

**Rocky River Public Library and Cowan Pottery Museum
Records Database Project
Mid-Year Report
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Rocky River Public Library (RRPL) and the Cowan Pottery Museum obtained a grant from the Ohio Records Advisory Board to purchase Past Perfect Museum Software to allow us to catalog our archival holdings in a digital database for better inventorying and recordkeeping and to eventually increase public awareness of and access to these archives.

Upon receiving the grant of \$870.00, we purchased Past Perfect V.5. (This means that the total grant amount was used at the onset of the project; matching funds in the form of staff time are ongoing for the duration of the project.) Before cataloguing materials could begin, Lauren Hansgen spent time working with the Past Perfect system to understand how to use it and how to best apply it to RRPL's needs. PastPerfect was customized for our use as much as possible and Hansgen drafted written procedures for archives cataloguing. These will be edited as needed as the project progresses, but at its conclusion we will have finalized written procedures for archives cataloguing to serve as instructions for anyone adding to and maintaining our archives in the future. We have also identified the specific archival holdings in our collection and their type according to generally accepted archival definitions/hierarchies:

- Donald Calkins Manuscript Collection
- Cowan Family Manuscript Collection
- Bassett/Naumann Manuscript Collection
- Cowan Pottery Museum Archival Collection
- Rocky River Public Library Archival Collection
- Rocky River Public Library Historical Assembled Collection

Cataloguing began with the Donald Calkins Manuscript Collection and is currently focused on the other Cowan Pottery Museum manuscript collections. Work on these collections should be concluded by mid-late September and then we will proceed to the remaining RRPL archival collections. Archives cataloguing will be a long process that will need occasional maintenance every year, but the bulk of the work will be completed by the end of the grant period. Lauren Hansgen will be submitting budget requests for the Cowan Pottery Museum and history projects in mid-September and will be including a request for the media package add-on for Past Perfect that will

allow us to add images to records and further the accessibility of the archives to the public.

Already the project has been beneficial by serving to acclimate the Curator/Historian (who assumed the post in January 2014) to the archival holdings. Cataloguing the individual materials has given Hansgen the opportunity to review these items to understand what information is available to researchers, or what will aid her in answering research questions. Furthermore, being equipped with an archives cataloguing database has already proved promising when speaking with potential donors. Specifically, we have been able to further conversations with a donor about our ability to accept and provide a good home for a major artist archive. The donor's ultimate goal is that these archives are accessible to the public, something we are better able to facilitate as a result of this grant.