



National 4-H History Preservation Program

January, 2014 Newsletter
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Smith-Lever Act Centennial

The signing of the Smith Lever act by President Woodrow Wilson May 8, 1914, was the result of over six years of work by Land Grant Colleges and many organizations nationwide to get aid and support for Extension work at the State and County level.

The act was introduced by Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative A. F. Lever of

South Carolina to expand the vocational, agricultural, and home demonstration programs in rural America. This particular law met with a wide approval in the existing Extension community because it built upon the programs that were already working at the local level and gave them additional funding which allowed them continue and grow.

Resources:

- You can learn more about the history of the creation of the act and how it relates to 4-H by reading chapter 11, pages 118-132, in "The 4-H Story" by Franklin M. Reck at <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/books>.
- For a look at Reba McIntire's best wishes to the Cooperative Extension Service on its 100th birthday: <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9GyqMs0FKIUKBTxtcyg04w>. She specifically mentions 4-H and being an alum of 4-H.
- To learn more about the Smith-Lever Centennial celebrations and see the celebration tool-kit: http://www.extension100years.net/en/administration/about_us/chancellors_office/extension/toolkit/.

2014 Significant Historic 4-H Event Anniversaries

5th anniversary: National 4-H History Preservation Program created, January 7, 2009

5th anniversary: 4-H flag into space on NASA's Space Shuttle Endeavour, June 13, 2009

55th anniversary: National 4-H Center opened, June 16, 1959

100th anniversary: Smith-Lever Act signed into law, May 8, 1914

2014 Reflection on 4-H History Preservation



History Leadership Team members in 2013. Back: Tom Tate, Rick Moses, Larry Krug, Dave Benedetti, Mel Thompson & Jim Kahler. Front: Eleanor Wilson, Sue Benedetti & Kendra Wells.

Five years ago this month, a team of current and former 4-H staff, volunteers, leaders and members came together at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center, outside of Washington, DC to discuss ways that the legacy of the 100-year-old 4-H and Cooperative Extension Service might be better preserved, acknowledged and made accessible to anyone who might be interested in the rich and important history of the program. Our group became known as the National 4-H History Preservation Program and we began meeting regularly.

Following those early meetings, members of our group visited a variety of places where we thought old 4-H history records might be hiding:

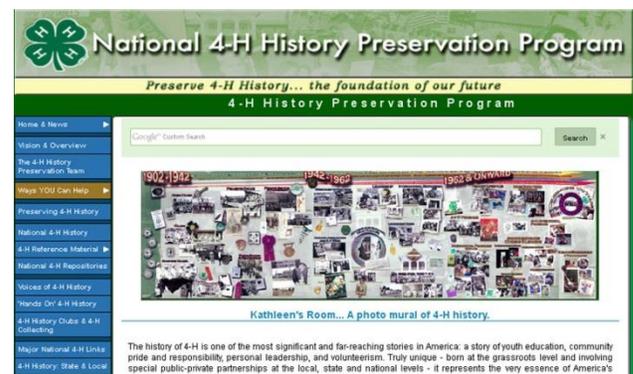
- National Archives of the United States;
- National Agricultural Library;
- Library of Congress;
- USDA Headquarters Building; and
- University of Maryland History Archives.

A search of these collections led to the discovery of huge quantities of old records, photographs, audio/visual recordings of 4-H programs. Some of the documents and photos dated back to the early 1900s when 4-H and Cooperative Extension were just getting started. Among the boxes of records were

history notes where former members, leaders and volunteers had written their recollections of the 4-H experiences that had been most meaningful to them. Often, treasured photos were included to document those experiences.

We also found a huge gap of no information at all for a number of years; sadly, much of the history of that period had been destroyed. Partly to help fill that gap and to expand on topics we were already working on, we recruited almost 100 volunteers across the country to assist with this project, which seemed to be growing larger and more complex each time we met; our core group then became known as the 4-H History Preservation Leadership Team.

Our searches and discovery led us to turn to the power of new technology to preserve the records, photos, audio and visual history which we could unearth. We also recommended that we initiate efforts to capture the 4-H History that only existed as memories in the minds of former 4-H members, leaders and volunteers, and make it accessible to the general public; to use it to illustrate the meaning of 4-H in the lives of participants.



After months of research and writing from Team members, and with the dedicated effort from those recruited volunteers across the nation, we have the promising foundation of an unrivaled digital archive of 4-H History; it collects in one place the myriad elements that make up 4-H's rich legacy, and it will continue to grow. Anyone anywhere in the world with an Internet-connected device can now visit the digital

archives. To date, more than 50 thousand visitors from over 100 nations have visited the digital 4-H archive at <http://4-hhistorypreservation.com/>.

In March, 2012, we began to discuss how to celebrate 4-H during the 2014 observance of the Centennial of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act (May 8, 1914). This act brought federal, state, and county – along with private sector and individual – resources together in what would become known as “Extension Work” across the US. It basically created an official home for 4-H. Taking that idea led to questions of how and who could best tell that story; it is, after all, the individual stories of how 4-H and Extension have touched and changed people’s lives. How could these stories be collected? Why of course, 4-H members could collect the stories from their families and communities in what would become the “Voices of 4-H History” and the “Voices of Extension History” projects. These mobilize inter-generational teams of youth and adults to record and film those significant events which, together, illustrate the impact of 4-H and Extension on the lives of all Americans.

With “Voices of 4-H History,” telling of the personal importance of 4-H came alive, with memories from alumni, leaders, staff and cooperators, and “Voices of Extension History” will do the same to commemorate the Centennial of the Smith-Lever Act.



History Leadership Team members Eleanor Wilson, Tom Tate & Sue Benedetti staff the History Preservation Exhibit at Galaxy IV.

The consultation with national, state and local repositories, the creation of a digital archive and the recording of oral histories for nationwide distribution, while central to our mission, are but

a part of what the National 4-H History Preservation Program has been doing for the past five years. As we embark on the next five (ten? fifteen?) years of work on 4-H History, it’s illustrative to look back at a selection of things we’ve done since we began in 2009 – all in close collaboration with 4-H National Headquarters at USDA, National 4-H Council, and State and County 4-H programs:

- Established a monthly 4-H History Newsletter (contact info@4-HHistoryPreservation.com to subscribe;
- Digitized over 700 books, reports, educational materials and other historical documents and written 67 sections of National 4-H History now available for research on the history preservation website;
- Located and documented original artwork from National 4-H Calendar Program and National 4-H Poster Program and raised funds to restore the original art;
- Established a 4-H History category at the annual National 4-H FilmFest;
- Conducted Capacity Building Workshops at NAE4-H Conferences and exhibited and conducted educational Poster Sessions at Extension’s Galaxy IV Conference;
- Oriented international visitors on the history of 4-H and the National 4-H Youth Conference Center; and
- Shared oral presentations and educational displays at National 4-H Hall of Fame, 4-H Heritage Club, Epsilon Sigma Phi, National 4-H Conference, Citizenship Washington Focus, Regional 4-H All Stars conferences, MN Vintage 4-H Club, and USDA Extension Retirees’ meetings.

We believe it’s important work and we hope you agree.

4-H Flag Returns from Space to 4-H Headquarters



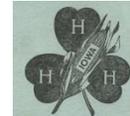
In July, 2013, representatives from NASA Headquarters Office of Education made a special presentation to Lisa Lauxman, Director of Youth and 4-H at NIFA, USDA. A 4-H flag was launched into space aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour on June 13, 2009, as part of the STS-127 mission. Lisa received the flag framed along with photographs and other mementos from the NASA mission. Mary Sladek, NASA Manager for Informal Education, said that the flight of the flag commemorated the long and continuing national collaboration between NASA and 4-H. That relationship currently includes joint efforts in the NASA Adopt a Pixel citizen science project and 4-H National Youth Science Day.

4-H News Flashbacks

The December 1919 issue of Farm Boys' and Girls' Leader and the November - December 1938 issue of National 4-H Club news each heralded the departure of an important 4-H pioneer from national 4-H leadership at USDA.

It was announced in the Farm Boys' and Girls' Leader magazine that O.H. Benson, who was in charge of club work in the north and west for ten years, was leaving USDA to become the Director of the Youth Achievement Bureau of the Eastern States Agricultural and Industrial League located in Springfield, MA. Previously, Benson was the school superintendent in

Wright County, IA, where he started agriculture youth clubs. At that time, Benson created a 3-leaf clover design emblem which represented "head, heart and hands" that evolved into the modern 4-H emblem. The 5-year contract at \$10,000 per year, described as "a substantial increase in salary," with \$100,000 to finance club work and the chance to continue working with youth was an offer that Benson couldn't refuse.



The 1938 National 4-H Club News issue contained a tribute to A.B. Graham, honoring his retirement as Director of the Federal Extension Service, USDA. As superintendent of Clark County schools, Graham started after-school clubs with his rural pupils in Springfield, OH that some consider the beginning of the US 4-H program. He wanted youth that were interested in farming to "have a fundamental scientific knowledge of agriculture" and domestic science. This concept was replicated in Iowa by O.H. Benson and Jessie Field Shambaugh, and by others across the country. Graham was the superintendent of Ohio State University Extension before joining the Federal Extension Service in 1915.

Another article in the Farm Boys' and Girls' Leader issue recognized the "Can Can Club" of Sanders County, Montana, as the first club in the state to meet the national requirements for a Standard Club. A letter from C.E. Potter, State Club Leader of Montana, stated that all eight club members completed their projects and records. They also sent a judging and a canning team to the county fair and gave public demonstrations in order to complete the requirements.



Early 4-H record books hand made by members.

Hands-On History:

Record keeping has always been an important part of 4-H work. December is the time when many 4-H members collect their records and list of accomplishments to prepare a 4-H record book or portfolio.

Over the years, 4-H records and record books have changed dramatically. For many, hand-written journals and forms have given way to digital forms and online records. Often, record books are submitted to receive special honors, including trips and scholarships.

In your club, ask if any older members or alumni can bring their 4-H record book to your club meeting. Compare how these records have changed over the years. Ask the older members and adults to talk about the benefits of keeping good records.



“Voices of 4H History” at FilmFest 2014

Youth-Produced Multi-Media projects to be Featured at National 4-H Film Festival in 2014.

During 2013, seven pilot test states (California, Connecticut, Missouri, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia) developed and tested a variety of methods for documenting the memories of 4-H members, staff, volunteers

and supporters. Products developed ranged from poster and banner exhibits at fairs, libraries, museums, to videos and films that were exhibited at film festivals, and cable and commercial television networks. Guidelines for youth-produced media were developed to train teams of youth and adults in the process of recruiting, interviewing, producing and editing media; this was to increase public awareness of the 100 years of 4-H and Extension History, and to help celebrate the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914.

In January, 2014, The National 4-H FilmFest will invite youth-produced videos/films to be submitted for viewing and judging during August 3-6, 2014. Many of those films will be selected to be posted to the National 4-H History Film Archives, and exhibited widely to improve public awareness of 4-H and Extension programs.

To learn more about getting involved in this effort, please visit the "Voices of History" website at:

<http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/voices>.

“Voices of 4-H History” Updates

Oklahoma: “Voices” participants interviewed Extension and 4-H participants during Homecoming Weekend in late 2013. The Ag Communications Unit of Oklahoma State University invited Extension and 4-H Program participants to stop by to record a memory of their experiences. This effort will help OSU build an audio/visual record of their program’s 100 year history, for use in celebrating the Centennial of passage of the Smith-Lever Act. A mini TV studio was set up in Ag Hall, October 19, 2013, to record stories following the homecoming game. Dozens of recordings were collected and will be combined with still and motion images that visualize the recollections of the interviewees.

The resulting audio and video clips will be made available to a variety of local, state and national media outlets. Brenda Sheik and Jeff Sallee are working with colleagues to develop the 4-H

components. Jeff Sallee told us, "Agriculture Communications and I are offering in-service training in digital media on equipment and software which county agents can check out and use with youth. They will have the equipment training and all they need [will be] kids' involvement and stories to document."



Maryland 4-H Leaders, Lisa Edwards, Prince Georges County & Sandy Staples, Montgomery County discuss how they plan to work with the "Voices of 4-H" History in their counties.

Maryland: National 4-H History Leadership Team members helped conduct "Voices of 4-H History" and "Voices of Extension History" training at the 4-H Volunteer Leader Forum in November. Volunteer leaders from 14 MD counties agreed to start up a 4-H History Preservation Leadership Team. An exhibit with

banners and posters drew a lot of attention to the idea. A couple of clip boards with sign-up sheets encouraged people to become committed to the project. Adult and teen leaders in the workshop interviewed each other as a way to instill the importance of "practicing" interviews with other team members. It's a good way to prepare for the "real" interviews. All of the materials used are available for reproduction at <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/Voices>.

Hawaii: 4-H leader Joan Chong has shared that Hawaii 4-H has two youth-adult partnership teams (one from Maui, one from Kona) that came together the first weekend of November for training. "We are working on going to other islands/sites to do more training," Chong said. "The youth are excited to take on this project."

Kentucky: Jenny Cocanougher, 4-H sent us the good news that their proposal for a Volunteer Leader Forum workshop on 4-H History was accepted. We thought that it's a great accomplishment to have had Ag Communications agree to be at the event to get interviews from those in attendance during the Volunteer Leader Forum. We hope that youth will also have a chance to practice interviewing skills.

Contact the 4-H History Preservation Team:

Sue Benedetti, Chair; *4-H National Headquarters, USDA, retired*
Larry L. Krug, Vice Chair; *National 4-H Council, retired*
Eleanor L. Wilson; *4-H National Headquarters, USDA, retired*
Jim Kahler; *4-H National Headquarters, NIFA, USDA*
Kendra Wells; *University of Maryland 4-H, retired*
Tom Tate; *Extension Service, USDA, retired*
Melvin J. Thompson; *National 4-H Council, retired*
Gary Deverman; *National 4-H Council, retired*
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