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ADM.2018.75; The Copyright Act (RSC 1985, c.C-42); Cultural Property Export and Import Act (RSC, 1985, c.C-51); Firearms Act (SC 1995, c.29); Collection Development Plan; Canadian Museum Association Deaccessioning Guidelines

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The museum and archives of the Blue Mountains Public Library are located at the Craighleith Heritage Depot, managed by the Museum Curator in collaboration with the Library CEO, and governed by the Blue Mountains Public Library Board.

ADM.2024.04.1 Policy Statement

This policy defines the purpose, responsibilities, and standards for all activities related to Museum collections. This policy does not apply to Library collections, which are covered in the Collections Policy POL-ADM.2018.75.

ADM.2024.04.2 Definitions

Accession: The formal process or procedure of recording an addition to the collections; the status assigned to the object. Not all objects acquired by the Museum are accessioned.

Acquisition: The act of gaining legal title of an object or a collection of objects.

Collection: Refers to objects including artifacts, works of art, and biological and geological materials, sound and video recordings, and any other movable cultural or natural property that has been formally accepted and accessioned.

Deaccession: The formal process or procedure that records the permanent removal of an accessioned object or group of objects from the collections.

Disposal: Permanent physical removal from the collections of any catalogued object or specimen, usually by exchange, donation, sale, or destruction.

Loan: An object that is lent or borrowed; the act of furnishing an object or a collection to another party for temporary use, for an agreed specific purpose, with specific conditions regarding the handling and care of the object, and on the condition that the object is returned by a specified date.

Safeguarding: Includes the conservation, preparation, and preservation of objects; collections management; and security.

Museum: Refers to the Craigleith Heritage Depot, a branch of the Blue Mountains Public Library, and the Town of The Blue Mountains' community museum and archives.

ADM.2024.04.3 Purpose of the Collection

The Museum collection is managed by the Museum Curator, and serves as a repository of specimens, artifacts, archival materials, and associated records (“items”) that have been approved for accession.

ADM.2024.04.4 Scope of the Collection

1. The Museum maintains three categories of collections:
 - 1.1. **The Permanent Collection:** Comprised of accessioned items accorded the highest standard of care. This Collection has three collecting domains:
 - 1.1.1. **Natural History:** This domain focuses on ornithology and paleontology, including complete specimens or parts (such as genetic samples) of species found in, or directly relevant to, the Town of The Blue Mountains
 - 1.1.2. **Human History:** This area concentrates on archaeology, First Nations, settler, and post-settler history. It includes items that document the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Town of The Blue Mountains.
 - 1.1.3. **Archives:** This domain focuses on items of enduring value to the Town of The Blue Mountains, regardless of their format or medium. The collection contains textual and born-digital records, film, video and sound recordings, photographs, documentary art, maps, and publications.
 - 1.2. **The Handling Collection:** This collection consists of non-accessioned items that are cared for by Museum professionals and archivists. These items are used in school and public programs, as well as for exhibit props.
 - 1.3. **The Asset Collection:** This collection is made up of non-accessioned items that are carefully maintained by facilities management and exhibitions staff. These items are used to support the Museum's precinct and exhibits.

ADM.2024.04.5 Responsibility for the Museum Collection

1. The Museum Curator is primarily responsible for developing the collections. Along with Museum staff, including the Museum Technician(s) and Museum Interpreter(s), the Curator implements the collections policy approved by the Board, in alignment with the collections strategy, and oversees the development and organization of the collection.
2. The Museum Curator manages and maintains centralized collection records and addresses any legal issues and logistical matters.

3. All Museum staff are responsible for the daily activities related to the care, conservation, and utilization of the items in the collection.
4. All Museum staff are responsible for risk management, preventative conservation and conservation treatments.
5. The Museum Curator, with assistance from the Museum staff, is responsible for approving accessions and deaccessions in accordance with the collections strategy and delegated authority levels set by the Library Board.
The Museum Curator, with assistance from the Museum staff, is responsible for approving accessions.
6. The Library Board approves deaccession requests.

ADM.2024.04.6 Acquisition

1. Items are acquired for the permanent collection through deposit and selective acquisition.
 - 1.1 **Deposit Acquisition:**
 - 1.1.1 The Craigleith Heritage Depot is the official repository for the Blue Mountains Public Library and the Town of The Blue Mountains archives in physical and/or non-digital form.
 - 1.1.2 The Craigleith Heritage Depot is a repository for archaeological materials found within The Town of The Blue Mountains.
 - 1.1.3 The Craigleith Heritage Depot is also the identified repository for paleontological and appropriately designated type specimens located within The Town of The Blue Mountains.
 - 1.2 **Selective Acquisition:** The Craigleith Heritage Depot acquires items through donation, strategic collecting, benefaction, exchange, and purchase. An item can only be acquired under the following conditions:
 - **Significance:** The item must have significance to the natural and cultural history and heritage of the Town of The Blue Mountains. Significance reflects the values and meanings an item holds for individuals and communities. To determine significance, the item is assessed based on four primary criteria: historic, artistic or aesthetic, scientific or research potential, and social or spiritual. The degree of significance is evaluated using four comparative criteria: provenance, rarity or representativeness, condition or completeness, and interpretive capacity.
 - **Alignment with Collection Goals:** The acquisition of the item should support a goal outlined in the Museum’s Collection Plan.
 - **Adequate Storage:** There must be adequate storage space to accommodate the item. The Museum must be capable of providing proper care and storage for the objects. An item should not be considered for acquisition if its physical condition exceeds the financial ability of the Blue Mountains Public Library Board for proper care and preservation.
 - **Legal Title:** The item must be accompanied by warranties of good legal title, where appropriate.

- **Provenance and Authentication:** The item should have a good record of provenance and must be authenticated when applicable. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - **Valuation:** The item should be valued when appropriate.
 - **Documentation:** The item must be accompanied by a bill of sale, or another statement signed as defined in the Copyright Act (RSC 1985, c.C-42).
 - **Conditions of Donation:** Donation of the item must be free of conditions and restrictions.
 - **Irrevocability of Donation:** The donation of the item is irrevocable upon the formal transfer of title (with a signed donation form) to The Blue Mountains Public Library and The Craigleith Heritage Depot.
 - **Rights for Exhibition:** The Craigleith Heritage Depot receives all rights necessary to permit the exhibition and non-commercial reproduction of the item. All details regarding the creator's rights to the integrity of their work and the right to be associated with the work will be governed and construed in accordance with existing relevant laws.
 - **Rights for Treatment and Modification:** The Craigleith Heritage Depot retains the right to conduct treatments or analytical techniques on the item, to exchange the item with another institution, to deaccession the item, to remove samples from the item, or to modify the item for preservation, storage, or staff safety.
- 1.3 The Craigleith Heritage Depot must ensure that the item has not been stolen or illegally acquired. The Depot must also ensure that any item from a foreign country complies with the Cultural Property Export and Import Act (RSC 1985, c.C-51).
- 1.4 All required documentation regarding the legal collection of the item must be provided.
- 1.5 **Items of Uncertain Origin:** In cases where new information or circumstances challenge the original grounds for an item's acquisition, the Craigleith Heritage Depot will conduct thorough and transparent research in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, facilitating the prompt return of any item for which legal, moral, or ethical claims may be considered invalid based on this research.
- 1.6 Donations are not guaranteed exhibition space.

ADM.2024.04.7 Care of the Collection

1. The BMPL will allocate an annual budget to fund the ongoing care and preservation of objects in the Museum's collections. Ensuring proper storage and exhibition facilities, along with adequate environmental controls, will be a top priority for the Museum at all times.
2. The BMPL will safeguard the Museum's collections against risks such as fire, flood, pests, theft, vandalism, and natural disasters.
3. Museum staff will establish and maintain a comprehensive record-keeping system that includes the following information:

- Documentation regarding the provenance and legal title of each object.
- All correspondence, documents, and other materials related to an accessioned object.
- Accessioning and cataloging data.
- Photographic documentation.
- Information about the object's condition and conservation history.
- Insurance records.
- Current location and loan records.
- Information on deaccessioning.

Duplicate copies of all essential records related to the Museum's collections will be created in both digital and physical formats.

ADM.2024.04.8 Professional Conduct

All staff involved in collections acquisition must:

- Be aware of all applicable binding international conventions, as well as federal, provincial, and municipal laws; regulations; and sectional policies relating to the acquisition, import, and export of collections.
- Refrain from using their connection to the museum and archives to promote personal collecting activities.
- Avoid competing with the collecting activities of the museum and archives, whether through their own collecting efforts or those of their immediate family members.
- Ensure that any non-staff individuals collecting on behalf of the museum clearly communicate their relationship with BMPL to all potential vendors or donors.

ADM.2024.04.8 Museum Collection Management

1. **Collections Information:** Museum staff maintain records that identify, describe, locate, and assess the condition of all items in the permanent collection, as well as items related to ongoing activities (particularly exhibitions, loans, research, and correspondence with the public, donors, and researchers). In doing so, the Museum ensures that these records are authoritative, accurate, trustworthy, and objective. Records are maintained both physically and in our collections management systems and databases. The Museum uses metadata to manage and share information about its collections and follows best practices for museum metadata and collections management that are specific to the relevant collections discipline and media format.
2. **Collections Care:** Museum staff are responsible for the long-term care of the permanent collection. They ensure that items are maintained under conditions that preserve their physical integrity while on display, in storage, or on loan.
3. **Museum Collections Plan:** The Museum's collections will be acquired based on a collection plan. 3.2 The Museum Collection Plan will be accepted as information by the

Library Board, as it outlines the scope of the collection along with key desired acquisitions. The Plan will be created by the Museum Curator in consultation with the Library CEO. When items become available, the Library CEO and/or Museum Curator will negotiate for their acquisition.

4. **Special Collections:** May be developed in partnership with donors through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In these cases, donors will have limited direction over how their financial contributions are spent within the Museum's collections and exhibitions but will not influence general collection development. The Museum Curator may, with CEO approval, purchase items not included in the Collection Plan provided they:
 - Align with the mandate of the Community Museum.
 - Fall within budget allowances (operational, capital, or reserves).
 - Adhere to the procurement policy of the Board.

ADM.2024.04.9 Museum Collection Use

1. The Museum is dedicated to making its collections available as widely as possible, both across Ontario and internationally. To achieve this, the Museum facilitates access—both physical and intellectual—to the permanent collection for research, learning, exhibitions, publications, and cultural uses.
2. Acknowledging the significance of public access to the permanent collection, the Museum uses its best judgment to balance the need for access and display against the necessity of preserving items for future generations, all while adhering to relevant legislation and ethical standards.
3. Access to the permanent collection or information related to it may only be denied if the curator or archivist provides written justification for the limitation or if the request violates applicable legislation or binding agreements.
4. The Museum lends items to responsible institutions for exhibitions, research, public programming, and educational purposes. Except for requests from First Nations rights holders, the Museum does not loan items to private individuals.
5. Regarding the human history collection and the archival collection:
 - All loans require a formal written agreement between the lender and the borrower.
 - The borrower must adhere to all conditions and restrictions imposed on borrowed items.
 - Loan requests should be submitted to the Museum in writing at least three months before the proposed loan date, unless otherwise approved by the Museum Curator.
 - Loan requests must specify the purpose and time period of the loan, which shall not exceed a continuous duration of two years without explicit approval from the Curator.
 - Loan agreements must cover copyright and reproduction rights.

- The borrowing institution is responsible for the costs associated with conservation, crating, shipping, and returning the loaned item, unless otherwise approved by the Museum Curator.

ADM.2024.04.10 Deaccession and Disposal

1. The Blue Mountains Public Library Board adheres to the deaccessioning guidelines set forth by the Canadian Museum Association. These guidelines outline the steps involved in deaccessioning objects, highlight key considerations, and grant the Board, as the governing authority of the Museum, the final decision regarding which objects to deaccession.
2. Requests for deaccessioning objects will be submitted by the Museum Curator and Library CEO to the Library Board for final approval.
3. The Museum reserves the right to deaccession any object under the following criteria:
 - It is no longer significant to the community.
 - It was acquired illegally at the time of acquisition.
 - It was collected immorally or unethically according to current standards.
 - It has failed to retain its integrity or authenticity.
 - It cannot be properly preserved, stored, or utilized.
 - It does not support the Museum's mandate to collect items from the Town of The Blue Mountains.
 - It is needed for upgrading the Museum's collections and their care.
 - It would be more appropriately housed at another museum or archive. Before approving any deaccession, the public relations impact must be carefully assessed.
4. Disposal of a deaccessioned item will be conducted in the following order of preference:
 - Exchange with or transfer to another museum, archive, or charitable institution.
 - Donation to another museum, archive, or charitable institution.
 - Sale to another museum, archive, or charitable institution.
 - Sale at public auction outside the Museum's immediate location, without listing the Craigeith Heritage Depot's name or an associated accession number.
 - Incineration or physical destruction.
5. Where possible, deaccessioned objects should be disposed of in a manner that keeps them in the public domain. An object may be destroyed if it is not salvageable or no longer of interest to anyone.
6. No member of the Blue Mountains Public Library staff, Library Board, or volunteers—nor any representative or immediate family members—can receive, purchase, or otherwise knowingly obtain a deaccessioned item.
7. A deaccessioned item cannot be sold directly to a private individual or corporation.
8. Proceeds from the sale of deaccessioned items are designated for the development and care of the museum and archival collections.
9. Except for archival records, an item cannot be disposed of by gifting it back to the original donor; however, the original donor may purchase the item at its current fair

market value. Living artists are granted the first right of refusal to acquire their own works that they previously donated.

10. Items governed by the Firearms Act (SC 1995, c.29) can only be deaccessioned through transfer to a registered federal depository or surrendered to the Ontario Provincial Police for licensed destruction. Such items cannot be transferred to another museum.
11. Archival records may be returned to the donor at no cost after appropriate consultation and mutual agreement between the Museum and the original donor, particularly if the records should not have been acquired in the first place or if the originating agency can now manage the records itself.
12. If donors received a tax receipt for the value of their donation, the archival records must be repurchased at fair market value.
13. When archival records from the Town have been transferred to the museum and archives in error, or have since been deemed active by the donor, they may be returned to the originating ministries, agencies, courts, boards, commissions, and inquiries for active use.