

## **II. MISSION, VISION, VALUES, AND GOALS**

All policies, procedures, and decisions within the organization will be based upon the following mission, vision, values, and goals statements.

### **MISSION:**

The purpose of the Athens County Historical Society & Museum is to collect, preserve, and display items of historical nature; to promote interest in and disseminate information about the history of Athens County and its people and to provide an organizational structure for affiliations by groups with similar historical interests.

### **VISION:**

The Athens County Historical Society and Museum envisions itself as the premier historical society, museum, and genealogical center for all of Southeastern Ohio. The organization will preserve and maintain relevant artifacts, develop educational experiences for the public, and provide professional quality service to the public, researchers, and interested members of the public.

### **VALUES:**

The Athens County Historical Society and Museum values the following:

- Athens County History
- Professional quality preservation of Athens County History
- Providing access to the collection by researchers and the public at large
- Effective and accurate education about Athens County History
- Our employees, volunteers, donors, patrons, and community
- Professionalism in all interactions between people
- Honesty and integrity
- Diversity among people without regard for gender, race, place of origin, beliefs, orientation, or physical condition

### **GOALS**

- Be proactive in locating and professionally maintaining and preserving significant artifacts of Athens County History.
- Maintain an excellent, user-friendly museum of Athens County History.
- Update and rotate exhibitions on a regular basis.
- Maintain an excellent historical and genealogical library.
- Be proactive in informing the public at large of significant risk to historical buildings, locations, and/or artifacts and lobby for their preservation if they are salvageable.
- Increase interest in local history within the schools and the community at large through education and exposure.

- Provide professional researchers for public use at reasonable costs.
- Provide excellent value-added services for members.
- Develop positive relations with the many facets of the communities that comprise Athens County, Ohio.
- Develop a significant volunteer base.
- Demonstrate respect and appreciation for volunteers, interns, employees, and others who donate time to the organization.
- Expand facilities and services over the coming years to accommodate the unfolding history of Athens County, Ohio.
- Develop significant funding sources to accomplish goals of the organization.

## **VII. COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY: ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM**

(Adapted from 2010 policy previously approved by the Board)

### **A. Purpose:**

The purpose of the Athens County Historical Society and Museum (ACHSM) shall be to collect, preserve, and exhibit items of an historical nature and to promote interest in and disseminate information about the history of Athens County and its people. ACHSM collections shall be utilized for education and scholarly research to advance the purpose of ACHSM.

### **B. Management:**

The Executive Director shall have oversight responsibility; however, the curator, shall work cooperatively with the Executive Director to manage ACHSM collections, acquiring and accessioning items, and implementing the de-accessioning policy. Advice and consent shall be provided by the Collections Management Committee in accordance with ACHSM by-laws (By-Laws, Article VII. Section 2b.)

### **C. Scope:**

The collections shall be relevant to and consistent with the purposes and activities of the ACHSM. Library holdings shall be subject to the management and policies of ACHSM and the Levering Library.

### **D. Acquisitions:**

#### **1.) Definition:**

- a. Acquisition is defined as the discovery, preliminary evaluation, taking physical and legal custody, recording, and acknowledging receipt of materials.

#### **2.) Criteria:**

- a. Museum materials or objects must meet ALL of the following tests of acquisition BEFORE BEING ACQUIRED by the ACHSM. All materials or objects accepted or acquired shall be in accordance with federal and state laws. The ACHSM shall refuse to acquire materials and objects where there is cause to believe that the circumstances of their collection involved needless destruction of historic sites, buildings, structures, habitats, districts and objects.
- 3.) The materials or objects must be relevant to and consistent with the purposes and activities of the ACHSM. A Collections Development Plan shall be adopted as a guide in the acquisition of items into the collections.
- 4.) The ACHSM must be able to properly provide for the storage, protection, maintenance, and preservation of the materials or objects under conditions that insure their availability for museum purposes in keeping with professionally-accepted standards.

- 5.) The materials or objects will have permanency in the collections as long as they retain their authenticity and/or as long as they remain useful for the purposes of the ACHSM.
- 6.) To the extent possible, materials or objects should be documented as to provenance.
- 7.) All moral, legal, ethical, security, and safety implications of the acquisition must have been considered.
- 8.) All donations of materials or objects are considered outright and unconditional gifts to be used at the discretion of the ACHSM.
- 9.) Title to all materials or objects acquired shall be free and clear without restriction as to use or future disposition.

**E. Methods of Acquisition**

- 1.) Materials and objects may be acquired by bequest, gift exchange, field collection, and abandonment.

**F. Designated Acquisition Officials**

- 1.) Authority to acquire museum materials and objects rests with the curator and Executive Director working in concert with the advice and consent of the Collections Management Committee.

**G. Appraisals:**

- 1.) No staff member shall establish appraisals of the monetary value of objects or archival materials to donors or reveal the ACHSM insurance value to establish a fair market value of gifts offered to the ACHSM.
- 2.) Donors desiring to take income tax gift deductions must obtain independent appraisals from authorized appraisers. Staff members, board members, trustees, or representatives of ACHSM shall not appraise objects or archival materials casually brought to the ACHSM.

**H. Conflict of Interest:**

No employee, board member, or trustee shall compete with the ACHSM in any personal collecting that involves the acquisition of materials or objects of significance to the ACHSM collections. Employees, board members, and trustees shall not use their association with the ACHSM to promote their collecting activities.

**I. Accessioning:**

- 1.) Definition:
  - a. Accessioning is defined as the process of accepting items into the permanent collections of the ACHSM.

2.) Criteria:

- a. All materials and objects shall be processed under procedures and policies adopted by the Board of Trustees.
  - i. Materials and objects shall be stored in a manner which provides the best security, accessibility, and preservation possible within the means of the ACHSM.
  - ii. Materials and objects in need of restoration shall be noted and recommendations made for care.
  - iii. When restoration is performed, it shall be made by qualified professionals using approved techniques and substances.
  - iv. Materials and objects, whether in use or in storage, shall as much as possible, be protected from excessive heat, cold, humidity,, dryness, dust, ultraviolet light, insects, or improper handling.

3.) Procedure:

- a. Legal ownership by ACHSM of all accessioned museum objects and materials shall be established and documented by a deed of gift.
- b. All accessioned museum objects and materials shall be assigned an accession number as determined by curatorial policies and procedures.
- c. All accessioned museum objects and materials shall be labeled or tagged with an appropriate accession number.
- d. All accessioned museum objects and materials shall be accessioned and cataloged appropriately into the ACHSM electronic database.

**J. De-accessioning:**

1.) Definition:

- a. De-accessioning is the process of removing permanently from the collections, accessioned museum objects and archival materials.

2.) Criteria:

- a. The material or object has deteriorated beyond usefulness.
- b. The material or object has doubtful potential utilization for educational or scholarly research purposes, and does not fulfill the purpose of ACHSM collections.
- c. The material or object lacks physical integrity.
- d. The material or object has failed to retain its identity or authenticity or has been lost or stolen and remains lost for longer than two years.

- e. ACHSM is unable to properly preserve, care for, or protect the material or object.
- f. The material or object is a duplicate or not otherwise needed for exhibit, or educational purposes.
- g. The object has been accessioned twice. One number shall be de-accessioned. The object shall remain in the collection.
- h. The material or object is hazardous to the museum, personnel or other collections.

3.) Means of Disposition:

- a. De-accessioned items may be removed from the possession of the ACHS&M using one of the following three methods:
  - i. Gift to or exchange with a non-profit organization.
  - ii. Sale at professional public auction outside county limits, to include online auction.
  - iii. Witnessed destruction.

4.) Procedure:

- a. Before disposing of any object from the collections, reasonable effort shall be made to ascertain that the ACHSM is free to do so.
- b. In consultation with the collections committee and the Executive Director, the curator shall recommend to the Executive Committee the de-accessioning of the object that meets any of the criteria mentioned above.
- c. In considering various alternatives for the disposition of de-accessioned objects or materials, the ACHSM should consider
  - i. Whether the manner of disposition is in the best interests of the ACHSM, the public it serves, the public trust it represents in owning the collections, and the scholarly or cultural community that it represents.
  - ii. Whether the objects or materials shall be given through gift or exchange to another tax-exempt public institution wherein they may serve the purpose for which they were acquired by the museum.
  - iii. If the object is offered for sale other than to a tax-exempt organization, should preference be given to sale by public auction or to sale in the market place to best protect the interest, objectives and legal status of the ACHSM.
    - a.) If sold, objects must be sold outside of the Athens County limits.
    - b.) Objects shall not be given or sold privately to museum employees, Board members, volunteers, their immediate family members, or other associated parties.

- c.) All proceeds generated from the disposal of objects from the collections shall be applied to a collections/acquisitions fund. The fund shall be restricted and utilized for the care and preservation of ACHSM collections. The Board of Trustees shall be notified as to the amount of proceeds resulting from the de-accessioning of objects.

**K. Records:**

- 1.) An adequate record of the conditions and circumstances of the de-accessioning of an object shall be made and retained as part of the ACHSM's files.
- 2.) All marks identifying an object with the museum must be removed. The accession records shall be annotated with the date of de-accessioning.
- 3.) Included in the files shall be the following records.
  - a. All correspondence concerning the object.
  - b. A description of the object.
  - c. The reason for disposition.
  - d. The means of disposition.
  - e. Sales receipt with the amount in the case of sale, or an inventory list with amounts received for auction sales.

**L. Un-accessioned Objects Found in Collections:**

- 1.) In the case of objects found in the custody of the ACHSM with no identifying markings on them to document ownership or loan status, the following guidelines shall be considered:
  - a. If there is a reason to believe that the object is a loan and not the property of the ACHSM, every reasonable effort shall be made to contact the lender.
  - b. If there is no indication that the possibility of loan status exists, the object is presumed to be owned by the ACHSM.
  - c. The object shall be reviewed following the general criteria for accessioning to determine the recommended disposition of the object.
  - d. Once decided upon, the outlined accessioning/de-accessioning policies and procedures described previously shall be followed.

**M. Loans:**

- 1.) Loans from ACHSM:
  - a. Objects shall not be loaned to individuals for personal use. Outgoing loans shall be made for educational and scholarly purposes.

- b. Any temporary loan of ACHSM property shall be approved by the Collections Management Committee. Approved loans shall be administered by the ACHSM Executive Director through the Curator working in concert with the Registrar.
- c. A loan shall be made for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days unless circumstances warrant an extended period of not more than six (6) months. At the end of the period agreed upon, a privilege of renewal shall be executed if the Collections Management Committee approves.
- d. The ACHSM Loan (Outgoing) Agreement shall be signed by the borrower and the ACHSM Executive Director. Proof of insurance by the borrower shall be attached to the agreement.
- e. The curator shall maintain a record and make systematic follow-ups of all ACHSM objects on loan.
- f. Property of others in the custody of ACHSM shall not be loaned without the owner's written permission.
- g. All objects loaned from ACHSM shall have been properly cataloged into the ACHSM electronic database before leaving the property.

2.) Loans to the ACHSM:

- a. Incoming loans shall be accepted for exhibit purposes only.
- b. The ACHSM Loan (Incoming) Agreement form shall be signed by the lender and the ACHSM Executive Director. Proof of insurance by the lender shall be attached to the Loan Agreement.
- c. The ACHSM shall accept loaned items for a period of no longer than six (6) months.
- d. Special arrangements shall be made for long-term loans with written consent of the owner.
- e. No repairs, alterations, including matting or re-matting of graphic objects, or conservation treatment of loaned objects shall be undertaken without properly documented permission of the lender.
- f. Personal collection of the staff of the ACHSM may be used for a particular display exhibit, but shall not be stored in the building on a permanent basis. The personal collection shall be exhibited as a loan with a signed legal loan form.
- g. All objects loaned to the ACHSM shall be cataloged into the ACHSM electronic database.

**N. Archival Deposits:**

- 1.) The ACHSM may accept as archival deposits official notebooks, minutes, programs, directories, albums, scrapbooks, and other records of civic, fraternal, lineal, literary, and other organizations in order to provide permanent, safe storage of such records to insure that the history of the organizations shall be preserved and to provide materials for ACHSM to exhibit and for educational activities.

## 2.) Procedure

- a. A list of the holdings to be deposited shall be compiled by the organization and the ACHSM.
- b. Safe storage containers shall be provided by the organization.
- c. An agreement setting forth any special requirements shall be signed by the organization and the ACHSM.
- d. Archival deposits on loan shall be cataloged into the ACHSM electronic database.

## 3.) Usage of Archival Deposits

- a. Deposited materials shall be exhibited and/or used for educational and historical research.
- b. Deposited materials shall be loaned only to the depositing organization with the written approval of the depositing organization's board and/or officers.

## O. Access to Collections:

- 1.) The museum's collections storage areas shall be closed to the general public. The collections shall be accessible to
  - a. Serious students, community members and scholars for research.
  - b. Visiting museum professionals and/or historical agencies.
  - c. Persons associated with daily operations, including intern staff and volunteers.
- 2.) A written request by the person(s) stating the purpose for access and anticipated use for their research and their need for access must be filed. Authorization for access to the collections shall be approved by the Executive Director or the Curator.
- 3.) Persons wishing to use objects or archival materials for profit-making ventures shall adhere to all copyright designations in accordance with ACHSM by-laws.
- 4.) Until such time as the system is made public, search access to the ACHSM electronic database shall be restricted to ACHSM staff, including intern staff and volunteers approved by the Executive Director or Curator.

## P. Costs:

- 1.) Any requests for photocopies, photographic prints, and special handling of materials shall be paid by the individual requesting service.
- 2.) Prices for services will be those determined by the ACHS&M Board and staff.
- 3.) Prices will be uniform for all patrons.