

Winnebago County Historical & Archaeological Society

Collection Policy

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Winnebago County Historical and Archaeological Society (WCHAS) was chartered in 1919 by the Wisconsin State Historical Society. Since its beginning, the organization strives to promote and facilitate outreach programs that encompass topics of Winnebago County history. In order to preserve and promote county-wide history awareness, the WCHAS seeks to acquire artifacts and records of historical significance related to, but limited to, residents, government, industry, commercial establishments, and events in Winnebago County spanning from the year 1840 to present. The purpose of this policy is to establish a planning and documentation strategy, as well as long-range collecting priorities that encompass Winnebago County history.

The WCHAS will accept historical artifacts, records, and library material with historical connection to people, organizations, and events as they relate to cities, towns, villages and rural areas of Winnebago County. The subject areas may include, but are not limited to: agriculture, communication, business and industry, labor, natural resources and environment, politics and government, ethnic population, religion, recreation and leisure, settlement, social organization and activity, and transportation, and individuals. The formats include, but are not limited to: manuscripts, books and other written and printed materials; photographs, prints, paintings and other visual materials; tapes, recordings and other oral history materials; equipment, furnishings, clothing and other natural, commercial, institutional and personal objects of the past

The WCHAS Archives will solicit historical records of the Morgan family and the Morgan Company because of this organization's location in the John and Eleanor Morgan residence at the time this document was adopted.

The WCHAS will accept items based on these criteria:

- a. They are relevant to and consistent with the purposes and activities of the Society.
- b. The items have historical or cultural significance to Winnebago County.
- c. The condition of the objects and records are of sufficient quality, or worthy of preservation.
- d. The Society can provide proper storage, protection, and care.
- e. The objects and records are supplied with provenance.

II. THE MORGAN HOUSE

The Morgan house was constructed in 1884 in the Queen Anne style of architecture and is an example of Victorian Era elegance. Every effort will be made to display items that were owned by the Morgan family. Special emphasis will be placed on the architectural

details that are original to the house. The Committee must also ensure that the museum is a functional space for meetings, exhibits, presentations, and social events.

III. COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

The Collections Committee will oversee the archival and artifact collection of the WCHAS. It will establish a system of record keeping, storage, and care of all items in the society. The committee will elect a chairperson from the Board of Directors. In the event that a chairperson is not elected, the President will appoint a chairperson. The committee will ensure that best practices are used in preserving the collections, and that all protocol established by the committee is being followed. A Curator and Archivist will be selected by the committee to implement and follow the collection policy for the artifact, archival, and library collections. The committee will also be responsible for layout, presentation, and staffing docents at the museum.

IV. ARCHIVIST

An Archivist will be appointed by the Collections Committee to oversee the recordkeeping of archival and library materials acquired by the society. The Archivist will accept donations of library and archival items on behalf of the society within the scope of policy established by the Collections Committee. Items over \$100 or over the committee's budget allowance must be approved by the Board of Directors. Any items to be deaccessioned from the society's collection must first be approved by the committee and then receive approval from the WCHAS Board of Directors.

V. CURATOR

A Curator will be appointed by the Collections Committee to oversee the recordkeeping of artifacts acquired or by the society. The Curator will accept donations of artifacts on behalf of the society within the scope of policy established by the Collections Committee. Artifacts over \$100 or over the committee's budget allowance must be approved by the Board of Directors. Any items to be deaccessioned from the society's collection must first be approved by the committee and then receive approval from the WCHAS Board of Directors.

VI. ACQUISITION & ACCESSION GUIDELINES

Historical material may be acquired by donation, bequest, purchase, or any other transaction that passes title of the materials to WCHAS. All purchases must be approved by a committee vote, and all items purchased for the collection over \$100 or over the committee's budgeted allowance must be approved by the Board of Directors. All items accepted and denied into the collection by the Curator or Archivist will be reported to the monthly Committee meetings to ensure policy is being followed.

a. Donations/Bequests/Purchases will be accepted under the following circumstances:

- i. A source of origin, documentation or other evidence of authenticity must accompany items, or have connection to currently existing acquisitions within the collections.
- ii. Materials fall within the collecting scope of the society
- iii. Donor/Merchant must have valid title to the material
- iv. A Deed of Gift form that legally transfers ownership of the materials from donor to the WCHAS is signed
- v. Donor does not require excessive restrictions on use.
- vi. Donor did not obtain items illegally

The WCHAS will not accept items on deposit nor will any board member provide financial appraisals of donated items. It is the duty of the Collections Committee to maintain a good record of Deed of Gift and accession files.

- b. Accession Procedure
 - i. Donation Applications to be reviewed by the Collections Committee.
 - ii. If items are to be accepted, Donor must sign a Deed of Gift
 - iii. An accession form will be filed on paper and in an electronic format
 - iv. Donor will be mailed a “Thank You” letter as a receipt for donation.

VII. DEACCESSION GUIDELINES

The Collections Committee will complete a deaccession form, and present items for deaccession to the Board of Directors who must approve or reject the recommendation of the Committee.

1. Items can be removed from the society’s collections under the following circumstances:
 - a. Does not fall within the collecting scope of the program
 - b. Duplication of others in the collection
 - c. Condition has deteriorated beyond usefulness, or the item has been damaged beyond repair
 - d. Lack of provenance
 - e. No longer useful
 - f. Hazardous to society staff and visitors

Methods of disposal may include: donation or trade to another historical organization that may want it, public sale, or destruction. The Collections Committee shall maintain a file of all deaccessioned material and give a report at monthly meetings.

VIII. CARE AND CONSERVATION OF COLLECTIONS

- a. Every effort consistent with professional standards and ethics and within the financial resources of the WCHAS will be made to preserve the collections.

- b. Archival material may not be removed from the Morgan House unless it is to be repaired or restored, and only after being approved by the Board and documented.

IX. RECORDKEEPING

- a. Systematic records concerning the WCHAS collections shall be maintained at all times. They will consist of the following:
 - i. Deeds of Gift, Donation/Gift Agreements, Purchase Record
 - ii. Accession Record
 - iii. Deaccession Record
 - iv. Loan Forms
 - v. Notes on care and conservation of collections
 - vi. Database inventory of collections
- b. Collections records will be protected, in so far as possible, from destruction by creating duplicate files to be stored in an off-site or virtual location.

X. ACCESS AND USE OF ARCHIVAL AND LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

The collections are an educational resource and will be accessible for research. The following guidelines and rules apply:

- a. All researchers are subject to procedures necessary to safeguard artifacts as determined by the Society.
 - i. Items such as pens, markers, food, and drink are not allowed in the archives (Pencils are accepted writing utensils while conducting research.)
 - ii. Researchers and staff are required to wear the appropriate archival cotton gloves when handling artifacts or archival documents that are fragile.
- b. All researchers must sign-in when using the WCHAS archives.
- c. Archival material will not be removed from the Morgan House by a researcher.
- d. Researchers are subject to restrictions of normal operating hours, availability of study space, research requests from other researchers, staff availability and time necessary to assist the researcher. A Collections Committee member must be present when research is being conducted.
- e. Researchers will bear the cost of reproducing records or of any other services they request.
- f. Researchers must obtain permission in writing from the WCHAS Collections Committee Chairman to publish any materials from the Society's collections. This includes the reproduction of photographs or materials.
- g. Researchers must cite the "Courtesy of the Winnebago County Historical and Archaeological Society" when using materials in published works.

XI. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

The WCHAS may enter cooperative agreements with the Wisconsin Historical Society, Oshkosh Public Museum, Oshkosh Public Library, and other historical organizations in

Winnebago County in order to preserve materials and/or make them more widely available.

XII. VIII. SECURITY

- a. The WCHAS will, within its means, establish security and safety measures designed to protect the collections and the building.

XIII. LOANS

- a. Loans are accepted only for a limited time period and only for the purposes of exhibition or research.
- b. Loans from the society are made only for a limited time period and only to non-profit organizations of similar purpose for exhibition or research.
- c. All incoming/outgoing loans must be documented.

XIV. REVIEW OF POLICY

- a. This collections policy is to be reviewed annually by the WCHAS Collections Committee. All amendments to the policy must be approved by the Board of Directors.

**Adopted 7/11/16