

OHRAB Final Report

Franciscan Sisters of the Poor Congregational Archives

Processing of the St. Mary/Providence Hospitals (Cincinnati) Collection

Project Director

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Summary of Project Activities and Accomplishments

The processed collection measures 12 cubic feet along with 3 digitized movies, 2 oversized archival boxes, and 14 refoldered architectural drawings.

The finding aid is attached as a Word document.

This project met most of the objectives stated in the grant application. The entire collection was processed and the final size was as estimated. Three movies were preserved through scanning and the creation of WAV master files and MP4 use files. The movies were also re-cored and re-housed using archival cores and canisters.

Processing this collection revealed wonderful information on Architect Gordon Friesen as well as documentation of the now mostly destroyed West End neighborhood. The collection contains over 100 photographs of buildings that were unfortunately lost during urban renewal. These photographs also show the poverty of African Americans in 1950s Cincinnati. One photograph shows two young boys standing in an alleyway behind a ramshackle frame house. A Sister who was missioned in rural Brazil in the 1960s at first thought she was looking at a photograph of a shack there. I believe this collection will attract researchers who do not usually think of using small, religious archives.

During the course of processing many more blueprints and architectural drawings were found in the basement of Providence Hospital and donated to the Archives. These will be processed and added to the collection in the near future. We also discovered early original land deeds, property records, and other legal documents for St. Mary and other hospitals. These records are part of and will be kept with the governmental records of the Congregation.

I also encountered some problems. My intern quit about half way through this project, leading me to devote much more time to processing than originally thought. I am a "lone arranger" and I spend a great deal of time doing research and writing reports for Congregational leadership, so finding processing time was difficult.

This appears to be an artificial collection and was therefore very difficult to process. My original plan to use MPLP techniques was abandoned because parts of the collection were quite simply a mess. Some materials were produced by the hospitals, others by Congregational leadership, still others by the Sister Administrator of each hospital. For example, multiple copies of Board of Trustee records were found in the collection. Each group of records overlapped the time period of other groups and was obviously assembled by different individuals. At some point the records held by Congregational leadership were separated from other governmental records and intermingled with the records of both hospitals. Some records contain confidential information not related to either hospital. The provenance of many parts of the collection was lost. I made the decision to not return these parts to their original collections. Doing so would take too much time and in some cases would be impossible. I also decided that weeding duplicate records from these artificial collections was a poor use of time. Board of Trustee records, Congregational records, transcripts, and other confidential material mixed into this collection are restricted. Researchers can, however, request redacted information from these files.

Unfortunately I am still waiting on the launch of the Archives' website. Some advertising of the grant was successful, other efforts were not. Because the website was not ready, I asked the Congregation's local PR person to promote some scanned photographs. This was somewhat successful but my descriptions and the grant credit line were sometimes shortened or even left off. I am working on ways to correct this problem and I am stressing the importance of correct use of all images from the Archives.

The grant award was featured in the Society of Ohio Archivists Fall 2015 newsletter (selection below). It was also discussed at the August, 2015 Miami Valley Archives Roundtable, hosted by the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor Congregational Archives. Several images from the collection were submitted to the PR office of the Congregation's US Area for "Throwback Thursday" on Facebook (selection below). I am hosting a "movie premier" with popcorn and snacks for Sisters and staff in March. I am sure that the Sisters will identify many people in the scanned movies and I will hear many stories and recollections after our party.

Franciscan Sisters of the Poor (Cincinnati)

The Franciscan Sisters of the Poor are a proud recipient of a 2015 OHRAB grant. The grant award is being used to process the St. Mary/ Providence Hospital (Cincinnati) collection. St. Mary, opened in 1858, was the first hospital the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor operated in the United States. Providence Hospital, located on the former estate of industrialist Powel Crosley, Jr., replaced St. Mary in 1971. Archivist Jennifer Gerth-Unger and [redacted] are processing the collection.

Facebook post from Franciscan Sisters of the Poor U.S. Area, dated July 2, 2015. The post includes a black and white photograph of fireworks exploding over the Cincinnati skyline at night, with the St. Mary Hospital building visible in the foreground. The text of the post describes the photograph as being taken from the roof of St. Mary Hospital on June 29, 1961, during the opening of the \$20,000,000.00 Millcreek Expressway. The text also mentions that the opening took place near the river front and that the expressway is to the right of the hospital. The tallest building in the city, the Carew Tower, is also mentioned. The photograph was taken by Irene L. Gamble for St. Mary's Public Relations Office on 6/26/1961.

Project Cost

Supplies

4 boxes letter size folders (RF9111) at \$30.10 each	\$120.41	
2 packages 8x10 photo envelopes (PNP810) at \$27.94 each	\$55.88	
1 Package PrintFile slide sleeves (3520P) at \$47.74 each	\$47.74	
36 blue/gray letter size document cases (D12105) at \$4.61 each	\$165.96	
2 16x20 drop front storage boxes (PB20163) at 13.09 each	\$26.18	
	Subtotal	\$416.16

Scanning

Scanning, 1 16mm and 2 8mm films by SceneSavers, Covington, KY	Subtotal	\$600.00
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Total grant funded expenses \$1016.16

Project Cost Match

Supplies

1 package Photo Envelopes (AP) at \$9.31 each	\$9.31	
1 package 10 pt. Map & Print Folders (M3648 substituted for M3240) at <u>\$69.20</u>	\$69.20	
1 package 35mm Negative Sleeves (FL35N) at \$9.36 each	\$9.36	
	Subtotal	\$87.87

All archival supplies were ordered through Gaylord.

Staff and volunteer time

April 1-August 13, 2015 80 hours by intern at \$15/hr plus 7.65% FICA	\$1292	
April 1-August 31, 2015 10% of archivist's time	\$1875	
September 1-December 31, 2015 33.3% of archivist's time	\$5000	
	Subtotal	\$8167

Total matching funds \$8254.97

Total project cost \$9271.03