2020 OHRAB Re-Grant Final Report - Delhi Historical Society - Flat File Project

Organization: Delhi Historical Society Project Name: Flat File Project

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The Delhi Historical Society's (DHS or the Society) Flat File project has been completed. The project was created to improve the storage, protection, and accessibility of many of the Society's large documents, photographs, and maps. The project was supported in part by an award from the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board (OHRAB).

The project was completed through several phases:

- Initial analysis of situation and developing the scope of the project
- Removing collections from a deteriorating, wooden flat file; assessing each item's condition, ensuring it is photographed, and entering the item or updating its entry in our collections database, Past Perfect.
- Placing the items in safe temporary storage until arrival of the new flat file, folders, and sleeves.
- Upon arrival, the flat file was assembled and placed in the Society's Henlein Room (its Research Center). It was given the name Henlein Flat Storage (HFS). Each drawer was identified as HFS Drawer 1, HFS Drawer 2, etc. and labeled with its name.
- The new locations were updated in Past Perfect.
- The Past Perfect entries were uploaded to Past Perfect Online, making the entries available to anyone who visits the Society's website.

DHS received \$2,460.00 in re-grant funding for the project.

\$1,707.00 was spent on a 36" x 48" five drawer flat file and an open base (provided a storage shelf) \$753.00 was spent on 36" x 48" folders; 36" x 12" folders for panoramic photographs; clear archival sleeves for photographs and documents; and shipping of the purchase materials.

\$2,507.39 in-kind match was provided by DHS through 69.5 volunteer hours and 37 staff hours.

Immediately, the project yielded results. A developer visited our website seeking information regarding a local large piece of land in the township. That land was a 19th-20th century family farm which had been developed into a suburban shopping center in the mid-1970s. Now, that land is being redeveloped into a mixed-use project which will include retail, residential, and community activity space. The flat file project made the research easy. Also, the Delhi Historical Society has received several requests for copies of photographs which were uploaded to Past Perfect Online as part of the flat file project. Not only do these requests produce a modest income, they prove the Society's page is being used and the Society is seen as a resource to the community.

An interesting side effect of the flat file project's publicity was that a long-time member of Delhi Historical Society asked if we wanted *another* flat file. This smaller file cabinet had been used by her late husband in his engineering business; it had been sitting unused in her basement for years. The Society determined it was a perfect adjunct to the large flat file which was the focus of the Flat File Project. This smaller flat file was brought to the Society's Research Center and placed on top of the new flat file. Now, more items requiring flat storage are properly stored and catalogued.

Attached to this report is a photograph of the new flat file and its (used) companion piece in the Society's Research Center.

A further benefit of the Flat File Project was the "re-discovery" of four boxes of un-catalogued local newspapers which are not available through any online system. Funding to support a project to catalog, preserve, and digitize these papers will soon be the focus of a new grant application from the Delhi Historical Society.

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Deteriorating flat file which inspired the Delhi Historical Society's 2020 Flat File Project.

Delhi Historical Society's new flat file (at left) funded through a 2020 OHRAB Grant. (NOTE: A thermal barrier was placed on the side of the flat file near the radiator.)



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Screen shots of Delhi Historical Society's online catalog page showing items catalogued, photographed, and stored as a result of the 2020 Flat File Project.



