



MARTHA'S VINEYARD MUSEUM
COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
OCTOBER 23, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction: Overview of the Martha’s Vineyard Museum	1
	A. Mission	1
	B. History of the Martha’s Vineyard Museum	1
	C. Legal Status and Organizational Structure	2
II.	Statement of Authority	2
	A. Board Authority and Responsibilities	2
	B. Staff Authority and Responsibilities	3
III.	Scope of Collections	4
	A. Introduction	4
	B. History of the Collections	4
	C. Collecting Guidelines	5
IV.	Categories of Collections	5
V.	Acquisitions and Accessions	5
VI.	Deaccessions and Disposal	7
VII.	Loans	9
	A. Outgoing Loans	9
	B. Incoming Loans	9
	C. Old Loans	10
VIII.	Objects in Custody	10
IX.	Documentation	11
X.	Collections Care	11
XI.	Insurance	12
XII.	Access and Use	13
XIII.	Intellectual Property	13
XIV.	Ethics	14
XV.	Collections Management Policy Review and Revision	14

I. Introduction: Overview of the Martha's Vineyard Museum (MVM)

A. Mission

The MVM's Mission, approved by the Board of Directors on Aug 18, 2008:

The Martha's Vineyard Museum is dedicated to furthering an interest in, experience of, and appreciation for the history and culture of the Island and its environs.

In order to achieve these goals the Museum will:

- Mount exhibitions on a variety of topics
- Present collaborative educational programs
- Actively involve the people of Martha's Vineyard
- Support scholarly research
- Preserve and add to its museum, library, and archive collections

B. History of the Martha's Vineyard Museum

The Martha's Vineyard Museum was founded as the Dukes County Historical Society in 1922 and incorporated the following year. The Society's founders devoted a great deal of their time, energy, and resources to the documentation of the Island's role in American history and the community's involvement in the maritime industry. In 1996, acknowledging the fact that the Society's collections relate exclusively to Martha's Vineyard and recognizing that the Cuttyhunk Historical Society serves the only town in Dukes County that is not on the Vineyard, the organization changed its name to the Martha's Vineyard Historical Society. In 2006 the organization began calling itself the Martha's Vineyard Museum in order to better convey its collecting, exhibiting, educational, and programming goals. The name change became official in 2010.

The Society met in libraries, churches, and private homes until 1932, when it acquired the Cooke House in Edgartown (built in the early 1700s). This structure was converted into offices and exhibition space without compromising its architectural integrity. It became the Society's headquarters.

By 1947, the Society required more space to accommodate its growing collections and serve its increasing membership. It purchased the property adjoining the Cooke House and, over the following three decades, built four structures on the newly acquired land: a small tower to house an original 1854 Fresnel lens from the Gay Head lighthouse; a gate house; a library building (1954), and later an addition to it for exhibition space and archival storage (1978); and a carriage shed (1954) to store and exhibit the museum's largest collection objects.

The purchase in 1989 of the Captain Francis Pease House (c.1840) allowed further expansion of the campus. Offices, collections storage, exhibit galleries, and a museum shop are currently located in the Pease house. The present Edgartown campus is about one acre in size, and is located at School and Cooke Streets, two blocks south of Main Street.

The museum interprets the entire island of Martha's Vineyard on its Edgartown campus through exhibitions of its collections, but the Gay Head, East Chop, and Edgartown

lighthouses extend its presence beyond Edgartown. The Coast Guard gave the museum stewardship of these important historic buildings in 1995. They are open to visitors during the summer months.

Since its founding, the organization has preserved the material culture of the Vineyard through its three dimensional collections and the history of the Vineyard through its archives and library. In 1959 the Dukes County Historical Society began publishing *The Dukes County Intelligencer*, a journal dedicated to examining the history of the Vineyard and its people. The organization has also, through the years, published books and booklets on subjects pertaining to Vineyard history.

In 1993, the Oral History Center was established at the MVM with the mission to promote the preservation and collection of Vineyard history, past and present, through recorded oral history interviews and related materials. The Center has established an archive of over 1400 oral history interviews with Vineyard people. The archive of tapes, transcripts and photos is housed on the museum campus in the Gale Huntington Library, where it is available to the public for purposes of education, research and enjoyment. The Center promotes the use of oral history as a learning tool and trains others in the techniques of oral history collection. Whenever possible oral histories are integrated into the Museum's exhibits to enhance and enrich the visitor's experience.

C. Legal Status and Organizational Structure

The Martha's Vineyard Museum is a private non-profit corporation incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The governance of the museum is vested in a Board of Directors elected from the membership.

II. Statement of Authority

This section articulates the authority and responsibilities of the Boards and Staff of the MVM with regard to the collections.

A. Board Authority and Responsibilities:

The Board of Directors of the MVM must actively exercise its fiduciary responsibilities, thereby insuring that the collections are well managed. This is accomplished through the establishment and regular review of the Collections Management Policy and the performance of other duties, as follows:

- Approval of all accessions valued greater than \$5000
- Approval of all deaccessions
- Establishment of the **Collection Committee**. This standing committee of 7 to 9 members includes Board members; pertinent staff members, including the Executive Director and Chief Curator; and representatives from the MV community. The committee oversees all collections. Its responsibilities include:
 - Review of potential donations having values greater than \$5000 and forwarding positive recommendations to the Board
 - Approval of purchase of objects and archives for the collection
 - Recommending deaccessions to the Board

- Ensuring proper storage, care, and security for the collections, as outlined in section X of this policy (below, page 11)
- Development and review of collections-related policy and planning documents; submitting such documents to the Board for approval
- Seeking funding for purchase of new collections and for collections care

In addition, the Collection Committee will be consulted as needed in exceptional situations involving collections. Such situations might include:

- Accepting or refusing an object that would place an extraordinary financial burden on the museum to store or care for
- Accepting an object that does not fall clearly into the collecting guidelines set forth in section III.C of this policy (below, page 4)

B. Staff Authority and Responsibilities:

The small size of the MVM’s staff requires that members of the Curatorial Department work together as a team to provide for the proper management and care of collections, with an obligation to share responsibilities as the situation may require.

The Board of the MVM delegates authority to accept gifts valued at \$5000 or less to the **Chief Curator**.

The Board of the MVM delegates authority to sign Deeds of Gift for accessions to **Chief Curator**.

The **Chief Curator** coordinates all activities relating to collections, maintains close communication with the Executive Director and the Collection Committee, and supervises the members of the museum’s curatorial department. The Chief Curator is also responsible for:

- the physical care of the collections, balancing the need for conservation and maintenance of each object with the need for public access and research, exhibition, and staff research
- presenting potential accessions and deaccessions, to the Collection Committee along with recommendations for committee action
- approving incoming and outgoing loans
- insuring the physical well-being of the collections through proper risk management
- creating and maintaining detailed collections records
- creating procedures for carrying out the provisions of the Collections Management Policy
- insuring that all staff and volunteers who handle collections are properly trained

The **Assistant Curator** has primary responsibility for evaluating needs of collections that are being considered for exhibition and providing care and monitoring of exhibited collections. The Assistant Curator also aids the Chief Curator in day-to-day collections care responsibilities.

The **Oral History Curator** has primary responsibility for managing and maintaining the oral history collection through:

- creating and maintaining detailed records of the oral history collection
- preserving the oral history collection through proper back-up and storage
- providing access to the collection

The **Library Assistant** schedules research appointments and insures that visitors and staff using archives and library materials are supervised by a qualified staff member or volunteer

III. Scope of Collections

A. Introduction

The MVM collects objects and archives that relate to the natural history, culture, and history of Martha's Vineyard. This section of the Collections Management Policy describes the collections of The MVM and provides guidelines for future acquisitions.

B. History of the Collections

For most of its history, the museum collected materials relating to:

- the Vineyard's maritime industry and legacy
- European settlement of the Island
- the Wampanoag people
- the genealogy of Vineyard residents
- the Island's place in American history

Early collecting focused on the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, but in the 1990s the museum extended its collecting to include all periods of Martha's Vineyard history up to the present. The Oral History Center, in particular, has contributed greatly to the museum's goal of collecting the more recent history of the Vineyard.

With the exception of oral histories, most of the collections were donated or bequeathed to the museum. This passive collecting has resulted in a rich collection that is used in exhibits and by researchers to convey the island's history. However, it does not represent the breadth of Vineyard history that the museum strives to interpret. As the Martha's Vineyard Museum moves forward, it will actively seek out materials relating to people and eras currently underrepresented in the collections.

C. Collecting Guidelines

In keeping with the Museum's mission statement, the focus of the collections shall be on items that further an interest in, experience of, and appreciation for the history and culture of the Island and its environs. The museum collects relevant materials from all time periods and strives to include archives, oral histories, and objects that represent the diverse communities that contribute to the culture of Martha's Vineyard. A more detailed description of the materials that the museum collects and does not collect will be found in the Martha's Vineyard Museum's Collecting Plan.

IV. Categories of Collections

The MVM holds four distinct types of collections, which are treated differently according to their purpose.

Permanent Collections – These materials are maintained at the highest standard of care, require the most complete documentation, and are held in public trust for the foreseeable future.

- Objects – works of fine and decorative art; material culture
- Oral Histories – recordings and associated photographs and documents
- Archives – original documents and photographs

Collections for use – These large accessioned objects are actively used and maintained by properly trained individuals who have been approved by the MVM. Unlike most of the collections, they will suffer wear and tear that may necessitate repair or replacement of significant parts, repainting, or other maintenance. All collections for use are identified as such in the accession records. General guidelines for the care and treatment of these objects will be included in the Collections Procedures Manual and specific guidelines and maintenance records will be placed in the object files.

Library – Materials in this collection are under control of the Chief Curator and do not fall under this policy. Prior to the date of this policy, library materials were assigned accession numbers in addition to Dewey decimal numbers. Accessioned library holdings will be individually evaluated to determine whether they should remain in the accessioned collection as objects or be deaccessioned to the library collection.

Education Collection – Items in this collection are unaccessioned and intended to be used in hands-on activities and demonstrations. They may be authentic pieces or reproductions. Management of the Education Collection is the responsibility of the Education Director and does not fall under this policy.

V. Acquisitions and Accessions

Accessioning is the formal process of legally accepting objects into museum collections. The MVM may acquire collections through gift, purchase, exchange, transfer, bequest, or field collection. It will only accession objects that fulfill the **requirements for accessioned collections**, set forth below, that it intends to keep for the foreseeable future.

The Chief Curator is responsible for accessioning and cataloguing the collections as outlined in The MVM's Collections Management Procedures Manual. Each accessioned object will have a record of the date of its receipt, how it was acquired, name and address of the donor or vendor, and date of accession. If available, the records will also include information about and documentation of the provenance of the object and its appraised value.

All documentation relating to accessioned collections is kept in the care of the Chief Curator. This includes the file containing the Deed of Gift, as well as any receipts, appraisals, or other

paper records associated with the object. In addition, each accession will be recorded in the MVM's computer collections database.

The standard of nomenclature for cataloguing accessions is the Chenhall taxonomic system, supplemented when necessary by the Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus, Union List of Artist Names, and the Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names. The standard of nomenclature for archives, library, and oral histories is the Library of Congress Authorities.

Requirements for accessioned collections:

All new accessions, however acquired, must:

- conform to the MVM's mission
- enhance and strengthen existing collections or conform to the MVM's collecting guidelines (III.C, page 4, above)
- have a clear title
- be designated for the permanent collections
- be ethically acquired
- if applicable, comply with all requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990

The MVM will not acquire new objects for its collections unless it is able to adequately store and care for them. For this reason, the MVM will accept no new large objects into the collections until an improved storage facility is constructed, purchased, or put into place in one of its existing buildings. The Chief Curator will determine if resources exist for the MVM to adequately store and care for any proposed addition to the collections and make recommendations to the Collection Committee regarding whether or not to accept materials offered for the collections.

Gifts

The MVM will only accession gifts that conform to the requirements for accessioned collections.

A Deed of Gift shall be executed for all donations to the collections. This document lists the objects in the gift. It must be signed by the Chief Curator and the donor, who must have legal authority to convey title. The MVM does not accept conditional, partial, or fractional gifts. A promised or deferred gift will only be allowed under terms of a written contract.

The MVM will not make, arrange, or pay for appraisals of donations. Internal appraisals (e.g. for insurance purposes) will not be shared with donors. Donors who wish to take a charitable deduction are solely responsible for fulfilling IRS requirements for their non-cash charitable donations.

Bequests

The MVM will only accession bequests that conform to the requirements for accessioned collections. The MVM reserves the right to refuse bequeathed objects that do not meet these criteria, or to choose to accept only a portion of the bequest. The MVM also reserves the right to refuse conditional bequests and bequests of objects for which it cannot properly provide care or storage. For all bequests, copies of the will shall be retained in the accession file.

Purchases

All purchases of objects for the collections must be initiated or reviewed by the Chief Curator and approved by the Collection Committee. The method used to evaluate the purchase price and provenance must be documented and the documentation retained in the accession file.

Transfer

A transfer of property will be considered for accession in the same manner as other acquisitions.

Exchanges

Exchanges are treated as two separate collections management actions. Incoming objects are considered for acquisition in the same manner as other acquisitions and must be approved before the exchange takes place. Title transfer documentation appropriate to the type of acquisition is retained in the object's accession file. Outgoing objects must be deaccessioned in accordance with Museum Policy.

Field collected objects

The MVM does not accept field collected materials if there is reasonable cause to believe their recovery involved the unauthorized, unscientific, or intentional destruction or damage of terrestrial or underwater archaeological or geological sites, or species and natural habitats. In the same way, acquisition will not occur if there has been a failure to disclose the finds to the owner or occupier of the land, or to the proper legal or governmental authorities.

VI. Deaccessions and Disposal

Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning is the formal process of removing accessioned objects from a museum collection. The MVM may deaccession collections objects when they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the object is inconsistent with The MVM's mission
- the object is so badly damaged or in such poor condition that it cannot support the MVM's research or exhibition functions
- the object cannot be properly stored or cared for by the MVM
- the object is not authentic or lacks museum quality
- the object represents unnecessary duplication of other collections objects
- ownership of the object is illegal, dangerous, or unethical

Objects that meet criteria for deaccessioning may only be deaccessioned in accordance with the procedures set forth in the MVM's Collections Management Procedures Manual. All deaccessions must be recommended by the Collection Committee and approved by the Board.

No object may be deaccessioned that has been in the collection of the MVM for less than three years.

All accession records for deaccessioned objects must be kept, including the records created in the

process of deaccession (those which justify the deaccession). Accession numbers may not be reused.

The MVM may only deaccession objects to which it holds clear title. Legal counsel must be consulted if title to a proposed deaccession is questionable.

Legal counsel must be consulted before proceeding with deaccession of objects that carry restrictions as conditions of ownership by the MVM.

In some instances, loaned objects have been assigned accession numbers. As these objects were never owned by the MVM or formally accessioned into the collections, it is not necessary to deaccession them when they are returned to their owners. However, records for these objects must be retained and the disposition of the object must be clearly noted (see section VII on loans, below, page 9).

Missing or stolen objects will not be deaccessioned.

In an effort to maintain positive community relations, the MVM may, at its option, inform donors or heirs prior to the deaccession of specific objects if such items are judged to be of notable personal or family significance.

Guidelines for disposal of deaccessions

The MVM may dispose of deaccessioned collections by the following methods:

- **Transfer** to the MVM's Education Collection or to another museum, repository, or educational institution (If an object is deaccessioned solely because it cannot be properly stored or cared for by the MVM, then transfer to another museum, repository, or educational institution where it will continue to be accessible to the public is the preferred method of disposal.)
- **Exchange** with another museum, repository, or educational institution for an object of equal or greater value that meets the requirements for accessioned collections
- **Sale** at public auction or public sale
- **Repatriation** in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990
- **Destruction**, if the object has deteriorated or been damaged beyond repair, poses a health hazard, or holds neither intrinsic nor monetary value

MVM employees, Board members of the MVM, Collection Committee members, and their immediate family members may not purchase or otherwise benefit from the disposition of a deaccessioned object.

Use of proceeds resulting from deaccession

Funds resulting from the sale or disposition of deaccessioned objects will be used solely for the purchase of acquisitions for the collections or for the conservation of specific objects in the collections. The MVM will have a segregated account that may be used only for this purpose.

VII. Loans

A. Outgoing Loans

Loans of collections objects may be made to other museums for purposes of exhibition, scholarly research, or educational use. Loans must clearly benefit public interests and the interests of the MVM. Loan documentation is processed by the Chief Curator, who has the authority to sign all loan forms. The Chief Curator may delegate authority to sign loan forms to the Assistant Curator.

Requests for loans must be made in writing. The Chief Curator will evaluate the request and approve or disapprove the loan based on the condition and availability of the object, as well as the prospective borrower's ability to insure its proper care and security.

Loans are made for periods of one year or less and may be renewed yearly at the discretion of the Chief Curator.

The Collection Committee has the authority to make exceptions to the outgoing loans policy (longer loan period, or loans to non-museum entities, for example) if a compelling reason is provided. Justification of exceptions must be written and placed in the object file.

All outgoing loans are subject to the conditions set forth on the Outgoing Loan Agreement, which must be signed by the borrower before the object leaves the MVM's custody. The MVM may charge a loan fee and/or require the borrower to provide a professional, outside appraisal for insurance purposes.

B. Incoming Loans

The MVM borrows objects for specific purposes, such as exhibition. As of the date of the adoption of this Collections Management Policy, the MVM will accept no incoming loans with terms longer than one year, renewable yearly up to five years at the discretion of the Chief Curator. For policy relating to longer-term loans already in place, see "Long-term loans" under heading C, "Old loans," below.

The Collection Committee has the authority to make exceptions to the incoming loans policy (longer loan period, for example) if a compelling reason is provided. Justification of exceptions must be written and placed in the object file.

The MVM will abide by conditions set forth in the Incoming Loan Agreement, which may be the MVM's form or one provided by a lending institution. The MVM does not accept incoming loans offered for the purpose of commercial exploitation of the object or to increase the value of the object when sold.

The museum does not provide long- or short-term storage services except in cases where a lender of archival materials agrees to allow public access to the materials.

The MVM applies the same legal and ethical standards to incoming loans that it applies to acquisition of collections.

The MVM applies the same standard of care to incoming loans that it applies to its own collections unless a higher standard is stipulated by the lender in the Incoming Loan Agreement.

C. Old Loans

Long-term loans

The MVM will begin a systematic review of all objects in the museum on long-term loan. If ownership of these materials cannot be transferred to the MVM, they will be returned to the lender, loan agreements will be updated and renewed, or special repository agreements will be executed with the lending institution. Only loaned objects that conform to the requirements for accessioned collections will be kept by the MVM.

In some cases objects that have long been on indefinite loan to the MVM have been assigned accession numbers. These objects do not need to be formally deaccessioned upon return to their owners because ownership was never transferred to the MVM.

Loans where the owner cannot be identified

In cases where the owner of a loaned object cannot be identified, the MVM will retain the object under the same standard of care as its accessioned collections until its status is resolved. Massachusetts currently does not have a law to assist museums in managing old loans. The MVM will apply common-law principles to resolve the old loan, including making good-faith efforts to locate the owners or heirs to the property. The MVM will consult with legal counsel in these matters and retain all records of its efforts to resolve the problems associated with old loans.

VIII. Objects in Custody

Temporary custody

Objects may be left in custody of the MVM for examination for purchase or approval as a gift. Only the Chief Curator and Assistant Curator have authority to accept objects and archives into temporary custody. The Oral History Curator has authority to accept documents and photographs associated with oral histories into temporary custody.

If necessary, the Chief Curator or the Assistant Curator may designate another staff member to receive an object if an appointment has been made in advance.

Authentication and identification

The MVM does not accept objects for authentication or identification. Oral assessments may be provided by knowledgeable staff, but it must be made clear that the MVM does not warrant the accuracy of this information.

Objects found in collection

Objects that lack documentation are referred to as “found in collection” (FIC) and are assumed to be the property of the MVM.

IX. Documentation

All documentation relating to collections is kept in the care of the Chief Curator. The Chief Curator is responsible for creating and maintaining these records or delegating this responsibility to individuals trained in the documentation procedures that are set forth in the Collections Management Manual.

Documentation includes the following paper files:

- Accession ledgers
- Accession files containing Deeds of Gift, receipts, appraisals, or other paper records associated with the object.
- Card files
- Deaccession files
- Loan files

In addition to its paper files, each accession is recorded in the MVM's computerized collections database. The database records reflect the information in the paper files. In addition, they contain up-to-date condition, location, and movement records. The database is backed up weekly and the backup records are stored in a location remote from the MVM's server and the primary database computer.

X. Collections Care

It is the MVM's goal to care for its accessioned collections in accordance with professional standards. Detailed collections care procedures are set forth in the Collections Management Manual, the Housekeeping Plan, and will be part of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan when it is complete. These procedures address or will address the following preventive conservation measures:

- Monitoring of environmental conditions to mitigate against damage caused by extremes of temperature and rapid fluctuation of temperature and relative humidity
- Proper storage. Until the MVM has storage facilities where all collections can be kept in suitable conditions, the MVM will strive to store collections in existing spaces that meet the preservation requirements of collections as closely as possible. The Chief Curator is responsible for determining the best storage locations for collections objects based on their preservation requirements and vulnerability to damage and theft.
- Proper handling of objects in the collections to protect against damage from direct physical forces
- Emergency preparedness to mitigate damage to collections from natural and man-made disasters
- Integrated pest management
- Routine housekeeping in exhibition and storage spaces to prevent damage from dust, gasses, and particulate pollutants
- Light control to prevent damage from ultra-violet and visible light

- Security requirements to protect against theft and vandalism. Protections in place will include:
 - o Alarm systems for all buildings in which collections are stored or exhibited
 - o Key control
 - o Documentation of object movement to prevent loss or misplacement.
 - o Restricted, monitored access to collections storage by the public and non-collections staff

The MVM's staff members work together to insure the protection of the collections. The Chief Curator is responsible for the overall care of the collections, including the training of staff and volunteers who work with collections objects. Only persons approved by the curator may handle collections

Researchers who use the archival collections must read the Guidelines for use of the Archives, which include handling instructions, and agree to abide by them. The staff member or volunteer who is staffing the archives is responsible for insuring that visiting researchers are handling archival collections properly.

Conservation treatments of collections objects must be recommended by the Chief Curator and authorized by the Collection Committee. With the exception of the collections for use (see IV above, page 5), conservation treatments may only be done by professional conservators.

Periodic inventories provide a systematic, itemized accounting of the objects in the collections and verify their locations. Inventory of the collections is the responsibility of the Chief Curator, who selects and trains staff and volunteers to assist in the process. Complete inventories of the accessioned collections are undertaken every four years. Partial inventories are conducted at the discretion of the curator and in all situations where security may have been compromised.

Objects that have been discovered to be missing during inventory will be reported immediately to the Executive Director and the Chief Curator.

XI. Insurance

The MVM currently does not insure its collections unless they are off campus and not under its direct control, such as in the case of outgoing loans. Currently, available funds are used for the security and care of the collections in an attempt to prevent loss, rather than towards insurance, which only provides compensation after a loss has occurred.

Incoming loans will be insured according to the terms of the loan agreement.

Outgoing loans will be insured by the borrower for their full value as determined by the Chief Curator.

Payments resulting from insurance claims for damaged, stolen, or destroyed collection objects may only be used to conserve the objects or replace them with similar objects. In the case of a

total loss, proceeds from an insurance claim must be used as if they were proceeds from the sale of a deaccessioned object (see VI above, page 7).

XII. Access and Use

The MVM recognizes its responsibility to provide access to its collections while insuring their preservation for future generations. Public access to the collections is provided primarily through long- and short-term exhibitions. Collections may also be made available to the public for research, publication, and other educational uses. Access to archives and collections in storage depends on available, trained staff and volunteers to retrieve objects, monitor their use, and return them to their storage locations. Access also depends on the availability of clean spaces of adequate size to safely use the collections.

Access to collections and archives by researchers and members of the general public must be supervised by trained staff or volunteers and must be scheduled in advance through the Chief Curator or staff member or volunteer designated by the curator. The curator or designated supervisor will advise researchers of proper use and handling of collections and will exercise judgment when determining who has access to collections. All use of archives and collections must be conducted in accordance with procedures set forth in the Collections Management Procedures Manual.

Collections records will be made available to the public at the discretion of the Chief Curator. Monetary value of collections objects will not be disclosed and the privacy rights of donors will be protected.

Photography is not permitted in the exhibition spaces of the museum without advance permission from the Executive Director, Chief Curator or the Assistant Curator. Reproduction of photographs, archives, and objects in the collections is governed by the Reproductions Policy, which is included in the Collections Management Procedures Manual.

Activities which may place the collections at risk are restricted. The restrictions are outlined in handling guidelines and events guidelines, which are included in the Collections Management Procedures Manual.

XIII. Intellectual Property

The MVM complies with Federal copyright law. The MVM presumes to hold copyright to collections objects acquired before 1978 unless such rights were expressly reserved by the donor or seller.

Printed, manuscript, and photographic objects in the MVM's collections may be reproduced as provided under the fair use provision of the United States copyright law. The MVM may refuse to permit the copying of any collection object if such reproduction would violate copyright law, violate the donor agreement, or potentially damage the object.

Other restrictions and fees for use are set forth in the MVM's Reproduction Policy.

XIV. Ethics

Staff, Board members, and volunteers of the MVM are required to sign and abide by codes of ethics that govern all operations of the MVM, including the care and management of collections. The MVM is currently in the process of revising these codes and developing an Institutional Code of Ethics, which will supersede current codes of ethics.

XVI. Collections Management Policy Review and Revision

This Collections Management Policy supersedes all previous Collections Policies of the MVM. The Collections Management Policy will be reviewed every five years by the Collection Committee. Changes to the policy must be approved by the MVM Board of Directors.

The Executive Director designates that the Chief Curator monitor compliance with the Collections Management Policy.

Approved by MVM Board of Directors 10/23/2010
Updated to reflect Mission change of 2/10/2011