FINAL REPORT
For
Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board
January 1, 2024

Preservation and Digitization of Historical Records at Fallen Timbers Union Cemetery District

Fallen Timbers Union Cemetery District
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The following is the final report for the Preservation and Digitization of Historical Records at Fallen Timbers Union Cemetery District. Fallen Timbers Union Cemetery District (FTUCD) was formed in 2019 by consolidating the records and operations of five rural cemeteries, all with their own style and method of record keeping. Records needed to be organized, environmentally secure, and digitally preserved for future generations. FTUCD has historical records dating back to the 1800's; the area is a historical site from the Battle of Fallen Timbers.

In its proposal, the project would be deemed successful when:

•The environment of the building in which the historical documents are stored maintains an air temperature of not greater than 75 degrees, 100% of 25 randomized readings, as evidenced by on-site hygrometer readings. AND the environment of the building in which the historical documents are stored maintains a humidity level not to exceed 55%, 100% of 25 randomized readings, as evidenced by on-site hygrometer readings.

These goals were met. Methodology included obtaining and installing a hygrometer that was centrally located and easily accessed. The sexton randomly took readings, varying the time of day and day of the week by photographing the hygrometer image and sending them to this writer (see attachment 1). Only one page was printed for this report due to the number of pages required to materialize 25 hygrometer readings.

•100% of available documents, including maps and index cards (used in the past to record grave plot data) will be contained within secure housing.

This goal was met. A deviation from the proposal, however, was that we felt the rolled maps would maintain their integrity better if stored upright versus horizontally in a long file cabinet.

Stacking the rolls in a horizontal plane held the potential to crush the maps located at the bottom of that pile. We obtained permission to secure instead a fireproof rifle cabinet that allowed the maps to be upright and next to each other instead of on top of each other. This case also locks, increasing security of the maps and limiting unauthorized access (see attachment 2).

•80% of available records shall be captured virtually (digital photo/scan).

This goal was not met. It is estimated that approximately 60% of the available documents were digitally photographed. While we did succeed at photographing 3587 documents, approximately 7 cubic feet remain to be digitized. There a few reasons our goal was not met, but the primary inhibitor was illness. It is not an exaggeration to say we had a "community outbreak" of the flu and/or other viral illness (see attachment 3). The chart indicates actual hospitalizations from the flu, but most in the community were home-bound, if not from the flu, then out of fear of getting the flu so close to the holidays. Even the sexton and his assistant got ill, and this writer was ill most of December, limiting access to doing any work on the grant. Secondly, the sexton had been using his personal computer as his work computer as well, and it could not hold all the information we were trying to upload to it. We then got permission to use the $2100 saved (by buying a fireproof gun case instead of a fireproof horizontal cabinet) to buy a new computer for dedicated use by the cemetery district (see attachment 4). There was a delay in getting the computer, as we wanted to get it locally to support local business, and new software had to be added.

SUMMARY

Through the operation of this grant, information and records from all sorts of sources (some records were found in shoe boxes!) were organized, filed, and secured in safe housing. Digitizing has begun but is far from done. Volunteers have logged 171 hours so far to get the records ready and to begin digitizing (see attachment 5). People from the community have stepped forward to engage in the process of preservation and are willing to help us see this through in the new year. While we fell short of actually being able to have people access cemetery records virtually, we did manage to educate the public about our endeavors and ignite an interest in genealogy and record preservation. FTUCD has become more recognized by its community. Our local newspaper did an article on our project (cited in the interim report). We feel good about what we have accomplished so far and look forward to having all these precious records preserved for generations to come.

EXPENSES

Volunteer hours: 171 hours @ $29.95/hr $5121.45

Equipment:

Fireproof gun safe	700.36
Desktop computer with software	2095.00
Olympus Tough digital camera with GPS	529.00
Black & Decker dehumidifier	155.00
Midea 12000 BTU window air conditioner	459.00
Fujitsu ScanSnap SV600 Overhead Scanner	579.00
Accurite Indoor Temperature and Humidity Monitor	10.96
Dehumidifier drain hose	9.11
Air conditioner foam insulating strip	14.68
	$4552.11

receipts for gun safe and computer included in this report; receipt for other equipment found in interim report

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