

Collections Management Policy



Section	Date	By-Law Number	Page	Of
Lake of the Woods Museum	October 20, 2020	153-2020	1	6
Subsection	Repeals By-Law Number		Policy Number	
Collections	N/A		LOWM-01-02	

Purpose:

1. The Lake of the Woods Museum has been created to collect, preserve, research, exhibit, and interpret the material culture, photographs, and documents that best serve to illustrate the human history of this area, including the region's first people and the founding, settlement, and development of Rat Portage, Kenora, Keewatin, Jaffray Melick and Lake of the Woods for the purpose of education, enjoyment and entertainment.
2. The term "collection", as used in the Collections Management Policy, is understood to mean the acquisition of historically significant artifacts that contribute to an understanding of past human behaviour, customs, activities, events, institutions, and people.

Acquisition of Collection:

3. The Lake of the Woods Museum will collect only those objects, photographs, printed and audio-visual media made and/or used in Rat Portage, Kenora, Keewatin, Jaffray Melick, and Lake of the Woods; or that are associated with a person, place, or event in this area; or, to a limited extent, are typical or representative of objects made or used in this area; and that are relevant to, and consistent with, the purposes and activities of the museum.
4. The acceptability of an artifact for the Museum's collection will be determined by the Director of The Muse who may also delegate this responsibility to the Museum Educator. In some cases, acceptability may be determined by the Director or Museum Educator in consultation with the Museum Advisory Committee or The Muse Board if the Director deems it necessary.
5. A budget line is provided in the annual operating budget for the acquisition of objects, their cataloguing, storage and care.
6. Objects collected must be useful in the Museum's display, research, and interpretive activities. However, the display of particular objects is not guaranteed.

Collections Management Policy

Policy Number	Page	Of
LOWM-01-02	2	6

7. The Museum will not collect duplicates unless they serve a useful purpose, such as extension program displays, educational kits, etc., or unless they are of a higher quality or of significance for reasons of comparison. Any duplicate which does not have a specific function should not be collected.
8. The objects must be in reasonable condition so that the Museum may fulfill its goal of preservation, with as little alteration to objects as possible.
9. Acquisition may be made through gift, bequest, purchase, exchange or transfer.

Gift or Bequest – A gift or bequest may be accepted from any source, including a staff member.

Purchase - Artifacts may be purchased by the Director and Museum Educator from any source. Purchases over \$100 must be approved by the Director. Purchases exceeding \$1,000 or the budget allotment must first be approved by The Muse Board.

Exchange - The exchange of artifacts between institutions is an established and useful means of developing and improving a collection. Exchanges may be arranged by the Museum Educator with the approval of the Director. Exchanges with individuals will not be made.

Transfer - The Museum may acquire artifacts from other institutions. The transfer must be supported by documentation.

Found in the Collection - Unaccessioned objects that have been treated as artifacts over time but for which acquisition documentation cannot be found are designated "found in the collection." These objects will be accessioned if approved through the acquisition process.

10. All donations are considered outright and unconditional gifts to be used, displayed, or disposed of at the Museum's discretion.
11. All acquisitions involving transfer of ownership or transfer of responsibility (loans) must be accompanied by the appropriate legal documentation.
12. Charitable receipts for income tax purposes may be issued for donations of artifacts. The person who determines the fair market value of the property must be competent and qualified to evaluate the particular property being transferred as a gift. Donations exceeding a value of \$1,000.00 must be accompanied by a written professional appraisal, paid for by the donor, before a tax receipt can be issued.
13. The Museum will not give appraisals for external purposes.

Collections Management Policy

Policy Number	Page	Of
LOWM-01-02	3	6

14. The Museum will, in its acquisition and collection practices, abide by all municipal, provincial, and federal laws.

Documentation of Collection:

15. Objects collected should be accurately and thoroughly documented. Documentation is the responsibility of the Museum Educator and other staff as appropriate. Such documentation should include:
- identity of the object
 - circumstances surrounding the object's discovery and acquisition (where, when, by whom)
 - the original owner and manufacturer
 - the object's original use and function
 - a chronological history of the object
 - a description
 - condition of the object
 - any other pertinent facts
16. The Museum will use accepted and consistent standards, methods and procedures to document the collection. Documentation must be maintained as a permanent record. Copies of electronic records must be maintained and stored in an off-site location.
17. The Museum may collect artifacts that have incomplete documentation if they contribute to a clearer understanding of significant former customs, activities, people or events.
18. The Museum will ensure that the collection is properly labelled, stored, and cared for, in the best possible physical environment.

Loans

By Museum:

19. Objects may be loaned to other institutions with specified time lengths according to the loan conditions established by The Muse Board and detailed in the reverse of the loan form used for such purposes. Loans will not be made to individuals, except under unique circumstances.
20. The Museum may loan objects for temporary displays or educational purposes off-site. Such off-site locations must offer reasonable security and environmental conditions. Loans which may pose undue risk to an artifact will not be considered.
21. Objects loaned by the Museum on a long-term basis must be reviewed and renewed annually, if such renewal is desirable.
22. Each request to borrow items from the Museum will be dealt with individually with the final decision being made by The Muse Director in consultation with the Museum Advisory Committee or The Muse Board, if the Director deems it necessary.

Collections Management Policy

Policy Number	Page	Of
LOWM-01-02	4	6

23. Outgoing loans must be fully documented. The documentation will include one copy of the signed loan form and information relating to value and condition.
24. The Museum reserves the right not to lend artifacts or other materials.

To Museum:

25. Artifacts will be accepted on loan by the Museum for a specific purpose, i.e. special displays, photographic reproduction, etc. All artifacts accepted as a short-term loan will have a pre-determined time limit, agreed upon by both parties concerned.
26. The Museum will accept loans from institutions, corporations, or individuals for assigned periods of time.
27. The Museum will provide the same standard of care and security for the objects on loan as it does for those in its collection. Treatment will not be undertaken on borrowed objects without the prior written consent from the owner. Any treatments must be documented.
28. No long-term loans (exceeding 3 months) will be accepted from individuals because of the expense involved in housing, handling, maintaining and insuring the loaned items.

De-Accessioning:

29. The Museum may permanently remove artifacts from the collection that are:
 - not historically significant to the city of Kenora, Lake of the Woods or the immediate area.
 - duplicates of artifacts that are historically significant.
 - found to be not authentic.
 - useless for research purposes due to poor documentation.
 - not useful for exhibition, or loan.
 - in such poor physical condition that conservation or restoration treatments are unfeasible, or are such that the Museum is incapable of providing the conditions necessary for minimum curatorial care, or are such that it does not serve a useful purpose.
 - a preservation threat to other articles in the collection.
 - a physical or health threat to staff or public.
 - found to have unethical or illegal provenance.
 - approved for repatriation.
 - accidentally lost or destroyed.
30. The deaccessioning of an artifact from the Museum's collection will be recommended by the Director of The Muse in consultation with the Museum Educator and the Museum Advisory –Committee to The Muse Board.

Collections Management Policy

Policy Number	Page	Of
LOWM-01-02	5	6

31. When an artifact is deaccessioned the Museum must ensure that:
 - It has clear title to the object or in the case of poorly or undocumented material, be able to demonstrate that it has made a serious, diligent and documented investigation to determine ownership;
 - There are no legal restrictions that prohibit deaccessioning the artifact;
 - The reasons for removal of the object from the collection must be thoroughly documented in accordance to professional standards and documentation.
32. Disposal of such artifacts will be accomplished in one of the following manners (not necessarily in this order):
 - offered to another museum or educational or cultural institution as a gift or in exchange.
 - sold by public sale or by reputable and established dealers with the proceeds going into an acquisition fund.
 - destroyed if the object is hazardous or poses a danger to staff, the public, or the collection; if the object has deteriorated or is damaged to a point where it does not serve a definable purpose; or if all reasonable efforts have been made to dispose of the object through other methods.
33. On no occasion will The Muse staff members or The Muse board members be permitted to acquire deaccessioned items.
34. The process of deaccessioning will be thoroughly documented so that a permanent record of the Museum’s actions is available for future reference. The catalogue number must be removed from the deaccessioned object; however the catalogue number must be maintained in the accession records along with the necessary details of the disposal.
35. The Museum will deaccession collections for the purposes of repatriation, when it can be shown that the individual, group or body of government 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. The Museum recognizes that requests for repatriation can only be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

Access to the Collection:

36. The level of staff access to the collection is determined by The Muse Director. Staff and volunteers who handle artifacts must be appropriately trained and supervised.
37. There will be physical access to artifacts through exhibitions, programs, events and tours. Other requests for physical access will be considered individually (loans, individual requests, research).
38. Access to and use of the collection is at the discretion of The Muse Director and Museum Educator and is generally provided to any person who can demonstrate a need.

Collections Management Policy

Policy Number	Page	Of
LOWM-01-02	6	6

Determining factors include:

- Condition of the artifact
- Risk to the artifact
- Location
- Security
- Health and safety risks
- Copyright
- Intended use
- Expertise of the researcher
- Human and financial resources available.

39. Lake of the Woods Museum must be credited for any use of its collection with "Courtesy of the Lake of the Woods Museum."

Review:

40. The Collections Management Policy shall be presented by the Director to The Muse Board for review at a minimum of every three years.