



Guidelines for Donations of Items to the Collection

The Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum is grateful to all those who consider making a gift of an item for the Museum's permanent collection. However, in order to meet professional museum operating standards, as well as abide by municipal, provincial and federal legislative requirements, the museum has a very specific accession policy, approved by its board and carried out by staff.

This document is intended to give prospective donors a summary of the policies, and some guidelines about the processes of acquisition and accession when an item offered to the Museum. The full policy is available to the public upon request.

The Process:

- When an item is offered to the museum, staff will ask some questions about the item, to see if it broadly meets the accession policy criteria. If it does, then the Registrar will add the item(s) to the agenda for the next Accession Committee meeting.
- If the items are brought to the museum, a Temporary Receipt form will be filled out and signed. *NOTE: It is preferred you do not bring the items to the museum before they are accepted for donation; it is best to bring/ send photos and a description. We have extremely limited storage space.*
- The Accession Committee of the Board meets three to four times per year and considers all the items included on its agenda. Their decision is based upon the Museum's collection policy. *Please note it can be several months between Accession Committee meetings.*
- After the meeting, the Registrar or the Director/ Curator will contact the donors to let them know the decision of the committee.
 - If items are accepted:
 - if they have previously been brought to the museum, then arrangements will be made for the Donation forms (pink) to be signed.
 - if items are not yet at the museum, arrangements will be made for the items to come to the museum and the Donation forms (pink) to be signed.
 - If items are not accepted and were previously brought to the museum, arrangements will be made to have the items picked up by the donor, and for the Temporary Receipt form to be initialled. *NOTE: The museum cannot dispose of items not accepted for the collection, they must be returned to the donor.*

Tax Receipts:

- Donors who wish a tax receipt for the value of their donation (should it be accepted by the Accession Committee) must have the item appraised by an independent, accredited appraiser, at their own expense. A copy of the itemized written appraisal and valuation must be submitted to the Director-Curator, then to the City of Port Colborne Treasurer for approval before the Donation forms (pink) are completed and signed.

Collection Development and Accession Policies Summary:

- The museum does not accept any items on “permanent” loan.
- The museum has to abide by legal and ethical standards in its collection, for example, not acquiring items which have a questionable, undetermined or unethical history of ownership.
- Objects have to meet the purposes of the museum and its mandate, for example, associated with a historically important Welland Canal or marine subject, or Port Colborne person, place, or event.
- Duplicates of items already in the collection are usually not accepted, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Objects must be stable and not present a hazard to staff or other items in the collection. The museum has a professional obligation to protect and preserve the collection in keeping with the standards of good museum conservation practices.
- The museum has the right at any time to deaccession an item if it no longer meets the criteria for the collection policy. Deaccessioning takes place upon the decision of the Accession Committee, and the process follows the best practices of the museum sector for deaccessioning.