

Collections Policies

Lock 52 Historical Society of Port Byron, NY Statement of Policies Governing Collections

Adopted September 2020

Collections Statement

1. The purposes of this Society are to discover, to collect, to preserve, to exhibit, and to interpret materials and objects' germane to the history of the town of Mentz, New York, and the village of Port Byron, New York, and to sponsor and encourage public education, publications, and public interest in the history of the town and its historical resources.
2. The Society shall collect artifacts, photographs, and archival materials that depict the history and development of the town and village and its people, industries, businesses, and events from prehistoric times to the present. In general, the Society shall restrict its collecting to those artifacts of cultural, historical, or technological significance which can either.
 1. contribute to the documentation or interpretation of the history or prehistory of the town and village and its residents, or
 2. be used for research, exhibit, or educational purposes as they relate to the objectives of the Society.
3. Only those artifacts and other materials that relate to and are consistent with the purposes of the Lock 52 Historical Society shall be considered for accessioning into the permanent collection. Even if appropriate to the Society's purposes however, some objects may not be desirable acquisitions because of their duplication of existing collections, because of their physical condition, because of the expense and space necessary to acquire, conserve, store, and preserve them, and because of other factors that may constrain the Society's ability to store and preserve objects for posterity.
4. Materials should not be accepted or otherwise acquired for the Society's collections unless the conditions listed below are met.
 1. The artifact is relevant to and consistent with the purposes and activities of the Society.
 2. The artifact is connected to the town and / or village in one of these ways:
 1. It was made in, or owned or used by a person, organization from Port Byron or Mentz
 2. It has a direct and important connection to a major event in local history or to an important person from Port Byron or Mentz.
 3. It is about the history of Port Byron or Mentz or about one of its residents.
 4. It is typical or representative of a form or type used in Port Byron or Mentz.
 3. The provenance of the artifact is known and, if possible, documented. As a general rule, an artifact whose provenance is well documented is more likely to be acquired for the Society than one whose provenance is not well known.

4. The present owner has clear title to the artifact.
5. The physical condition of the artifact is of sufficient quality to warrant its use by the Society for instructional or scholarly purposes.
6. The Society can provide proper storage, protection and care for the artifact under conditions that ensure its availability for the Society's purposes and in keeping with professionally accepted standards. Acceptance of an object places the responsibility or its perpetual maintenance and preservation on the Society.
7. The Society will not knowingly accept material of illicit origin or doubtful title into the collection. It will not knowingly or willfully accept or acquire any object that was illegally imported, or that would support or encourage irresponsible damage to or destruction of archaeological and historic sites, properties, and monuments.
8. The Lock 52 Historical Society intends to keep objects permanently in its collections as long as they retain their physical integrity, authenticity, and usefulness for the Society's purposes.

Acquisition Policies and Procedures

President's Discretion:

If an item is brought to the Lock 52 Historical Society that is not relevant to our mission, the president has the discretion to direct/work with the donor to locate a proper home for the item

1. Objects may be added to the collections by means of gifts, bequests, purchases, exchanges, or any other transaction by which title to the objects passes to the Society. Before accepting an object, the Society shall make reasonable efforts to ascertain that the donor, seller, or trader has legal title to the object.
2. Except in extraordinary circumstances, title to all objects acquired for the collections is obtained free and clear without restrictions as to use or future disposition. Such restrictions might include, but are not limited to, guaranteeing that an acquisition will not be disposed of, that it will be restored or maintained to the satisfaction of the donor, or exchanger, or that it will be permanently exhibited. Exceptions to this policy require the recommendation of the Acquisition Committee to the Board. A majority of the Board must approve this recommendation. If objects are accepted with limitations, the conditions will be stated clearly in an instrument of conveyance, will be made part of the accession records for the object, and will be strictly observed by the Society.
3. The Society will not provide appraisals to donors. Additionally, members of the Society will not offer individual appraisals in any transaction in which the Society is a party. The Society will endeavor, however, to help donors obtain proper and legal appraisals of donations. The Society may also establish values for its own insurance purposes.
4. A legal deed of gift, setting forth an adequate description of the object and the precise conditions of its transfer, accompanies all gifts and purchases and is kept on file by the Society.

This document is signed by both the donor and an authorized representative of the Society and becomes part of the records of accession that are kept for all objects acquired for the collection.

5. Temporary or short-term, (one year or less), loans to the collections for specific purposes may be authorized. Any and all offers to add to the Society's collections through permanent, indefinite, or long-term, (one year or more), loans will be declined to avoid renegotiating the terms of the display, care, or return of the loan with heirs.
6. The Society will loan collection items to appropriate institutions for approved educational purposes. The Society does not normally loan collection items to individuals or commercial institutions, unless such institutions are staging exhibitions of notable educational value. Primary considerations for the approval of a loan are the care and security to be provided by the borrowing institution, the condition and value of the items requested, and the importance of the items to the educational purposes of the loan request. All loan requests must be approved by the Acquisitions Committee chairperson and must be accompanied by a loan form, which lists the following information. It is recommended that a photo of the collection be taken before loan to document the condition.
 1. The purpose of the loan, the date on which the loan period begins.
 2. The condition of the loaned item at the time it leaves the Society.
 3. The date on which the loan period is to end and the object is to be returned.
 4. The condition of the object upon its return.
 5. One copy of the loan form is given to the borrower and a copy retained by the Society
 6. Borrowers may request extensions of the loan period by contacting the chairperson of the Committee.
7. Although recommendations may be made, decisions about acquiring objects for the Society will be made by its Acquisitions Committee. In determining whether to accept a gift, transfer, or exchange or whether to acquire an object for Society collections, the Committee should try to answer these questions:
 1. What is it?
 2. For what purposes was it used?
 3. What is its provenance?
 4. Who used it?
 5. Where was it used?
 6. When was it used?
 7. Who was its manufacturer/artist/publisher?
 8. Where was it made?
 9. When was it made?
 10. What is the object's condition?
 11. Is conservation needed?
 1. Can the conservation work be done acceptably and safely by the Society?
 2. If not, can a conservator be recommended?
 3. What is the estimated conservation cost? Is the object of sufficient significance to warrant the expenditure of Society funds to conserve it?

12. Does the object require special storage conditions?
 1. Can the Society care for and store the object properly?
 13. Are there similar objects in the collection?
 14. Does the donor/vendor have similar or related materials which help document or enrich the object (e.g., photographs, letter, accessories, etc.)?
 15. Is the object being given with free and clear title?
 16. How does the object enhance the Society's stated purpose?
8. The Committee operates on a consensus basis except where purchases of \$250 or greater are being recommended. In such instances, the Board of Trustees makes the final decision.
 9. If a gift is accepted, the Committee chair prepares and forwards a deed of gift and a letter of acknowledgments to the donor. The donor of gift relinquishes and transfers to the Society all rights, title, and interest in and to the property in question. If the object is acquired by the Society through purchase, bequest, or other legal transfer, a copy of the bill of sale, will, estate probation, or other legal document shall serve as the deed of gift.
 10. If a gift is declined, the chair prepares a letter explaining the reasons for refusal within a week of the Committee's decision.
 11. The Society will not acquire collection materials with the advance of disposing of them unless prior written consent of the donor is obtained.
 12. Deaccession Policy and Procedures:
 1. The Society may, from time to time, deaccession and dispose of objects from the collections as deemed necessary by the Accessions Committee and, in some cases, the full Board. Reasons for deaccessioning include, but are not limited to, those listed here:
 1. The object does not meet the criteria and/or accession listed in the Lock 52 Historical Society Collection Statement, part 4.
 2. A better example of the object has made the object less useful.
 3. The physical condition of the object has deteriorated to the point that it is no longer usable by the Society or is beyond the Society's ability to restore or maintain.
 4. Evidence has arisen that the object did not, in fact, meet the criteria for accessioning at the time of accession;
 5. Disposal of the object would allow for the acquisition of a superior object that has been identified and for which the Society has a valid current option.
 6. In the event that an object is recommended for deaccession, the Society will make every reasonable effort to ascertain that it is legally free to do so. If restrictions exist, the Society will make reasonable efforts to comply with them, seek authority to alter them from a court of competent jurisdiction, or notify the donor of its intent to deaccession.
 7. Objects in the collections are deaccessioned only upon the Board of Trustees' majority approval of a written recommendation From the Acquisitions Committee. If the estimated or appraised value of the object is \$250 or greater,

recommendations to deaccession must be unanimously approved by the Acquisitions Committee, the President, and the Board of Trustees.

8. In accordance with principles set forth the New York State Association of Museums, the Society will make every effort to assure that the manner of disposition is in the best interests of the Society, the public it serves, the public trust it represents in owning the collections, and the scholarly or cultural communities that it represents. Whenever possible, the Society will attempt to place the object, through gift or exchange, or sale, in another tax-exempt public institution where it may serve the purpose for which it was initially acquired by the Society. The Society will consider that institution's ability to care adequately for the object before approving its transfer in this manner.
 9. The society supports the principle that objects which represent the historical, cultural, or scientific heritage of a region, state or nation should remain in the region, state, respectively.
 10. If objects are otherwise offered for sale, preference is given for sale at advertised public auction or in the Public market place in a manner that will best protect the interests, objectives and legal status of the Society.
 11. Objects will not be given or sold to members of the Society, its officers, or members of its Board.
 12. An adequate record of the conditions and circumstances under which objects are deaccessioned and disposed of will be made and retained as part of the Museum's collection records.
 13. Income derived from the sale of deaccessioned objects will be used not to defray ongoing operating expenses, but to enhance the collections.
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