

HIGHLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 317
Seahurst , WA 98062

COLLECTIONS POLICY STATEMENT

I. Statement of Mission and Scope

The mission of the Highline Historical Society (HHS)(1) is to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret the history of the Highline area and its people.

The objectives of the Highline Historical Society's mission are met with the following Statement of Purpose:

*To acquire and conserve a valuable collection of artifacts relating to the Highline area's history and heritage (2).

*To exhibit artifacts, and produce public programs and events, in an educational and entertaining manner which motivates the young, educates the novice, and stimulates the professional.

*To educate the public in the history of the Highline area.

*To provide a center for scholarly research about the Highline area.

II. Highline Historical Society Vision Statement

The Highline Heritage Museum will be recognized nationally:

- As an exemplary regional heritage museum **that inspires** a sense of place and history;
- As a place that **engenders pride** in Highline residents by making them feel that they and their experiences are important to our shared story;
- As a dynamic community gathering space **to study and understand** the tangible evidence of Highline's continuing history;
- As a museum that **attracts and engages** visitors by providing them stimulating exhibitions and educational programs; and
- As a magnet for all to **experience and share** our rich and diverse regional and national history.

III. Collection Ethics

The permanent, archival, and educational collections of the Highline Historical Society need continual improvement in the quality and representation of the objects therein. Improvement includes not only growth through a collections policy which *actively seeks new acquisitions*, but also through the judicious removal of materials which are unrelated to the HHS stated theme, unauthentic replicas of original pieces, or items inappropriate to the purpose of the facility.

Objects acquired for use by HHS by any means must meet the following conditions:

1. The object must be consistent with and relevant to the HHS primary theme, which emphasizes the interpretation of cultural history within the Highline area.
2. Acceptable objects donated to HHS will be given as free and unrestricted gifts subject to the conditions outlined within this policy statement.
3. HHS must be able to provide safe storage, protection, and preservation for each object acquired under conditions that insure that item's availability for the educational purposes of the organization and in accordance with prevailing professional standards.
4. HHS will not knowingly and willfully accept or acquire any object that was illegally imported into the United States or that was collected or recovered under circumstances that would support or encourage irresponsible damage to or destruction of collecting sites, cultural monuments, or human burial places. (3)
5. The staff of HHS will not appraise, identify or authenticate objects under circumstances that will encourage or benefit illegal, unethical or irresponsible traffic in such materials.

III. Acquisitions: Ethics, Procedures, and Records

The Collections Committee of the Historical Society will review all acquisitions before formally accepting them. The following procedures will be followed:

1. Temporary Custody Receipt: The prospective donor will receive a temporary receipt, which lists all artifacts and their respective provenance. The prospective donor will sign this and receive a copy of it, along with a copy of this policy document. This receipt will be valid for 90 days.
2. Deed of Gift: After review and upon acceptance of the donation, an official deed of gift, requiring the donor's (and donor's spouse) signature for HHS records, will be forwarded, along with any objects not accepted into the collections. This deed must be signed in duplicate at this point, for objects without such a deed will, after a five year period from the of its temporary receipt, be deemed abandoned, and the validated temporary custody receipt will act in its place.
3. Registration: The donation will be listed in the HHS registration records and assigned an accession number if all or parts thereof are to be retained in the collections.
4. Donor File: All properly acknowledged gifts will be recorded in the donor file and a notation made of the disposition of the objects if an accession number is not assigned to them at that time.
5. Catalog File: HHS will maintain catalog records utilizing Chenhall's *Nomenclature* of all objects in its collections, or other widely recognized authority. These objects will be properly marked and identified on the appropriate forms to facilitate retrieval and research of same.
6. Waiver/Disclaimer: The staff and Board of Trustees of HHS will not be held responsible for unsolicited or unacknowledged gifts that have not undergone the procedures outlined in this collections policy.

IV. Loans: Outgoing and Incoming

Outgoing Loans from HHS collections must meet the following criteria:

1. It is understood that the objects in this loan will remain in the condition received and will not be repaired, cleaned, or altered in any way without permission in writing from the HHS.
2. The borrower must demonstrate an understanding of proper environmental, exhibit, and security standards and shall be responsible and liable for all damages, loss, or changes in borrowed items.
3. Insurance for full value of loaned artifacts may be required of the borrower (4).
4. Borrowers or their personal representative must bear packing and transportation costs and they are responsible for returning the loaned item(s) to the HHS at the time predetermined on the Outgoing Loan form.
5. The borrower agrees to use the loaned item(s) only for the purposes stated on this completed form. HHS reserves all copyrights to the loaned item(s) and publication permission must be arranged in advance.
6. The Museum Supervisor, with the consent of the Collections Committee, will approve all outgoing loans.

Incoming Loans to the HHS collection are only sought for a prearranged use, usually exhibit, and for a definite period of time which will not exceed three years (5). Additional incoming loan criteria include:

- A. The Society will exercise the same care in respect to loans as it does in the preservation and safekeeping of comparable property of its own. However, HHS is not responsible for the conservation or restoration of loaned objects.
- B. The lender will provide insurance for loaned objects unless otherwise stated on the face of the Incoming Loan form. If additional insurance coverage is required of HHS, the lender must furnish a written valuation by a certified appraiser.
- C. HHS will release loaned materials upon reasonable notice (6) from the lender, after surrender of the loan form and appropriate return arrangements have been made.
- D. In the event of the lender's death while any or all of the loaned objects are in the possession of HHS, personal representatives or heirs of the estate will have (upon reasonable notice) (7) one year to withdraw objects or to formulate a new agreement. If they fail to do so, the objects will begin processing under the amended RCW 63.24.160 and 63.29.020, which deal with abandoned property.
- E. The HHS has full discretion in determining how, when and whether loaned objects will be exhibited.
- F. All loans will be properly recognized while on exhibit.
- G. The Museum Supervisor, with the consent of the Collections Committee, will approve all incoming loans.

V. De-accession Ethics, Procedures, and Records

All museums occasionally find it necessary to dispose of artifacts from the collections. Consideration for disposal will be a collective effort by the Museum Supervisor, Collections Committee, the Museum Board, and President of the Highline Historical Society. Disposal of an object is justified if one or more of the following conditions exists:

1. Duplication: Similar types of artifacts of lesser quality than artifacts in permanent collections and in surplus according to established exhibit and research guidelines.
2. Non-relevance: Usually non-regional or non-historical in nature and not consistent with the purposes of the HHS.
3. Inferior Quality: Artifacts of broken, deteriorated or otherwise poor condition, considered "beyond repair."
4. Expense of Retention: Excessive cost of restoration, maintenance, preservation, or proper storage makes it impractical to retain some artifacts.
5. Hazardous materials: Artifacts that have become dangerous because of damage, deterioration, or chemical composition which pose a threat to the objects in the collections.
6. Non-solicited material of no redeeming quality for exhibit, research or loan use.

VI. De-accession Procedures

The Museum Board makes all de-accessioning decisions at the point of removal. All objects will be disposed of in accordance with the following principles, insofar as it is practical to do so:

1. The manner of disposition chosen will be in the best interest of HHS, the public it serves, the public trust it represents in owning the collection, and the scholarly and educational communities it represents.
2. Primary consideration will be given to placing the objects through trade, sale, or gift, in another tax-exempt public not-for-profit institution wherein they may serve a valid purpose in research, education, or exhibition.
3. Public auction of objects will take place if deemed in the best interest of HHS, and in a manner that will best protect the stated objectives and legal status of HHS.
4. Objects will not be given or sold privately. HHS employees, officers, members of the Board or their representatives are excluded from participating in any public auction of de-accessioned museum collections.
5. Artifacts that have been broken, deteriorated or of other non-redeemable quality may be destroyed.

VII. Disposal Records

Before disposal, all identifying marks, tags, numbers, etc., will be removed. The name of HHS will cease to be associated with disposed items, either visually or verbally. A written record of the reasons and methods for disposal of cataloged material will be retained in appropriate HHS records, usually in a De-accession Form, complete notation in the records, as well as within HHS Board minutes. A written record for uncatalogued material will be retained only if circumstances warrant. In all cases, pertinent information will be noted in the Donor File.

APPROVED:

Board President, Highline Historical Society

Secretary, Highline Historical Society

Date

Date

*****Notes:

(1) The Highline Historical Society (HHS) is registered in the State of Washington as a private not- for-profit 501(c) 3, educational institution. The HHS was incorporated in 1994 to found, govern, operate and maintain a museum and other relevant collections that are located in the Highline area.

(2) For the purposes of this document, the term "collection(s)" will encompass all current two and three-dimensional objects within the permanent holdings of the HHS. The term "object(s)" within this document refers to single items or individual pieces within the collection.

(3) A policy regarding the acquisition, exhibition, and handling of Native American or indigenous Hawaiian Tribal materials as defined in the *Federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990*, will be forthcoming.

(4) This requirement may be waived in certain circumstances.

(5) These loans may be renewed. Exceptions may be made to accept long-term loans for an indefinite period of time in unusual or unique circumstances. Utmost discretion will be used in accepting all loans because of the expense and problems of care, handling, insurance, and storage, as well as the legal complications involved.

(6 & 7) A fifteen-day period qualifies as reasonable notice.