

# THE TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

## Section: Community Services

### Policy: Museum Collections Management

**Creation Date:** 1977

**Revised Date:** 1995, October 2013

**Resolution Number:** 1140 (consent) 10/13

**Supersedes Resolution Number:**

**Policy Number:** 2.10

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#### **1. Purpose**

The Fort Frances Museum's collection management policy sets forth the goals of the Fort Frances Museum with respect to managing its collections. The policy outlines responsibilities and sets standards for all collection-related activities.

The collection is held and managed in the public trust.

#### **2. The Acquisition of Objects**

The Fort Frances Museum collects objects, photographs, printed and audio-visual material pertaining to the history of Fort Frances and area, in accordance with its Statement of Purpose. The collections are made for the purpose of documentation, preservation, research, exhibition and interpretation for all generations.

The Fort Frances Museum collects according to the following criteria:

- a) Artifacts that are specific to Fort Frances and area; i.e. items related to historically important people, places and events in Fort Frances and area.
- b) Artifacts that are typical of Fort Frances as a community in Northwestern Ontario, Canada; i.e. artifacts used in Fort Frances and area and/or owned by Fort Frances and area residents.

A budget line is provided in the annual operating budget for the acquisition of objects, their cataloguing, storage and care.

#### **3. Ethics of Acquisition**

The Fort Frances Museum acquires artifacts and/or collections only if it has adequate resources (human, financial, temporal, spatial) to document, preserve, store, research, exhibit and interpret the artifact/collection in accordance to museum standards and while adhering to Canadian Museum Association Ethics Guidelines.

The Fort Frances Museum does *not* acquire material:

- a) That has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any provincial or national statute;
- b) That has questionable, undetermined or unethical history of ownership;
- c) That has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (or any similar statutes) as ratified by Canada on June 28, 1978;
- d) If, in addition to, or beyond the preceding clauses, there is any reason to believe that the object's recovery involved recent unscientific handling and/or intentional destruction or damage of archaeological/historical sites or illegal/ clandestine excavations.

In addition to the above considerations, acquisition and deaccession of artifacts will be made in light of sensitivity concerning the evolving nature of the relationship between First Peoples and museums.

In situations where copyright is of relevance, the Fort Frances Museum respects the provisions of the Copyright Act (Bill C.32, an Act to Amend the Copyright Act, April 25, 1997). Also, the Fort Frances Museum respects the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act (1974). Also, the Fort Frances Museum respects the Freedom of Information Act as pursuant to the Municipal Act, R.S.O., 1990 Chap.M.45, the Firearms Act (1995 C.39), the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Wild Animals and Plant Protection Regulation of the International and Interprovincial Trade Act (WAPPRITA), 1992.

#### **4. Mode of Acquisition**

- a) Objects/artifacts are acquired by means of donation, bequest, exchange, and on rare occasions, by purchase.
- b) All decisions to acquire an artifact are made by the Curator.
- c) Any purchases made by the Curator are reported to the Advisory Committee and to the public via Advisory Committee minutes and through the museum's newsletter.
- d) All acquisitions involving transfer of ownership and/or responsibility must be accompanied by a *signed* gift agreement or other proof of legal title to the object, such as a transfer of title form or a bill of sale.
- e) *No* acquisition is made by which the conditions of acquisition restricts the use of, or disposition of, the object(s) by the Fort Frances Museum as per the Fort Frances Museum's mandate and policies, and professional standards. In rare occasions, should the Curator determine that an artifact is of utmost importance to the collection and the potential donor insists on certain conditions, the donation will be considered.

#### **5. Management of Artifacts & the Collection**

- a) Artifacts are stored and handled according to current professional standards.
- b) Records are maintained and updated according to current professional standards and staff resources.
- c) Artifacts are researched, interpreted and exhibited according to current professional standards and staff resources.
- d) A comprehensive inventory is maintained in order to ensure current information about the collection for management and insurance purposes.

## 6. Education

The Fort Frances Museum recognizes the importance of experiential learning for its visitors. In fulfillment of this need and to ensure the integrity of the permanent collection, the Fort Frances Museum collects and manages objects separate from the permanent collection to be used for the purpose of enhancing the learning experience during a museum visit, school program or travelling exhibition.

These items may be duplicates or reproductions, and should be in good condition and directly relevant to current research, exhibition, or interpretation programs.

## 7. Loans:

- Objects may be loaned to other institutions for temporary displays or educational purposes. Off-site locations must offer reasonable security and environmental conditions. Loans that could pose undue risk to an artifact will not be considered. All loans must be fully documented.
- The Museum will accept loans only for specific purposes – i.e. special displays or temporary exhibits. The Museum will provide the same quality of care as for items in its own collection. No long-term loans from individuals will be accepted due to expense and liability involved in housing, handling, maintaining and insuring the items.

## 8. Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning refers to the permanent removal of one or more artifacts from *the permanent collection*.

In order to maintain a growing and relevant collection in accordance with the Museum's Statement of Purpose and current professional standards, occasionally it is necessary to deaccession an artifact or artifacts.

The decision to deaccession will be made on the recommendation of the Museum Curator, and with approval of the Museum's Advisory Committee.

In order to deaccession material from the permanent collection, the Fort Frances Museum adheres to the following standards:

- a) The Fort Frances Museum does not acquire any artifact with the intention of eventual deaccession.
- b) Criteria for deaccessioning an artifact are: minimal value or significance to the collection and/or to history; poor quality; poor condition; duplication; lack of documentation verifying authenticity, and/or origins, and/or chronological history, and/or owner and/or donor(s); expense of conservation; the possibility/act of upgrading the collection by means of exchange or other transaction.
- c) The Fort Frances Museum will deaccession an artifact/artifacts for the purpose of repatriation, when it is legally proven that another body, organization, people, and/or government has the legal and ethical right to the artifact.
- d) Once the decision to deaccession has been made, subsequent disposal will:
  - Adhere to all applicable laws;
  - Be in the best interest of the artifact, the Museum and the public;
  - Take into account any restrictions made when the artifact was gifted to the Museum;
  - Be in accordance with professional ethical standards;
  - Make every effort to keep the artifact in the public domain: artifacts with significant national, regional or local importance should be directed towards appropriate public institutions;

- Ensure that any receiving institution must be able to adequately care for the artifact;
  - Employ public sales that are open and transparent, through reputable auction houses or dealers. Funds thus gained must not be used for operational purposes, but for further developing the collection.
- e) If an artifact must be destroyed, the Curator and a representative of the Advisory Committee will witness the destruction.
- f) No artifact will be returned to its original owner (as stipulated by the Canada Revenue Agency).
- g) No artifact can be acquired by staff, Advisory Committee members, or their families.

## **9. Repatriation**

- The Fort Frances Museum will be committed to the return of culturally sensitive objects when requested by communities or groups with a demonstrable claim or historical relationship to them.
- Every request for restitution, repatriation or return will be given immediate and serious consideration, and treated with respect and sensitivity. Each request will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.
- In respect to First Nations peoples, the Museum will be guided by the Museums Association of Saskatchewan “Standards for the Care of First Nations and Métis Collections”.

## **10. Policy Review & Approval**

The Collection Management Policy will be reviewed every three years by the Curator, Museum Advisory Committee and Community Services Manager. Recommended changes will be forwarded to Town Council for approval.