

Fort Mill History Museum
History Research Process (FMHM-ADM-07)
Rev. Date: Sept 2020

Purpose

An essential component of the Fort Mill History Museum’s mission is to research local history topics and elements. This document outlines the process used by the FMHM History Research Team to perform research in a consistent, efficient, and effective manner. The process includes the submittal and vetting of potential topics, team member assignments, analysis, peer review and approval, reporting of the findings, and research archival. This ensures adequate steps are followed during the entire history research process.

Scope

All sanctioned research by the Fort Mill History Museum adheres to this process. Topics and elements to be researched should be associated with local history of the Town of Fort Mill, the township, and the surrounding areas of northern York and Lancaster counties, including Indian Land and Tega Cay.

Direct and Indirect Research Components

The Fort Mill History Museum research projects include direct and indirect components. Direct research components are specific events, occurrences, or factors requiring team members to accumulate evidence (information, facts, stories, interpretations, opinions, statements, reports, etc.) in an orderly and presentable manner. The historian pursues the 5 “W”s of Who, When, Where, What and Why.

Indirect research components are elements which help historians collect and analyze direct research components. These include reference material and resources such as databases, books, and documents available both within the museum or other venues (e.g. libraries).

Research Topic Sources

Sources of local history topics for research consideration by the FMHM History Research Team include:

- Topics or components currently in the FMHM research backlog
- Topics presented or requested from FMHM members or external entities (community, Town of Fort Mill, schools, etc.)
- Items discovered during research analysis of other topics
- Topics related to upcoming events (town anniversaries, holidays, etc.)

Process

1. Research Topic Submission and Vetting Procedure
 - a. An individual or a representative of an entity (company, Town of Fort Mill, etc.) proposes an item/topic for research consideration

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- b. Individual completes the “FMHM History Research Request Form” located on the FMHM website. Paper copies of the form are also available at the museum.
 - c. Individual completes the form with the following information:
 - i. Individual name, phone number, and email address
 - ii. Description of research request
 - iii. Listing of any documentation individual already has regarding the item which can be made available to the research team
 - iv. Describe the type of deliverable requested at the completion of the research (list, report, presentation, etc.)
 - d. Individual submits the request online or delivers paper copy to the museum
 - e. FMHM History Research Team Lead:
 - i. reviews request and contacts individual who submitted the request if additional information or clarity is needed
 - ii. discusses proposed item with History Research Team member(s) for consideration:
 - 1. If topic does not qualify for research, History Research Team Lead notifies individual or entity submitting proposal of the non-qualification
 - 2. If topic qualifies for research, process continues
 - iii. determines the specific deliverable(s) to be produced by the research
 - iv. enters the topic and details on the FMHM History Research Items spreadsheet
2. Research Topic Assignment
- a. As needed, FMHM History Research Team Lead presents updated spreadsheet to team members
 - b. FMHM History Research Team member volunteers to pursue topic and their name is entered in the “Assigned Researcher” column beside the specific topic
 - c. FMHM History Research Team Lead and assigned Researcher clarify deliverable and establish a projected due date for research completion
3. Analysis – assigned Researcher:
- a. reviews deliverables and begins research
 - b. provides an update on research progress upon request by History Research Team Lead
 - c. compiles data/information for the noted deliverable(s) in the FMHM approved format
 - d. notifies History Research Team Lead upon completion of research
4. Peer Review / Approval
- a. If applicable, History Research Team Lead assigns a History Research Team member as a Reviewer of the submitted research

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- b. If needed, Reviewer contacts Researcher for additional information or clarity to ensure noted deliverable(s) are correct, complete, and in FMHM approved report format
 - c. Reviewer notifies History Research Team Lead that research is correct and complete for all noted deliverable(s) and in FMHM approved report format
5. Reporting of Findings
- a. Researcher contacts requestor to notify research is complete and determines delivery option (email, presentation, etc.)
 - b. Researcher provides requestor with deliverable and notifies History Research Team Lead of deliverable
6. Archival
- a. Researcher submits deliverable(s) to FMHM Executive Director for approved archival
 - b. FMHM Executive Director files deliverable(s) in designated research area