

Final Report

Ohio Historic Record Advisory Board - Historical Records Grant 2017

Preservation, Organization and Storage of Historic Newspapers of Portsmouth, OH

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The Ohio Historic Records Advisory Board – Historical Records Grant 2017 was used by the library to purchase archival boxes to aid in preserving the historic newspapers of Portsmouth Ohio. The newspapers had been stored in the basement of the local newspaper office. When the newspaper decided to relocate their offices, it became necessary to find a new home for the bound volumes. The collection consists of 930 bound volumes of Portsmouth, OH newspapers dating back to the 1850s.

While some of these newspapers have been microfilmed, researchers have been disappointed in the quality of the images, etc. Shawnee State University's Dr. Andrew Feight spearheaded the donation of the papers to the university with the goal of preserving them and later digitizing them for public access. The sheer size of the collection made it difficult to find a permanent home for the collection. The content of this collection is very important to local historians and the Shawnee State University history program. Dr. Feight and his students write extensively about the lower Scioto Valley and intend to rely heavily on the newspapers content. The library decided to partner with Dr. Feight on preserving the collection given its significance to the history of the lower Scioto Valley.

Grant funds were used to purchase 141 archival boxes measuring 22 ¾ "wide X 30" long. The expenditure totaling \$3,977.48 was made in August, 2017. The first shipment of archival

boxes was delayed. Upon arrival of the first shipment of archival boxes, the library matched the \$4,000.00 grant award by purchasing an additional 114 archival boxes and 256 packets of desiccant. In addition, \$22.52 in unspent grant funds was used to cover a portion of the cost of one toner cartridge. All \$4,000.00 of grant funds and \$4,000.00 of matching library funds were expended on archival materials and supplies for the sole purpose of preserving the newspaper collection. The funds were expended by the December 2017 deadline.

The library set up a sizeable work space in an unused room and moved approximately a quarter of the volumes to begin unbinding them and placing them in the archival boxes. Student employees and library staff have been trained to work on the project. We found we needed to set up large fans and provide adequate ventilation for staff members working on the collection.

We were presented with many challenges during this project and the work has been much slower than anticipated. We experienced significant delays receiving the archival boxes. In addition, it took some time to develop an efficient method of unbinding the volumes. The final hurdle was the sheer size of the collection combined with a recent campus-wide freeze of vacant positions. Initially, we planned to begin with the volumes dating from the 1850s, but decided to work from the front of the storage building to the back. Consequently, we began to unbind the newspapers beginning with the 1960s. The biggest hurdle was the spouse of the project director was involved in a serious accident and this pulled her away from the project for a period of time. Despite these delays, we were able to purchase the archival boxes and desiccant and begin processing the collection in earnest. We remain committed to conserving the entire collection by unbinding them and placing them in the archival boxes with a packet of

desiccant in each box. As this work has progressed, we have labelled each box with the newspaper title/dates. We are also using the available space in the workroom to organize the boxes/collection by date. This will allow us to identify any gaps that exist in the collection. The volumes were placed randomly in the storage unit and organizing the volumes by date has taken considerable time. We estimate it will take until the end of August 2018 to work through the entire collection. To date we have processed approximately 1/4 of the collection. Some volumes have been set aside due to their condition. We will return to these once we have completed boxing volumes that are in better shape.

The campus is committed to preserving the historic collection. The next step is to begin digitizing dates/volumes in consultation with Dr. Andrew Feight. We have identified many time periods that aid his research and can enlighten other researchers interested in the history of the lower Scioto Valley. The campus is actively investigating digital platforms and options for local or commercial digitization. It will be a lengthy project, but one we are increasingly committed to as we examine the contents of the volumes we have worked with.

While we were not able to process as many volumes as we had hoped, it is estimated that the archival supplies purchased with this grant and the matching funds will hold the bulk of the collection. We have found the majority of the papers in remarkably good condition once the bindings have been removed. It has reinforced our decision to place the volumes in archival boxes for preservation.

We appreciate the opportunity to preserve the Historic Newspaper Collection of Portsmouth, Ohio with the support of the Ohio Records Advisory Board grant.

General Ledger Report Ohio Records Advisory Records Grant Funds

Notes

Accounting Period	Ledger or Ledger Set	ENTITY	FUND	FUNCTION	UNIT	OBJECT	PROJECT	FUTURE	Beginning Balance (USD)	Period Activity (USD)	Ending Balance	Notes
2017-Jul	SSU_LEDGER	10	1030	20	30060	44101	10000	00000	0	-4,000.00	-4,000.00	OHRAB Grant Funds (see attached PDF Receipt of grant funds)
2017-Sep	SSU_LEDGER	10	1030	20	30060	61101	10000	00000	0	22.52	22.52	Partial payment for toner cartridge for labels (see Ricoh invoice)
2017-Aug	SSU_LEDGER	10	1030	20	30060	66199	10000	00000	0	<u>3,977.48</u>	3,977.48	141 Archival boxes (See Demco invoice dated 7/31/17)
										4,000.00		

Matching Funds Clark Memorial Library - Shawnee State University

Demco									\$	3,244.97		114 Archival boxes (See Demco invoice)
Gaylord Archival									\$	740.51		256 Silica Gel Packets (See Gaylord Archival invoice)
Ricoh									\$	57.31		Partial payment for toner cartridge for labels (see Ricoh invoice)
									\$	4,042.79		