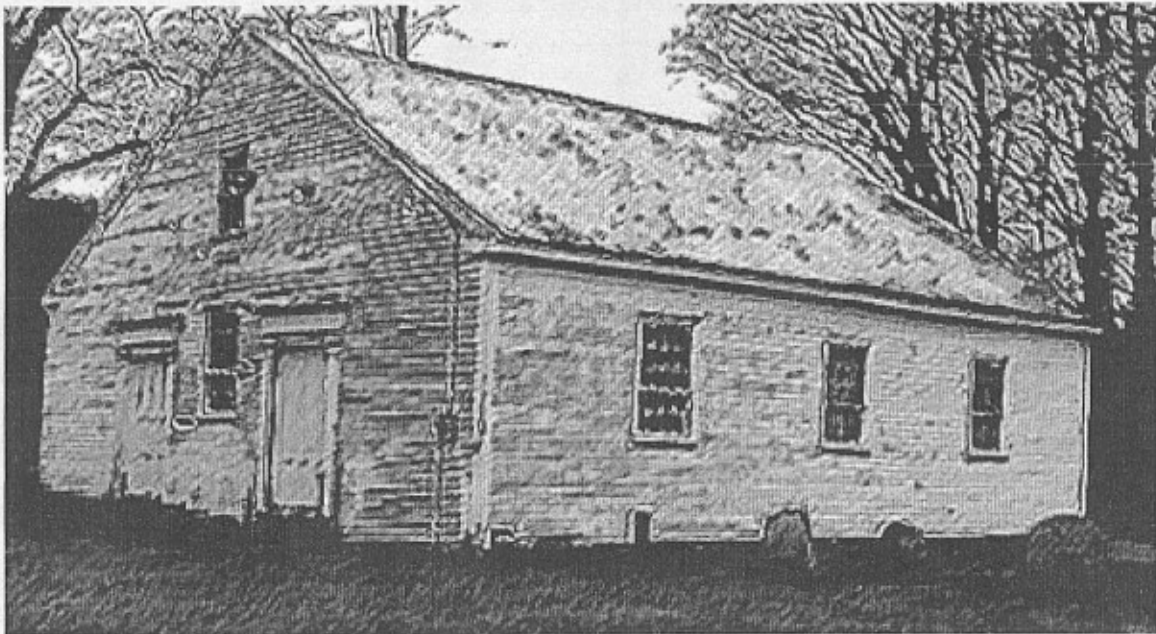


Collection Policy



Historical Society of Litchfield
Litchfield, Maine 04350

20 June or
July 03

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1. PURPOSE.

The purpose of the Historical Society of Litchfield is to preserve and exhibit artifacts that represent the cultural heritage of the Town of Litchfield, Maine. The Society exists for the purpose of providing education, inspiration and aesthetic enrichment for all people through exhibition and explanation. The Society's goal is to educate and enlighten people about the past history and cultural aspects of the Town of Litchfield, Maine.

This document reaffirms existing policies and explains administrative intent governing the acquisition, use, and disposition of those collections by the Historical Society of Litchfield herein after referred to as the Society.

The rules set forth in this policy statement:

- Outline basic priorities for adding new objects to the collection.
- Provide direction for acquisition of collections by the Society.
- Affirm that the highest ethical standards will be met by the Society staff in all transactions, including avoidance of conflicts of interest.
- Affirm that the Society staff will comply with all domestic and foreign laws and regulations governing the collecting of objects, the transfer of ownership of those objects, and the movement of objects and collections across political boundaries.
- Assure that the standards of documentation for acquisitions shall equal or exceed those current in the respective disciplines relating to the collection.
- Define the conditions of acceptance that may be placed upon objects to be acquired by the Society or on its behalf.
- Define the conditions and procedures for permanent removal of objects from the Society collections.

2. ACQUISITIONS.

A. Society Collections

B. How Objects and Collections are Acquired.

1. Objects and collections that are to become part of the collection should be acquired by direct gift, bequests, purchases, exchanges, and other transfers.
2. Objects and collections, or other assets that may be sold in the future should be acquired directly by the Historical Society of Litchfield Board.
3. Objects or collections that are to become part of the Society's collection, but which can only be acquired through purchase, should be acquired by direct approval of the Historical Society of Litchfield Board.

The Historical Society of Litchfield can make acquisitions only after approval by the Acquisition Committee in consultation with the designated curator in charge.

C. Priorities for Acquisition.

The Historical Society of Litchfield collections can be improved by selective addition of new objects.

It is equally clear that the Historical Society of Litchfield cannot engage in indiscriminate acquisition. The diversity of human culture and artifacts, is so extraordinarily large that physical space limitations alone make comprehensive collecting impossible. The financial aspects of fulfilling the Society's continuing obligation to preserve, maintain, and use representative samples of Litchfield history limits our acquisition capabilities. Consequently, a schedule of priorities for new acquisitions has been adopted. For similar reasons, consideration must be given to policies covering disposition of objects that may no longer be appropriate or necessary for the Society's areas of interest.

First Priority. To strengthen collection areas in which the Society has a current specialization and recognized historical interest, especially when these areas are threatened irreversibly by human activities. Examples of primary priority acquisitions are objects of direct use in present or projected research or in current educational or exhibition programs; high quality objects needed to fill gaps in the current holdings or to supplement objects of lesser quality. Objects where technological changes and expanding human activity place a time limit on the period in which sampling can take place.

Second Priority. To broaden the comparative base of our established collection areas. An example of secondary priority acquisitions would be objects that will strengthen a collection in a subject area related to a previously established one.

Third Priority. To obtain collections of a general nature that are within the broad interests of the Society. Examples of tertiary priority acquisitions are interesting or unique, but adequately documented, objects of limited use in a scientific sense; objects outside the scope of current Society collections, but that might in the

future have direct use in explaining more fully the diversity of nature and culture to the lay public.

It is recognized that acquisition of objects often must be opportunistic. From time to time, collections of recognized national or international significance become available from individuals or institutions that no longer are able or willing to preserve, maintain, and use them in research and educational activities.

Acceptance of responsibilities for such collections may involve establishing a new area of interest within the Society. Acquisition of such collections must be judged on their individual merits, carefully weighing the values and costs of such additions against the evolving programs and emphases of the Society (see '2I. Accessioning Acquisitions' below).

D. Ethics of Acquisition.

All acquisitions by the Historical Society of Litchfield shall reflect its commitment to preserve and guard the living and cultural heritage of Litchfield. Objects that have been collected recently in such a careless manner as to impair their value shall not be accepted, e.g., objects with inadequate documentation.

Any acquisition of Native American remains or cultural objects must be in full compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (see '2F. Conditions of Acceptance' below). These diverse perspectives affect the ethical concerns evoked at all levels of curation from acquisition through collections management to deaccessioning. Wherever possible, the ethics surrounding a collection in the culture of origin will be taken into consideration in the evaluation and management of anthropological materials.

E. Laws Governing Acquisition.

The Society will refuse to acquire objects in any case where it has cause to believe that the circumstances of their collection involved the recent unscientific or intentional destruction of sites or monuments, or where state or federal laws or international treaties have been violated. These standards also will be taken into account in determining whether to accept loans for exhibition or other purposes. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that these conditions are met, that title to the object or objects may properly be transferred to the Society, and that the Society keeps up to date on the changing laws and regulations concerning object collecting, ownership, and movement across political boundaries. The Society will cooperate with authorities of the United States and other countries in legal action against those committing improprieties.

In an attempt to avoid encouraging, even indirectly, trade in illicit or irresponsibly recovered objects, the Society will not authenticate any object whose acquisition does not meet the Society's own criteria for acquisition. In addition, if the Society should inadvertently acquire an object that is later determined to have been

exported or recovered in violation of the Society's acquisition policy, the Society will promptly return the object to the owner.

F. Conditions of Acceptance.

With very few exceptions, all acquisitions are unconditional. The Society normally cannot accept objects on which the owner has placed restrictions that would prevent effective research, examination, normal exhibition use, loan, or disposal in accordance with this established policy. The Society also cannot accept objects with restrictions requiring that they be placed on exhibition, or that the collection of which they form a part should be kept together permanently and/or displayed only as a discrete collection. Under extraordinary circumstances, objects can be accepted with the requirement that the Society retain ownership for a negotiated period of time.

Anthropological collections, particularly those covered by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), form an area where certain exceptions may be considered in consultation, not with the donor, but with the tribe which is culturally affiliated with the collections in question.

G. Standards of Documentation.

Minimum requirements of documentation, including provenience, should not vary in the Society collection. Such standards are necessary requisites for objects to be added to the collection. We cannot afford to permanently house objects lacking scientific value. Objects with less than complete data, but having scientific or educational value, may be accessioned at the discretion of the curator in charge.

H. Appraisal and Authentication of Acquisitions.

No member of the Society staff shall, in his or her official capacity, give appraisals for the purpose of establishing the tax deductible value of gifts or purchases offered to the Society. The U.S. Internal Revenue Service prohibits appraisals from a recipient institution that is directly involved in the transaction. Only appraisals from disinterested third parties are accepted. No member of the Society knowingly shall appraise, identify, or otherwise authenticate historical or cultural objects for other persons or agencies under circumstances that could encourage or benefit illegal, unethical, or irresponsible traffic in such objects. Identification and authentication may be given for professional or educational purposes and in compliance with the legitimate requests of professional or governmental bodies or their agencies. Where appropriate, the Society will assist owners in finding qualified professionals who can provide appraisals.

I. Accessioning Acquisitions.

Before any collection is accessioned into the Historical Society of Litchfield collection, a summary report must be completed and filed in the permanent records of that collection. The report shall contain the following information:

8. Name of collection being acquired.
9. Summary of contacts with owner or administrator; names and dates.
10. Name of collection owner if different from initial contact.
11. Items in collection, e.g., number of objects or number of lots, books, notes, photographs.
12. Statement about the provenience of the objects-a brief summary should be provided for large collections containing hundreds of objects with varied or extensively detailed provenience.
13. Copies of documentation certifying to the legality of the collection, e.g., export permits from the country of origin, U.S. federal or state permits, statement from owner.
14. Signed letter, document, or certificate from the owner stating that title to the collection is being transferred to the Historical Society of Litchfield.
15. Date collection was transferred to the Society.
16. Names of people involved in the acquisition.
17. Date and signature of the curator and/or collection manager.
18. A copy of the acknowledgment certificate given to the owner.
19. Information detailing the circumstances of original acquisition and the curatorial history of the collection.

If the collection is a large one, which will require considerable curation (i.e., expense) before it is fully incorporated into the Society collection, the following additional information must be included:

20. How the collection will be transported to the Society.
21. Cost of transporting the collection to the Society.
22. Where the collection will be held while it is being processed into the collection.
23. Projected time needed for curation.
24. Projected cost of curation, including extra staff, cabinets, labels, computer entry, etc.

Before any sizable collection can be acquired and accessioned, the Historical Society of Litchfield Board of Directors must be made aware of the curatorial time and budget that will be committed to integrating the collection into the research collection.

3. MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTIONS.

A. Curation.

All the collections of the Historical Society of Litchfield shall be curated according to the highest professional standards. That curation aims to preserve and maintain the collection, and the objects and associated data they contain, so they will be available in perpetuity for use in studies and exhibitions (the rare exceptions are discussed below under '4E. Disposal' and '5E. Destructive Analysis'). To assure that those standards are met, each collection in the Society shall be assigned to the responsibility of the curator.

4. DISPOSITIONS.

A. Legal and Ethical Constraints.

All of the provisions for disposition shall be consistent with the ethical and legal constraints set forth in '2D. Ethics of Acquisition', '2E. Laws Governing Acquisition', and '3A. Curation' above. No transfer or disposal shall be made of any objects held by the Society in bond. The Society acts as custodian of objects for the broader benefits of society. This, at times, requires permanent removal of objects from the Society. Society's legal, professional, and moral obligation to maintain its collections for the public good extends even to dispositions. When dispositions are appropriate, every effort should be made to transfer objects to other museums or public institutions where they will continue to be available for research and education. See also '5E. Destructive Analysis' below. Such transactions must not profit individuals or private institutions. A record of all transfers and disposals shall be maintained as part of the permanent records of the Society.

B. General Policy on Dispositions.

Objects in the collections should be retained permanently if they continue to be useful to the purposes and activities of the Society; if they continue to contribute to the integrity of the collections; and if they can be properly stored, preserved, and used. Upon the recommendation of the curator, objects may be disposed of by formal deaccessioning when the above conditions no longer exist, or if it is determined that such action would ultimately improve or refine the collections, upon compliance with all legal requirements.

C. Recommendation of Curator.

Each object being considered for deaccessioning must meet the following criteria as evidenced by the written recommendation of the curator in charge to the Acquisition Committee, and based upon one or more of the following:

- The object lacks value for scientific research or documentation, or for educational use.

- The object no longer retains its physical integrity, its identity, its provenience, or its authenticity.
- The object is not relevant to or consistent with the Society's function and purpose.
- Exchange of a redundant object (one of a series of similar objects with similar provenience in the collection) with a recognized public collections facility will improve and refine the Society's collection.

Such deaccessions shall be made by transfer or disposal.

D. Transfer.

Permanent transfers of valuable objects may be recommended by the curator in charge and approved by the Acquisition Committee and the Historical Society of Litchfield's Board of Directors. Except in extraordinary circumstances they shall be made only to other public institutions. Transfers to private individuals shall be made only when the curator can demonstrate a benefit to the collection of the Society, and only after approval of the Historical Society of Litchfield Board of Directors.

All objects or collections shall require prior approval of the Historical Society of Litchfield Board of Directors before transfer from the Society.

The deaccessioning of human remains and cultural objects for repatriation to Native American tribes is a specialized form of transfer mandated by federal law in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The Historical Society of Litchfield is committed to compliance with this legislation.

E. Disposal.

Over the years, as standards of object documentation change, as the collections grow and objects suffer deterioration, biological and anthropological objects that formerly were a significant part of the research collections may become surplus. Removal or culling of such objects from the collection is a continual and routine process.

If objects are not needed by the Society, the curator of the Society collection may give them to appropriate educational institutions for use in teaching activities, or if no alternative exists, they may be discarded completely or destroyed. Such objects for disposal shall have all identifying marks and numbers removed from them and the disposal shall be noted in the appropriate research collection catalogues by the curator in charge, and then disposed of in accordance with these guidelines. Appropriate notification of such disposals shall be sent to the Acquisition Committee and then to Historical Society of Litchfield Board of Directors. Objects shall not be given or sold privately to Society employees or their relatives or representatives.

The Society may devise specialized discard procedures for certain types of collections, but any such specialized procedure must be approved by, and on file with, the Historical Society of Litchfield Board of Directors

F. Private Collections.

Conflicts Of Interest and Ethical Constraints. If a curator, collection manager, technician, research assistant, or other Society member or employee were to maintain a private collection in his or her professional field of interest, the temptation would be great to put particularly valuable objects in the private collection rather than in the Society collection.

Because of this potential conflict of interest, Society employees are prohibited from having private collections, or objects of scientific interest in collections, that are in their professional field of interest, e.g., decorative arts, natural history, or anthropology.

Collections of objects of primary scientific interest and associated field notes or xerographic copies made by professional Society staff with the use of Society funds, direct or indirect, complete or partial, in the broadest sense, shall be Society property. No authority shall be granted the Society to restrain or restrict a principal investigator's use of his or her own field notes. Should the principal investigator leave the Society staff, a complete copy of the field notes shall be left with the Society.

Personal collections, where permitted by the above policy, may be amassed by Society staff only through compliance with applicable state and federal laws.

These restrictions also apply to anthropological type collections and synoptic collections in natural sciences. However, if a person leaves the Society, such collections may then be made available to his or her new institution.

The private collections policies, set forth in this section, do not apply to non-paid associates and courtesy appointments.

However, such volunteers and honorary colleagues are prohibited from adding to their private collections any objects acquired as a result of their association with the Society. This 'conflict of interest' policy shall be carried out with the best interests of the Society in mind.

Any dispute arising from this section shall be resolved by the Acquisition Committee, and the Society Board of Directors.

5. USE OF COLLECTIONS

A. Loans.

Materials from the research collections may be loaned to or borrowed from other natural history museums, universities, and other appropriate public institutions for research and/or exhibition purposes. A record of all incoming and outgoing loans shall be maintained as part of the permanent records of the Society.

B. Incoming Loans.

Incoming loans shall be accepted only for purposes of research or exhibition under the following conditions:

- 1.No indefinite or long-term loans shall be accepted, but exceptions may be authorized by the Board of Directors on recommendation of the Acquisition Committee.
- 2.Incoming loans shall not be accepted if they do not meet the same standards set forth in '2D. Ethics of Acquisition' and '2E. Laws Governing Acquisition' above.
- 3.While the loans are in our care, they will be handled, conserved, stored, and exhibited, as required by the lending institution or otherwise accorded the same professional care as if they were part of the Society's collections.

C. Outgoing Loans.

The Society lends objects to qualified institutions for scholarly research and exhibition subject to the policies and practices consistent with the Society's collection policies. However, the following pertain to all outgoing loans:

- 1.Objects shall not be lent to individuals except under exceptional circumstances and then only on the recommendation of the Acquisition Committee and with the approval of the Society Board of Directors. Before lending to individuals, the committee must make every effort to seek an institutional affiliation or endorsement for that person. If an institutional affiliation is impossible to establish, then written reasons must be stated with the loan form.
- 2.Objects requested by students will require faculty or institutional endorsement and will be considered the direct responsibility of the faculty member or institutional representative endorsing the request.
- 3.Loans shall not be transferred by the borrower to any other institution or individual without prior written approval.
- 4.The maximum duration of any loan shall be one year, but shall be subject to renewal.

5. Objects shall not be loaned for destructive analysis except as provided in '5E. Destructive Analysis' below.

6. Shipment of outgoing loans shall comply with labeling and permitting requirements of all applicable state and federal laws and international treaties.

D. Access to Collections.

During normal operating hours, the collections shall be accessible for legitimate research and study by responsible investigators, subject to procedures necessary to safeguard the objects and to restrictions imposed by limitations of space and facilities, exhibition requirements, and availability of appropriate curatorial staff.

Access to anthropological collections by representatives from Native American Tribes shall be available upon request and shall be subject to the same restrictions as research access.

E. Destructive Analysis.

Since aspects of it are related to '4E. Disposal', research involving destructive analysis is a specialized use and requires special consideration. Destructive analysis is not allowed, except under exceptional circumstances, and requires the prior approval of the curator in charge and the Collections Committee. The Society's legal, professional, and moral obligation to maintain its collections for the public good extends even to destructive analysis.

On occasion, destructive analysis of specimens yields information which benefits the collection and is in the public interest. This is particularly true when redundant, not unique, specimens or materials are involved.

When destructive analysis is appropriate, every effort should be made to limit destruction to less than the entire specimen and to save what remains so it will continue to be available for research and education.

Requests for destructive analysis must detail the specimens or materials required and the procedures to be conducted. Any remains from the analysis remain the property of the Society unless other provisions are specifically allowed in writing by the curator in charge prior to destruction. In cases involving the dissection of biological specimens, the undestroyed component parts shall be returned to the collection along with associated identifying tags or marks. The data resulting from the destructive analysis shall become part of the collection of the Society and will be maintained with the records associated with the materials analyzed. At the discretion of the curator in charge, arrangements may be made to divide duplicate histological slides and similar preparations between the researcher and the collection.

F. Use in Exhibitions.

The Society places original, reconstructed, and duplicated objects from the collections on public exhibition. These objects remain the curatorial responsibility of the collection from which they originated, and shall be treated in a manner consistent with the policies stated above. If the curator determines that exhibition will damage the objects, or is damaging the objects, from the collection, the situation shall be remedied immediately. Such remedy may entail removal of the objects from exhibition with approval of the curator in charge and consultation with the Acquisition Committee,

G. Commercial Use of Society Objects.

The Society collections normally are not available for commercial non-educational use. However, at the discretion of the curator in charge and with approval of the Board of Director, objects may be made available for reproduction for commercial sale. The curator and the Acquisition Committee shall be the judge of quality control, selections, and marketing with approval of the Board of Directors. Such commercial use shall be consistent with this collections policy. Copyright for reproduction of Society objects shall remain the property of the Society.

DEFINITIONS

'Collection' is an assemblage of objects acquired, accessioned, and conserved because of their historic significance and educational value.

'Object' encompasses all collection materials, including, but not limited to, specimens, artifacts, articles, photographs, illustrations, drawings, archival and library materials, field notes and records, and exhibits.

'Acquisition' involves all transactions by which title to incoming objects is transferred to Historical Society of Litchfield or by which the objects come under the professional administrative and curatorial control of the Society, and includes gifts, bequests, purchases, exchanges, and other transfers, in addition to collection by Society staff.

'Disposition' involves all transactions by which title to outgoing objects is transferred from the Society to another institution or individual, as well as disposal by intentional destruction.

'Accession' refers to the specific procedures that are followed in the preliminary logging of new objects into the Society's collections following acquisition.

'Deaccession' refers to the specific procedures that are followed in removing objects from the Society's collections in preparation for disposition.

'Curation' embraces all aspects of professionally caring for the collections and the objects they contain, including, but not limited to, acquiring, accessioning, cataloguing, maintaining, preserving, restoring, deaccessioning, and disposing of the collections, objects, field notes, databases, and other associated records and documentation.

Note that acquisitions and dispositions do not include 'loans' or 'chain of custody evidence' both of which are the temporary transfer of collection objects to and from the Society without a change of ownership (see '5B. Incoming Loans' and '5C. Outgoing Loans' above).