



Rogers Historical Museum
313 S. 2nd Street
Rogers, AR 72756

Collections Management Policy

Approved: April 7, 1988

Revised: October 5, 1989, June 7, 1990, July 7, 1994, January 6, 2005, June 6, 2006, September 4, 2008, February 17, 2012, July 7, 2016, June 6, 2019

MISSION STATEMENT

The Rogers Historical Museum serves Rogers and all of Northwest Arkansas, a rapidly growing metropolitan area that shares a rich natural and cultural heritage, a vibrant entrepreneurial spirit, and an increasingly diverse population.

Our mission is to enrich lives through education, experience, and exploration of our heritage.

The Museum fulfills that mission through:

- Collecting and preserving artifacts, archival materials, and research materials which document the history and cultural heritage of Rogers and the four county area of Benton, Washington, Carroll, & Madison Counties;
- Offering exhibitions, programs, publications, and web-based resources which foster an appreciation of our region's heritage and enabling area residents to create a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities;
- Offering family-friendly exhibitions and programs which allow people of all ages to engage the past, image the future, and find joy in learning; and
- Offering loan exhibitions and related programs which broaden the cultural horizons of area residents and help place our region's natural and cultural heritage in a broader context.

COLLECTION TYPES

The Museum shall maintain four types of collections (the "collections") which shall be used for research, education, and/or exhibition purposes. The Permanent Collection shall consist primarily of accessioned Northwest Arkansas-related historical materials.

In addition to historical artifacts, there shall be a Reproduction Collection, consisting of modern reproductions of items that played a major role in the area's history. This collection helps fill voids in the historical collection that are impossible or unfeasible to

fill with authentic objects. These items will add the same interpretive value to programs and exhibits that an historical object would provide.

Different from the historical materials, the reproductions may be touched or handled under supervision of a Museum staff member. Guidelines for handling each reproduction item will be set on an individual basis by the Museum Commission.

Also within the Permanent Collection is a smaller Northwest Arkansas Community College collection which consists of items related to the college's institutional history.

The Teaching Collection shall consist of reproductions, objects without historical documentation or significance, too low in quality to be used in the Permanent Collection, or other hands-on materials.

The Research Collection shall consist of actual or reproduction books, journals, newspaper articles, maps, manuscripts, and reproduction historic photographs.

The Museum Archives shall consist of brochures, newsletters, posters, documents, and memorabilia relating to the history of the Museum.

All collecting activities shall be guided by the acquisition criteria, scope, and priorities outlined in the Collections Management Policy (the "Policy").

The Museum shall encourage and carry out research significant to the collections and shall provide information to the general public by the development and presentation of exhibitions, publications, educational programs, and the web site.

The Rogers Historical Museum Commission (the "Commission") has "the authority to operate, manage, maintain, and control said museum and to have full and complete charge thereof" as stated in the Rogers Historical Museum By-laws. The Museum director shall work on the Commission's behalf to maintain the Museum and shall directly oversee all employees and staff members.

ETHICS

Staff and Commissioners shall subscribe to the Rogers Historical Museum Ethical Guidelines. No staff member or Commissioner shall use his or her position at the Museum for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of the Museum, its mission, its reputation, and the society it serves. Additional guidelines regarding governance, conflict of interest, ownership of scholarly materials, outside employment, political activities, equal opportunity, etc., are detailed in the Ethical Guidelines.

PERSONAL COLLECTING

Neither staff nor Museum Commissioners shall compete with the Museum in any

personal collecting. The Museum's collecting interests are detailed in the "Acquisition Priorities for the Permanent Collection" section of this Policy. Staff and Commissioners shall use their best judgment in determining whether or not an object is currently collected by the Museum, in consultation with the director and/or the curator of collections.

If such an object comes to the attention of staff or Commissioners, either through sale or possible gift, the Museum shall be informed of its availability and shall have the first chance to accept or reject it. If such an object is purchased by staff or Commissioners, it shall be offered to the Museum at purchase price. Objects collected prior to an individual's association with the Museum, bequests, or gifts of a personal nature shall be exempt from this policy.

Staff or Commissioners may not participate in any dealing in objects similar to those objects collected by the Museum. For the purposes of this Policy, a dealer is defined as someone who buys and sells objects for profit on a regular basis.

APPRAISALS AND IDENTIFICATIONS

No museum employee shall perform appraisals. The exception to this principle is appraisal for internal use by the Museum (e.g. insurance evaluations for loans). Any such appraisal shall represent an honest and objective judgment and shall indicate how the judgment was reached.

Donations to the Museum are tax deductible to the extent of the law. Donors, therefore, are expected to obtain independent appraisals for objects they wish to donate at their own expense. The Museum shall avoid any action that might appear to be an effort to assist the donor in securing an improper income tax deduction.

Although Museum employees are barred from appraising objects, whether for potential donation or otherwise, they may help individuals identify the historical or cultural identity of objects based on their expertise in the field. Staff members shall make it clear to the public that such identifications are not appraisals, that no financial or insurance value should be based on such identifications, and that secondary identifications are often warranted.

Museum employees may also provide the public with advice about the care of their private collections. Such opinions shall be based on professional expertise. If questions exceed the bounds of a staff member's personal capabilities, they shall refer those questions to other appropriate museum professionals, such as conservators.

CAPITALIZATION OF THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

It is the policy of the Museum that its Permanent Collection not be capitalized. The Permanent Collection meets the requirements of the Government Accounting

Standards Board in that museum collections do not need to be capitalized as are other financial assets so long as: they are held for public exhibition, education, or research in furtherance of public service rather than financial gain; are protected, kept unencumbered, cared for, and preserved; and are subject to an organizational policy that requires proceeds from the sale of collections items be used to acquire other items for the collections. Furthermore, current museum ethical standards strongly discourage the capitalization of collections or treating them as financial assets.

ACQUISITION CRITERIA

The Museum shall acquire objects through gifts, bequests, purchases, or exchanges in conjunction with the following essential criteria.

1. The object shall be consistent with the mission and acquisition priorities of the Museum.
2. The Museum must be able to give proper care to the object.
3. Acceptance of the object shall not result in major expense for conservation disproportionate to the usefulness of the object to the collections.
4. The present owner shall have a clear title of ownership and shall have obtained the object legally and ethically.
5. If the object is for sale, staff shall arrange funding before entering into an agreement to purchase, with a fair market value determined between the parties.
6. The object shall, if possible, be documented with adequate historic information.
7. Current Federal tax law shall be followed regarding all charitable contributions.
8. Donations shall be made without restrictions or encumbrances; however, copyright may or may not be transferred at the time of gift.

When an object has successfully fulfilled the acquisition criteria, the director and/or the curator of collections have the authority to tentatively accept objects on behalf of the Museum, pending Commission acceptance. If the object is extraordinarily significant for any reason (e.g., a bequest, a structure), the director shall seek advance acquisition approval from the Commission.

The director and curator of collections (collections Manager in absence of Curator of Collections) shall sign the Deed of Gift on behalf of the Museum. The collections manager shall follow all accession procedures outlined in the Registration Manual (Collections Procedures Manual) and shall be responsible for maintaining all records pertinent to the collections.

Undocumented objects found in the collection are considered abandoned property and are subject to the Arkansas Museum Property Act: ACA §§13-5-1001 – 1013. Every effort should be expended to identify the objects before action is taken.

The Museum acts in accordance with state, federal, and international statutes and laws in existence that may affect the acquisitions of certain objects and/or cultural property.

ACQUISITION PRIORITIES FOR THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

Limitations of space and of qualified staff for the care and study of objects shall be considered in conjunction with all acquisition priorities for the Permanent Collection. Additional guidelines concerning the content of current collections and recommendations for future collecting are detailed in the Permanent Collection Collecting Plan.

The first priority shall be to collect those objects and their accompanying data which strengthen existing collections in which the Museum has a current specialization and recognized historical interest, especially when these areas are threatened irreversibly by human activities, threatened by inflation in value, threatened by disappearance to collectors in the private sector, or any other reason which might make collection difficult, not feasible, or impossible at a later date. Examples of the first priority include:

1. Objects of direct use in present or future planned research, exhibition, or interpretive programs.
2. Objects of high quality needed to fill gaps in the collection.
3. Objects of historical interest where deterioration, technological changes, expanding urbanization, industrialization, cultivation or other types of land use place a time limit on the period in which the collection of objects and data can take place.

The second priority shall be to collect those objects which broaden the comparative base of the established areas and which will strengthen a collection area immediately adjacent to a previously established one.

The third priority shall be to collect those objects of a general nature which are within the broad interest of the Museum and those objects needed for a specific project or exhibition which may not be directly related to the existing collections but are consistent with the acquisition criteria, scope and priorities outlined in this Policy.

Geographical Scope

The Museum shall restrict its collecting to historical objects associated with Northwest Arkansas as defined by the four counties of Benton, Carroll, Washington, and Madison. Objects should have been made or primarily used in Northwest Arkansas or purchased therein.

There shall be four exceptions to this geographical limitation. The first exception shall be in the case of objects which have a secondary connection to Northwest Arkansas; in this instance, objects may be collected as long as they are associated with a resident, business or organization and are deemed necessary to illustrate this person's life story or the history of a business or organization.

The second exception shall be in the case of objects which are representative of those known to have been used in Northwest Arkansas, but an example of equal quality is not currently part of the Museum's permanent collection.

The third exception shall be in the case of furniture and household goods needed for display in the Museum's 1895 Hawkins House; in this instance, non-Benton County objects may be collected as long as they are consistent with items commonly found in middle-class homes in Northwest Arkansas at the turn of the 20th century and are deemed necessary to illustrate the Hawkins House story.

The fourth exception shall be in the instance where it is impossible or infeasible to acquire items of historical importance which played a major role in the history of the four county area. The Museum may accept well made, to scale, reproductions built to original specifications for inclusion in the the Permanent Collection

Temporal Scope

The Museum collects historical objects from 1819, when the Arkansas Territory was formed, to the present. Exceptions may be made for historic pre-1819 objects with strong ties to Benton County.

ACQUISITION SCOPE FOR THE NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE COLLECTION

Limitations of space and resources for the care of objects shall be considered in conjunction with all acquisitions for the Northwest Arkansas Community (NWACC) Collection. Objects accepted into this collection will be from NWACC staff, administration, and/or board members and related to the institutional history of NWACC. All objects will be subject to the Memorandum of Agreement between the Museum and NWACC, as well as subject to any part of the permanent collection policy outlined herein.

ACQUISITION SCOPE FOR THE TEACHING, IMAGE, AND RESEARCH COLLECTIONS AND THE MUSEUM ARCHIVES

Limitations of space and of qualified staff for the care of objects shall be considered in conjunction with all acquisitions for the Teaching and Research Collections, and the Museum Archives.

Teaching Collection

Teaching Collection objects are items which are historic in nature but not acceptable for inclusion, or not needed, in the Permanent Collection. These may be objects which are duplicates of objects in the Permanent Collection, or objects without historical documentation or significance that have been deaccessioned from the Permanent Collection. It shall also consist of objects which meet the Museum's mission but do not fulfill the acquisition criteria. Items accepted into the Teaching Collection shall be consistent with the collecting priorities of the Museum and meet current educational programming needs, but they need not necessarily be from Northwest Arkansas.

Within the Teaching Collection are three sub-categories: first, historic items that have been deaccessioned from the Permanent Collection, donated to the Museum but not of sufficient quality for the Permanent Collection; second, a Reproduction Collection, which consists of reproduction items with historical significance, constructed on original plans, and are to scale, but are not of sufficient quality for the Permanent Collection; third, props, which consist of reproduction items, which do not fall within the Reproduction Collection, or are modern examples of historical objects.

Research Collection

The Research Collection shall consist of actual or reproduction books, journals, newspaper articles, maps, documents, manuscripts and reproductions of historic photographs. Items accepted into the Research Collection shall provide information about Northwest Arkansas history and its environs, reflect regional and national historical events or cultural influences that have impacted Northwest Arkansas, or offer information about historical collectibles consistent with the collecting priorities of the Museum. Photographs within the Research Collection are reproductions of photographs found in the Permanent Collection or were lent to the museum for the purpose of research; and will be tracked with a unique numbering system for the purpose of reproduction for use by sanctioned researchers or the museum.

Museum Archives

The Museum Archives shall consist of posters, brochures, programs, records, architectural models, and memorabilia relating to the history of the Museum.

DEACCESSION OF OBJECTS

It is intended that all objects accessioned by the Museum shall be maintained permanently in the collections as long as they retain their physical integrity, their authenticity, and their relevance for the purposes of the Museum, and as long as they can be properly housed and maintained. The deaccession process, therefore, shall be cautious, deliberate, and scrupulous. Objects considered for deaccession shall have been in the Museum's collections for at least two years, with the exception of criteria #9, and shall meet at least one of the criteria for deaccessioning.

Criteria for Deaccessioning

1. The object is outside the current or feasible future mission of the Museum and its acquisition policy.
2. The object is inferior or insignificant in aesthetic quality to another similar item in the collection.
3. The Museum has failed to retain the object's identity or authenticity.
4. The object has been lost or stolen and remains so for longer than five

- years.
5. The Museum is unable to preserve the object properly.
 6. The object has deteriorated beyond usefulness.
 7. The object has doubtful potential utilization in the foreseeable future.
 8. The object has been accessioned twice.
 9. The object's donor is found to have not been its legal owner at the time of donation.
 10. The object was accessioned in error.

Before any object is recommended for deaccessioning, the Museum shall establish clear and unrestricted title to the object (except in #9 above). Title shall consist of a signed deed of gift and/or an unqualified offer, acceptance, and transfer of property.

The collections manager shall recommend in writing to the curator of collections the deaccessioning of an object if, in the collections managers' best judgment, one or more criteria for deaccession has been met. The written recommendation shall specify the source of the object, the reason(s) for deaccessioning, the estimated market value (if applicable or available), and the recommended means of disposition as listed in the "Methods of Dispersal" section of this Policy.

If the curator of collections agrees with the collections managers' recommendation, the recommendation requires approval first by the director and then by a two-thirds majority vote of the Commission. Consideration may be given to any ethical or political implications of the proposed action.

Before any object placed within the NWACC collection is recommended for deaccession to NWACC, NWACC must show it has the proper space, staff and resources to retain and maintain the objects according to the collections management best practices of the American Alliance of Museums.

Methods of Dispersal

The following is set by City of Rogers City Council resolution.

These methods are not ranked in order of preference; any method may be applied as long as it is deemed the most appropriate one given the nature of the object and the general interests of the public.

1. An object shall be offered back to the original donor, if donor can be located. If the donor cannot be located it should be offered to an heir if the item can be considered to have sentimental properties (e.g., family Bible, military uniform).
2. An object may be placed into the Museum's Teaching, Image, or Research Collections, or in the Museum Archives, in which it will remain property of the City of Rogers.
3. An object may be placed through gift or exchange in another tax-exempt public institution, preferably in Arkansas, or may be donated to a

- charitable institution such as a school, library or thrift store.
4. An object may be sold by private or public sale, as recommended by the Commission. However, an object shall not be given, sold or otherwise transferred, publicly or privately, to Museum employees, Commissioners, Friends of the Museum board members, or their families or representatives.
 5. An object may be destroyed if it is significantly deteriorated and if no further use for it can be found. The Museum shall follow the practice of "witness destruction," in which one staff member witnesses another staff member's destruction of an object.
 6. An object may be transferred to its legal owner(s) should the legality of the donation be contested and non-Museum ownership sufficiently proved. The Museum may act as the repository for the object while its true ownership is determined.

End City of Rogers City Council resolution.

The collections manager in conjunction with the curator of collections shall follow all deaccession procedures as outlined in the Registration Manual (Collections Procedures Manual) and shall be responsible for maintaining all records pertinent to the collections. The collections manager shall also maintain a complete and current list of objects which have been deaccessioned. This list may be distributed in response to any responsible inquiry at the director's discretion.

In compliance with the American Association of Museums' Code of Ethics and by City of Rogers Resolution, proceeds from the sale of collections shall go only to the acquisition of new collections.

CARE OF COLLECTIONS

The Museum maintains four types of collections: Permanent; Teaching; Research Collections; Museum Archives. The curator of collections shall maintain accession and deaccession records which shall contain Deeds of Gift, correspondence, historical information, and other relevant documents for the collections. Records shall be made in a timely manner, housed in secure locations, and physically preserved by proper handling and storage methods. The collections manager shall maintain records that are complete, accurate, orderly, retrievable and current. A duplicate copy of all records shall be maintained and stored separately (off-site) from their originals.

The collections manager shall be responsible for monitoring and adequately maintaining all collections storage and exhibition areas. Such efforts shall be documented through a variety of means including environmental records, database records, inventories, photographs, and storage check-out logs.

Permanent Collection

Museum staff shall be responsible for the preservation and protection of the Permanent Collection, and any smaller collections within, in accordance with current professionally accepted methods including the maintenance of proper storage environments, the use of archivally-safe storage materials, and the practice of recommended object-specific storage techniques.

Collections in the Hawkins House shall be inventoried annually and a comprehensive inventory taken of the Museum's collections storage areas, accompanied by a condition inspection of the objects, every five years. Any object showing signs of instability or recent damage shall be noted and treatment sought, if needed. Spot inventories of the Museum's more significant collections (i.e., those objects that are considered local historical "treasures" and/or have a high monetary value) shall be taken annually. Additional guidelines regarding the management of the Permanent Collection are detailed in the Registration Manual.

The objects in the Permanent Collection shall be adequately covered by insurance. For purposes of valuation, the curator of collections shall seek comparable valuations from local, regional, and national sources and may, if warranted, seek the assistance of a qualified appraiser. Valuations shall be updated as need, time and budget allow. The curator of collections shall be responsible for monitoring insurance coverage. All proceeds from insurance payments resulting from claims due to damaged or lost collections shall go only to the acquisition of new collections.

The Permanent Collection shall be used for research and exhibition purposes by Museum staff, qualified museums, and sanctioned researchers.

Reproduction Collection

Museum staff shall be responsible for the preservation and protection of the Reproduction Collection, a subdivision of the Permanent Collection, and any smaller collections within, in accordance with current professionally accepted methods including the maintenance of proper storage environments, the use of archivally safe storage materials and the practice of recommended object-specific storage techniques.

Teaching Collection

Museum staff, their authorized representatives, and sanctioned educators or other non-profit organization leaders shall be responsible for the protection of the Teaching Collection. The Teaching Collection shall receive adequate maintenance; however, because of the purpose of the Collection, the objects in it are subject to wear and tear. The Teaching Collection shall be housed in suitable materials that offer protection and which may or may not be archivally safe.

An inventory for location of the Teaching Collection shall be undertaken annually. A comprehensive inventory, along with condition inspections, shall be undertaken every five years with the permanent collection inventory. Any object that has deteriorated or has been damaged beyond usefulness shall be deaccessioned and disposed of

according to deaccession guidelines. Additional guidelines regarding the management of the Teaching Collection are detailed in the Teaching Collection Manual.

The Teaching Collection shall be used for education and exhibition purposes by Museum staff, their authorized representatives, and sanctioned educators or other non-profit organization leaders.

Research Collection

Museum staff, volunteers, and sanctioned researchers shall be responsible for the protection of the Research Collection. The Research Collection shall be housed in vertical files, on shelves or in file boxes. Archival safe materials shall be used whenever possible. It shall be used for publication, education, research and exhibition purposes by Museum staff, qualified museums and sanctioned researchers.

Museum Archives

Museum staff shall be responsible for the preservation and protection of the Museum Archives. The Archives will be comprehensively inventoried every five years coinciding with the permanent collection inventory. The Museum Archives shall be housed in archival safe storage. It shall be used for research and exhibition purposes by Museum staff.

Integrated Pest Management

The Museum's integrated pest management program serves as a guide in helping prevent pests from entering the museum and attacking collections. It establishes a routine inspection schedule and provides staff with a means to record findings. Additionally, it provides a compilation of data about any past pest problems.

The aim of the Museum's IPM program is to prevent the intrusion of pests in collection and exhibits areas. By preventing access to pests, the need for reactive measures such as chemical treatment, are not necessary. The Museum's IPM program follows a combination of environmental monitoring, housekeeping, inspection, diagnosis and reporting of infesting species, and implementation of specific treatment strategies.

The Museum encourages on-going maintenance and housekeeping strategies to prevent pest infestation. These include the restriction of food and other organic material to certain areas and proper disposal as well as regular cleaning of collection and exhibit areas. The collections storage and exhibit areas must be cleaned and monitored regularly for signs of pest activity.

CONSERVATION

The Museum holds and cares for all objects as a public trust and is committed to the standards set by the American Institute for Conservation. The authority for collections

care is vested in the director and the curator of collections.

The curator of collections shall determine, either through routine monitoring, exhibit production, or accidental damage, which objects may need professional conservation treatment and inform the director. Objects in need of treatment shall be assessed and an appropriate time for conservation determined, considering a combination of need, budgetary allowances, and the availability of a qualified conservator. All treatments shall be properly documented and treatment records maintained by the curator of collections.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Museum staff and, to some degree, volunteers are responsible for the security of the Museum and its collections, and for the safety of staff, volunteers, and visitors. The curator of collections is responsible for overseeing safety and security at the Museum. Additional guidelines regarding buildings, collections, and personnel safety, as well as emergency procedures covering fire, theft, injury, and inclement weather, are detailed in the Emergency Preparedness Plan.

LOANS

Loans of Museum objects shall be consistent with the Museum's Conditions Governing Loans. These conditions shall be met in writing before any objects may be loaned. The curator of collections, in consultation with the director, shall be responsible for authorizing loans of objects and maintaining all records pertinent to the loans. If there are any unusual circumstances concerning the conditions of a loan, the decision to loan shall be referred to the director.

Loans are made by the Rogers Historical Museum to institutions and not to individuals, except under unusual circumstances (as determined by the Museum's director). It is understood that the person signing the Loan Agreement is an authorized representative of his or her institution or governing board and is responsible for ensuring that the loan conditions are met.

As deemed necessary by the curator of collections, outgoing loans shall be covered by insurance (e.g., wall-to-wall, transit), and the coverage shall be carried by the borrower or the Museum. Incoming loans shall be insured by the Museum, if requested, as specified by the loaning institution. Insurance coverage to be carried by the Museum shall be arranged by the curator of collections or the assistant director.

All loan transactions shall be processed through the curator of collections or the assistant director, who shall be responsible for proper and legal documentation, insurance coverage and packing and shipping arrangements. The curator of collections shall monitor all loans.

The Museum has two types of loans, short-term and long-term. The Museum does not accept “permanent” loans from individuals or institutions. Loans of this type can cost the Museum greatly in terms of maintenance, time, insurance, and space. Additional guidelines regarding the management of loans are detailed in the Registration Manual.

The Museum complies with the Arkansas Museum Property Act: ACA §§13-5-1001 – 1013 regarding abandoned loans.

OBJECTS PLACED IN THE CUSTODY OF THE MUSEUM

Objects temporarily deposited with the Museum for whatever purpose shall be subject to all conditions specified on the Temporary Deposit Receipt unless otherwise noted. A staff member shall sign the Receipt on behalf of the Museum. Additional guidelines regarding objects placed in the custody of the Museum are detailed in the Checklist for Incoming Donations.

ACCESS TO AND USE OF COLLECTIONS

The Museum welcomes study of its collections by qualified individuals for research and other generally beneficial purposes, taking into account the following conditions:

1. The curator of collections shall receive a written request to study a collection at least two weeks (10 working days) prior to the time the collection is to be studied. The request shall outline the goals and methods of the research and include the credentials of the researcher. The curator of collections, in consultation with the director, shall determine whether access to the collections shall be granted and shall inform the researcher in writing.
2. Research space shall be made available.
3. The researcher shall agree to meet all imposed conditions deemed necessary for the protection of collection materials.
4. Copying and photography costs shall be borne by the researcher.
5. The researcher shall give the Museum copies of papers or publications which result from the study of its collections.
6. The curator of collections or the director may waive any of the above conditions if it is in the best interest of the Museum to do so.

COPYRIGHT & REPRODUCTION

In policy and in practice, the Museum shall follow U.S. copyright law incorporated in Title 17 of the U.S. Code, as well as all subsequent legislation pertaining to copyright and other issues of intellectual property. Additional guidelines regarding copyright and reproduction issues are detailed in the Copyright Guidelines manual and the Policy on Images.

COLLECTION POLICY REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS

This policy may be revised at any time by a majority vote of the Rogers Historical Museum Commission. The policy shall be reviewed every five years.