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Under previous Historical Records Preservation Grant programs, ISHRAB awarded grants in amounts ranging from $500 to $5,000. Projects have included digitizing a rare and fragile glass-plate negative collection; transferring archival enclosures and boxes to re-house paper documents, photographs and negatives; hiring a preservation specialist to conduct a preservation assessment for a collection of 19th-century original, oversized maps of Illinois towns and counties; and expanding and strengthening a small college's local history archives.

Grant proposals will be accepted beginning May 15, 2013, with the deadline for submission of May 31. The official grant cycle will run September 1, 2013, through August 31, 2014. Actual starting and ending dates for individual projects may vary within those parameters. Grant award winners will be announced in August. For more information and application instructions, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com (click Departments, Illinois State Archives, Illinois Historical Records Advisory Board) or call 217-782-3492.

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Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Archivist

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75 years ago...

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ILLOIS STATE ARCHIVES
Margaret Cress Norton Building
Capital Complex • Springfield, IL 62756 • 217-782-4882 • Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. • Closed state holidays.
Archivists receive Lake County naturalization records

In January, the Lake County Circuit Clerk’s office contacted the Illinois State Archives regarding its collection of late 19th- and early 20th-century naturalization records. The records dating back to the 1860s had been housed in the Circuit Clerk’s storage area for many years.

Lake County Circuit Clerk Keith S. Brin knew that the documents, which are in remarkably good condition, needed to be deposited where they would be carefully preserved. The process for finding a new home for the naturalization records started when the Clerk’s office contacted the National Archives and Records branch in Chicago. Staff at the National Archives explained that responsibility for naturalizing citizens was primarily handled by state and local courts until about 1906, although many citizens were also naturalized in federal courts during this time.

Generally, the National Archives takes custody of naturalization records that were handled in federal courts. The State Archives handles the naturalizations performed outside the federal courts in Illinois through the Illinois Regional Archives Depoitory (IRAD) system.

Shortly after the Circuit Clerk’s office made contact with the IRAD office, arrangements were made for the naturalization records to be transported to the State Archives for microfilming. IRAD staff arrived at the Lake County Courthouse on January 23 to begin the transfer.

A total of 208 volumes of Lake County naturalizations spanning 1864-1987 are now at the State Archives’ Margaret Cross Norton Building in Springfield. The documents have been sorted, arranged and tagged for microfilming. The microfilm will then be scanned and the Lake County Circuit Clerk’s office will receive DVDs of the documents. A user copy of the microfilm along with the original records will be moved to the IRAD at Northern Illinois University where they will be available for public use. A security copy of the microfilm will be stored in the State Archives.

Through the effort and cooperation of three levels of government agencies — federal, state and local — these vitally important immigration records will be preserved and made widely available for use by historians and genealogists.

Civil War soldier’s diary donated to State Archives

An Arizona woman recently called the State Archives wishing to donate a Civil War diary written by an Illinois soldier. Within a month, the diary was in the Archives’ possession thanks to her generous gift.

The State Archives serves as the repository of all official state government records determined to have a long-term historical value. When a historic non-governmental record such as this diary comes along, Archives staff will accept it but generally will look for an appropriate home for the item. Usually, that home is the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, which houses the Illinois history collection of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. That is what happened in this case.

The 75-page diary spans the years 1861-1863, and was written by a soldier who served in Company I of the 45th Illinois Infantry. Some pages of the diary are missing but it appears to have been written by a William Kinkade, whose records can be found on the Archives’ Civil War Muster and Descriptive Rolls database.

The diary may prove to be a valuable addition for persons researching Illinois and the Civil War. This type of cooperation with the public and between archival and historic institutions in Illinois helps preserve and make accessible valuable, historic records.

ISHRAB receives $65,000 NHPRC grant

At its November 2012 meeting, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission awarded a $65,000 State and National Archival Partnership grant to the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board.

The grant, which runs from July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2015, will support a variety of board activities, including sponsorship of the IRAD intern training program; production costs of the Illinois Archives Month poster; and State Archives’ membership in the Council of State Archivists. Grant funds also will be used to continue the Historical Records Preservation re-grant program (see page 1).
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Historical Records Preservation Grant — May 31 deadline

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