

Local History Department at Iredell County Public Library Wins NCPC Award

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Joel Reese, Local History Librarian at the Iredell County Public Library in Statesville, accepted the North Carolina Preservation Consortium's *Award for Preservation Excellence* at the 2016 NCPC Annual Conference. This annual award recognizes institutions in North Carolina that have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage of enduring value. The NCPC Board of Directors selected the library's Local History Department for its successful efforts to rescue and preserve the history of Iredell

County. The collection includes rare photographs, maps, and documents.

In her letter of support Louanne Mundehenke Watts, president of the Iredell Friends of the Library, praised the Local History Department for preserving historical photographs:

I personally have seen many people spend hours studying the faces of friends and family from days gone by. It is wonderful to hear their stories and see the joy in their faces as they recognize people long gone from their daily life in the community. People, places, local events, happy occasions and tragedies reappear in front of them and the stories flow. There is value in this collection that cannot be measured in monetary terms alone.

The historic photograph collection holds more than 95,000 images, which have been inventoried and digitized for public access on the Internet. Original photographs and negatives are stored in archival cabinets within an environmentally controlled room.

Other rare treasures in the local history collection include a 1773 William Sharpe Fourth Creek Congregation Map, the 1771 Lord Granville Land Grant document presented to Robert Tate, and an 1805 Marriage License issued in Iredell County. These items were treated by professional conservators at Etherington Conservation Services and digitized for world-wide access. They are currently on display in the local history room.

NCPC Executive Director Robert James said that the Local History Department in the Iredell County Public Library is a model for other North Carolina institutions responsible for preserving heritage collections and cultural resources.