

November, 2011

By Marsha McDevitt-Stredney, Director, Marketing & Communications
State Library of Ohio



Paul Immel (1955 – 2010) worked in Ohio libraries for nearly four decades, but it was for his unparalleled level of expertise and professional service to the Ohio genealogy community at the State Library of Ohio that he is remembered. His work as a Research Services Librarian from 1979 to 2009 bridged his love for history, library service, and research.

In 2007, Paul oversaw the transfer of the State Library of Ohio's genealogy collection of 25,000 books and several thousand microfilm to the Columbus Metropolitan Library. It was a collection that Paul had helped to develop, promote and share his knowledge of with thousands of genealogy enthusiasts in Ohio. Although the physical collection was no longer at the State Library after 2007, Paul continued to do his work by assisting State Library patrons, teaching other

librarians about genealogy, writing for the State Library [Genealogy blog](#), and recommending documents from our collection to be digitized and added to the Ohio Memory Project.

During his lifetime, Paul was recognized with two prestigious awards for his steadfast dedication to library service in genealogy. He received the Ohio Genealogical Society Presidents Award in 2007 in recognition of his years of dedicated and conscientious service to Ohioans as Genealogical Librarian at the State Library of Ohio. Paul was also awarded the Silver Medal for Citizenship and Service in 2008 for his contribution to genealogy in Ohio by the Ohio Society, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). The Silver Good Citizenship Medal was authorized in 1939 and recognizes outstanding service that is at the state level. It recognizes extensive service—which is to preserve history, genealogy, or perpetuate the memory of patriots of the revolution.

During the 2008 award presentation, Tony Robinson, Ohio Society, SAR Second Vice-President said, "Paul Immel met all three. The Medal may be presented to a Governor, U.S. Representative, Senator, High Ranking military officer, or some similar post which has allowed him to perform outstanding service to his state or country. In addition, persons who have performed similar outstanding service as a member of the professional or religious community may be considered."

Steve Kelley, member of the Ohio Society, Sons of the American Revolution, said this about Paul during the ceremony, "In his years of service at the State Library, Paul Immel has assisted thousands of individuals in their discovery of family history. His service has always been focused on the individual. He has adapted his library skills to the new media. His genealogy blog reaches out across the entire state and makes the State Library of Ohio a more valuable resource to its residents." Kelley continued, "In my case, Paul directed me to the proper Pennsylvania Historical Documents Volume to verify the County militia service of my eighth generation grandfather during the American Revolution. Paul listened and with his vast knowledge directed me to the proper document. Years of searching were condensed to an afternoon of productive research. With that



certified document I had the proof that was required to become a member of the Sons of the American Revolution." (pictured left to right - Steve Kelly, former State Librarian Jo Budler, Paul Immel, Tony Robinson)

Gracious and inspiring in his acceptance of the award, Paul commented, "One of the keys to

success as a genealogy librarian is to see it as a perpetual learning experience. Often, you will learn more from your patron than they will from you. To study great historical events is exciting, but to trace one's own flesh and blood in those events is sublime."

Anyone that ever met Paul will remember him for his warm smile, humble heart and compassion, dedication to research and service, and obvious love for his family, friends, and work.