

DIRECTIVE



qathet Museum & Archives Society
4798 Marine Ave, Powell River, British Columbia
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| <i>Archival Acquisitions Policy</i> |
| Board Approval: July 19, 2021 |
| Revisions: |

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the criteria and process for acquiring archival materials.

Guiding Principles

The Powell River Historical Museum and Archives Association (hereinafter referred to as the Museum) adheres to the ACA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (Association of Canadian Archivists, 2017).

The Archival Acquisitions Directive is guided by the *Vision, Mission and Mandates Policy*.

Definitions

Unless otherwise noted, the following definitions are from the British Columbia Museum Association's Best Practices Glossary, 2005.

Archives:

(1) Documentary materials created, received, used and kept by a person, family, organization or other public or private entity in the conduct of their daily work and life and preserved because they contain enduring value as evidence of information about activities and events.

(2) The agency or institution responsible for acquiring and preserving archival materials and making those items available for use. Archives Principles and Practices (Laura Millar, 2010)

Archives include photographs, maps, prints, sketches, letters, diaries, manuscripts, financial records and other primary sources of information in any media which may also be referred to as material(s), donation(s), record(s) work(s), file(s), item(s).

Discrete Donations: Single items or small donations that do not have any known provenance or are not connected to a larger body of records.

Fonds: A body of records created, accumulated and used by an individual, family, organization or corporate body. Also, a group of documents that share the same origin.

Inactive Records: Those records, which have ceased to be useful to their operational body and/or have passed their retention period under the current policies of the organization.

Library Collection: Published materials that relate directly to the geographic mandate, the historic themes identified in the Artifact Acquisitions Directive, or a collection of unpublished materials acquired by the Museum.

Media Migration: The process of converting data from one type of storage material to another to ensure continued access to the information as the material becomes obsolete or degrades over time.

Permanent Archival Value: Ascribed to those records which best represent the vision, structure, activities and overall accomplishments of the Museum.

Permanent Collections: Artifacts and archival materials that have been identified as having enduring value. They form the museum and archival holdings acquired in accordance with the Artifact Acquisitions Directive and the Archival Acquisitions Directive.

Provenance: A fundamental principle of archives that refers to the individual, family or organization that created or received the items in a collection and ensures information is provided about the origins, custody and ownership of an item or collection. When used in reference to an artifact in a museum, provenance is the history of the object and any known adaptations made to it for a special purpose.

Reasonable Use Restrictions: Conditions placed on a set of records at the time of donation. Recommendations by a donor are subject to approval of the senior staff person, who has the authority to refuse a donation, if conditions required by the donor are too restrictive or unreasonable.

Respect des Fonds: Dictates that records from the same origins (provenance) be kept together to preserve their context and maintain integrity.

Special Media: Information in a format that cannot be accessed without the use of specific equipment, computer hardware or software. This includes, but is not limited to, digital media, audio media, audio-visual media, microfilm and microfiche.

Criteria for the Acquisition of Archival Material

1. Primary considerations for the acquisitions of archival material:
 - a) Relevance to the geographic region as defined by the Vision, Mission and Mandates Policy
 - b) Condition and format
 - c) Integrity of the fonds
 - d) Originality and uniqueness
 - e) The inactive nature of the material
 - f) Privacy and copyright concerns
2. Additional considerations for special media:
 - a) Ability to access media
 - b) Ability to migrate media

3. Priority will be given to unique, original or unpublished materials to be used as primary source materials by researchers.
 - 3.1. Published materials should be acquired on a limited basis and only as they relate directly to a large body of unpublished material. Published materials may also be acquired for the Library Collection of the museum.
 - 3.2. If a duplicate copy of an item already exists in the Archives, a replacement copy should only be acquired if it is in better condition with known provenance.
 - 3.3. Whenever possible, staff should seek to acquire original material. However, if the donor is not willing to donate the originals:
 - 3.3.1. Staff may provide one copy of select or all materials to the donor for a fee.
 - 3.3.2. If the material is of particular interest and the donor wishes to retain the originals, staff will agree to keep copies and treat them as if they were originals.
4. The archives must have the capacity to properly store, preserve and migrate the information, if necessary, before acquisition of donation.
 - 4.1. Damaged or compromised materials should only be acquired if staff can restore or conserve the works properly or there is an appropriate budget to pay an outside party for this service.
 - 4.2. Items showing water damage or mold, should only be acquired until the following circumstances:
 - 4.2.1. The mold is still in a relatively isolated part of the material and has not already destroyed a significant portion of key historical information.
 - 4.2.2. The material can be safely isolated and treated without posing a risk to the rest of the archival collection.
 - 4.2.3. The items can be salvaged by staff, or there are funds in place to have the material repaired by a third party.
 - 4.3. The senior staff person must ensure availability of sufficient and appropriate storage space before acquiring over sized items.
5. The archives will seek to *respect des fonds*, a key principle of provenance.
 - 5.1. If the archives acquires a partial record of a specific collection (or fonds), it should seek either to acquire the entire body of records from the fonds or transfer the offered material to an institution already in possession of a portion thereof.
 - 5.2. If a donation is of discrete nature, the item in question should be of particular historical importance or uniqueness.
6. The mandate of the archives is to collect records of historic value, and as such, they should be in active and not in regular usage by an institution or organization to which they belong.

Use Restrictions

7. Use restrictions must comply with current privacy and copyright legislation and Board directives.
 - 7.1. The archives will not accept records or collections where access is permanently closed through current legislation or at the request of the donor, or where access requires permission from the donor, creator or the records or other third party.
 - 7.2. Reasonable use restrictions must be negotiated and approved by the senior staff person.

- 7.2.1. Restrictions must have a time limit (such as the death of the creator of the records).
- 7.2.2. Reasonable restrictions may also allow access for reference only and/or prohibit use in publications.
- 7.2.3. The archives must keep written records of the accepted use restrictions and provide a signed copy to the donor.
- 7.3. Donors will sign over their copyrights to the archives along with their right to receive funds or determine the management of funds generated by the use of donated archival materials.
- 7.4. The archives may acquire materials, where copyright is not known, if the materials are of significant historical value to the region. It is, however, preferable to obtain copyright from the appropriate individual or group and due diligence should be taken to locate the owner.

Special Media

- 8. Museum staff or local specialists must have the capability to access information stored on special media that is accepted or acquired.
 - 8.1. Records that require that use of obsolete technologies for access may be accepted by the museum as artifacts but should not be acquired by the archives.
 - 8.2. Since access to media in a specialized or obsolete format may be lost or compromised over time, strong consideration must be given to the suitability of the media under review for migration to a current, accessible technology.

Appraisals and Tax Receipts

- 9. Tax receipts can be issued for the value of donations accepted by the Museum.
 - 9.1. In-house appraisals of donation may not exceed \$1000.00 with the final amount agree upon by both the donor and the Museum
 - 9.2. If the donor believes their donation exceeds the value of \$1000.00 and would like an outside opinion, the donor is responsible for costs associated with a professional appraisal.
 - 9.3. No tax receipt will be issued for more than \$1000.00 without official paperwork from a professional appraisal.
 - 9.4. A Copy of documentation from the appraisal must be kept with the accession file in perpetuity.

Purchasing Archival Materials

- 10. The Museum and Archives relies primarily on no-cost donation from members of the community. However, archival materials may be purchased if they are deemed to be of exceptional historical value to the geographic region, defined by the Vision, Mission and Mandates Policy.
 - 10.1. A 'Collections Committee, as defined in the Artifact Acquisitions Directive) may be convened if necessary to make recommendations on donations or purchased archival materials that represent exceptional issues or circumstances.
 - 10.2. All records associated with the purchase should be included with the Donations Form.

Signature of Museum Board President: _____

Date: _____