



History of the Cincinnati History Library and Archives

1831

The Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio was incorporated on February 11, 1831, in Columbus, Ohio.

1844

The Cincinnati Historical Society was established in Cincinnati in 1844.

1849

The Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio (founded in 1831 in Columbus) and the Cincinnati Historical Society (founded in 1844 in Cincinnati) merged. The new organization retained the name the "Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio," but the collections and meeting place were relocated to Cincinnati.

1852

The Society, which had been meeting in various rented spaces, began leasing space in the Cincinnati College building.

1860

The lack of funds forced the Society to give up the rooms at the college. The collection was packed up and placed in storage at the public library.

1868

By 1868, the Society had dwindled to four active members. Nine new members were added that Spring. They helped to revitalize the organization. The collection, which consisted of 1,738 books and 2,900 pamphlets, was brought out of storage and moved to their new location at the Literary Club.

1871

The Society moved back into the rooms in the Cincinnati College building. Duplicates from the library were offered to the Chicago Historical Society after most of their collection was lost in the Great Chicago Fire.

1886

The Society purchased the William R. Ramsey house on 8th Street on July 2, 1886.

1901

The Society moved its collections to rooms in the University of Cincinnati's library.

1963

The Society changed its name to the "Cincinnati Historical Society" in an effort to differentiate itself from the Ohio Historical Society and to better reflect the scope of the collections.

1964

The Society moved into new quarters, this time in a new wing of the Cincinnati Art Museum in Eden Park.

1980

By 1980 the Cincinnati Historical Society had an education department, membership events and a women's association, in addition to the library.

1986

A county-wide levy passed which provided funds for the renovation of Cincinnati Union Terminal as a future site for the Cincinnati Historical Society and Cincinnati Museum of Natural History.

1990

The Society moved into Union Terminal. The library's reading room was located on the mezzanine level.

1995

The Cincinnati Historical Society merged with the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and Science to become Cincinnati Museum Center. The library retained the name, the “Cincinnati Historical Society Library.”

2011

The Cincinnati Historical Society Library's name was changed to the “Cincinnati History Library and Archives.”

2016

The library closed on February 1, 2016, in preparation for the comprehensive restoration of Cincinnati Union Terminal. Beginning in March, all of the library and archival collections and staff were moved off-site.

2019

On July 15, 2019, the Cincinnati History Library and Archives reopened to the public with the reading room in its previous location on the mezzanine level of Union Terminal.

2020

The Cincinnati History Library and Archives (and all of Cincinnati Museum Center) closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic beginning on Saturday, March 14, 2020. The library reopened (by appointment only) on July 24th.

MORE INFORMATION:

Virginius C. Hall wrote a history of the first 125 years of the organization called: “Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio: A Short History” in the *Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio*, Vol. 14, no. 2 (April 1958): 86-104.

<https://searchcollections.cincymuseum.org/public/archive/Portal/Sharedlink.aspx?component=AAAE&record=a6ddf453-4784-41fa-99eb-2c34740ceccf>

The Society’s name change to the "Cincinnati Historical Society" was announced in the “Annual Report of the Society, 1963” in the *Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin*, Vol. 22, no. 1 (January 1964): 41-72

<https://searchcollections.cincymuseum.org/public/archive/Portal/Sharedlink.aspx?component=AAAE&record=8385ac19-be19-4f5a-94b8-2d65b5c79f41>