

Collections Management Course Assignment

submitted by

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To

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Collections Management Action Plan

Executive Summary

During the interview for the position of Curator, the Board and Executive Director informed me that the previous Curator had little training and did not grasp the basics of Collections Management. Over the past month, I have spent the majority of my time familiarizing myself with these issues. Through this analysis, I have identified 4 major challenges for the collection as: (1) Catalogue Records (Mastercards) are lacking cataloguing information, (2) Catalogue Records (Mastercards) are missing location information, (3) Outdated Inventory Lists, and (4) Unsigned Deed of Gift Forms. The lack of documentation in these areas poses a great threat to the collection. An approach for dealing with these issues resulted in the development of this Action plan within the next 5 years.

Planning Phase

As the Curator for Brant Museum and Archives, we have consistently estimated that we care for 60,000 artifacts as far back as 2007 and in 2015 we accessioned over 300 artifacts alone. We will employ a layout driven, backwards design approach that aims to improve our documentation at the museum.

In conducting our research, we consulted the Collections Management Policy (CMP) for the Brant Museum and Archives regarding documentation for the collection. The CMP clarifies the proper procedure, but this should be updated. The remaining concern of Outdated Inventory Lists should be addressed by changing the

CMP's use of donor/source, location, subject, and classification cards. These systems have become obsolete with digital cataloguing systems and our location cards stopped being updated around 1992. Significant movement of artifacts without updating locations has turned this into an unusable form of information on the location of artifacts.

The backwards design approach is borrowed from the education sector and is a “method of designing educational curriculum by setting goals before choosing instructional methods and forms of assessment” (Wikipedia, 2016). We will use this approach to address three of our challenges aimed at improving documentation around museum artifacts. We have designed a form (See Appendix A) that will be attached to our Mastercard or Catalogue Records system in physical form and a copy will be scanned and uploaded to attach it digitally in Past Perfect. The top of the form includes a location section with the same six pre-defined fields that Past Perfect uses. An object cannot pass from one step to the next, unless the previous step is completed to ensure that everything will be done.

The next portion asks the assessor to find the original Mastercard, which catalogues each object for the museum and select the checkbox. If a Mastercard does not exist, then one must be created before the object returns. Once the Mastercard has been created, it will be incorporated into our system in another step of the process.

The next check box in this section aims to rectify the challenge identified by unsigned Deed of Gift forms. Many of our artifacts only possess a Temporary Custody Receipt rather than a Deed of Gift Form. We will attempt to reach back out

to the donor and ask if they can return to the museum to help us in improving our records.

It is unlikely that objects received before 1981 when the Community Museum Operating Grant Standards were established will be able to have a signed Deed of Gift form. The only solution to this problem is to reach out to the Ontario Government to introduce and pass legislation which states that museum donations before 1981 are automatically assumed to be property of the institution. This will allow all museums to improve the Collections Standard from the CMOG program.

The layout driven part of the initiative will employ a top-down and from the northwestern corner of a room, clockwise around the room approach. This approach also works on all areas of the museum's scope from building to floor to room to shelf, etc. using the six predefined fields in Pastperfect. For example, when starting this project, the first object that will update will be located in the attic, in room W, and in the northwestern corner (see floor plan and pictures in Appendix B). A procedure should be written that transfers the inventory lists into location update forms that are entered by volunteers. If this procedure is written correctly, it should allow for the first comprehensive inventory and location list for the museum.

The final step of the plan involves organizing and storing of all the paperwork generated from the plan. The procedure written to guide workers and volunteers through this process should explain the consistent order for the integration with the catalogue card system (i.e. Mastercard, Checklist, etc.). These pages should be numbered to aid in the identification of missing pages. All documentation should be scanned, uploaded, and attached to the record in Past

Perfect ensuring a digital backup also exists.

Timelines

As the plan is for the entire museum, we tested the time of 50 random objects in the museum and timed the length of time. In our selection at least one object of each material, one object in each room or display, and at least 8 large objects to get a comprehensive reflection of the time this may take. With our 50 random objects, the average work time spent was 35 minutes \pm 8 minutes. This time does not include the wait time from contacting donors and waiting for their reply to sign the Deed of Gift Forms.

Extrapolating for the estimated 60,000 artifacts in the collection we have a maximum estimate of 24 years to complete. This timeline could be reduced by hiring 3 full time positions and would more realistically be completed in a 3-5 year goal or a 5-year investment of \$450,000. Additional paper and equipment supplies should be budgeted at \$50,000 over the timeline of the project. Therefore, the approach in dealing with this is a long-term project and should form part of the Master Plan for the museum and improve our level of fulfillment of the Community Museums Operating Grant Standards.

Conclusions

Over the past number of years, the Brant Museum and Archives has struggled in achieving the ideals of our CMP and the CMOG Standards (2011) around documentation for artifacts. We have identified 4 major documentation concerns to

be addressed as part of our Master Plan with an investment of \$050,000. Our action plan identifies the process, resources, and the documentation that will be generated as a result of that project.

Deaccessioning the Dutch Gin Bottle

It is rare that museums deaccession artifacts from their collection as they would be removing something that was once donated to the public good. However, deaccessioning occasionally must happen due to a number of factors and this allows museums to better prioritize proper storage and care for other artifacts that are in the museum's care. This brief report will outline the reasoning behind deaccessioning the object and outline the steps to remove this bottle from our collection.

Rationale for Deaccession

Museums deaccession artifacts for a variety of reasons including, not within the scope of mission, beyond the capability of the museum to obtain, duplicates in the collection, not useful for research, exhibits, and educational use. The CMP for the Brant Museum and Archives lists a number of reasons including no longer fitting with exhibition themes, not fitting the mandated time period of the museum, sufficient information or provenance cannot be obtained, it is in poor condition, a mutual agreement of the donor cannot be met, a superior duplicate artifact is acquired, theft or destruction of artifact, and repatriation. It should be noted that there is no mandated time period for the museum and has been a common complaint of patrons that we're out of the Victorian era, suggesting patrons wish to

see more post-Victorian artifacts.

The gin bottle does little to fit the museum's mandate of "collecting, preserving, and sharing the history of Brantford, Brant County, Six Nations, and New Credit Reserves" as the artifact is from Holland, but was used in Brantford briefly. The donor, George W. Bloomfield, was one of the earliest donors who donated frequently to the museum through from the 1920s until the late 1950s.

When the artifact was donated, it was done before the modern creation of museum standards. This, in combination with the fact that the donor has been dead for a number of decades, showcases that we are unable to obtain sufficient provenance or any other information about the bottle.

Therefore, because of this artifact not fitting with the mandate of the museum, no information being able to be obtained on the artifact, and the lack of it fitting in potential exhibits, we recommend that the object be deaccessioned.

Deaccessioning the Artifact

With the Collections Management Policy for the Brant Museum and Archives has a procedure for deaccessioning and Gerrard (2013) points to several additional criteria that must be kept in mind. The largest issue for the Brant Museum and Archives is ensuring that it has legal authority to act. We should advocate the Province of Ontario to introduce a mechanism to removal of artifacts when there is no legal authority to act.

The next step is removal of the markings from the museum for the artifact's identification. The number was applied before the use of layering agents in applying numbers to museum artifacts. An attempt to remove the number through the use of

a number of solvents, such as ethanol and acetone should be undertaken. The removal of the artifact number will fulfill this step of the deaccession process.

The method of disposal is often something that worries curators in deaccessioning an object. Options for disposal highlighted in the collections management policy are returning the artifact to the donor, offer to another museum, sell at auction, and destruction. As we cannot return the artifact to the donor, this option is a moot point. It is unlikely that another museum would like such an item and attempts to offer it to several local institutions have not resulted in success.

A search on eBay reveals that the average price of such a bottle is around \$20, resulting in low return to invest in the museum's collection. As a result, we are left with destroying the artifact as our recommended method of disposal. It should be noted that the object was photographed in 2012 so it doesn't need to be photographed again before disposal.

Conclusion

The above reports outlines the criteria and steps for deaccessioning an artifact for disposal. It is therefore recommended that the Dutch Gin bottle donated to the museum be deaccessioned and be disposed of through destruction.

Incoming Loan Report

A loan of 3 pieces of artwork has recently been offered to our institution for free including shipping costs (See Appendix C). This additional programming will be helpful in covering an intended exhibit for the fall that will not be possible with the loss of a staff member. This report highlights the 5 major issues of incoming loan is the purpose of the loan, the length of the loan period, the location of the

exhibition, the dates of the exhibition, and a list detailing the borrower's responsibilities.

The loan forms (incoming, outgoing, and terms and conditions) currently used by the Brant Museum and Archives has not been updated since 2008 (See Appendix D). It is interesting to note that the form does not include the purpose of the loan. It should be clear when someone fills out the form, the reason it is being loaned to the institution whether it be for an exhibit or for an education program. We have updated this form, so that it now includes an area that outlines the purpose of the loan.

Another important factor that needs to be included in the incoming loan is the length of the loan period. This is clearly outlined on the existing form with two fields of "Time Period Begins" and "Time Period Ends". It is important to verify the start and end dates of the loan so the incoming institution knows when it starts and ends taking care of the artifact. This also provides controls for the outgoing institution when they take possession of the artifact back from the incoming institution.

A third factor to consider for this incoming loan is the location of the exhibition. This will ease the outgoing institution concerns as they should know when loans are arriving and departing the incoming institution. This is not clearly identified on the original form, so that we included this on the updated form for the Brant Museum and Archives.

The dates of the exhibition of the loaned items should also be included on the incoming loan form in a much clearer way. This easily identifies when the date the

loan is coming into the institution, when it will start being on display, when it ends being on display, and when it concludes its time at the Brant Museum and Archives. This follows the “do unto others, as you would have them do unto you” rule providing the outgoing institution as much information as possible about their artifact that is currently in our possession.

A final factor to consider is the terms and conditions of the loan. This should be fairly comprehensive and be updating for each loan indentifying concerns that must be taken into consideration such as handling, packing, and display considerations. The Brant Museum and Archives currently has only an outgoing loan terms and conditions for artifacts that is lends out to other institutions. A similar sheet of the terms and conditions of incoming loans for the institution should be created as a proactive measure. This would aid other institutions that are considering loaning artifacts to the Brant Museum and Archives and place as an institution that is a collaborator in museum sector.

The five important factors discussed above must be confirmed before the incoming loan agreement is signed and confirmed by both parties. This exercise has highlighted the need to update our existing incoming loan form to include start and end dates of arrival, departure, and exhibition. It has further emphasized the lack of an incoming terms and conditions list for the Brant Museum and Archives.

The need for a Comprehensive Collections Management Procedure (CCMP): From accepting the donation to Final storage destination

The Brant Museum and Archives has no existing comprehensive procedure that has been written down in a formal procedure. The Collections Management

Policy (CMP; See Appendix F) has a section on Collections Management with subsections on Temporary [Custody] Receipt, Registration, and Cataloguing. While existing procedures cover portions of, and are consistent with, the existing CMP, a Comprehensive Collections Management Procedure (CCMP) will have two additional benefits. Firstly, the quality of our entries into PastPerfect will be done consistently adding value to the database as a tool for Collections Management and the database's use in research. Secondly, we have an abundance of collections volunteers and this would guide in training volunteers to deal with the accession backlog and cataloguing of new and existing artifacts.

The first portion of the procedure will deal with accepting the donation which is currently covered in the Temporary Receipt portion of the Collections Management Policy. Currently, we attempt to speed up this process by having the donor bring in the artifact and explaining why the donation has an importance and value to the collection. This allows the Curator the opportunity to fill out the Deed of Gift Form (See Appendix E) with the donor making notes on important details around the donation's provenance. If we do issue a Temporary Custody Receipt, then we must affix temporary labels, research the objects, make a decision within 30 days, notify the donor about the decision, have them retrieve unwanted items, and sign a Deed of Gift Form with the Curator.

The next portion deals with the accessioning or registration portion of the CMP. Having the completed Deed of Gift from the previous section, we accession the objects into the register with a brief description of each item. The CMP details the assignment of object numbers in the following manner:

“A three-part number is assigned to the artifact. The first part represents the year of acquisition, the second part represents the accession’s order of entry, and the third represents the artifact’s order in respect to its accession (i.e. 2000.16.4). Once recorded, the accession number is physically marked on the artifact in a conservationally approved method”.

An additional step that should be added to the procedure includes writing the year and donor number (i.e. 2000.16) on the Deed of Gift Form in case the paperwork becomes dissociated from the artifact. The dominant forms of applying the number are the three-layer method, HB pencil, cotton twill tape, and tagging. These important steps will make up the portions of the accessioning portion of the CCMP.

The next section in this procedure includes the cataloguing of each artifact and currently outlined in the Cataloguing Portion of the Existing Collections Management Procedure. This used to be done on a single sheet of paper with a hand sketch of each artifact commonly referred to as a Mastercard. Currently, this is accomplished by entering the object into PastPerfect using the Object Entry Procedure along with taking a picture to attach to the PastPerfect entry. Another possible simplification involves the digitization of this processes using existing options within the PastPerfect software. This section of the CMP should also be updated to reflect the digital revolution that has occurred in the museum sector in the past 15 years.

The silence of anything after the Cataloguing Section of the CMP suggests that we amend the policy to include a Storage Section with an accompanying procedure. This section should mentions about the proper packing, storage, and recording the

location of the object. As part of this process, we should create an Object Location Update Form using the existing 6 fields within PastPerfect. These forms should be used to update locations of new and recently moved artifacts and the use of volunteers to enter these forms.

This report has highlighted the need for a CCMP at the Brant Museum and Archives. While the existing CMP provides guidelines, it should be revised to include modernizations of the digital era and a new subsection on Storage and Locations. Once this is approved, the CCMP will be generated and used as a resource by current staff and volunteers, as well as those in the future. This will greatly improve the value of the collection at the Brant Museum and Archives.

Collections Management Policy: Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	29
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT	30
Budget	30
What will be collected	30
The museum will collect:	30
The museum will not collect:	30
Ethics of Acquisition	30
Mode of Acquisition	31
COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT	31
Documentation of Artifacts	32
Temporary receipt	32
Registration	33

Cataloguing	33
DEACCESSIONING	33
An artifact is deaccessioned when:	33
Deaccessioning Procedure	34
Where the Deaccessioned Artifact Goes:	34
LOANS	35
INSURANCE	35
POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL	35

The Brant Museum and Archives is required to have a Collections Management Policy (CMP; See Appendix F) as a requirement to receive funding from the Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Sport. These standards were created in 1981 and revised in 2011 and stipulate what must be included in this policy. While the CMP covers the standards, it has not been updated since 2001. As a result of this review, we propose 5 recommendations aimed at improving the CMP and the care of the collection the Brant Museum and Archives holds in trust for the public.

Firstly, the existing CMP is really two different policy documents merged into one document creating redundancies, gaps, and giving the policy a disorganized appearance with no logical flow. Looking at the standards developed by the Ministry reveals the policy was written in an attempt to cover each point. A reorganized CMP and a separate Collections Development Policy (CDP) will greatly increase the use and ease of use of this policy throughout the organization.

Creating a new CDP will allow expansion of this policy to include explicit priorities. The existing development section of the CMP tells what we collect and what we don't collect, but does not go far enough in identifying priorities. A section should be added noting examples of priorities including, but not limited to, Brantford's History before 1875, artifacts and documents relating to Brantford's Industrial Heritage, and collections donated by notable local celebrities. Expanding on the CDP to include explicit priorities for collecting will aid in creating value in donations in the future.

The existing CMP does not detail an approach for dealing with objects found in the collection, which is estimated at 15-25% of the collection. Some clarity to the types of found objects we collect, the accession into either the main or education register, and the recommendation to deaccession unimportant found objects would certainly improve the value of the collection possessed by the Brant Museum and Archives.

A fourth priority that should be included in the new CMP is a statement about collecting digital files and how we implement those into our existing system. The Small Museums Cataloguing Manual (2006) suggests: "A good system is to create folders by registration number, seeing this as a unique identifier for each collection object. If a document has a large digital supplementary file, you might want to use subfolders". By adding phrases like those suggested above, will improve and enhance the CMP for the Brant Museum and Archives.

A final area of the collections management policy that could be improved is by clearly differentiating between the education and main collection in the CMP as

required by Section 2b of the Collection Management Standard set by the Ministry of Culture Tourism and Sport(2011). As this would affect both the CMP and the CDP, a small subsection should be included in both policies. Currently, the education collection is around 400 objects and comprised only 3 banker banks worth of objects or the average size of an archival collection. Making a clear distinct between the education and main collections cared for by the Brant Museum and Archives would further improve the Collections Management standard.

The CMP of the Brant Museum and Archives has not been updated since 2001. This report generated 5 recommendations to be included in a new CMP as: (1) splitting the existing CMP into two new policies of a CMP and a CDP; (2) Stating explicit priorities for collections that would improve the quality and value of the collection; (3) Adding a section to the CMP on found objects in the collection; (4) Adding a section to the CMP on digital accessions into the collection; and (5) Differentiating between the main collection and the education collection. The implementation of any of these five recommendations would improve the Brant Museum and Archive's Collections Management Practices.

References

“Backward Design” *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 28 June 2016. Web. 7 July 2016.

Ericksen, H. and Unger, I. “The Small Museums Cataloguing Manual. “Museums Australia (Victoria). 2006. Web. 20 July 2016.

< http://www.mavic.asn.au/assets/Small_Museums_Cataloguing_Manual_4th.pdf>

Gerrard, Richard. “An Introduction to the Deaccession and Disposal of Collections” 2013. Web. 11 July 2016.

Standards for community museums in Ontario. Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport, Government of Ontario, 2 Feb. 2015. Web. 29 May 2016.

<http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/museums/museums_standards.shtml>

Appendix A: Brant Historical Society Documentation Checklist

Checklist Verifier: _____

Date: _____

Accession #: _____

Object Name: _____

Location:

Building	
Room	
Wall	
Shelf	
Drawer	
Container	

Location Updated by: _____

Date: _____

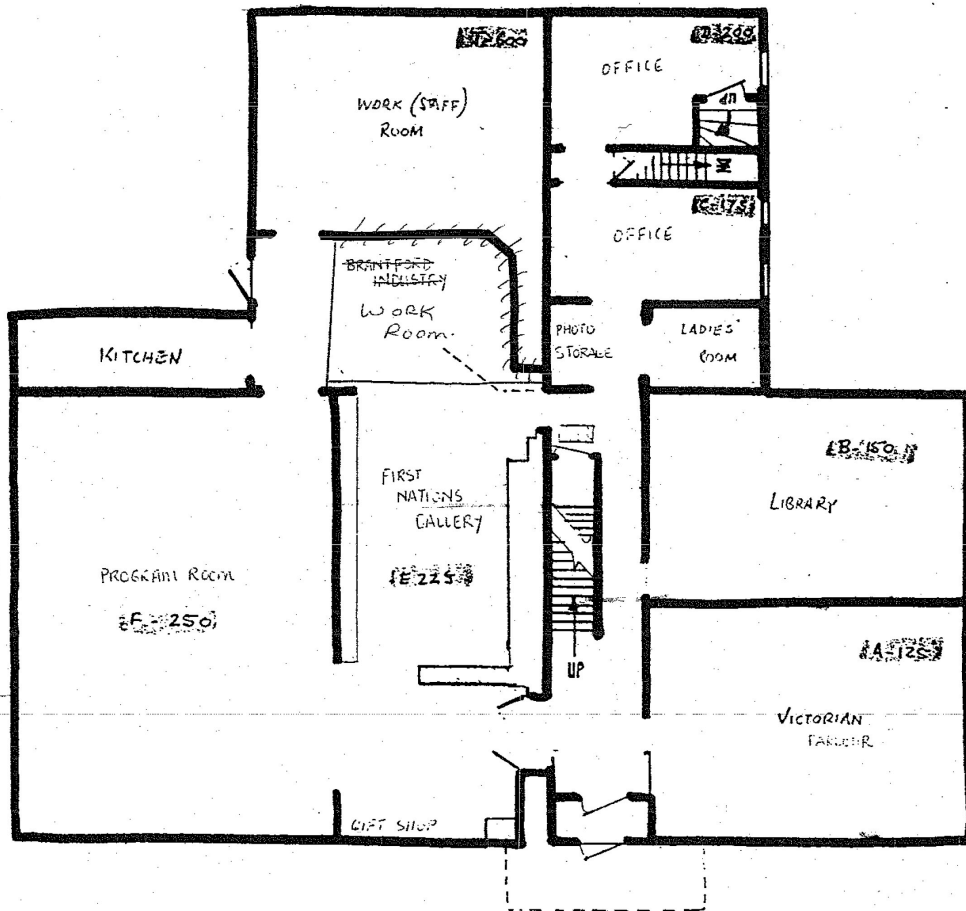
Documentation:

X	Name of Document	Page #s
	Mastercard	
	This Page (Documentation Checklist)	
	Copy of Signed Deed of Gift Form or Temporary Custody Receipt	

Documentation Verifier: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Floor Plans

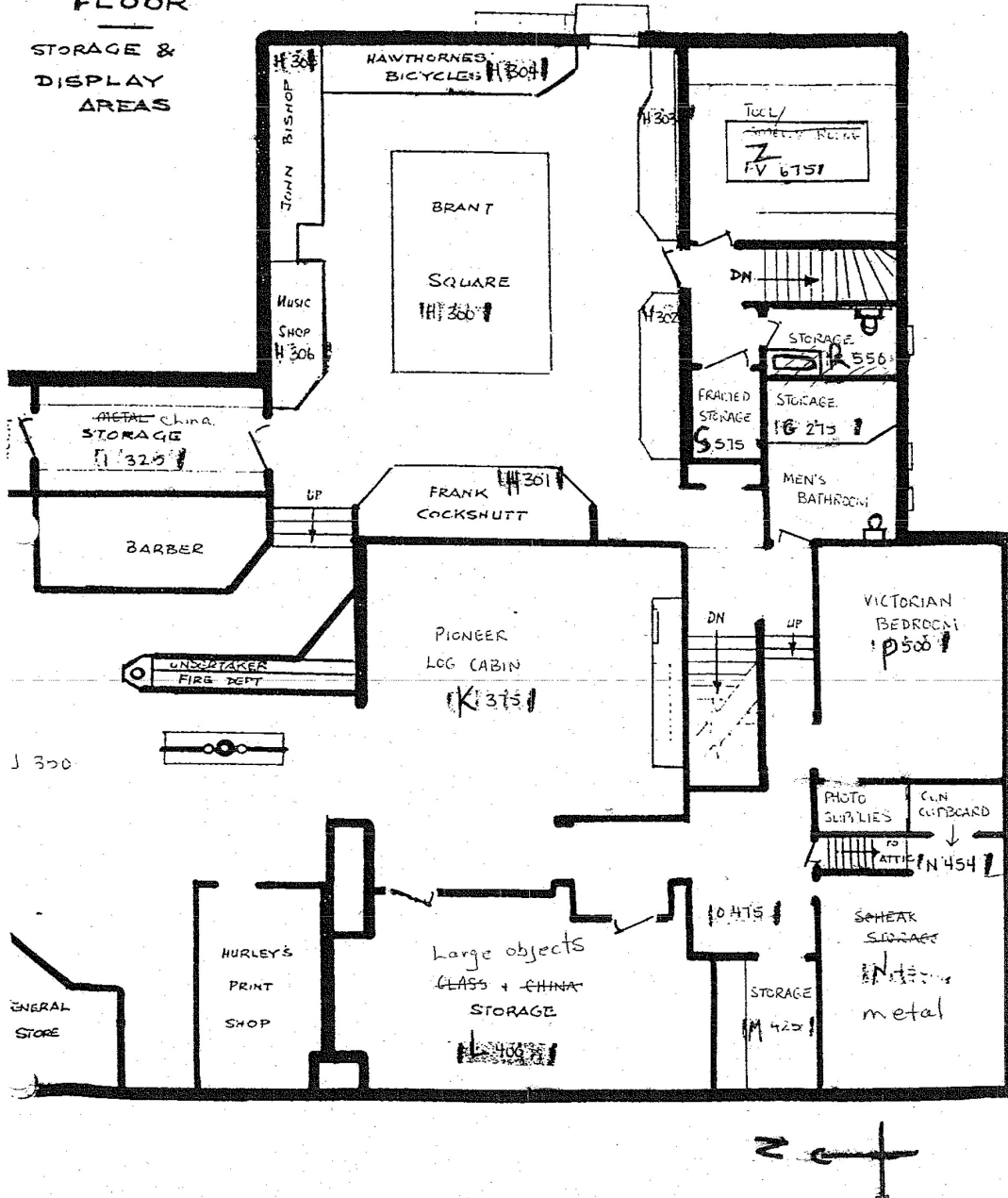


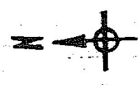
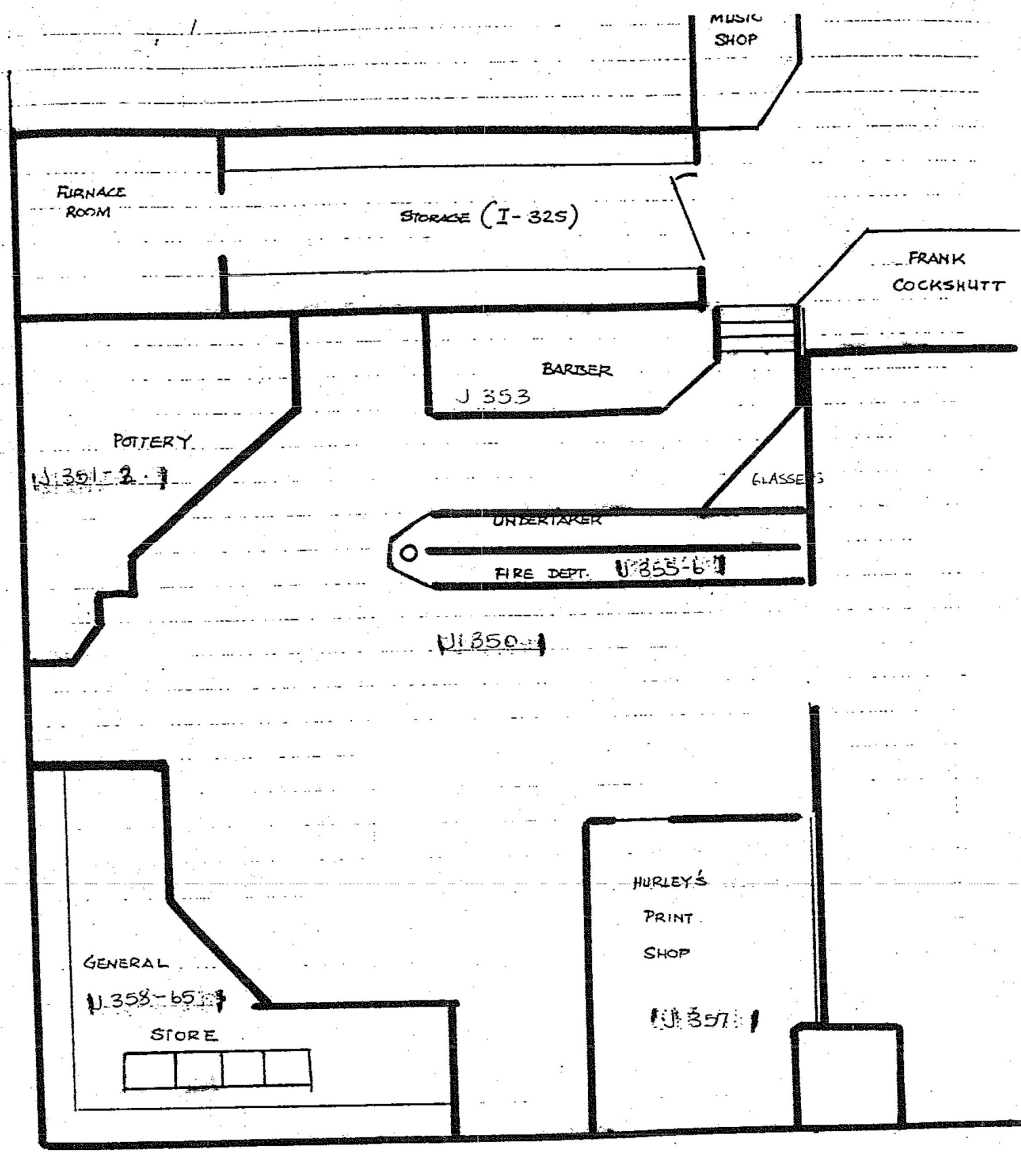
**GROUND FLOOR
PLAN**



SECOND FLOOR

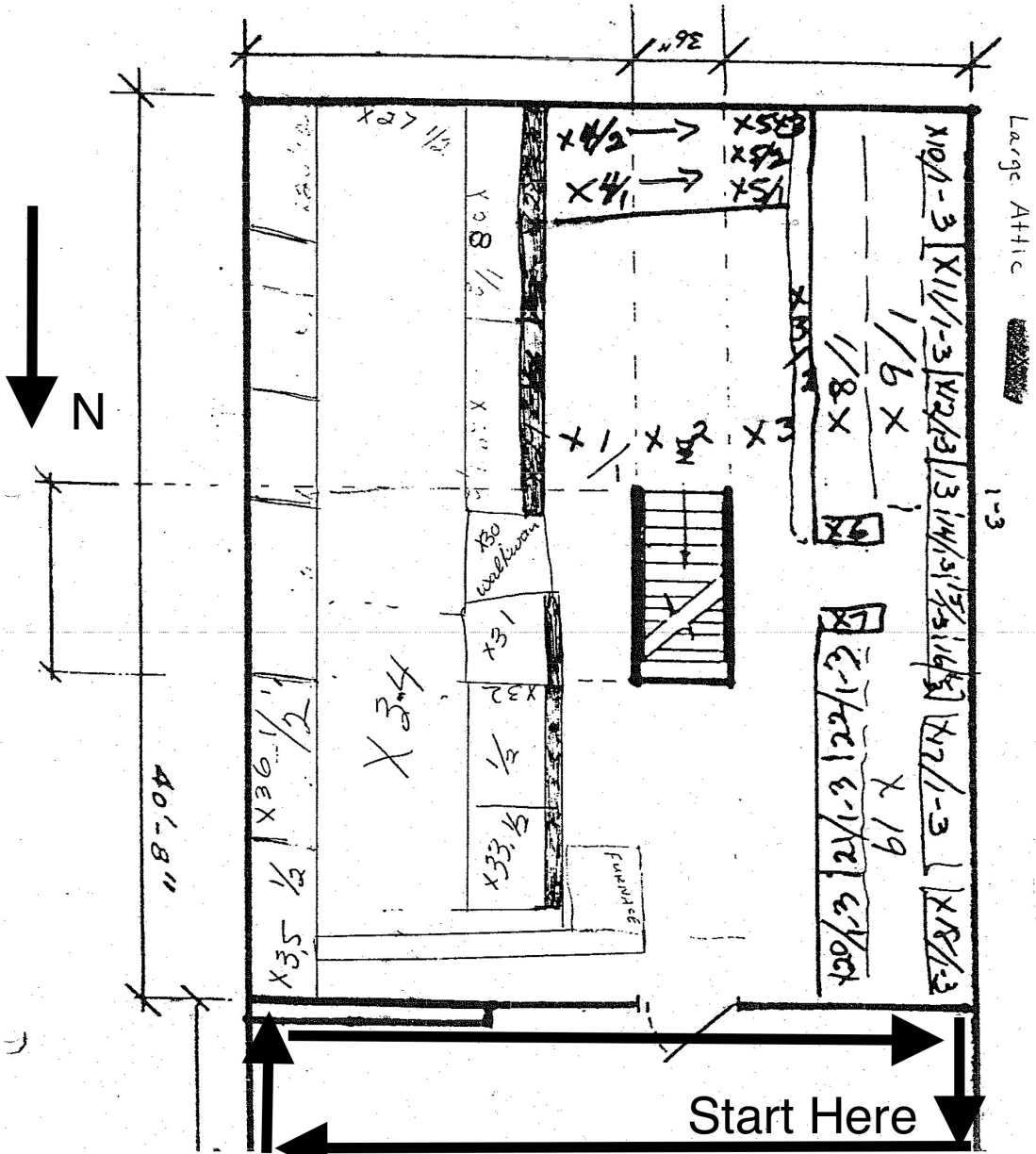
STORAGE & DISPLAY AREAS





SECOND FLOOR
DISPLAY & STORAGE AREAS

Corrected by Jan 17/10



Appendix C: Incoming Loan Email for Exhibit

Nathan Etherington

From: Carolee Dunn <carolee.dunn@brantmuseums.ca>
Sent: April-25-16 1:58 PM
To: nathan.etherington@brantmuseums.ca
Subject: FW: Donation
Attachments: 01-Burden-DM.jpg; 02-Pickmeup-DM.jpg; 03-Stretch-DM.jpg; C.V David Moore.pdf; David Moore et quelques unes de ses oeuvres.pdf; Fiche technique oeuvre de l'artiste David Moore.docx

From: Robert Desjardins []
Sent: April-25-16 1:35 PM
To:
Subject: Donation

Dear

One of my customer currently has a collection of works by the artist known David Moore.

These three works in wood, metal and painting concern a significant period of the creation and production of this artist. Three works of high aesthetic quality, original and signed.

Quebec artist of Irish descent, David Moore works of sculpture, photography and drawing, but focused mainly on the realization of hybrid nature of plants. The artist lives and works in his workshop / barn St-Denis sur Richelieu and conducts regular homes in Greece. He exhibits regularly in Canada and Europe. Among his public accomplishments include the important work "aLomph Abram" built into the turret of the National Museum of Fine Arts of Quebec and the monumental work "Site-Interlude" of the City of Lachine Sculpture Park.

The works of artist David Moore are found in several Canadian museums.

You will find enclosed the description as well as pictures of three works from this collection.

My customer is willing to offer them to your institution graciously for the year 2016.

He is also willing to have it delivered works immediately and pay all associated costs (assessments, transportation etc.)

Pending.

Receive my best regards

Robert Desjardins

Appendix D: Incoming Loan Form, Outgoing Loan Form, and Terms and Conditions

Loan Agreement Form: Incoming Brant Historical Society

57 Charlotte Street, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 2W6 ph.: (519) 752-2483 fax:(519) 752-1931
www.brantmuseum.ca

The following items are on loan to the Brant Historical Society who agrees to take full responsibility for their care and security while they are in the possession of the Brant Historical Society.

Person or Institution:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/Town: _____ province: _____ postal code: _____
 Phone: _____ fax: _____ e-mail: _____

Time period begins: _____ Time period ends: _____

Terms of agreement: _____

Insurance Arrangements: _____

Shipping Arrangements: _____

Credit Line: _____

Released by: _____ Date: _____
 Released to: _____ Date: _____
 Returned by: _____ Date: _____
 Returned to: _____ Date: _____

Catalogue Number	Name Of Item	Value

Loan Agreement Form: Outgoing Brant Historical Society

57 Charlotte Street, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 2W6 ph.: (519) 752-2483 fax:(519) 752-1931
www.brantmuseum.ca

The following items are on loan from the Brant Historical Society to the person or organization listed below who agrees to take full responsibility for their care and security while they are away from the Brant Historical Society.

Person or Institution:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/Town: _____ province: _____ postal code: _____
 Phone: _____ fax: _____ e-mail: _____

Time period begins: _____ Time period ends: _____

Terms of agreement: _____

Insurance Arrangements: _____

Shipping Arrangements: _____

Credit Line: _____

Released by: _____	Date: _____
Released to: _____	Date: _____
Returned by: _____	Date: _____
Returned to: _____	Date: _____

Catalogue Number	Name Of Item	Value

**Brant Historical Society
Outgoing Loan
Terms and Conditions**

1. The Borrower is responsible for all loss or damage to the objects borrowed which is due to the negligence of the Borrower, its employees or agents. The Borrower is responsible for insuring for loss or damage caused to the objects while they are in its care, custody or control.
2. Brant Historical Society shall provide to the Borrower a written report of the condition of the objects prior to display by the Lender.
3. The Borrower shall keep and maintain the objects in such a place or in such a manner as to reasonably protect them from damage, loss and theft. The Borrower shall maintain the objects under conditions which will protect them from mishandling and deterioration. Museum conservation standards apply.
4. The Borrower will immediately advise the Brant Historical Society in the event of damage, loss or theft of the objects.
5. The Borrower will not clean, alter or repair any objects without the prior written consent of the Brant Historical Society
6. The Borrower may unless otherwise stipulated in writing by the Brant Historical Society, photograph or televise the objects for condition reports, educational and publicity purposes only. Objects may not be reproduced without the written consent of the Brant Historical Society.
7. Objects will be returned packed in the same or similar materials as received unless otherwise authorized by the Brant Historical Society
8. If an extension of time is desired on this loan, application will be made to the Brant Historical Society within thirty to sixty days before the end of the period noted on the form.
9. Objects will be returned to the Brant Historical Society at the address stated on the load form.

Deed of Gift

Brant Historical Society, 57 Charlotte Street, Brantford, Ontario
N3T 2W6

Name: _____	Date: _____
Address: _____	
City: _____	Prov.: ____ Postal Code: _____
PhoneH/W: _____	Fax: _____
Email: _____	

I the above named, hereby irrevocably and unconditionally give, transfer, assign and deliver to the Brant Historical Society by way of gift, all rights, title and interest in and to the following item(s) which I own. I declare that I own the Property and it is free of any encumbrances.

I understand that the item(s) may be displayed, loaned or disposed of at the discretion of the Brant Historical Society.

I understand that the Brant Historical Society may copy the work(s) described herein, for the purpose of collections management. In addition the Brant Historical Society may copy the work for the purpose of research or private study in accordance with section 30.21 of the Copyright Act.

The Brant Historical Society accepts from the Donor the Property described as a gift. The Property shall be the exclusive and absolute property of the Brant Historical Society. The Brant Historical Society reserves the right to display the Property as it deems advisable and in making this donation, the Donor understands and agrees that the Property may be displayed, loaned, retained, or disposed of in such a manner as it is in the best interest of the Brant Historical Society.

Personal information contained on this form is collected and used for the purposes of cataloguing and display label preparation.

Please check here if you DO NOT wish this institution to identify your name on a display label for this gift.

Description of Gift:

By my signature below I accept the foregoing conditions and acknowledge reading any attached information.

This gift is given in memory of: _____

Dated: _____
_____ Donor/agent

_____ Donor/agent
Date received: _____ Received by: _____

THE GIFT DESCRIBED ABOVE IS ACCEPTED FOR BRANT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By: _____
Name title date

Appendix F: BRANT MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION	29
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT	30
Budget	30
What will be collected	30
The museum will collect:	30
The museum will not collect:	30
Ethics of Acquisition	30
Mode of Acquisition	31
COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT	31
Documentation of Artifacts	32
Temporary receipt	32
Registration	33
Cataloguing	33
DEACCESSIONING	33
An artifact is deaccessioned when:	33
Deaccessioning Procedure	34
Where the Deaccessioned Artifact Goes:	34
LOANS	35
INSURANCE	35
POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL	35

INTRODUCTION

This policy defines how collecting enables the Brant Museum and Archives to fulfill its Statement of Purpose to collect, preserve, research, exhibit and interpret collections that may be of interest to the residents of our community, as well as illustrating the founding, settlement, diversity and development of the County of Brant and the

surrounding area. This policy serves as a checklist when artifacts are being considered, and helps the museum maintain high collection standards.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Budget

The Brant Historical Society provides sufficient allocation of funds in its operating and capital budgets to finance the acquisition of artifacts. The annual budget includes an amount to be used for collecting.

What will be collected

The museum will acquire only artifacts that can be properly researched, documented, exhibited and maintained. Artifacts must be in reasonable condition so that they may be preserved in their original condition as much as possible. Exceptions to these points are made for rare artifacts.

The museum will collect:

- Objects that are historically significant to the County of Brant and immediate area.
- Objects that are associated with important events, periods, episodes and personalities in the County of Brant and immediate area.
- Objects that were made, used or bought in the County of Brant and immediate area.
- Objects that are useful in the museum's display, research and interpretive activities.

The museum will not collect:

- Curiosities and relics that do not contribute to a significant historical awareness for the County of Brant and immediate area.
- Duplicates unless they serve a useful purpose, such as extension program displays, travelling educational kits, etc. Any duplicate must have a specific function within the museum's program. Any duplicate which does not have a specific function should not be collected.

Any deviation from the above stipulations are subject to the discretion of the Museum & Archives Management Committee and/or the Director/Curator.

Ethics of Acquisition

The museum adheres to regulations that govern the use of various artifacts:

- The Copyright Act (1970, C.30; 1988, C.30)
- The Ontario Heritage Act (1974) and any subsequent revisions
- The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O., 1990

The museum will not acquire artifacts:

- That have questionable history of ownership
- That have been acquired illegally, or by unscrupulous salvaging of historical sites

Mode of Acquisition

The staff at the Brant Museum & Archives employ active, systematic and thorough methods of searching and also acquire suitable artifacts that are discovered by chance.

The following steps will be followed to determine if the Brant Historical Society will acquire an artifact:

- The artifact is brought to the attention of the Director/Curator
- The artifact is considered by the Acquisitions Committee. The Acquisitions Committee consists of the Director/Curator and several Museum & Archives Management Committee members. The committee will decide whether or not the artifact is to be accepted.

Artifacts are acquired by means of purchase, donation, bequest, exchange or loan. For all acquisitions, the transfer of ownership must be accompanied by a legal document.

Purchases are made in the name of the Brant Historical Society and the Society receives a bill of sale as well as the name, address and telephone number of the vendor. The Director/Curator and the Museum & Archives Management Committee must be consulted before purchases are made.

The Director/Curator or Assistant Curator fills out a gift form for a donated artifact and ensures that it is signed by the donor. A tax receipt is issued to the donor provided the donor has obtained a bona fide appraisal. If the donor does not wish to obtain an appraisal, the Brant Historical Society or Museum & Archives Management Committee or Director/Curator may arrange for an appraisal at its expense. Donations are deemed to be unconditional gifts and the museum has full discretionary power over the use of the artifact. This regulation must be agreeable to both parties (BHS and donor) or the donation agreement is null and void. Exceptions to this policy are subject to the discretion of the Museum & Archives Management Committee and the Director/Curator.

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Documentation of Artifacts

All objects collected will be well documented, such documentation should include:

- Circumstances surrounding the object's discovery and acquisition (i.e. where, when and by whom).
- The original owner and manufacturer.
- The object's original use.
- A chronological history of the object.
- Any other pertinent facts.

Such documentation must be capable of verification.

The museum may collect artifacts that have incomplete documentation as long as they contribute to a clearer understanding of significant former customs, activities, people or episodes in the County of Brant and immediate area.

There are three basic steps to recording information about new acquisitions: temporary receipt of the artifact, registration and cataloguing. The information is computerized as much as possible in order to facilitate management procedures and public access to information.

Temporary receipt

- This step applies to donations only. It is needed to give the museum time to decide if donations are suitable for the collection.
- A museum staff member fills out a temporary receipt for a donated artifact and makes a copy each for the donor and the museum records. The donor must be made aware of the conditions (i.e. disposal of objects left at the museum) that are on the temporary receipt. The donor must sign the temporary receipt acknowledging these conditions.
- The next available number in the accession register is assigned to the deposit. Access to the accession register is restricted to the Director/Curator, the Assistant Curator and individuals authorized by resolution of the Museum & Archives Management Committee.
- A temporary tag is prepared for the artifact.
- If the artifact is not accepted into the collection, the artifact is returned to the donor or disposed of according to the terms of the temporary receipt, the temporary receipt is filed and a letter of thanks is sent to the donor. If a depositor is contacted to pick up an artifact, the date must be noted on the temporary receipt. When it is returned, both parties must sign and date the receipt. If an artifact is disposed of after 30 days, the method of disposal must be recorded, and the receipt signed and dated. The return or disposition of an artifact must be noted in the accession register.
- If the artifact is accepted, the museum sends two copies of the gift agreement form to the donor with a request to return a signed copy to the museum.

Registration

- The artifact's transfer of ownership is processed. The gift form is signed and , in the case of a purchase, the bill of sale is filed in the Accession File.
- The artifact is recorded in the Accession Register.
- A three-part number is assigned to the artifact. The first part represents the year of acquisition, the second part represents the accession's order of entry, and the third represents the artifact's order in respect to its accession (i.e. 2000.16.4). Once recorded, the accession number is physically marked on the artifact in a conservationally approved method.
- No artifact shall be loaned or exhibited before accession numbers are affixed and registration procedures are completed.

Cataloguing

- A series of files are developed for each artifact in the collection. These files minimize the number of times an artifact must be handled.
- A master catalogue sheet and condition report are prepared.
- The master catalogue sheet, donor/source card, location card, subject card, and classification card are prepared and filed in the appropriate locations.
- Files are maintained and updated to the best of the staff's resources.
- A back up copy of all signed gift forms and master catalogue records shall be made and kept securely at a second location.

DEACCESSIONING

Deaccessioning is the process of removing an artifact from the collection. Occasional deaccessioning helps maintain the quality and relevance of the collection.

Artifacts are deaccessioned upon the request of the Director/Curator and the approval of the Museum & Archives Management Committee.

An artifact is deaccessioned when:

- It no longer fits in with exhibition themes.
- It does not fit the mandated time period of the museum.
- Sufficient information or provenance cannot be obtained for it.
- It is in poor condition.
- A mutual agreement of the treatment or handling of the donation cannot be met with the donor.
- A superior duplicate artifact is acquired.

Deaccessioning Procedure

- A reasonable effort must be made to contact the donor as a gesture of courtesy.
- All museum markings are removed from the artifact.
- The deaccession is noted in the artifact's record, along with the deaccession date (i.e. when the committee approved the deaccession and where the artifact has gone).
- All records of the deaccessioned material shall be retained, as well as all correspondence and a copy of the advertisement and a record of the receipts if sold at public auction.
- Revenue from the sale of deaccessioned artifacts must be directed to the Reserve Fund for Acquisitions.
- When a new artifact is purchased with funds obtained through the public auction of a donated artifact, the name of the original donor must be noted in the collection records for the new acquisition under the method of acquisition.

Where the Deaccessioned Artifact Goes:

When a deaccession involves transfer of ownership, appropriate forms are completed. Due to conflict of interest, museum committee and staff members may not purchase an artifact which is to be deaccessioned.

A deaccessioned artifact might be:

- Returned to the donor or the donor's family if the donor is deceased. If a tax receipt was issued the artifact cannot be returned to the donor.
- Offered to another museum or educational or cultural institution.
- Sold by public auction or tender. Items for disposal will not be sold on the site of the museum. On no occasion will staff members at the museum or members of the Board of Directors be permitted to purchase any such items.
- Destroyed, if badly damaged or deteriorated. A Conservator may be consulted to determine whether the artifact should be destroyed, and if so, how to do it safely and ethically. This is at the discretion of the Director/Curator and the Museum & Archives Management Committee. The object will be photographed prior to destruction.

When an artifact is deaccessioned due to theft or destruction, this shall be recorded on all collection records along with the date the loss was discovered.

The museum will deaccession collections for the purpose of repatriation, when it can be shown that other bodies or governments have a right to the material. The museum will proceed with repatriation only when it has assurances that the collections will be preserved in accordance with the highest standards of the museum profession.

LOANS

Objects may be borrowed for temporary exhibition with specified time lengths according to the loan conditions established by the Museum & Archives Management Committee and the Director/Curator and detailed on the reverse of the loan form used for such purposes.

A loan form shall be completed for all loans. The Director/Curator and Assistant Curator are authorized by the Museum & Archives Management Committee to sign these forms. Two copies shall be made of the loan agreement, one for the borrower or lender and one for the Museum.

Condition reports shall be updated before and after an artifact is loaned. The artifacts shall be inspected upon its return to the museum before the Director/Curator or Assistant Curator signs and dates the loan agreement.

The museum may loan objects for temporary displays or educational purposes off-site. Such off-site locations must offer reasonable security and environmental conditions.

Objects borrowed or loaned on a long-term basis must be reviewed and renewed annually, if such renewal is desirable. A condition report must be completed as a condition of the renewal.

A lender must specify how he or she wishes an artifact borrowed for an exhibit is to be credited, otherwise it shall be listed as belonging to an anonymous donor.

INSURANCE

The permanent collection of the Brant Museum & Archives is insured against loss by fire, theft and damage. Every year, the Director/Curator provides updates of the insurance records to the Treasurer. New acquisitions are appraised for insurance purposes.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Brant Museum & Archives' Collection Management Policy is recommended by the Museum & Archives Management Committee to the Board of Directors for approval. The Collection Management Policy is reviewed and amended as required.

Approved by the Museum & Archives Management Committee

Chair _____
Calvin Diegel

Date January 25, 2001

Approved by the Brant Historical Society Board of Directors

President _____
John Wyatt

Date September 11, 2001