

Acquisitions and Accessions

Definition: Acquisition refers to an object obtained by the museum and does not mean that a transfer of ownership has taken place. Acquisitions cannot be added to the collection, registered or cataloged until they have been accessioned. If the museum adopts an acquisition by accessioning it, the object is to be held in the public trust and administered according to the Museum's Collections Management Policy.

Objects acquired for Stranahan House's collections may be acquired by gift, bequest, exchange or purchase. All objects acquired for the collections shall be registered, and information about the objects and their source of acquisition shall be organized in a permanent record.

Representatives of Stranahan House will not appraise donations; appraisals for the purpose of establishing tax deductible value are the responsibility of the donor. All donations shall be considered outright and unconditional gifts to be used or not used at the discretion of Historic Stranahan House Museum. The Museum will not guarantee that the objects will be exhibited, retained in the collection or preserved in their current state.

Criteria for Acquisitions:

- 1) All collected objects must fit within the museum's scope of collections, thus furthering the mission and purpose of Historic Stranahan House Museum.
- 2) Historic Stranahan House Museum must be able to provide adequate storage, care, security, maintenance and conservation for the object or collections of objects.
- 3) The object or collection of objects cannot be encumbered by restrictions, thereby allowing Historic Stranahan House Museum the full and complete ownership and freedom of use as permitted by law
- 4) The conveyor of the object or collection of objects is the legal owner or authorized agent for the legal owner.

Restrictions on Acquisitions:

- 1) No object or collection of objects shall be knowingly acquired which are known to have been illegally imported into, or illegally collected in the United States contrary to state or federal law, regulation, treaty or convention.
- 2) No object or collection will be accepted unless accompanied by all rights, copyrights, title and other interests

Acquisition Process:

Gifts – The Museum requires sufficient documentation that each gift the Museum receives is valid, i.e that the donor intended to make a gift of the property and that the museum received the property and accepted it as a gift. Donors will sign a Deed of Gift form containing language that describes the object or objects and legally transfers ownership to the museum. (See Appendix B) Partial or fractional gifts may only be accepted if a contract is executed requiring the owner to transfer the remaining interest to the museum within a specified time period. Restricted gifts should be avoided.

Purchases – Museum staff should consider the fairness of the purchase price and the relative importance of the object to the collection, and whether a comparable object may be obtained by gift or bequest. Museum funds must be available to cover the cost of purchase, transportation, documentation, conservation and storage of the object. The Museum is prohibited from purchasing objects for its collections from volunteers, staff or board members.

Exchanges – Exchanges are restricted to nonprofit museums and educational institutions to insure that museum objects remain accessible to the public. A written agreement between the organizations will specify what will be transferred and which organizations will be responsible for packing and shipping.

Bequests -- Bequests are treated similarly to gifts and are documented with a Deed of Gift signed by the donor or the donor's agent. The museum is under no obligation to accession bequests and will only accept bequests that fit into the museum's collection plan.

Accession Process:

Each object or group of objects that has been accepted into the Museum's collections shall be assigned an accession number. An accession record will be established for the object or group of objects documenting a description of the object(s), where the object(s) came from, and how the object(s) came into the Museum's possession. This information shall be kept electronically in addition to paper records.