



Aurora Historical Society – Collection Policy

This document is the condensed version of the Hillary House National Historic Site Collection Policy at the AHS. To inquire about our full policy, please send an email to community@aurorahs.com or call 905-727-8991.

The Aurora Historical Society (AHS) owns and operates Hillary House National Historic Site (NHS). The following guidelines form the Collection Policy for Hillary House NHS:

Scope of the Collection

1. The collection at Hillary House NHS will include objects and archival material related to the families that lived in Hillary House. The collection, consisting of building, structures, moveable artifacts and archival materials, will contribute to greater understanding of the history of the building and the activities that occurred within it and on its grounds.
2. The date range for collecting will encompass the timeframe from construction of the building (1862) until the last Hillary descendent moved from the site (1992).
3. The collection will be used for the purposes of preservation of documents and objects for future generations, documentation of the history of Hillary House NHS and research into that history as well as use in exhibition, educational programming and in-house interpretation.
4. The AHS at times may identify and collect items outside of direct provenance associated to the house. These stand-in items would act in lieu of those that would have been used in the building. These items would be used in future restoration projects to furnish period rooms.
5. AHS Board of Directors will set an annual budget for materials and supplies related to collections management and development.

Collection Development/Acquisition

1. The Collection Committee will have discretion to make decisions about the acquisition of items for the Collection. The Collection Committee will consist of a Director from AHS Board of Directors, 1-2 members of the AHS and the Manager/Curator of AHS.
2. In terms of educational value and condition, acquisitions must be acceptable for present or future use in display, teaching, or research.
3. Donors will be informed of the historical importance of proposed gifts. For income tax purposes and receipting, AHS is able to appraise the value of donated items up to the amount of \$1,000 at no cost to the donor. If an official receipt for income tax purposes is requested by a donor that exceeds \$1,000, the gift will be appraised at the cost of the donor before the receipt is issued. Official receipts will meet the provisions of the Canada Revenue Agency with regard to gifts in kind.



4. The Society will meet any legislative requirements which may have an impact on collecting activities. This legislation may concern such issues as repatriation, human remains, endangered wildlife, firearms hazardous materials, health and safety requirements, and illicit materials.

5. An artefact acquisition budget will be determined by AHS Board of Directors which will enable the Collections Committee to make purchases of artefacts where donation is not possible. Preference in acquisition will be towards the acquisition of items via donation, bequest or exchanges.

Collections Management

Please note that the use of Curator in the following section refers to the Curator employed by the Aurora Historical Society.

Method of Acquisition

- Items may be acquired as donations, bequests, purchases, or exchanges. In the case of gifts, once the Manager/ Curator is satisfied that the donor or lender has the right to complete such an agreement, a gift agreement will be signed by the donor and by the Curator. The terms of the agreement will establish the AHS' unconditional ownership of the item.

Loans

1. If required for a specific purpose (e.g. temporary exhibitions), items may be borrowed from the collection. The borrower and Manager/ Curator will sign a loan agreement which specifies the terms of the loan.

Documentation

2. The file of gift and loan agreements and other documents relating to acquisitions will constitute the acquisitions register.

3. An on-going program of cataloguing, research, and conservation will be carried out according to accepted museum practice. For example:

- The tri-partite numbering system will be used to identify individual items in the collection.
- The Chenhall system will be used in classification of objects and archival material. Deviation or additions to Chenhall may be used in lexicon development for specialized material (e.g. medical objects)
- A cataloguing sheet with accompanying condition report will be completed upon receipt of a donation to the collection.

4. A database of the collection will be maintained. Duplicates of the computerized catalogue will be kept on- and off-site. A back-up procedure to ensure the safeguarding of digital assets is currently in effect.

Conservation

5. During all stages of the acquisition and registration process, artifacts will be treated with due regard to conservation standards. Publications of the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI) will be used in the first instance for guidance in conservation matters. Consultation with CCI or



conservation consulting firms for advanced conservation support will be enacted where necessary.

6. All staff and volunteers involved in the collecting process will receive training in handling objects and archival material, and care and preservation methods for the collection.

7. Offsite storage areas must meet the requirements of AHS in terms of preservation, safety and security of the collection.

8. With respect to restoration and conservation projects concerning structures (e.g Hillary House, barn), the Easement Agreement between AHS and the Ontario Heritage Trust will be adhered to and provide the starting point to future capital projects.

Deaccessioning/ Disposal for Artefacts and Archival Material

9. Items which are superfluous, have deteriorated, or are otherwise incompatible with the collection may be responsibly disposed of by the Collection Committee. The Curator will present the recommendations for de-accessioned objects on behalf of the Collections Committee which will be subject to the AHS Board of Directors final approval.

10. The manner of disposal shall be in the best interests of AHS, the community, and the public trust placed in AHS.

B. AHS will refer to gift forms for any conditions. Following this review, the AHS will adhere to these steps:

1) If suitable, the item will be delegated to the Education/ Teaching Collection (see below)

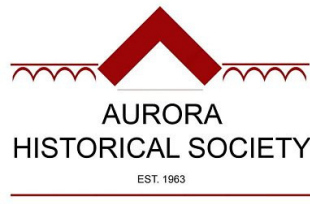
2) If not suitable for the Teaching Collection, the object(s) will be offered as gift to other incorporated, not for profit museums. The object(s) will be offered first to museums of medical history (if the object is related to medicine); then to museums within York Region, and then to museums elsewhere in the province.

3) In the event that no other public institution acquires the item, the object (s) may be offered for sale at public auction or to a recognized dealer. In no circumstances will an artifact be sold privately to a member of the Collection Committee, a member of the Board of Directors, a member of staff or volunteer. Proceeds of the sale of any de-accessioned item will be used only for the purposes of adding to the collection or conserving the collection.

4) In the event that a public sale does not occur, the object(s) will be destroyed under the supervision of a member of the Collections Committee, a Board Member and the Curator.

In addition:

- AHS will meet any legislative requirements which may have an impact on collections management and documentation.
- AHS will adhere to the CMA Ethical Guidelines for disposal of collections.



- AHS will maintain documentation on de-accessioned items and the method in which they were de-accessioned. Documentation will include original gift form, transfer/ sale or destruction document, photograph of object, cataloguing and condition report with full description, and entry in collections database noting that object is de-accessioned, method of de-accession and date.

Education Collection/ Teaching Collection

1. An education collection may be developed to enhance learning experiences. The materials in this collection will be numbered and catalogued to differentiate it from the main Collection (i.e. E2009.01.01)
2. Material in the education collection will not be subject to the same standards of conservation as items in the main collection.
3. In general, duplicates of items already in the collection will be acquired only to improve upon the quality of the existing example, or to provide an artifact which may be used in an education collection which will not be part of the main collection.

Accessibility

1. The collection will be accessible to all. Members of the public will have supervised access to the collection by appointment.
 - AHS will endeavour to provide learning opportunities that allow for public access of material that is located in offsite and onsite storage areas.

Reviews and Approvals:

Most recently approved and adopted by AHS Board of Directors, February 2014.