dave Lieberth. These funds were made possible by the Akron Digital Media Center, the Charles E. and Mary K. Booth Family Fund, and the John A. McAlonan Fund.

The Lieberth video collection consists of 332 videotapes. They contain footage used in the Time Warner Cable production *Wheels of Fortune*, as well as *An Akron Time Capsule* and *Reinventing Akron*: *Stories of a Generation*. Produced for ACF in 2001, *Reinventing Akron* features interviews with eighteen recipients of the Bert Polsky award. These oral histories alone account for the largest single collection of original material about the development of Akron between 1945 and 2000.

The urgent need to preserve these tapes, originally recorded in Betacam SP format, was becoming more apparent as they began to show signs of deterioration. Now, with the help of grant funding, these tapes can be transferred into a digital format that will preserve them and allow the recordings to be accessible to the public. A plan will also be created to reach out to educators, students, and other historical organizations and cultural institutions to promote this resource. The preservation of this particular archive will help save the collective memories of significant figures in the community that exist in no other location and in no other form.

The Special Collections Division extends our sincere thanks to Dave Lieberth and the Akron Community Foundation for their tremendous support of this valuable collection.

Dave Lieberth has been a driving force in the preservation of Akron's history for many years. He served as Deputy Mayor of Akron 2002-2012 and was elected chairman of the board of the Summit County Historical Society in 2014.

We would like to thank the following for their generous donations:

David McCann for *Sally Wister's Journal: A True Narrative*.

Suzanne Pitcairn for 1929 West High School yearbook.

Dave Roberts for 1938 Stow-Tallmadge-Munroe Falls-Silver Lake Directory.

David C. Smith for National Society Sons and Daughters of the Pilgrims lineage books, Vols. 4-6.

Chris Stuckman for *The Film Buff's Bucket List* by Chris Stuckman.

Tim Weckbacher for 1975-1984 Central Hower High School yearbooks.

Patricia Wilkins for *Sisters of the Soil: West Virginia Land Girls on the World War II Farm Front* by Patricia H. Wilkins.

TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE

RUBBER CITY
TELEPHONE
ANSWERING SERVICE

24-HOUR SERVICE

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LOUISE PORTER,
Owner

Heavy sleeper in the summer heat? Itching to pile the family in a station wagon and cruise out to Yellowstone? In the late 1960s, you could depend on Louise Porter to jolt you from slumber or put your life on hold.
Akron Beacon Journal, *July 5, 1967.*

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