

**Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board**  
**Final Grant Report**  
**January 31, 2013**

**Organization:** Wyandot County Historical Society  
**Institution:** Wyandot County Museum  
**Location:** Upper Sandusky, Ohio  
**Project:** Archival Storage of One-Room Schoolhouse Documents  
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**Background and Report of Grant Activities from June through December 2012:**

While rearranging the Wyandot County Museum's Attic Storage Area during October 2011 (in preparation for a storage shelf construction project) the Wyandot County Museum's Curator discovered a tattered, manila envelope containing roughly one hundred and fifty folded and rubber banded documents pertaining to Wyandot County's one-room schoolhouses. Many of the papers were expenditure reports or rosters of students dating between 1855 and 1908. It was decided that the papers, especially the student names combined with those of their parents, would be of great interest to local historians and genealogists, therefore, the papers should be properly preserved and stored. It is believed that the earliest documents may represent the only appearance of some children, outside of census records, in the historic record.

Several smaller groups of school documents, including graduation programs, school souvenirs listing students, and "Reward of Merit" certificates were located during the project and added bringing the total number of documents processed to 190. It was initially believed that there were many more documents, but it became clear during the project that many of these nineteenth century papers were fragile and had separated along fold lines. These pieces were taped back together using archival tape and placed in the same folders, ultimately reducing the overall number of documents.

Upon receiving notification that the Wyandot County Historical Society was awarded the grant from Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board to process the collection, the Curator began to sort out the documents and unfold the papers in preparation for scanning. Each item was assigned an individual number as part of the accessioning process prior to being scanned and placed in archival folders. The Society had never undertaken an archival project like this before; however, the Society's ultimate goal is to store all of the documents and photographs in archival materials, thus this project serves as a reference and guide for future projects.

Scanning of the documents (front and back) began in June and all 190 items were processed by the end of September, resulting in an image database of over 430 images. Many of the early schoolhouse expenditure documents were much larger than the scanner bed, necessitating two scans per page. Each piece was scanned front and back resulting in two to four pages per item. Because of the fragile nature of most pieces, this was a slow process. Several needed to be repaired with archival tape before they could be scanned. Each scan was assigned the same number as the original document with additional designations (front, reverse, interior, exterior, etc.) for the multiple scanned papers. The Curator was allocated four hours a week to

complete this project and worked on the project steadily during an extremely active summer at the Wyandot County Museum.

As of December 1, 2012, the Curator had transcribed the names of individuals from nearly all of the documents (some documents were blank or partially completed) resulting in a database of roughly eighteen hundred names. Many of these names are students, parents and teachers who appeared in consecutive years. Several of the documents were written or filled in with pencil or light ink which has faded over time making it difficult to read and accurately transcribe all of the names. The Curator utilized additional resources such as early county history books, historic family biographies and census records to determine the correct or accepted spellings of many of the illegible names. Unfortunately, due to paper damage or completely faded ink, there are additional names which cannot be determined accurately.

The Curator completed the scanning and initial transcription of names by the project's projected end date of September 30, 2012. As of this time of this report, the scanned images and databases are available for researchers to use. Copies of these databases were also prepared and delivered to area historical and genealogical societies. It is hoped that the digital images will remove the need to handle the fragile papers, however, this project will allow the original documents to be easily retrieved by Museum staff for closer examination by researchers, if needed.

While it was initially believed that these documents encompassed the whole area of Wyandot County, it was quickly discovered by the Curator that they pertained primarily to the area of Eden Township. During the project, the Curator learned that the Wyandot County Genealogy Society was given boxes of similar schoolhouse documents by the Historical Society several years ago, which were then placed in storage. The Genealogy Society did not have the personnel or resources to process the materials, so the Curator negotiated a return of these historic documents. At the Public Meeting of the Society's Board of Directors on November 27, 2012, the Curator was presented with two boxes of the above referenced documents by the President of the Wyandot County Genealogy Society. These boxes contained roughly 500 items related to early schools in other townships, county school tax documents, as well as many documents related to military draft activity during the Civil War.

In keeping with the above stated goals, the Curator has begun to process these new documents utilizing archival materials left over from this grant project. Additional materials will be purchased to store these documents in addition to large collection of sheet music, music magazines and postcards and other ephemera discovered in storage. While the Attic shelving project led to the discovery of these documents, this grant project has been a major catalyst in the Society's efforts to properly preserve and store its collections. Near the end of this project, the local VFW Post #2842 presented the Society with \$1,500 to use toward the permanent storage of our military uniforms, artifacts and documents. Recently, shelving and clothing racks have been added to the storage area for long-term textile preservation. At a recent Board Meeting, the Society's Board of Directors discussed purchasing a map cabinet and fire-proof file cabinet to further protect the Society's oversize and valuable archival materials. The Wyandot County Historical Society is grateful for the authorization of this grant from the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board and the Ohio Historical Society. It is through partnerships like this that the Society is able to fulfill its mission to "protect and preserve" Wyandot County's history.



Images of the manila envelope containing early county school documents found in the Wyandot County Museum's Attic Storage Area during October 2011.

	Males		Females	
Samuel Armstrong				
	Julian Armstrong		Julian Armstrong	1
John Wilson	Amos Wilson	Amos Wilson		1
Walter Hill	Elija Hill	Jacob Hill	Elija Hill	
	John B. Hill	John B. Hill	Marshall Hill	5
	George Hill	George Hill		
	James Hill			
James Armstrong	Richard Armstrong	Richard Armstrong		
	James Armstrong	Richard Armstrong	James Armstrong	5, 9
	James Armstrong	James Armstrong		

I hereby certify the above to be a correct list of the White youth in Sub-district number four township two -  
 Wyandot County for the year 1855

October the 12<sup>th</sup> 1855

Jos. H. Williams } Local Director



Scanned image from the project showing a roster of students during October 1855 (left) and image showing documents as they were separated and placed in acid-free folders during the project.



Images showing the newly accessioned school documents in their individual acid-free file folders which had been placed into acid-free storage boxes.



Image of the acid-free boxes containing the school documents sitting on the Attic Storage Area work station ready to be labeled and placed in the designated archival section and Eagle Scout Mylon Carlson standing beside some of the newly constructed shelves his crew erected in the Attic Storage Area.