



Interim Report
Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Grant
August 29, 2022
*Digitizing and Providing Online Access to WHS's Archives
of the Waterville Interurban Bridge*

Waterville Historical Society (WHS) is identifying, digitizing and preparing to provide online access to our archival collection related to the Waterville Interurban Bridge. This bridge, built in 1908 and on the National Register, faces imminent demolition. One of its supports rests on the Roche de Boeuf, a midriver outcrop that was a landmark and council meeting place for the Miami, Shawnee, and Lenape tribes, who met there before the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. The bridge carried the Ohio Electric Company interurban trolley line over the Maumee River until the line was abandoned in 1937. When built, the bridge was the world's largest earth-filled, reinforced concrete bridge. WHS selected this project as our first effort at online accessibility given the renewed interest in the bridge and its history.

The grant-funded Fujitsu Scansnap SV600 Overhead Scanner was purchased in June for \$579.99. Due to supply chain problems, we were unable to purchase the proposed HP Envy 795-0010 Desktop computer. We were finally able to acquire an HP Envy TE01-1111 in mid-June for \$769.96. Since Windows 11 has robust security, we no longer plan to use the proposed \$20 in grant monies to purchase Norton 360. Early this month, we purchased and installed PastPerfect Online for \$285 from grant monies and \$489 from WHS matching funds for the PastPerfect Online annual hosting fee. We spent \$110.00 on contracted services to an IT specialist to help us upload software, transfer PastPerfect files from the old computer to the new one, and interface with PastPerfect to create our online launch page.

Approximately 90% of the project is completed. Seven archivists have volunteered 190 hours collectively to date as part of WHS's matching funds (representing \$5422.60 at the volunteer rate of \$28.54/hour). We grossly underestimated the amount of volunteer hours in our grant proposal, thinking 90 volunteer hours would be sufficient. We have so far identified 106 records to include in this digital collection and have digitized 78 historic photographs and 17 historic postcards, almost all of the bridge. While outside OHRAB's purview, we have also photographed our related artwork (drawings, a carving, and paintings) to include in the collection. We are currently identifying records of the Roche de Boeuf and also reviewing our historic maps for depictions of the rock outcrop, the bridge, and the trolley line.

Despite the delayed arrival of the computer, we are on track to begin online accessibility of the records in September in association with Waterville's annual Roche de Boeuf festival. PastPerfect Online has created our launch page. We have added an "Online Collections" tab to our website in preparation of our online launch, and we have beta-tested the upload of a sample of records.

WHS publicized the award of the OHRAB grant in our May 2022 WHS News Bulletin to our members and online (<https://www.watervillehistory.org/newsletters-2>) and in a June 1 Facebook post with a related article (<https://www.facebook.com/WHS43566/>). We also recognized OHRAB in crediting letters sent to Waterville Mayor Tim Pedro, Ohio Representative Derek Merrin, Ohio Senator Theresa Gavarone, U.S. Representative Robert Latta, U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur, U.S. Senator Sherod Brown, and U.S. Senator Robert Portman (example appended). When we launch the project, we will send a press release to our local newspaper and mail an announcement to twelve area historical societies, ten area public and college libraries, and the five schools in the Anthony Wayne Local School District.



Waterville Historical Society

Your Connection to the Past

August 5, 2022

Mayor Timothy Pedro
25 North Second Street
Waterville, OH 43566-1491

RE: Appreciation for an Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Grant

Dear Mayor Pedro:

On behalf of the Waterville Historical Society, I would like to voice our appreciation for the financial support we've received for our project *Digitizing and Providing Online Access to WHS's Archives of the Waterville Interurban Bridge*. This project 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.

The Waterville Historical Society's mission is to collect, preserve, provide access to, interpret, and foster an appreciation of the history that has impacted the Waterville area, one with a rich history as a Native American meeting place, early Ohio settlement, canal town, and small city. We are an all-volunteer organization that owns five historic buildings, staffs our Wakeman Archival Research Center, and provides public programs, tours, and events, including for our local 3rd grade classes.

This \$1,725 OHRAB grant will allow us to identify, digitize, and provide online access to our archival collection of the Waterville Interurban Bridge. The bridge's likely demolition has sparked renewed interest in it and its history. We believe our collection holds records, including photographs, historic maps, artwork, and artifacts, that are currently unavailable online and represent an important contribution to research. This project will be our first effort at online accessibility, and it will help us develop a strategic plan to digitize and provide online access to the rest of our archives.

We hope that you will use your position to support and promote the valuable work that the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board is doing to preserve and improve access to Ohio's historical records.

Sincerely,

Steven A. Lauer
President

