

0.4 Museum Collection and Conservation Management

Introduction

This policy aims to guide the management of the Shire of Toodyay collections and the environments in which it is stored or displayed. The objective of this policy is to provide guidelines for correct documentation, exhibition, storage and conservation of the Shire of Toodyay collection.

Application

This policy applies to all employees at the Shire of Toodyay and it is a requirement that all employees adhere to this Policy. Breaches of this Policy may result in disciplinary action.

VISION STATEMENT:

The Museum is a welcoming place where the community conserves and shares Toodyay's unique heritage.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Museum conserves, interprets and promotes Toodyay's unique cultural and environmental heritage by using a range of technologies and active public programs to attract and engage visitors of all ages.

TERMINOLOGY

Collection:	Refers to the significant objects, photographs, artworks, documents and books that represent the history and people of the Shire of Toodyay.
Preventive Conservation*:	The process of reducing rates of deterioration for a whole collection to minimize further damage (Western Australian Museum).
Provenance:	Refers to the confirmable history of the ownership and usage of an object.
Patina of age:	Physical signs of age that contribute to the significance of an object.
Interventive Conservation*:	The process of intervening with individual objects that have sustained damage in order to halt and prevent further damage (Western Australian Museum).
Restoration*:	The process of not only intervening but repairing the damaged object (Western Australian Museum)

**Note: Preventive Conservation is the optimum way to treat objects in the collection followed by Interventive Conservation. Restoration should only be considered in extreme circumstances.*

Museum Advisory Committee

The Museum Advisory Committee is to be consulted on acquisition and deaccession of objects to and from the Museum.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Acceptance of Material into the Collection

Acceptance into the collection will be subject to:

1.1. One of the following themes:

- 1.1.1. Those objects that relate to the Indigenous cultural history of the Shire of Toodyay.
- 1.1.2. Those objects that document or relate to the exploration and settlement of the Shire of Toodyay.
- 1.1.3. Those objects that relate directly to law and order, law enforcement, convictism in the region, the Police Force in the region and those relating directly to imprisonment, life and conditions in the Newcastle Gaol or the region to become the Shire of Toodyay.
- 1.1.4. Those objects that relate directly to Connor's Mill in its usage as a mill and a power station;
- 1.1.5. Those objects that relate to Toodyay's involvement in military conflict;
- 1.1.6. Objects that fall outside the region but are relevant to one of the above criteria may be considered for acquisition into the primary collection. Alternatively they may be documented, photographed and returned to the donor, or used in a secondary collection (eg. For educational purposes).
- 1.1.7. Those objects that relate to the natural environmental history of the Shire of Toodyay.

1.2. Whether objects are considered, upon assessment, to be significant to the Shire of Toodyay, where significant refers to the historic, aesthetic, scientific and social values of an object.

1.3. Objects will only be accepted into the museum in accordance with the Museums Australia Inc. Code of Ethics, 1999, which supports the "international efforts of UNESCO, ICOM and other organisations to control and eliminate international trafficking in stolen and/or illegally exported works of art (particularly of indigenous peoples), antiquities, endangered or protected animal and plant species, and any other museum object". Objects must also be accepted in accordance with Local, State and Federal laws regarding our National Heritage (see Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* at <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/>)

2. Acquisition of Objects

- 2.1. Objects will be acquired by donation, purchase or bequest.
- 2.2. No object will be acquired that is constrained by any limitations.

- 2.3. The intending donor must have legal title to the object, and be willing to pass legal title to the Museum.
- 2.4. Acquisition should not duplicate materials already in the collection unless for the exceptional purposes of education, comparison or condition.
- 2.5. Objects shall be collected only if in manageable condition and it is deemed possible for the Museum to safely document, conserve, preserve, store, display or interpret the objects without duress to its resources. This includes provenance of the object as well as physical condition.
- 2.6. All objects accepted into the collection will be accessioned, by the Curator or appointed Shire of Toodyay staff, in accordance with the Shire of Toodyay Procedural Manual for Collection Management of the Toodyay Museum Collection.

3. Object Storage

- 3.1. All objects are to be stored in accordance with the Shire of Toodyay Procedure Manual for Collections Management.

4. Safe Handling of Objects

- 4.1. Objects will be handled in accordance with the Museums Australia Inc Museum Methods practical manual extract.

5. Loans (Incoming and Outgoing)

- 5.1. Loans shall be processed in accordance with the Shire of Toodyay Procedural Manual for Collection Management of the Toodyay Museum Collection.
- 5.2. Objects will not be accepted on a short term loan for purposes other than for an event, exhibition or research.
- 5.3. Long term loans are unacceptable to the Museum. Three options exist for long term loans:
 - 5.3.1. The owner offers the object by donation;
 - 5.3.2. The owner bequest the object; or
 - 5.3.3. The object is documented, photographed and entered on the database, then returned to the owner.
- 5.4. Proper documentation shall accompany all incoming and outgoing loans.

6. Deaccession of Objects

- 6.1. Deaccession may only be undertaken due to duplication, condition, or irrelevance to the collection.
- 6.2. Deaccession by sale is only acceptable if the proceeds contribute to the conservation aims of the collection.
- 6.3. Disposal of the object must comply with the Museums Australia Inc. Code of Ethics.

6.4. Deaccession will take place in accordance with the Shire of Toodyay Procedural Manual for Collection Management.

6.5. Full documentation of all deaccessions will take place.

7. Conservation

7.1. Conservation and conservation practice must be the primary concern when using the collection particularly in reference to exhibition and display.

7.2. Only staff and volunteers that have been trained in Safe Handling Procedures will be allowed access to the collection.

7.3. Conservation treatment or restoration of objects will only be conducted by, or under the supervision of, a qualified conservator.

7.4. Any conservation treatment of object/s should be done in such a way that retains the significance, patina of age and evidence of use of the object/s. wherever possible, conservation treatments should be reversible.

7.5. The Museum will take every precaution to avoid accidental damage or loss to the collection through fire, flood, water damage, theft, vandalism, accident and damage from environment. Guidance is to be taken from Be Prepared: Guidelines for Small Museums for Writing a Disaster Preparedness Plan, Museum Methods: a Practical Guide to Managing Small Museums and Recollections: Caring for Collections across Australia.

7.6. The public will not be allowed to physically handle the collection unless under the direct supervision of the Curator.

8. Policy Review

Policy to be reviewed every three years.

Reference Information

Related Documents Museum Strategy

Related Legislation *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)*

Associated Forms and Attachments

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