

# Aurora Historical Society – Education 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](mailto:community@aurorahs.com) or call 905-727-8991.

Through its interpretation and education programs, the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) reaches audiences of all ages, interests, and abilities, and serves as an educational resource for the community. Interpretation and education programming offer the community opportunities to interact more closely with the AHS's collections and knowledge, and may complement other formal and informal sources of learning.

## **AHS Mission Statement**

*To preserve, interpret, and promote the social, cultural, and material heritage of the community of Aurora for the education, enrichment, and enjoyment of present and future generations.*

## **Educational Programming Mission Statement**

According to the 2021 Aurora Historical Society (AHS) Strategic Plan, the Education Strategic Focus and intentions of our organization:

*Through thoughtful community-based programming, AHS will promote awareness, connection, insight and pride in our community and heritage.*

The purpose of this policy is to provide overall guidance for interpretation and educational programming initiatives that support the AHS mission, which stresses the preservation and sharing of Aurora's history with visitors of all ages, backgrounds, sexual orientation, and accessibility needs.

## **Scope**

This policy pertains to the Aurora Historical Society; all staff, volunteers, and Board Members of the AHS be they permanent, part-time, summer seasonal, contract workers, interns, students, or community partners.

## **Goals**

- the development and implementation of innovative programs that educate and address the needs of the community
- reliable, inclusive and fulfilling delivery of programming for audiences
- actively inviting and reaching out to the community to engage with programs
- regularly welcoming and processing feedback from the community on AHS programming

## **Programs**

AHS interpretation and education programming will be developed in the following three board categories: public programming, education programming, and special event programming that are consistent with and further the objectives of the AHS's mission, and meets the needs and



interests of the community.

The types, variety, and number of programs offered by the AHS will be influenced by factors such as space, the availability of artifacts in the collection, staff resources, annual budget, and hours of operation.

AHS will strive to reach as wide an audience as possible by offering a variety of programs that meet the educational needs of all ages, cultural groups, the education system and those individuals with a variety of physical and mental abilities.

The AHS Curator/Manager and/or Programming & Outreach Coordinator will liaise with community groups and special interest organizations to determine areas of heritage programming required and develop new programs and program delivery mechanisms.

All programming will strive to:

- Provide both enjoyment and a meaningful heritage experience for every participant.
- Provide visitors with accurate and objective interpretive content.
- Respond to the needs of the community as established through consultation and collaboration.
- Be developed following established best practices of interpretation.
- Be developed and implemented in accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and will not discriminate against any person or community on the basis of race, religion, gender, language, sexual preference or physical ability.
- Consider cultural ownership, citizenship and the principles of stewardship in planning, implementation and/or delivery process.
- Ensure that ethical practices are adhered to by all staff members and volunteers when planning, implementing, and delivering programming.
- Meet municipal, provincial and federal requirements that have an impact on interpretation and education programs, including, but not limited to, the Canadian Copyright Act, Occupational Health and Work Act, Ontario Elementary and Secondary Curriculum, and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

#### Public Programming

Public programming will include, but is not limited to, general visitation to Hillary House National Historic Site, and outreach programming for special interest groups and events. Accurate and informative historical interpretation programs shall be offered. These programs shall provide the public with a historically accurate portrayal of life in the designated time/restoration period, with emphasis on Aurora and Ontario.

Programs for the public may include, but are not limited to:

- Interpretive guided tours
- Exhibits and displays
- Camps
- Public lectures, seminars, workshops and courses
- Outreach/extension activities

The AHS will offer public programming on a year-round basis with dedicated days and hours during peak or increased visitation periods.



Special consideration will be given to the interests, needs, expectations and demographics of the community and visitors when planning, implementing, and delivering public programming.

### Education Programming

Education programming will include, but is not limited to, regular on-site programming, special events, workshops, outreach programs, school visits and/or conferences. Accurate and informative historical interpretation programs shall be offered. These programs shall provide the public with a historically accurate portrayal of life in the designated time/restoration period, with emphasis on Aurora and Ontario.

Educational programs may include, but are not limited to:

- Curriculum related school programs
- School or education kits
- Programs for youth groups, for example, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts; 4-H Clubs
- Historical interpretation and/or exhibitions, on and off-site

When developing education programming, staff will establish clearly defined learning outcomes based upon the objectives set out in provincial curriculum and the AHS's mission statements. Staff may work with school boards and individual teachers to ensure educational programs link with school curricula and will supplement classroom learning.

When possible, education programming will be developed to be adaptable based upon the needs and skills of the participants.

### Special Event Programming

In order to increase attendance, boost revenue, and gain greater visibility in the community, the AHS will encourage events and exhibits that reflect the goals and aims of the organization. Special events will include (but are not limited to) events, workshops, one-day or multiday events, outreach programming and/or field trips.

Educational programs may include, but are not limited to:

- Seasonal events and displays;
- Temporary and travelling exhibits;
- Special events, festivals

AHS will offer quality special events programming as required. Special events programming will serve to promote heritage education, community involvement in heritage preservation, and to build an enduring relationship with the community the AHS serves.

Special consideration will be given to the interests, expectations and demographics of the community and visitors when planning, implementing, and delivering special events.

### **Program Objectives**

The interpretation and education programs that are offered by AHS strive to achieve the following objectives:

- To develop and maintain AHS as a dynamic institution committed to providing the community with engaging, innovative, informative, and accurate educational resources



- To develop and maintain AHS as a current and relevant educational resource for the community
- To provide the community with educational opportunities, and promote community involvement through interactive educational experiences
- To maintain a high standard of accessibility and flexibility in order to meet the programming and educational needs of all user groups
- To educate the community about the purpose and function of museums as an institution that is vital to our culture and society

### **Collection**

Programming will be developed that makes responsible use of facilities and collections. Wherever possible, reproductions or duplicate artifacts shall be used in interpretation and education programs. If suitable reproductions are not available, artifacts will be examined to determine their ability to withstand use in programs. Staff and volunteers will take every precaution to ensure that originals are used with great care.

### **Evaluation**

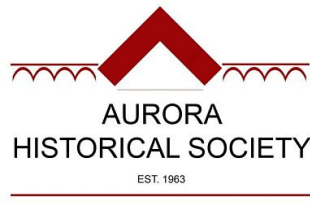
In order to meet the changing needs of the community, all programming activities will involve establishing learning objectives and outcomes in the planning phase which will be used for evaluation. Regular review, revision, and redevelopment of programming will take place based on program evaluation results.

### **Review**

This policy shall be reviewed by staff every 3 years and shall be updated as required.  
Date of next review: February, 2026

### Reviews and Approvals:

Most recently approved and adopted by AHS Board of Directors, February 2023.



- 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.