

Gift Information for Donors

The museum relies on the generosity and support of the public to help us collect, preserve, and share the cultural heritage of our area. We hope the following information will help folks better understand the nature of the museum's collections and the conditions under which they are given and used.

What We Collect

The museum collects objects that document the rich and unique history of Rogers and the surrounding area. While emphasis is placed on those items specific to Benton County's history, the museum occasionally collects objects from outside the area, especially if they enhance already existing collections or are representative of objects generally available in the area.

The museum is committed to preserving the history of the community for future generations. To that end special care is given to collections in the areas of handling, exhibition, and storage. Acid-free storage materials, low light levels, and good housekeeping are just a few of the ways the museum ensures a long life to the objects entrusted to its care.

When an object is donated to the museum it is accessioned (formally added) into one of five collections, depending upon the object's nature and condition, how it will be used, and who may use it. The donor signs a Deed of Gift, officially declaring that he or she is the legal owner of the object and gives it "irrevocably and unconditionally" to the museum.

Permanent Collection - Objects placed in the Permanent Collection consist of historic photographs, documents, textiles, tools, memorabilia, books, etc. These objects are given the greatest care and form the core of the museum's collection. The Permanent Collection is used for exhibition and research purposes. It may be used by museum staff or loaned to qualified museums.

Teaching Collection - Objects placed in the Teaching Collection consist of modern replicas, objects without historical importance, and objects deaccessioned (formally removed) from the Permanent Collection. These objects are used in supervised hands-on activities for children and adults, as well as in the "Attic" and "First Street" exhibits. The Teaching Collection receives adequate care, but, because of its purpose, may experience wear and tear. The Teaching Collection may be used by museum staff or its representatives.

Image Collection - Objects placed in the Image Collection consist of photos of museum events, copies of objects in the Permanent Collection, reproduction photos, and copies of original photos loaned to the museum. The Image Collection is used for research, publications, educational programs, and exhibitions, and to fulfill requests from the public. It may be used by museum staff and the public.

Research Collection - Objects placed in the Research Collection consist of books, magazine articles, newspaper clippings, etc. The Research Collection may be used for exhibition, program, and collections research by museum staff. It may be used by the public.

Museum Archives - Objects placed in the Museum Archives consist of programs, posters, records, memorabilia, etc., concerning the museum. The Museum Archives is a repository of the museum's history. It may be used for exhibits and research by museum staff.

Collections Policies

Restrictions such as those requiring permanent display, specific labeling, or unconditional access may

not be placed on any object donated to the museum.

The museum does not continuously exhibit Permanent Collection objects. Objects are taken off exhibit from time to time in order to protect them and provide new interpretive exhibits to the public. The exceptions to this policy are for the majority of objects on display in the historic 1895 Hawkins House and on "First Street," the museum's two long-term exhibits.

The museum maintains the right to deaccession any object from any collection in accordance with its Collections Management Policy. Some of the criteria for deaccessioning include loss of historical authenticity, physical integrity, or relevance to the museum's mission and goals. The decision to deaccession will be cautious, deliberate, and scrupulous. To that end, the museum is very careful as to what it adds to its collections.

The museum subscribes to the current "Code of Ethics" adopted by the American Association of Museums. The Code addresses such collections issues as rightful ownership, documentation, care and safety, accountability, accessibility, and responsible disposal.

Donors wishing to claim an income-tax deduction may need to have the gift appraised. Museum staff cannot offer appraisals. Since tax laws are subject to change, donors should consult the IRS or a knowledgeable tax expert about current requirements. Click [here](#) for more information about appraisals and tax deductions.