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Oakwood Cemetery Association LLC
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Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board Archival Project – Interim Report
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Organizational Description:

Historical Oakwood Cemetery is located in Trumbull County, in the City of Warren, Ohio and is run by a nonprofit organization, Oakwood Cemetery Association LLC. The cemetery has been in active use in Downtown Warren since 1847. The Cemetery Association was formed by an act of the Ohio Legislature in 1849 and is registered as a 501(c)(13). The Cemetery is home to roughly 50 acres of indoor and outdoor spaces, with 35 of the acres being developed property. Historical Oakwood Cemetery is supported by a dedicated team of two full-time staff members, a superintendent and the Oakwood Cemetery Association Board. Oakwood Cemetery operates as a nonprofit organization, with most funding originating from the cost of burials. Additional funding is secured from donations, with notable contributions from the Helene P Kaighin Charitable Trust and the Nancy K VanFossan Family Foundation. The Cemetery operates with an annual budget of roughly $200,000.

Oakwood Cemetery's holdings are rather narrow in scope, all relating to the purpose served by the Cemetery as a final resting place. That said, the archive room is home to roughly 45,000 interment records, that were bound in sectional post binders. The archive room also hosts lot records, also bound in sectional post binders, employee records spanning the cemetery's operational history, and large lot maps of the property. The estimated cubic footage of the collection storage area is 7488 cubic feet. The archive room is climate controlled, and the sectional post binders containing Cemetery records are stored on metal shelving units. The Oakwood Cemetery Archival Project interment records are currently well-preserved, showing the expected signs of aging but retaining legibility and usability. The records that comprise Oakwood Cemetery's holdings are available to the public for research purposes during the Cemetery's normal business hours, which are from 7:00am-3:30pm Monday through Friday.

Oakwood Cemetery's Historical Significance:

Oakwood Cemetery is the resting place for numerous American veterans, with service dating back to the Revolutionary War. Additionally, Oakwood Cemetery is the final resting place for many notable figures from Warren and Trumbull County, including the Perkins, Packard, and Sutliff families. Interment records provide researchers with invaluable information regarding the tens of thousands of individuals buried in the Cemetery.

Oakwood Cemetery Archival Project Interim Progress Report:

The Trumbull Historical Society assisted Oakwood Cemetery by ordering 60 archival-safe boxes. We estimate that 80% of the interment records have been scanned and stored in the archival-safe boxes. We estimate that we are on track to complete the scanning and re-boxing of interment records by December 31, 2025.

The scanning process is 80% completed, but the records will have to be transcribed to make Oakwood's holdings more accessible to researchers, while likewise increasing the efficiency of research through the use of indexes and keyword searchable files.

Actions and Current Interim Results:

1. Purchase document scanners and archival materials for preservation.
   RESULTS: Purchases 60 archival-safe boxes with the assistance of TCHS (receipt in email as an attachment). We did not purchase scanners because we switched over to an ADOBE digital scanner application on phones and iPads that worked efficiently without requiring new physical scanning equipment. We will assess if we need physical scanners or more archival boxes for the records as time goes on.

2. Finish the digitization of interment records within Oakwood Cemetery's holdings.
   RESULTS UPDATE: We have scanned approximately 80% of the interment records. We are on track to complete interment scanning by December 31, 2025.

3. Concurrent to step 2, move records from sectional post binders into archival boxes, label and organize holdings area. We are 80% completed on re-homing the paper interment documents. As we complete the scanning process, we will re-home the paper interment records. **We are approximately 80% completed on transferring the records to the archival boxes. Volunteers spend approximately 4-5 hours once a month to scan and transfer records to the archival boxes. We anticipate scanning and boxing the majority of the remaining documents by December 31, 2025. On average, we have 4-6 volunteers scanning and working on an average of 4-5 hours at a time. The total time combining the volunteers and TCHS paid volunteers and affiliates is between 16-30 hours at a time per month. We ordered the archival boxes in June 2025, and by August 19 we had transferred 80% of the interment records. The time for that transfer of the paper records to the archival boxes was approximately 10 hours of combined volunteer time.**

4. Develop a virtual catalog for the collection with the help of TCHS and volunteers. This will be a long term project for Oakwood Cemetery, Youngstown State University, and Trumbull County Historical Society. The scope of this work is related to the scanning project, but is a separate project that will also assist with preserving records and increasing public access to those records. We estimate between 30,000-45,000 burials have taken place since 1847.

Grant Project Staff:

☐ Holly Taylor Meyer, Authorizing Official/Project Manager: Oversees and organizes the project, ensures milestones are met within the grant period, and contributes 10% of her time over the grant period. Qualifications include a BA in liberal arts, 5 years of professional experience in records digitization.

☐ TCHS Staff (Meghan Reed, Savannah Moss, Kate Pfouts), scanning and preservation volunteers: responsible for digitizing records and establishing a digital database, each contributing 4 hours monthly over the grant period. Qualifications include master's degrees in public history and museum studies (Meghan Reed and Savannah Moss, respectively), bachelor's degrees in Anthropology (Savannah Moss and Kate Pfouts), and professional experience in document preservation, digitization, and collections care and management.

☐ Dr. Amy Fluker, scanning and preservation volunteer: assist in digitizing and cataloguing records, contributing 4 hours monthly over the grant period. Qualifications include a PhD in History, specializing in the history of Civil War Memory.

Results:

☐ Digitized interment records for all of Oakwood Cemetery's burials.

☐ A dedicated public database for access to the records digitally.

☐ The ongoing preservation of irreplaceable cemetery records. The primary objective of this project is the preservation of Oakwood's interment records. Digitization achieves this while also enhancing public access to these valuable records, allowing students, researchers, genealogists and more the capability to research interred records easily, and be able to view the records in person, onsite at the Oakwood Gatehouse records vault.

Additional Information:

Receipt for the purchase of the Gaylor Archival boxes. Receipt will be attached to the email.

Media advertising on Facebook:

We are so pleased to… - Trumbull County Historical Society | Facebook

Trumbull County Historical Society's post ✕

Trumbull County Historical Society
July 15 · ⚙

We are so pleased to share that Oakwood Cemetery received new archival boxes to house their records, courtesy of a Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board grant! In conjunction with the Youngstown State University History program, TCHS and volunteers have worked diligently the last 2.5 years to scan interment records to create an online searchable map. We are excited to complete the scanning process this year, moving on to transcribing each card to create the map. Stay tuned as this long-term project continues into the next phase!