

Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board / Oberlin Heritage Center
Mid-Term Grant Report
Project: Digitizing OHC's VHS Collection

Summary

As stated in our grant application, the Oberlin Heritage Center proposed to digitize, preserve, and share its collection of nearly 120 VHS tapes and mini tapes, dating from 1994 through 2005, using the services of a professional digitization vendor. The project will result in a more detailed inventory of our media holdings, the preservation of the original recorded materials as long as their nature allows, and new online public access to the digitized content, including 79 interviews with community members.

Project Update

Approximately 28% (34 interviews) of the collection has been digitized and delivered so far. This is slightly behind our estimated schedule due to an unexpected vendor change at the start of the project and limited staff resources, but once the materials were delivered the digitization has been proceeding smoothly. We submitted 119 VHS or similar tapes and the vendor is working with us to send files in batches so that we can begin review of the digitized files and drafting descriptions yet this summer, rather than wait for the entire collection to be digitized. The quality of the digitized interviews seen thus far is as good as can be expected from the material age and nature (nearly 30-year-old VHS tapes, some of which had been recorded over other content or recorded using lower quality settings).

We had hoped to have a summer intern begin viewing, making notes, and drafting descriptions of the tapes but with the delays, the bulk of this work will now begin during the fall academic year. Additional work is being conducted by staff and volunteers, but this will not factor into the grant budget.

Summary of Expenses

Since staff time is not factored into the grant, the only expense incurred thus far has been the mileage cost of delivering the files to the digitization vendor (\$49.28). We have been in contact with the vendor about special treatment required for some of the tapes but at this time they do not expect the final cost to go above the original quoted amount (\$1985.83).

Staff, volunteer, and intern time spent on the project

Total time spent on the project thus far: 23.25 hours. (We are not tracking the vendor's time)

Grant funded: 3.5 hours (Intern labeling tapes prior to delivery to vendor; review of digitized files)

Match: 19.75 hours (grant administration, creating an inventory and preferred digital file name list for ourselves and the digitization vendor, preparing the tapes for safe transportation, delivery to vendor, review of the first batch of digital files)

Project Schedule

The digitization part of the project is definitely on track to be completed by the end of the year. Safely storing the original materials after their return from the vendor will also be completed. Watching the videos, creating content descriptions, and posting the content to YouTube may extend beyond the end of the year if pandemic conditions impact intern availability. We hope that will not be the case, but even if it is, we expect to have the majority of the content uploaded by December 31.

Publicity

Below is a screenshot from an entry in the Oberlin Heritage Center's June newsletter. We plan to put out more publicity when we begin posting videos online.

News from the Second Floor:

OHC Welcomes Its Newest Endowed Life Members

OHC would like to recognize Janis and Robert Q. Thompson as our newest Endowed Life Members, or ELMS. Thank you, Janis and Rob, for choosing to support OHC in such a meaningful way. The Thompsons join 99 other ELMS, whose gifts support the OHC Endowment for Heritage Preservation and make the work of OHC possible.

Local Historian's Tapes to be Digitized

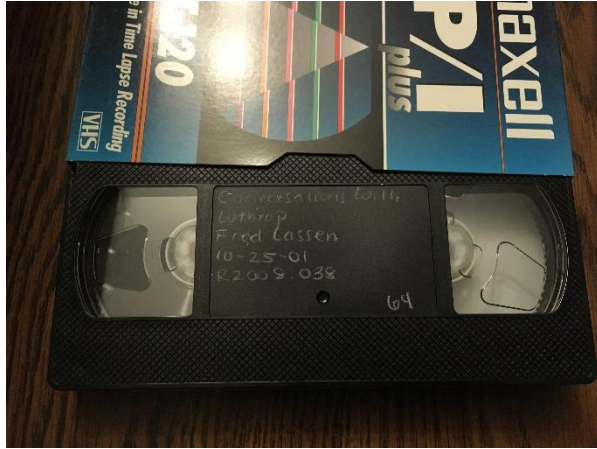
OHC is moving forward with a project to digitize its VHS holdings, which include approximately 70 community interviews conducted by local historian Richard Lothrop in the mid-1990s and early 2000s, as well as 40 tapes that document OHC's programs. These tapes are approaching the end of their expected shelf-life and we are excited to both preserve their contents and make that content more accessible to community members and researchers 24 hours a day, seven days a week—online! This work is supported in part by an award from the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board, through funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), National Archives and Records Administration, as well as a gift from OHC member Linda Lewis of Elyria.



OHC to Participate in the Lorain County Arts and Culture Collective



Photos of the Project in Progress



Newly labeled tape and Box 1 ready for transport



Digitized interview between Pat Holsworth, then Director of the Oberlin Public Library, and Dick Luthrop. November 17, 1994.