

**Tottenville Historical Society
Staten Island, NY
Collections Management Policy**

Purpose: To establish rules, guidelines and procedures for the acquisition, care, preservation, public access and deaccession of items in the collections of the above-named educational corporation, hereinafter referred to in this document the "Corporation."

I. Collections Committee

The Board of Trustees of the Corporation shall establish a Collections Committee. Pursuant to the Corporation's By-Laws, the Director shall appoint the members and chair of this Committee. The Committee shall recommend items for accession to and deaccession from the collections of the Corporation.

The Collections Committee shall include in its deliberations, whenever deemed necessary, the advice of professionals with the goal of making well-considered and timely recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

The final decision to accession, to acquire without accessioning, or to deaccession items to or from the collections of the Corporation shall rest with the Board of Trustees.

II. Acquisition

A. Scope. The Corporation collects printed and manuscript materials, maps, photographs, motion picture film, video and audio tapes (oral histories), paintings, artifacts and other items which have been created or used in the following location, community or geographical area, or are relevant to the following subject area:

- The society's area of concentration is in the southernmost portion of New York State, in Staten Island, NY, and involves the area known today as Tottenville (formerly Bentley Manor), including the smaller neighboring communities of Richmond Valley and Charleston (formerly Kreischerville). For over three hundred years, there has been a strong connection between these communities as evidenced by the population and immigration waves, business and industry trends, transportation, and social conditions. Artifacts related to all aspects of everyday life, including business, religious, cultural, educational, organizational and social, will be evaluated, collected, and preserved so that the history of this community will be well documented and available for researchers and the general public today and in the future. Currently, there is little collected information about this area's rich history and culture.

B. Guidelines. Acquisitions to the Corporation's collections by purchase, loan, gift, bequest or other means shall accord with the following rules:

- The owner must have clear title and must sign a deed of gift transferring title to the Corporation. In the case of a bequest, the donor must also have had clear title.
- A transfer or ownership file containing gift agreements and other proofs of the Corporation's legal ownership of acquisitions shall be maintained.

- Acquisitions by purchase shall not exceed the annual budget for such purchases unless additional proper financing has been arranged.
- No acquisition shall be appraised by a trustee, staff member, or any other person closely associated with either. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)
- The Corporation must be capable of housing and caring for the proposed acquisition according to generally accepted professional standards.
- Proposed acquisitions shall be free of donor-imposed restrictions unless such restrictions are agreed to by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
- Acquisitions approved by the Board of Trustees for accessioning shall be promptly accessioned upon receipt and acceptance under a system approved by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
- Donors and prospective donors, whenever deemed appropriate, should be asked by the Collections Committee whether they would be willing to provide funds for the full or partial cost of accessioning and subsequent maintenance of materials gifted to the Corporation. Willingness or unwillingness to provide such funds should usually not be a determining factor in the Board of Trustees decision to accept or reject a gift for accessioning.

III. Care and Preservation

The Corporation realizes its obligation to protect its collections which are held in the public trust. Therefore, the Corporation shall act to the best of its ability, according to the following guidelines:

- A. A stable environment for items in storage or on display shall be maintained by protecting them from excessive light, heat, humidity and dust. The environmental needs of different materials shall be considered.
- B. All materials shall be protected against theft, fire, and other disasters by a security system and by a written disaster plan.
- C. When possible, paper materials shall be copied on microfilm, photocopied on acid-free paper, or otherwise made redundant and stored in a separate location.
- D. When deemed necessary, conservation of materials shall be undertaken with the advice of a trained conservator.
- E. Records shall be kept using appropriate forms for documentation: i.e., temporary receipt form, deed of gift, accession forms, relevant correspondence, conservation reports and deaccession records.
- F. Inventories and location records shall be kept up to date to facilitate public access and to prevent loss.

IV. Public Access

The Corporation shall make research materials in its possession available to legitimate researchers with legitimate justification, but with the following stipulations:

A. Inventories, relevant files and the assistance of a staff member or trained volunteer shall be available to users.

B. A registration form listing rules for usage shall be read, filled out and signed by all researchers.

C. The Corporation may limit the use of fragile or usually valuable materials.

D. Hours of operation may be by designated hours or by appointment, depending on the availability of staff or trained volunteers.

E. Photographic and xerographic reproduction:

A Request for Copies form containing a notice of copyright restriction shall be signed by each user before copies are made.

Copies may not be used "for any purpose other than private study, scholarship or research."
(United States Copyright Law, Title 17)

Reproduction by the corporation in no way transfers either copyright or property rights, nor does it constitute permission to publish or to display materials.

All prices for copying shall be determined by the Board of Trustees.

In some cases, the Corporation may refuse to allow copies to be made because of the physical condition of the materials, restrictions imposed by the donor, copyright law, or right-to-privacy statutes.

F. A fee may be charged for research work done to meet requests: the amount shall be set by the Board of Trustees.

G. The Corporation may refuse access to an individual researcher who has demonstrated such carelessness or deliberate destructiveness as to endanger the safety of the materials.

In addition, the Corporation is committed to bringing to the public information culled from its documents, photographs, artifacts and oral histories by presenting public programs, including slide shows, live acts, videos and films; mounting exhibits; and publishing newsletters, pamphlets, checklists and guides to the collections whenever possible.

V. Deaccession

No accessioned object or collection shall be removed from the Corporation's auspices except in conformity with the following rules:

A. A deaccession recommendation shall be prepared by the Collections Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Whenever deemed necessary, professional advice shall be sought

before an item is deaccessioned.

B. The decision to deaccession should be cautious and deliberate and follow generally accepted museological standards. One of the following criteria must be met:

- The material is not relevant to the mission of the Corporation.
- The material has failed to retain its identity or has been lost or stolen and is not recovered.
- The material duplicates other material in the collection of the Corporation and is not necessary for research or educational purposes.
- The Corporation is unable to conserve the property in a responsible manner.

C. No donated material shall be deaccessioned for two years after the date of its acquisition. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)

D. A complete record of deaccessions shall be kept. A copy of this record shall be retained permanently.

E. Proceeds derived from the deaccessioning of any property from the collection of the Corporation shall be placed either in a temporarily restricted fund to be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections, or in a permanently restricted fund the earnings of which shall be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections. In no event shall proceeds be used for operating expenses or for any purpose other than acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections.

F. Disposal may be by exchange, donation or public sale with scholarly or cultural organizations as the preferred recipients.

G. Materials deaccessioned shall not be privately sold, given or otherwise transferred to the Corporation's staff or trustees.