

Collections Management Policy

Greater Southwest Historical Museum
35 Sunset Drive
Ardmore, OK 73401

Adopted 25 February 2002
Revised 28 July 2003
Revised 28 February 2005
Revised 26 May 2008
Revised 1 June 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
<i>Statement of Purpose</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Statement of Authority.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Scope of Collections.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Categories of Collections</i>	<i>3</i>
Permanent Collection	3
Education Collection.....	3
Reference Collection.....	3
COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT.....	4
<i>Acquisition.....</i>	<i>4</i>
Criteria for Acquisition	4
<i>Accession and Documentation.....</i>	<i>5</i>
Documentation.....	5
Registration.....	6
Numbering.....	6
Found in Collections	7
<i>Deaccession and Disposal.....</i>	<i>7</i>
Criteria for Deaccessioning	8
Procedures	8
Disposition of Deaccessioned Objects	9
Proceeds from Deaccessioning	9
Documentation of Deaccessioning	9
Deaccession of Found in Collections.....	10
Requests for Return of Collection Objects.....	10
<i>Loans/Temporary Custody</i>	<i>10</i>
Incoming Loans	10
Outgoing Loans.....	12
Temporary Custody.....	13
Unclaimed Loans/Abandoned Property	13
Found in Collections	14
<i>Access</i>	<i>14</i>
Collections and Records.....	14
Photographs and Reproductions	15

<i>Care of Collections</i>	15
Preservation and Conservation	16
Environmental Controls	16
Handling	17
Use and Activities	17
Inventory.....	18
<i>Risk Management/Insurance</i>	18
Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Plan	18
Insurance.....	18
Documentation.....	18
Loss or Damage	19
<i>Staff Responsibility: Ethics, Standards of Conduct, Personal Collecting, Appraisals, Authentication</i>	19
Personal Collecting	19
Use of Personal Collections.....	19
Appraisals and Authentication.....	20
Records.....	20
<i>Monitoring and Revising the Collections Management Policy</i>	20
Monitoring.....	20
Revisions	20
APPENDICES	21
<i>Glossary</i>	21
<i>Selected Bibliography</i>	25

INTRODUCTION

The Greater Southwest Historical Museum is entrusted with the preservation of the Museum's collection. The purpose of this collections management policy is to establish the criteria and procedures in approaching aspects of the permanent collection. This responsibility includes ensuring and developing proper collections management procedures. It serves as a guide in managing and maintaining the collection through thorough and detailed documentation as a means to achieve the overall mission of the Museum.

Statement of Purpose

The Greater Southwest Historical Museum (hereafter referred to as the "GSHM") is a regional history museum dedicated to collect, preserve, and interpret the social, cultural, and economic history of south central Oklahoma, focusing on Carter, Jefferson, Johnston, Love, Marshall, and Murray Counties. The mission is accomplished by collecting, conserving, exhibiting, and interpreting appropriate and historically significant artifacts and reproductions; identifying and preserving historical structures and sites; developing and promoting a variety of educational programming for schools and the general public; aiding in scholarly research; and placing local history in a regional, state, and national context. As part of its mission, the Greater Southwest Historical Museum has developed a working relationship with its umbrella organization, the Carter County Genealogical Society (CCGS). The purpose of the Genealogy Society is to preserve the history of southern Oklahoma, the United States, and the World, and to operate and maintain a Genealogical and Research Library.

Embodied with the GSHM's purpose and principles are the following objectives:

- To implement collections management activities to ensure preservation of our collections.
- To offer diverse collections for scholarship and interpretation to further benefit genealogists, researchers, visitors, etc.
- To acknowledge our commitment as stewards of the collection by responsibly preserving and maintaining the culture and history of south central Oklahoma.
- To maintain standards and best practices as defined by the American Association of Museums for the development, care, and preservation of our collections.

Statement of Authority

The GSHM is a privately funded, not-for-profit organization governed by a fifteen-member Board of Trustees drawn from the south central Oklahoma region for their expertise, interest, and service. The Board led by the President, is charged with the general administration, control, and direction of all GSHM affairs. The Board has the full power to manage all monies and property, to make investments, and to purchase and transfer all real estate and property belonging to the GSHM. The Board is responsible for all policies and procedures, raising funds, and approving the annual budget. The Board assists in the development of the collection through its oversight of acquisitions, deaccessions, and outgoing loans.

The CCGS operates under the GSHM's non-profit status. It is governed by a four-member member Board of Trustees drawn for their interest in genealogical research. One member serves as an Advisory Trustee on the GSHM's Board. The CCGS is charged with managing the Genealogical and Research Library for genealogical and research purposes. The CCGS is consulted when collections are added to the Library. All collections held in the Library are owned and cared for by the GSHM. The CCGS is responsible for maintaining this collection with the assistance of the Curator according to proper museum standards and procedures.

The Board of Trustees is guided by the recommendations of the Collections Committee for determining objects accepted into the permanent and education collection. The Collections Committee consists of the Curator and no less than four members serving on the Board or from the general membership who are appointed by the President and at least one appointed member from the CCGS. The Committee Chairperson is selected by committee members and serves as the liaison between the Board and the Committee.

All acquisitions, whether a gift, purchase, or bequest, are subject to approval by the Collections Committee with final approval by the Board of Trustees before entering into the permanent collection. The Committee and the Board must also approve all deaccessions and all methods of disposing the permanent collection. Similarly, the Committee and the Board approves all outgoing loans from the collection.

The Board of Trustees has delegated operations of the GSHM to the Director. The Director is responsible for the Museum's administration and financial operations and the development and maintenance of the collections. Overall responsibility for the management of the GSHM's collections lies with the Director who is guided by the policies and procedures in this document, keeping within the best standards and practices as outlined by the American Association of Museums. The Director shall delegate specific responsibilities to appropriate staff members in managing the collection.

As with the Director, the staff is guided in their collections-related work by these policies and procedures. Staff members directly responsible for the management, care, and use of the permanent and Library collections is the Curator and Curatorial Assistants. The Curator has the overall responsibility of implementing the best standards and practices in the museum field. The Curator and Curatorial Assistants are responsible for ensuring the continued preservation of the collection and maintaining accurate and detailed documentation of the collection. The Curator interacts with the Collections Committee. The Curator reports directly to the Director. Interns and volunteers who assist with the collection are selected by the Curator and under the direct supervision of the Curator.

Scope of Collections

The GSHM is limited by its mission and purpose to preserving and interpreting the social, cultural, and economic history of the south central Oklahoma. Objects shall have significance to the following six counties: Carter, Jefferson, Johnston, Love, Marshall, and Murray. Objects collected by the museum will include pre-historic and historic objects, decorative objects, and folk and historic arts of the area.

Categories of Collections

The GSHM collections holdings shall be classified under three primary divisions:

A. Permanent Collection

The Permanent Collection shall contain accessioned items that have been considered under the criteria established in the Scope of Collections. Following is a summary of these guidelines:

- Objects that fit the geographic, temporal, and thematic limitations set by the mission.
- Objects which can be cared for in perpetuity.
- Objects in reasonably good, complete, and original condition.
- Objects that are not duplicated in the collection, unless such duplication is desirable.
- Objects which complete and clear title can be secured. Restrictions placed on objects will not be accepted in most cases. Once an item is donated, it cannot be returned.
- Objects for which there is documentation as to what the object is, how the object was used, who used it, and other details pertaining to its place within our mission. Historical significance of an object will be enhanced if it can be shown to have been associated in some manner with important and well-known periods, events, or individuals.

This collection is maintained for research, educational, and exhibit purposes. Objects assigned to this collection shall be accessioned and numbered according to proper museum practices. Items shall be stored and exhibited under the strictest standards.

B. Education Collection

The Education Collection shall include items that have been considered under the following guidelines.

- Objects of known or unknown provenance, duplicating holdings in the Permanent Collection.
- Objects with clear provenance but in too poor condition to be accepted into the Permanent Collection.
- Reproductions of period objects.

This collection is maintained for support and research. It is intended for educational use in programs, exhibitions, and demonstrations. These items are not considered part of the permanent collection. Objects assigned to this collection shall be accessioned according to proper museum practices and marked with an "E" in front of the accession number by collections staff. Items shall be stored and exhibited under less rigorous standards than those applied to the permanent collection. Donors must be apprised in writing if their objects are to be classified as part of the Education Collection along with the terms and conditions.

C. Reference Collection

The Reference Collection shall include items intended specifically for the Genealogical and Research Library. Additions to shall be considered under the following guidelines:

- Books and archival material pertaining to Oklahoma history, United States, or World history that would aid the research efforts of genealogists, scholars, or the public.
- Books and archival material not considered historically significant to be accepted into the permanent condition but are important as research resources.
- Books and archival material in less than perfect condition to be accepted into the permanent collection but are important as research resources.

This collection is maintained by the Carter County Genealogical Society. These items are not considered part of the permanent collection. Objects assigned to this collection shall be accessioned according to proper museum practices and marked with an “R” in front of the accession number by collections staff. Items shall be stored and exhibited under less rigorous standards than those applied to the permanent collection. Donors must be apprised in writing if their objects are to be classified as part of the Reference Collection along with the terms and conditions.

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Acquisition

The GSHM shall seek and consider additions to the permanent collection that furthers the Museum’s mission and promotes the political, social, and economic history of south central Oklahoma. As such, objects may be acquired through gift, bequest, purchase, exchange, or any other transaction, which transfers title and the object to the GSHM. All objects accepted into permanent, education, or reference collection become the GSHM’s exclusive property and may be exhibited, loaned, retained, or disposed of in the best interest of the museum and the public it serves. The object or collection shall not be accepted with legally binding restrictions without the approval from the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.

The staff of the GSHM shall not provide an appraisal of an object or collection for the benefit of the donor. Appraisals for the purpose of establishing tax-deductible value shall be the responsibility of the donor. Staff shall also not recommend a certified appraiser to a potential donor.

A. Criteria for Acquisition

1. The Acquisition of the object or collection of objects furthers the purpose and activities of the GSHM as stated in the Mission Statement and would strengthen the collection and/or the exhibitions of the GSHM.
2. The GSHM can provide adequate storage, care, and security as well as the maintenance and conservation for the object or collection of objects. Objects or collections that cannot be properly cared for shall not be accepted into the collection unless the object or collection is recommended under special circumstances by the Curator (i.e., historically significant).
3. All donations to the GSHM are considered outright, unconditional gifts unless determined otherwise by the Board of Trustees at the time of accessioning and cannot be

encumbered by restrictions either expressed or implied, thereby allowing full and complete ownership of use as permitted by the extent of the law.

4. No object or collection shall be accepted unless accompanied by all rights, copyrights, title, and other interests.
5. The conveyer of the object or collection is the legal owner or authorized agent for the legal owner. Title and all rights to acquisition should be granted free and clear, with the exception of partial and/or promised gifts.
6. The GSHM shall not knowingly acquire objects that are unethically collected, imported, or removed from their society of origin as described by the provisions of the ICOM Convention of 1973.

Accession and Documentation

The GSHM defines *accessioning* as the process of transferring ownership of an acquisition to the museum, including the process of recording the acquisition as part of the collection. Acquisitions cannot be accessioned into the collection until it has been documented, registered, and catalogued.

A. Documentation

The GSHM is responsible for maintaining accurate and current records of the identification, location, and condition of collections objects. The Curator is primarily responsible for accurately completing and recording all information for the collections records and maintaining completed files of records and inventories pertaining to items, which are in the permanent collections or left in the custody of the GSHM.

The primary purpose of these records is to control and document the collections and must include as a minimum:

1. Identification by number and description
2. Legal status
3. Provenance, as far as determinable
4. Actions taken regarding the object, including records of location, conservation, exhibition, and loan.

The Curator shall assign a permanent accession number when the object is accepted. A Deed of Gift shall be sent to the donor(s), which is signed by the Curator or Director. A Thank You letter shall also be sent with the Deed of Gift, a copy of which shall be kept in the object's file as additional proof of ownership. When the Deed of Gift is returned, it must be signed by a GSHM Representative. Additional pertinent information shall also be included and referred to in the Accession File.

The following records shall be completed for all acquisitions:

- Temporary Custody Receipt
- Acquisition Justification Form
- Object Information/Biographical Information Form (to be completed by donor)
- Deed of Gift
- Accession Register

- Registration Worksheet
- Condition Report

All records must be safeguarded from hazards such as fire, water, vandalism, and/or loss. A list of all permanent and loaned objects, a back-up copy of the electronic database, and a duplicate copy of all collections records shall be maintained at an off-site location.

B. Registration

The Curator shall record important historical information in the collection database PastPerfect and number the object according to professional standards within 30 days following the Collections Committee meeting.

Upon completion, object information shall be entered into the accession register and collections database, PastPerfect. Information in the accession register shall include the accession number, date received, object name, donor, date accessioned, description, and other comments. The register shall serve as another source of ownership and as an alternative backup copy to the database and collections records.

NOTE: A second accession register addresses the backlog in the collections for objects largely accepted from 1986 to 1998 but shall also include records up to 2003. These records were never assigned an accession number nor catalogued. To keep within professional standards and avoid confusion, these records shall be assigned a 2007 accession number. All 2007 accessions shall be entered in a separate book to note this special situation. This was approved by the Board of Trustees on 21 May 2007 as part of the Collections Committee's recommendations.

C. Numbering

Each object acquired for the permanent collection is given a permanent, unique number. This number is applied to the object and to all documentation. The accession number consists of a sequential three-part numbering system used for objects assigned to the permanent collection. The first part of the number indicates the year the object is accessioned and is the four digits of the year. The second part designates the number of the acquisition/donation for that year as assigned by the order the objects are accepted by the Collections Committee.

For example, the fifteenth acquisition/donation in 2000 would be assigned the number 2000.15. Each object within the acquisition/donation is assigned the third part of the number, as needed. For example, the objects of the fifteenth accession of 2000 would be assigned numbers beginning with 2000.15.01, 2000.15.02, etc. Each part of the accession number is separated by a decimal.

When a single object has component parts that physically fit together, such as a box with a removable lid, the whole object is assigned one accession number that is then given a letter suffix to distinguish between parts. A letter suffix is also given to objects that are donated as a pair, such as a pair of shoes. Examples of component part numbering are as follows:

Two piece dress with separate belt	2000.15.01b	Skirt
2000.15.01a Bodice	2000.15.01c	Belt

Box with removable lid		2001.05.05a	Chest
1999.20.01a	Box	2001.05.05b-f	Drawers
1999.20.01b	Lid	Pair of shoes	
		1998.30.01a	Right Shoe
Chest with removable drawers		1998.30.01b	Left Shoe

If an object is a set or portfolio of objects, the whole object is assigned one three-part accession number and each individual part is given a four-part number. Examples are as follows:

Set of 8 souvenir spoons	Set of encyclopedias
2002.09.01.1-8	1997.18.01.1-26
Bound volume of 10 prints	
1999.02.05.1-10	

NOTE: Objects in the Education collection shall be numbered the same way, but preceded by an (E). Objects in the Reference Collection shall be preceded by a (R). Objects loaned to the GSHM shall be numbered the same way, but preceded by a (L)

D. Found in Collections (FIC)

Objects found in the collections with no documentation to indicate the ownership shall be assigned a three-part number similar to other artifacts, but the second part shall always be 00. Numbers shall only be assigned following a complete search of records. Examples of Found in Collections numbering are as follows:

Chair FIC 2001	2001.00.01
Glass FIC after chair	2001.00.02
Dress FIC 2002	2002.00.01

Items Found in Collections shall be recorded in a separate collections ledger and shall be tagged with the number until such time as the GSHM records are sufficiently organized to provide assurance that no records concerning the object shall be found. At that point, the item may be permanently numbered according to professional standards.

Deaccession and Disposal

The GSHM must be able to protect and improve the quality of its Collections through exchange, transfer, or disposal of artifacts. *Deaccessioning* is the process of permanently removing accessioned artifacts from the collection. Artifacts shall be deaccessioned only if they have lost their physical integrity, usefulness, authenticity, or relevance to the GSHM's purpose. Collection artifacts shall be disposed of in compliance with appropriate state laws and regulations. All deaccessions must be in accordance with the established GSHM Collections Policy.

Staff shall make every reasonable effort to ascertain that the GSHM is legally free to deaccession the object in question. There must be no legally binding restrictions contained in the original terms of gift or purchase that prohibit disposal. Such restrictions shall be strictly observed unless

deviation from these restrictions has been authorized by a court of competent jurisdiction. No object may be deaccessioned within three years following its acquisition by the GSHM.

A. Reasons for Deaccession

In order for an object to be considered for Deaccessioning from the collections, it must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. The object is outside the scope of the GSHM mission and collections policy.
2. The object is irrelevant to the purposes of the GSHM.
3. The object is a duplicate and without intrinsic value.
4. The object lacks physical integrity.
5. The object has deteriorated beyond usefulness.
6. The object has been accessioned twice.
7. The object cannot be properly preserved by the GSHM.
8. The object has failed to retain its identity or authenticity
9. The object has been discovered to be a forgery, replica, or reproduction, or has been lost or stolen and remains lost for longer than two years.
10. The object contains or is composed of materials hazardous to the safety of persons or of other objects in the collections.
11. The object is to be repatriated to the appropriate Native American tribe or culture under the guidelines of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

In order for an object to be considered for Withdrawal/Weeding from the Reference Collection, it must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Contains unsuitable subject level for the collection.
2. Does not support the mission of the GSHM or Library.
3. Contains unsuitable subject coverage, comprehensiveness, or significance of material.
4. Other formats of the same material are available.
5. Physical condition is beyond repair.
6. Excess number of duplicate copies are on the shelf.
7. Superseded editions are held.
8. Contains outdated material.
9. Scratched or damaged audiovisual materials.

B. Means of Deaccession

Objects in the collection may be deaccessioned only upon the formal written recommendation of the Curator and a majority of the Collections Committee. Final approval to deaccession an item shall be subject to a majority vote from the Board of Trustees. Such approvals shall be confirmed by the GSHM Board at a regularly scheduled meeting. Deaccessioning an item shall follow the following procedures:

1. Completion of a *Deaccession Worksheet* to be submitted to the Director and the Collections Committee. The Curator shall determine whether the item meets at least one of the criteria stated above in *Reasons for Deaccessions*.
2. Evaluation of the deaccession proposal by the Collections Committee. If necessary, outside experts may be consulted before a decision to deaccession is made.

Recommendations to deaccession an item shall be presented to the Board of Trustees after approval by a majority vote from the Collections Committee. An item the Collections Committee decided against deaccessioning shall not be presented to the Board of Trustees and cannot be overridden by the Board of Trustees.

3. Final approval of deaccessioning an item is subject to a majority vote by the Board of Trustees. If the Board decides against deaccessioning an item, the matter can be returned to the Collections Committee for further discussion and be presented again to the Board of Trustees. For a deaccession to be complete, the *Deaccession Worksheet* must be signed by the Board President, Collections Committee Chairman, Director, Curator, and two Board members.

C. Disposition of Deaccessioned Objects

The manner of disposition shall represent the best interests of the GSHM, the public it serves, and the public trust and scholarly and cultural communities it represents. The GSHM shall consider the following methods for disposition:

1. Transfer without compensation or exchanged for other objects with a cultural or educational, tax-exempt institution, whose mission is relevant to the deaccessioned item that shall adequately care for the object, and can ensure public access shall be given first consideration. In the event that an item cannot be transferred to a cultural or educational institution, the deaccessioned shall be offered to other nonprofit institutions that can adequately care for and ensure public access. Deaccessioned items shall not be offered to the previous owner or private individuals associated with the GSHM, CCGS, Southwest Historical Foundation, or Military Memorial Museum to include Board and staff members and their families or representatives.
2. Sale of deaccessioned item to the public with preference given to an advertised public auction or marketplace that shall protect the interests, objectives, and legal status of the GSHM. Private individuals associated with the GSHM, CCGS, Southwest Historical Foundation, or Military Memorial Museum to include Board and staff members and their families or representatives are restricted from purchasing objects the GSHM offers for sale or at auction. Donors and their families, however, may participate in the sale or auction of deaccessioned items.
3. Destruction of the deaccessioned item may be necessary because of biohazard, deterioration beyond repair, or having been deemed a fake. The method of destruction must comply with local, state, and federal codes; must be witnessed by GSHM staff; and attested to in writing that is deposited in the item's permanent file.
4. Return to legitimate owner if possession of the deaccessioned item by the GSHM is found not to be legitimate as determined by an appropriate authority.

D. Proceeds from Deaccessioning

All proceeds from deaccessioned objects shall be deposited in a restricted account designated as the "Acquisition Fund." Such funds shall exclusively be used for the acquisition of new objects or for the direct care of the collection as prescribed by AAM's Code of Ethics. Proceeds shall not be used for operating expenses.

E. Documentation of Deaccessioning

The GSHM shall maintain permanent records of all deaccessioned artifacts specifying the justification of removal and means of disposal. When the deaccession is approved by the Collections Committee, the Curator shall update all records relevant to the deaccessioned object including the Accession Ledger and Accession File.

F. Deaccession of Found in Collections

Objects of undetermined status, which cannot be cleared up by a search of the records, may not be considered for deaccession until such time as legislation has been passed regarding abandoned property that is applicable to museums. Items can only be deaccessioned if the GSHM can establish title.

G. Requests for Return of Collection Objects

Occasionally a request to return a collection object to the original donor or the donor's heirs shall be received. The Director shall be notified of such requests immediately. Return of objects to the original donor shall only be considered if title is determined to still rest with the donor. The Curator shall research all files and information regarding the object to determine if the GSHM has free and clear title or determine restrictions placed on the object at the time of accession. If title is determined to rest with the GSHM, requests will be denied. A certified letter shall be sent by Curator denying the request. All findings shall be reported to the Collections Committee. In no means shall donated objects be returned to original donors.

For undocumented objects, items not listed on any legal paperwork (Deeds of Gift or Loan Agreements), the requestor shall be required to submit a written letter to the Collections Committee and complete a *Request for Return of Objects* Form. The requestor must also provide evidence to support the claim of ownership for the undocumented objects. The Curator shall research all records to determine whether the requested object does or does not belong to the requestor. All findings shall be presented to the Collections Committee for determination of the request. If the request is granted, the Chairman of the Committee shall be required to sign the Request form. The request shall then be subjected to final approval by the Board of Trustees. The Board President shall be required to sign the form as well. The object may then be released to the requestor. If the requestor refuses to sign the prepared release, the object shall not be returned. If an object has been accessioned, it must be formally deaccessioned prior return to the lender.

Loans/Temporary Custody

A. Incoming Loans

The GSHM may request the loan of an item from an individual or from another institution for the purposes of exhibit, study, or research. Incoming loans must be approved in advance by the Director and Curator. The Curator shall be responsible for maintaining all documentation pertaining to the loan. It is the responsibility of the lender to notify the GSHM in writing of a change in ownership and/or address.

Loans shall be evaluated by the Curator and approved by the Director for a duration not to exceed a three-year, renewable loan. Loans shall be considered on an individual basis and conditions may be applied. At the expiration of the loan, the object shall be returned to the owner. Requests to end a loan prior to its expiration must be made in writing to the Director. In the event that the request is made by the original donor's descendents, the requestor must provide proof that they are an heir to reclaim any object. In situations with more than a single heir, all heirs must agree, in writing, to reclaim an item.

Unless renewed, a loan shall be returned to the lender 30 days after the expiration of the loan. If a lender fails to reclaim a loan, the GSHM will deal with the loaned items in the following procedure:

1. Non-renewed loans not reclaimed by the lender within 90 days after written notification (or other time period arrange with the Curator) may be assessed a \$100.00 or higher annual storage and insurance fee per item. This fee is non-refundable and not subject to being pro-rated.
2. Non-renewed loans not reclaimed by the lender within one year after notification shall be deemed an unrestricted gift to the GSHM, in consideration for storage and insurance.
3. Final disposition of the object shall be determined by the Collections Committee.

Items loaned to GSHM shall receive the same care given to objects owned by the GSHM. Condition of the loaned items shall be established through writing, by means of a *Condition Report*. Evidence of damage at the time of receipt or while in the GSHM's custody shall be immediately reported to the lender. No repairs, alterations, or conservation treatment of loaned items shall be undertaken.

The GSHM shall properly acknowledge the lender on all publicity and exhibit labels. The GSHM has the authority to photograph the loaned object for educational, catalogue, record, and publicity purposes. Reproduction of an item for sale is forbidden except in the context of an exhibition catalogue.

The GSHM shall insure the loaned items under its blanket policy. Insurance values shall be consistent with fair market value whenever possible. Loaned items shall be insured while in transit and on location during the period of the loan. The lender agrees that, in the event of loss or damage, recovery shall be limited to such amount as may be paid by the insurer, thereby releasing the GSHM from liability for all claims arising out of such loss or damage. For prior Permanent Loan Agreements, lenders acknowledge that the GSHM is not responsible or liable for the loss, destruction, or damage to the loaned items.

Note: Per the prior Permanent Loan Agreement, the GSHM has the ability to assume title of loaned items, which are not claimed by lenders within six months. Lenders shall be notified in writing by certified mail of the intention to terminate the loan. If the GSHM does not receive written proof of receipt of the notice within 30 days of the mailing or if an address is not on record, the GSHM shall publish notice, at least once a week for two consecutive weeks. The notice shall be made in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the GSHM is located and the county of the last known address of the lender. The notice shall

include a description of the object, name and last known address of the lender, and a request for the whereabouts of the lender. If the lender cannot be located or the items returned within six months, the GSHM may sell, trade, or dispose of the loaned items for its benefit. This shall only apply to Permanent Loan Agreements signed by the lenders or representatives. Unsigned paperwork or signed paperwork by someone other than the lender or representative shall not be legally binding upon the lender.

B. Outgoing Loans

The GSHM lends works from the collection for educational and scholarly purposes, but not for decorative purposes. Outgoing loans shall only be made to other nonprofit cultural or educational institutions. Loans cannot be made to private individuals for personal uses. Loans shall be made for use in appropriately climate-controlled and secure environments. As not all museums can abide by environmental standards, loans shall be made on an individual basis depending upon the object requested for loan. When making decisions on loan requests to other institution, the Curator must take into account the condition and conservation needs of the objects requested. Objects in poor condition, in need of conservation, or considerable extremely valuable to the permanent collection shall not be approved.

Loans can be made for a specified period up to 12 months. To renew a loan, the borrower must request an extension in writing. Loans shall be reviewed annually by the Curator, and authorized for a renewal period of up to another 12 months. Loans for longer than 12 months shall be at the discretion of the Director and Curator.

Objects must remain in the condition in which they are received, based on the *Condition Report* completed by the Curator. Objects shall not be cleaned, repaired, retouched, treated, remounted, marked, or altered except with written permission from the Curator. Tags or other identification should not be removed without approval from the Curator. Objects cannot be loaned to a third party or moved from its designated location without authorization from the Director and Curator. The GSHM must be notified immediately if a loaned object is damaged or stolen.

The GSHM shall be properly acknowledged as the lender of the object on loan. The borrower has the authority to photograph the loaned object for educational, catalogue, record, and publicity purposes. Reproduction of an item for sale is forbidden except in the context of an exhibition catalogue. The GSHM must approve . The borrower shall be responsible for providing two copies of any catalogues or publications associated with the

The borrower shall be responsible for all insurance, packaging, and shipping expenses associated with the loan, unless waived by the Director. Loaned items shall be insured at the value stated by the GSHM. For loans insured by the borrower, a Certificate of Insurance must be provided prior to shipment or pick-up-date. When returning loaned items, the borrower shall pack and ship the items in the same manner as received. Any changes must be specifically authorized by the Director or Curator in advance.

Objects may be withdrawn from loan if for any reason the borrower does not comply with all the policies and procedures set forth by the GSHM regarding outgoing loans. A \$50.00

processing fee shall be assessed to the borrower for the loan of each object. This fee may be adjusted or waived at the Director's discretion.

C. Temporary Custody

The GSHM often receives objects or collections in temporary custody for purposes of examination or identification or for consideration as a purchase or gift. A *Temporary Custody Receipt* must be completed for objects taken into for temporary custody. Decisions to purchase or accept a donation shall be handled in a timely and professional manner.

Temporary custody objects shall receive the same care given to objects owned by the GSHM. No repairs, alterations, or conservation treatment of loaned items shall be undertaken. Evidence of damage at the time of receipt or while in the GSHM's custody shall be immediately reported to the depositor. Insurance is the responsibility of the depositor. The GSHM is not responsible or liable for damage, destruction, deterioration, or loss while on deposit or in transit.

If declined as a purchase or gift, temporary custody of the object shall be reclaimed by the donor within 30 days. The depositor shall be notified by certified mail noting the need to reclaim the object. If the donor fails to reclaim the object, the GSHM will deal with the objects in the following procedure:

1. Objects not reclaimed by the depositor within 90 days after written notification (or other time period arranged with the Curator) shall be assessed a \$100.00 or higher annual storage fee per item. This fee is non-refundable and not subject to being pro-rated.
2. Objects not reclaimed by the depositor within one year after notification shall be deemed an unrestricted gift to the GSHM, in consideration for storage and insurance.
3. Final disposition of the object shall be determined by the Collections Committee.

Individuals leaving items for identification must first read and sign a *Temporary Custody Receipt*, making sure to check the box titled "For Identification." It is noted on the form that identification does not constitute an authentication and shall not include an appraisal. Items left for identification shall receive the same care as items in the collection but the GSHM shall not guarantee the items against damage, destruction, deterioration, or loss while on deposit or in transit. At the time of the deposit, staff shall determine a reclamation date. Items must be reclaimed by the specified date. A written notice shall be sent after the reclamation date has passed. If the item is not claimed within 90 days after the notice, the GSHM shall follow the procedures established above for declined purchases or gifts.

D. Unclaimed Loans

Unclaimed loans are generally permanent loans left unclaimed by the owner over a long period of time. Objects that are unclaimed loans, which cannot be cleared up by a search of the records or by locating lenders, may not be considered for deaccession until such time as legislation has been passed regarding abandoned property that is applicable to museums. Items can only be deaccessioned if the GSHM can establish legal title.

Note: Per the Permanent Loan Agreement, the GSHM has the ability to assume title of loaned items, which are not claimed by lenders within six months. Lenders shall be notified in writing by certified mail of the intention to terminate the loan. If the GSHM does not receive written proof of receipt of the notice within 30 days of the mailing or if an address is not on record, the GSHM shall publish notice, at least once a week for two consecutive weeks. The notice shall be made in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the GSHM is located and the county of the last known address of the lender. The notice shall include a description of the object, name and last known address of the lender, and a request for the whereabouts of the lender. If the lender cannot be located or the items returned within six months, the GSHM may sell, trade, or dispose of the loaned items for its benefit. This shall only apply to Permanent Loan Agreements signed by the original lenders or representatives. Unsigned paperwork or signed paperwork by someone other than the lender or representative shall not be legally binding upon the lender.

E. Found in Collections

Found in the collections refers to objects that lack any significant documentation as to time of possession, ownership, or records. Objects found in the collections, which cannot be cleared up by a search of the records, may not be considered for deaccession until such time as legislation has been passed regarding abandoned property that is applicable to museums. Items can only be deaccessioned if the GSHM can establish legal title. If a claim against an object found in the collections, refer to *Deaccession or Disposal: Request for Return of Collections Objects*. Claimants are required to support evidence of ownership.

Access

A. Collections and Records

The collection of the GSHM exists for the benefit of the public. Therefore, the public shall be granted reasonable access, by appointment, to the exhibited or stored collections for research and educational purposes. To safeguard the collection, staff may limit the size of groups granted access to storage and exhibit areas as well as determine which objects are suitable for public viewing. The collections can be accessed during normal working hours (Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM).

Access to collections and records shall be monitored at all times by the Curatorial staff. Outside maintenance personnel, contractors, and researchers must be accompanied by the Curator when in collections storage areas.

Tours through the storage areas are given periodically for individuals or groups. These visits must be arranged through the Curator and scheduled in advance. All visitors must be accompanied by the Curator. Approval for unplanned visits shall be left to the discretion of the Curator.

The GSHM makes its collections and records accessible to scholars, students, genealogists, etc. for research based on staff availability and consistent with accepted preservation practices. Costs associated with research, such as photocopies or photographic reproductions, shall be billed to the researcher.

Collections are available to researchers by appointment with the Curator, with the following exceptions:

- Objects/materials currently on exhibit
- Objects/materials under current research
- Unprocessed objects/materials
- Objects/materials deemed to fragile for handling
- Objects/materials subject to restrictions

Procedures for access to the collections are recorded are as follows:

1. Individuals seeking access to the collection and records must seek approval in writing from the Curator stating information sought, purpose/need for access, and anticipated significance of research. A Research Request Form must also be completed.
2. Access to the collection and records shall only be scheduled during normal working hours. Every effort shall be made to accommodate all reasonable requests.
3. All persons granted access shall be instructed by staff in the proper procedures. Persons shall leave all bags at the front desk upon checking in at which time they shall be supplied with paper and pencils. Individuals shall be supervised by staff when handling collection materials. Individuals shall not be left alone with collections materials or in storage areas.
4. Staff shall comply with any reasonable request to duplicate records. Costs associated with research will be billed to the researcher in accordance with the GSHM's Photograph and Reproduction Policy.

Access to collection storage areas shall be as follows:

1. Collections storage areas shall be locked at all times.
2. All keys for collections storage or exhibit areas shall be kept in a lockbox in the Curator's office. All staff, including collections, shall be required to sign keys in and out.
3. All non-collections staff, volunteers, community service workers, contractors, etc., are not permitted in storage areas without curatorial supervision.
4. Collections storage area and exhibits shall not be entered without proper authorization from the Director or Curator, except in an emergency.

B. Photographs and Reproductions

The GSHM complies with United States Copyright law concerning the reproduction and photographic activities and uses. Any restrictions or encumbrances involving the use or reproduction of individual collections objects must be observed, including copyrights, patents, trademarks, or trade secrets. All reproductions and photographs of the collections and collections-related materials must be approved by the Director. If an outside photographer is used, all negatives, prints, or slides shall become the property of the GSHM and shall be returned to the museum upon publication. Photographs may be taken of the collections for personal use but not for publication.

Care of Collections

Care of Collections is a continuing responsibility of GSHM. Staff is responsible for the proper care of collections, loaned or donated to the museum, under its supervision according to accepted professional practices. Such care includes maintenance, security, proper storage, exhibition, conservation, insurance, and protection against fire, theft, vandalism, and natural disasters.

Staff members must be aware of their responsibilities to preserve and protect the collections. The GSHM shall provide training to all staff on the proper care of collection. Curatorial staff shall be responsible for educating and training all volunteers who work with the collection.

Educational and public programs shall be designed to minimize danger to all artifacts. Rare or fragile objects shall not be used in demonstrations or hands-on activities.

A. Preservation and Conservation

The GSHM seeks first and foremost to do no harm and provide a safe and stable environment for the collections. Preventative conservation refers to actions taken to ensure that agents of deterioration that affect the collections are detected, avoided, blocked, or mitigated. It is the preferred method of care for the collections; however, there are times when further conservation treatment is warranted.

Any repair or conservation treatment needed for objects shall be performed by skilled museum professionals/conservators upon recommendations by the Curator or Director and with approval by the Collections Committee. The Curator shall be responsible for obtaining proposals/bids from professionals who adhere to standard museum practices (possible source: American Institute for Conservation of Historical and Artistic Works). Objects shall only be treated by conservators with the appropriate levels of skills and specialty, and are authorized to carry the specific treatment. Priority shall be based on the following considerations: historical significance, condition, recommendation of conservator, technical feasibility, request for exhibition, and financial resources. Documentation must be recorded in justifying treatment of a collection or specific object including a pre- and post-treatment report.

B. Environmental Controls

Control of relative humidity and temperature is critical in the preservation of museum collections because unacceptable levels contribute significantly to the breakdown of materials. Environmental conditions shall be controlled to maintain a constant temperature and relative humidity based on the ideal conditions for the collection. Maintaining stable conditions is crucial as fluctuations are damaging.

Relative humidity should range from 35 to 60 percent with temperature ranges between 65 and 72 degrees Fahrenheit. Relative humidity should not fluctuate ± 5 percent and temperature should not fluctuate ± 5 degrees within a 24-hour period. A continuous record of temperature and humidity levels shall be obtained with HOBO data loggers. Environmental information shall be downloaded monthly and tracked using Boxcar Pro 4.3 software. An outdoor data logger shall be used to monitor outdoor conditions as well. Staff shall also use a hygrometer to periodically check relative humidity and temperature in exhibit galleries and collection storage areas.

Light accelerates the deterioration of collections. Any exposure to light, even for a brief time, is damaging, and the damage is cumulative and irreversible. Natural light should be avoided near collection material whenever possible. Sunlight has a high percentage of ultraviolet. To reduce the effects of ultraviolet radiation, all windows and fluorescent bulbs need to be covered with films or filters.

The maximum light levels should range from 50 lux to 300 lux (5 footcandles to 30 footcandles) depending upon the type of material. A continuous record of light levels shall be obtained with HOBO data loggers. This information shall be downloaded monthly and tracked using Boxcar Pro 4.3 software. Staff shall also use a light meter and an ultraviolet monitor to periodically check light and ultraviolet radiation levels in exhibit galleries and collection storage areas.

Food is not permitted in the building except in staff offices and the kitchen. Food may be permitted in Noble Hall, excluding the Eaves/Brady Cabin, for events pre-approved by the Director. Food is under no circumstances permitted in exhibit areas or collections storage areas. After special events, all trash must be removed from the building that day.

Beverages are not permitted in the building except in staff offices and the kitchen. In accordance with the Building Rental Policy, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages are allowed in Noble Hall, excluding the Eaves/Brady Cabin, for events pre-approved by the Director. Beverages are under no circumstances permitted in exhibit areas or collections storage areas.

Live animals are not permitted in the building other than living-assistance animals.

SMOKING IS PROHIBITED!

C. Handling

Professional standards and supplies shall be utilized, under the Curator's supervision, when handling or moving objects within the building or for packing and shipping. Only trained staff and/or volunteers shall handle objects or collections records, under the supervision of the Curator or Director. Non-collections are prohibited from handling objects or collections records without the Curator's permission. Staff, volunteers, or contractors responsible for cleaning exhibit or storage areas shall adhere to the object handling procedures upon consulting the Curator.

D. Use and Activities

Awareness of the collections shall be incorporated in all GSHM activities. No use or activity shall take priority over the care and safety of the objects or records. The collections shall not be used for purposes or activities that do not further the mission of the GSHM. Inappropriate uses shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of objects as decoration or props at social or theatrical events that are sponsored by the GSHM or otherwise.

2. Reproduction of objects in publications or productions by outside entities that are in conflict with the mission and goals of the GSHM.
3. When in question, appropriate or inappropriate use of collections shall be determined by the Director, or if needed by the Board of Trustees, as long as it does not conflict with the above or accepted museum practices.

E. Inventory

A periodic inventory of the permanent collection is of primary importance in maintaining accountability for the objects that the GSHM owns and cares for. An inventory shall take place every 10 years. The Curator shall also be responsible for conducting spot-check inventory during this period. Upon completion of an inventory, the Curator and Collections Committee shall evaluate the collection to determine if objects are appropriate to the collection or if objects should be recommended for deaccessioning. When an inventory is undertaken, the Curator shall record the following:

- Accession Number
- Object Identification Number (if unknown a temporary number shall be assigned for control purposes)
- Object Name
- Object Description
- Status (accessioned, pending accession, loan, unknown)
- Location
- Condition
- Digital Images

Risk Management/Insurance

A. Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Plan

The Director is responsible for coordinating the development and maintenance of the *Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Plan* to ensure the protection of the collection in storage and on exhibit against all types of disasters. The Curator shall work with the Director in recommending updates to standards and procedures as appropriate to the collection to mitigate damage and loss. These revisions shall be reviewed by the Collections Committee with final approval by the Board of Trustees.

B. Insurance

The limit for fine arts coverage is \$225,000. Items over this amount are not covered unless specifically listed on an attached schedule with value. Incoming and Outgoing Loans must be insured for their fair market value, while off premises.

C. Documentation

The Curator shall keep records of all objects in the collection and their locations. The Curator shall be responsible for recording current market values for donated collections and incoming and outgoing loans, and maintaining records of all insurance claims. A list of donated and loaned items along with fair market values shall be sent to the insurance company. Copies of all paperwork (Deeds of Gift, Loan Agreements, Accession Files, Condition Report,

Insurance Values, etc.) shall be kept off-site along with an electronic and paper-based copy of the collections database.

D. Loss or Damage

Loss or damage of an object should be immediately reported to the Curator and Director. In the case of an incoming loan, it should be also reported to the lender. The Curator is responsible for documenting the incident. The Board shall be notified if the incident occurred as a result of theft or vandalism. An *Accident/Incident Report* shall be completed by the Curator and signed by the Director and Board President. Digital images of any loss or damage are also required. If it is decided that an insurance claim should be filed, the Curator shall notify the insurance company. The Curator shall process all documentation necessary in filing the claim and keep records in the object's file.

Staff Responsibility: Ethics, Personal Collecting, Appraisals, Authentication, etc.

The GSHM conforms to the Code of Ethics adopted by the American Association of Museums. Staff and volunteers of the GSHM are committed to the principles of good museum governance, protection, and enhancement of the GSHM's collections and programs, and its physical, human, and financial resources. The stewardship of the collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care, documentation, accessibility, and responsible disposal. The GSHM serves the community by advancing an understanding and appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage of south central Oklahoma through exhibits, research, scholarship, publications, and educational activities. As such, staff and volunteers are subject to the following:

A. Personal Collecting

Acquiring, collecting, and owning objects is not in itself unethical. It can enhance professional knowledge and judgment. However, acquisition and management of a personal collection can represent a conflict of interest. Therefore, Board members, staff, and volunteers may not compete in collecting activities with the GSHM for personal use through purchase, gift, trade, sale, exchange, or loan. They may not use their museum affiliation to promote personal collections objectives. This is to eliminate competition between the GSHM and its governing authority and staff for the acquisition of objects. Board members, staff, and volunteers must disclose all collection dealings in which they are privately involved in writing to the Curator.

B. Use of Personal Collections

Board members and staff are discouraged from bringing in objects from their personal collections for storage or other non-related museum purposes. Personal collections are allowed in the museum for the following purposes: gift approval, exhibits, research, and/or office decoration. Items brought in for office decoration or research purposes may not be kept in designated storage areas. Archival supplies, equipment, and paid staff time cannot be devoted to personal collections.

The GSHM shall insure only those personal collection objects that are on the premises for gift approval or exhibit. The GSHM shall not insure objects brought in for research or office decoration.

C. Appraisals and Identification

Staff, trustees, and volunteers are prohibited from providing appraisals, written or verbal, except for internal use in estimating values for purchases or deaccessions or determining insurance valuations. Appraisals are the responsibility of the donor in establishing fair-market value of gifts offered to the GSHM. Donors desiring to take an income tax deduction must have an independent appraisal made by a qualified appraiser concerning the value of their gift. Staff may assist donors in locating appraisers. Staff must refer donors to two or more appraisers.

Identification and authentication may be given for professional or educational purposes for requests from other cultural organizations or their agents. Information on authenticity and quality shall not be given on items brought in by the general public. Staff may only provide a verbal identification.

D. Records

All records and documents pertaining to the Collections must remain the property of the GSHM, open to responsible public examination for use at reasonable hours, except for collections valuation information, and guarantee donor confidentiality. Matters concerning collections administration, such as security, insurance, financial matters, and administrative records and practices are treated confidentially and are not used for any purposes that may be considered detrimental to the GSHM and its collections.

Monitoring and Revising the Collections Management Policy

A. Monitoring

Monitoring the implementation of these policies is the responsibility of the entire professional staff. The Director designates that the Curator monitor compliance with the Collections Management Policy. Questions regarding the implementation of the policy should be brought to the attention of the Curator in an appropriate and timely manner. The Curator is responsible for annually updating the Director and Collections Committee on the museum's ability to comply with the Collections Management Policy (no later than January 1 of each year).

B. Revisions

The Curator shall determine when a formal review and revision of the Collections Management Policy is necessary, usually every three years, to maintain its validity and usefulness in guiding staff, volunteers, and trustees. Working with appropriate staff, volunteers, trustees, and outside experts, the Curator shall submit proposed revisions to the Director and Collections Committee. In considering revisions, the Committee shall be guided by current AAM standards and best practices. The proposed revisions are then presented to the Board of Trustees for final approval.