

Clark County Historical Society

OHRAB Final Report

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Project: Oral History Website Development Project

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Summary

Our Oral History Website Development Project is a sequel project to our 2019 OHRAB grant-funded project to digitize our collection of 120 oral history interviews that date from 1986 to 2002. The 2019 project allowed us to digitize these oral histories and upload them to our YouTube channel, but we found that it would be difficult for researchers and the public to find the specific information they needed via YouTube.

For example, if someone wanted to find information related to the history of the Boy Scouts in Clark County, they would only be able to find Jack Gochenour's interview since the naming conventions at the time included "Boy Scouts" in the title and description. They would not know that the interviews with Mike Johns, Paul Price, and Bob Beach *also* contain information related to the Boy Scouts. If the first issue was locating the correct oral histories, then the second issue was being able to locate the necessary information within the 45 minute – 1 hour video. The majority of our oral history interviewees talk about multiple subjects, so even if our hypothetical researcher was able to find the correct oral history, they wouldn't necessarily know when the interviewee would start to discuss the Boy Scouts. Or, worse still, information about the Boy Scouts might be scattered across discussions around growing up in Clark County, going to school, home life, and other related but tangential topics. Our aim for this grant was to make our Oral Histories more accessible and discoverable to the public. We did this by creating a video archive on our website, thereby bypassing YouTube's search function and offering a downloadable PDF transcript with each video.

We by and large accomplished our goal with the help of our web developer, Torrch Labs. We already had the ingredients to make a video archive thanks to the 2019 OHRAB grant funds: we had digitized our Oral History Collection, uploaded the digitized videos onto YouTube, and we had transcripts for these interviews already prepared (albeit in DOCX and not PDF formats). We converted our DOCX transcripts to PDFs and uploaded them to Wordpress. From there, Torrch was able to create templated records for each individual video that included a title, the interviewer, the date of the interview, the length of the interview, interview topics, a brief description, and a link to the PDF of the transcript. (See Figure 1 at end of report.) We were able to create all 120 records for our videos and transcripts and use a search tool that would allow a

user to comb through the words on the individual video record *and* the PDF transcript as well. This releases Curatorial staff from the burden of being exhaustive in our descriptions and keywords.

After we completed the archive, we publicized its existence. We did this through a Mailchimp email campaign and through a Facebook post. Our email campaign through Mailchimp garnered 44% opens and 3.6% clicks. This open rate is on par for us, but the 3.6% click rate is the highest we've experienced in 3 months. Our Facebook post had a reach of 3,345 with 63 engaging with the post (through likes, reactions, comments, and shares) and 34 click throughs. Since these digitized Oral Histories are hosted on YouTube, we can use YouTube's analytics to help see how frequently these videos are accessed. Out of our top 50 videos from the past month, 19 are interviews from the Oral History Collection.

Our task going forward is to continue to create awareness around the accessibility of this collection. We already advertise our modern Oral History Program, which continues the work set out by the interviewers of the 1980s Oral History Collection, during community outreach events. We'll use future community outreach events to continue to publicize this online collection.

Project Expenses

ITEM	GRANT FUNDS	CCHS MATCH
CCHS Staff Labor		\$570.80
Wordpress Search Tool		\$99.00
Torrch Labs Labor	\$2,500	\$2,538.75
TOTAL	\$2,500	\$3,208.55

Torrch completed the following tasks:

- Installing, creating, and setting up the video archive webpage.
- Installing SearchWP Plugin.
- Uploading PDF transcripts to website.
- Creating 120 video records: embedding each record with the appropriate YouTube video, creating a button to link to the appropriate PDF transcript, copy/pasting/formatting meta information like Title, Description, Interview Topics, Interview Length, as well as linking video records together (e.g., so a user can access Part 2 of 4 after watching Part 1 of 4).

Please see Figure 2 at end of report for paid invoice.



Interview with John Allgier

Interviewer: Matthies, Roland

Date: 08/18/1993

Length: 19.0

Interview Topics: Casket manufacturing, local funeral homes, Springfield Metallic Casket, Woods-Allgier Funeral Home

[Transcript](#)

Interview on August 18, 1993, by Roland Matthies with John Allgier of the Woods-Allgier Funeral Home in which we are seeking information for the Clark County Historical Society archives about the casket manufacturing business historically in Clark County and then about the Woods-Allgier Corporation itself.

Figure 1. An example of an individual record that can be found via our video archive.