

# Chester Historical Society Collection Management Policy

Purpose: To establish rules, guidelines and procedures for the acquisition, care, preservation, public access and deaccessioning of items in the collections of the Chester Historical Society consistent with the recommendations, rules and regulations of the Chartering Program, New York State Museum

## I. Collections Committee

The Board of Trustees of the Chester Historical Society shall establish a Collections Committee. Pursuant to the Chester Historical Society's By-Laws, the President shall *appoint a minimum of* three members to this Committee. The Committee shall recommend items for accession to and deaccession from the collections of the Chester Historical Society.

The Collections Committee shall include in its deliberations, whenever deemed necessary, the advice of professionals with the goal of making well-considered and timely recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

The final decision to accession, to acquire without accessioning, or to deaccession items to or from the collections of the Chester Historical Society shall rest with the Board of Trustees.

## II. Acquisition

A. Scope. The Chester Historical Society collects printed and manuscript materials, maps, photographs, motion picture film, video and audio tapes (oral histories), paintings, artifacts and other items which have been created, used in or relevant to the history, development and current progress of the Village or Town of Chester, County of Orange, State of New York

B. Guidelines. Acquisitions to the Chester Historical Society's collections by purchase, loan, gift, bequest or other means shall accord with the following rules:

1. The owner must have clear title and must sign a deed of gift transferring title to the Chester Historical Society. In the case of a bequest, the donor must also have had clear title.
2. A transfer or ownership file containing gift agreements and other proofs of the Chester Historical Society's legal ownership of acquisitions shall be maintained.
3. Acquisitions by purchase shall not exceed the annual budget for such purchases unless additional proper financing has been arranged.

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4. No acquisition shall be appraised by a trustee, staff member, or any other person closely associated with either. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)
5. The Chester Historical Society must be capable of housing and caring for the proposed acquisition according to generally accepted professional standards.
6. Proposed acquisitions shall be free of donor-imposed restrictions unless such restrictions are agreed to by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
7. Acquisitions approved by the Board of Trustees for accessioning shall be promptly accessioned upon receipt and acceptance under a system approved by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
8. Donors and prospective donors, whenever deemed appropriate, should be asked by the Collections Committee whether they would be willing to provide funds for the full or partial cost of accessioning and subsequent maintenance of materials gifted to the Chester Historical Society. Willingness or unwillingness to provide such funds should usually not be a determining factor in the Board of Trustees decision to accept or reject a gift for accessioning.

## III. Care and Preservation

The Chester Historical Society realizes its obligation to protect its collections which are held in the public trust. Therefore, the Chester Historical Society shall act to the best of its ability, according to the following guidelines:

- A. A stable environment for items in storage or on display shall be maintained by protecting them from excessive light, heat, humidity and dust. The environmental needs of different materials shall be considered.
- B. All material shall be protected against theft, fire, and other perils by a security system and by a written disaster plan.
- C. When possible, paper materials shall be copied on microfilm, photocopied on acid-free paper, or otherwise made redundant and stored in a separate location.
- D. When deemed necessary, conservation of materials shall be undertaken with the advice of a trained conservator.

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- E. Records shall be kept using appropriate forms for documentation: i.e., temporary receipt form, deed of gift, accession forms, relevant correspondence, conservation reports and deaccession records.
- F. Inventories and location records shall be kept up to date to facilitate public access and to prevent loss.

## IV. Public Access

The Chester Historical Society shall make research materials in its possession available to legitimate researchers with legitimate justification, but with the following stipulations:

- A. Inventories, relevant files and the assistance of a staff member or trained volunteer shall be available to users.
- B. A registration form listing rules for usage shall be read, filled out and signed by all researchers.
- C. The Chester Historical Society may limit the use of fragile or unusually valuable materials.
- D. Hours of operation may be by designated hours or by appointment, depending on the availability of staff or trained volunteers.
- E. Photographic and xerographic reproduction:
  - 1. A Request for Copies form containing a notice of copyright restriction shall be signed by each user before copies are made.
  - 2. Copies may not be used “for any purpose other than private study, scholarship or research.” (United States Copyright Law, Title 17)
  - 3. Reproduction by the Chester Historical Society in no way transfers either copyright or property rights, nor does it constitute permission to publish or to display materials.
  - 4. All prices for copying shall be determined by the Board of Trustees.
  - 5. In some cases, the Chester Historical Society may refuse to allow copies to be made because of the physical condition of the materials, restrictions imposed by the donor, copyright law, or right-to-privacy statutes.

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- F. A fee may be charged for research work done to meet requests: the amount shall be set by the Board of Trustees.
- G. The Chester Historical Society may refuse access to an individual researcher who has demonstrated such carelessness or deliberate destructiveness as to endanger the safety of the materials.

In addition, the Chester Historical Society is committed to bringing to the public information culled from its documents, photographs, artifacts and oral histories by, but not limited to, presenting public programs, including slide shows, live acts, videos and films; mounting exhibits; and publishing newsletters, pamphlets, checklists and guides to the collections whenever possible.

## V. Deaccession

No accessioned object or collection shall be removed from the Chester Historical Society's auspices except in conformity with the following rules:

- A. A deaccession recommendation shall be prepared by the Collections Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Whenever deemed necessary, professional advice shall may be sought before an item is deaccessioned.
- B. The decision to deaccession should be cautious and deliberate and follow generally accepted museological standards. One of the following criteria must be met:
  - 1. The material is not relevant to the mission of the Chester Historical Society.
  - 2. The material has failed to retain its identity or has been lost or stolen and is not recovered.
  - 3. The material duplicates other material in the collection of the Chester Historical Society and is not necessary for research or educational purposes.
  - 4. The Chester Historical Society is unable to conserve the property in a responsible manner.
- C. No donated material shall be deaccessioned for two years after the date of its acquisition. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)

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- D. A complete record of deaccessions shall be kept. A copy of this record shall be retained permanently.
- E. Proceeds derived from the deaccessioning of any property from the collection of the Chester Historical Society shall be placed either in a temporarily restricted fund to be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections, or in a permanently restricted fund the earnings of which shall be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections. In no event shall proceeds be used for operating expenses or for any purpose other than acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections.
- F. Disposal may be by exchange, donation or public sale with scholarly or cultural organizations as the preferred recipients.
- G. Materials de-accessioned shall not be privately sold, given or otherwise transferred to the Chester Historical Society's staff or trustees, except if by public auction.

This Policy was formally approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Chester Historical Society at a meeting held at the 1915 Erie Station, 14 Winkler Place, Chester, NY 10918 on Wednesday 1 March, 2000.

*Revision #1 was formally approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Chester Historical Society at the meeting held on Wednesday, 1 March, 2006.*

Signed (officer): \_\_\_\_\_

Typed or printed name of officer: Mary Altobelli, President

Office copy

Station Copy

An original copy of this Collection Management Policy shall be mailed to the:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM

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