

New questions and sustainability in Collections Care

or

....When is good, good enough when
dealing with Collections

Presented by:

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Websites, List-serves and groups:

<http://museumpests.web.zaks.com/> - This site is divided into four main sections (prevention, monitoring, identification, treatment) expanding on the main elements listed above which are necessary in developing, implementing and managing an **IPM plan for your institution** – whatever your collection type.

http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/conservation/cons_toc.html – They are short, **focused leaflets** about **caring for museum objects**, published in loose-leaf format. New topics are added as needed and out-of-date issues are revised or deleted. Semiannual supplements will be issued for an indeterminate period.

<http://www.spnhc.org/> - Society for the preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) is an international organization devoted to **the preservation, conservation and management of natural history collections**.

<http://www.aam-us.org/> - "The American Association of Museums' mission is to **strengthen museums** through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and service."

***Other resources I use:

RCAAM, NHColl, Museumpest.net, LinkedIn AAM discussion group, MCN-L, blogs, etc.....

Websites, list-serves and groups cont'd



<http://www.minnesotamuseums.org/> - Minnesota Association of Museums (MAM) The Minnesota Association of Museums provides **a forum for individuals** who work in and with museums throughout the state.

<http://learningtimeevents.org/c2c/> - The free Connecting to Collections **Webinar series** featured six live online sessions. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), in partnership with Heritage Preservation and the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), presented a webinar series based on the national initiative *Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action*. These six webinars are **free** of charge to staff of museums, libraries, and archives who seek to enhance collections care at their institutions. **This site runs the archived sessions!**

<http://www.midwestmuseums.org/> - The Association of Midwest Museums (AMM) is an organization that provides resources to museums and cultural institutions and services to museum professionals in an eight-state **region** in the Midwest, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Books that I think are helpful:

- **Museum Registration Methods 5th Edition – AAM Press**
- **Museum Wise – Workplace words defined – SPNHC**
- **A legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections - Marie C. Malaro**
- **National Standards & Best Practices - AAM Press**
- **Storage of Natural History Collections: Ideas and Practical Solutions – SPNHC**
- **The Small Museum Toolkit: An "At Your Fingertips" Resource for Small Museums –*The Small Museum Toolkit will be available in late 2011 from AltaMira Press.***
Check <http://www.altamirapress.com/WhatsNew/> for updates.
This six-book series will address the following topics and features contributions from over 30 authors, most of whom are small museum practitioners:
Mission & Governance, Development & Financial Management, Audience & Evaluation, Organizational Management, Interpretation: Education, Programs & Exhibits, Stewardship: Collections & Historic Preservation



Fiduciary Responsibilities In Practice

1. **Maintain the highest legal, ethical, and professional standards**
2. **Establish plans, policies, and procedures to guide operations**
3. **Delegate authority through policy and procedure**



What's the difference between plans, policies, and procedures?

Plans	Policies	Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific goals • Rationale • How they will be achieved • Who will implement • When will it happen • What will it cost • Time-limited • Approved by governing authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General guidelines to regulate activities • Ethical and professional standards for exercising good judgment • Delegate authority for implementation • Not inherently time-limited • Approved by governing authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed methodology for performing activities • Protocols to follow when implementing policy • Succinct directions to accomplish a specific task • Step-by-step "how to" • Approved at the staff level



Collections Storage Vault (11/18/04)

What is Collections Planning?

“Collections planning is the process of creating a plan that guides the content of the collections and leads staff in a coordinated and uniform direction over a period of years to refine and expand the value of the collections in a predetermined way. By creating a plan, a museum seeks to gain intellectual control over collections, ensure that the collections support the mission of the museum, reinforce its interpretation and research activities, and ensure adequate resources for collections acquisition and care” (AAM web site).

Why Collections Planning?

**“The Accreditation Commission has identified a pattern of recurring problems connected to collections stewardship and institutional planning: insufficient resources to support collections; collections unrelated to the institution’s mission; and a lack of integration between planning for collections, interpretation, and facilities”
Gardner & Merritt (2002)
*Museum News.***



Collection Policy

“A detailed written statement that explains why a museum is in operation and how it goes about its business. The policy articulates the professional standards regarding objects left in its care and serves as a guide for the staff and as a source of information for the public.”

Malaro (1998) *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*.

Covers broad range of collection related topics: scope of collections, acquisition, accession, deaccession, intellectual control, preservation, security, use of collection, collection ethics, loan, insurance, rights and reproduction, abandoned property, and cultural sensitivity and repatriation.

Why Develop a Collection Policy?...besides fiduciary accountability

1. Can be presented to potential donors as a way of fully disclosing acquisition and accession criteria and policy, standards of care, and use of collections
2. Policy is preventive—without clear direction, poor decisions will be made
3. Policy sets the precedent and functions as a guide for staff
4. Required for AMM accreditation—indicator of adherence to national standards and best practice

Contents of a Collection Policy



- Introduction
- Standards of Conduct and Ethics
- Scope of Collections
- Acquisitions and Accessions
- Deaccessions
- Utilization of Collections

- Abandoned Property
- Care of Collections
- Repatriation and Management of Culturally Sensitive Material
- Loans
- Insurance
- Authorization



[Note: SMM Collections Policy section on deaccessioning is a part of "Things GREAT and SMALL - Collections Management Policies" by John E. Simmons Chapter 8 pages 61-62](#)

SMM collection policy on our website

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window with the title "Collections Management Policy - Netscape". The address bar contains the URL "http://www.smm.org/research/Collections/collmgmtpolicy.php". The page content includes the Science Museum of Minnesota logo, a search bar, and a navigation menu with categories like "Visitor Information", "Education Programs", "Research & Collections", "Science Activities", and "Get Involved". The main content area features the title "Policy Statement on Collections Management" (approved by Board of Trustees on 12-8-04), a "Table of Contents" with links to sections like Introduction, Staff Responsibilities, Ethics, Accessioning, Care and Conservation, Use and Access, Exhibits and Interpretation, Loans, Deaccessioning, Culturally Sensitive Materials, Review of Policy, and Bibliography. Below this is an "Appendices" section with links to Appendix A through G, covering topics like NAGPRA compliance, deaccessioning guidelines, and pest management. The page begins with an "INTRODUCTION" section titled "Mission and Responsibilities".

Science Museum of Minnesota

Search

Visitor Information
Education Programs
Research & Collections

- About Us
- ▶ Anthropology
- ▶ Biology
- ▶ Paleontology
- ▶ SCWRS
- ▼ Collections
 - Current Projects
 - Collections Move
 - Staff
- ▶ Conservation
- Object Identifying
- ▶ Scientific Publications
- Object of the Month

Science Activities
Get Involved
Sales & Services

Policy Statement on Collections Management

(approved by Board of Trustees on 12-8-04)

Table of Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Staff Responsibilities](#)
- [Ethics](#)
- [Accessioning](#)
- [Care and Conservation](#)
- [Use and Access](#)
- [Exhibits and Interpretation](#)
- [Loans](#)
- [Deaccessioning](#)
- [Culturally Sensitive Materials](#)
- [Review of Policy](#)
- [Bibliography](#)

Appendices

- Appendix A- [Procedures for Compliance with NAGPRA](#)
- Appendix B- [Deaccessioning Guidelines](#)
- Appendix C- [Definition of Terms](#)
- Appendix D- [Policies for Image Reproduction and Use](#)
- Appendix E- [Conditions Governing Loans to the Museum](#)
- Appendix F- [Conditions Governing Loans from the Museum](#)
- Appendix G- [Integrated Pest Management Procedures](#)

INTRODUCTION

Mission and Responsibilities

The Science Museum of Minnesota (hereafter Museum) limits ownership of all objects to

start AMM Collection Work... contents of collection... Collections Managem... 2:59 PM

Things that work for me.....

Numbering, accessions and paper product: keep it simple but complete and legible!

Using volunteers with collections work: it usually is a good thing

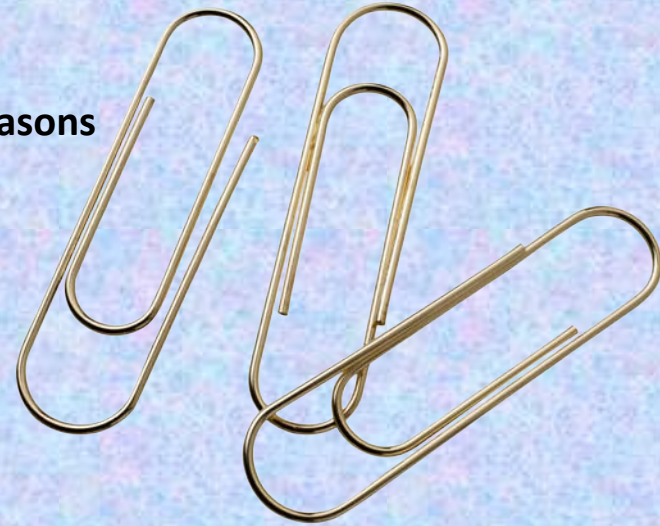
Collections Plan – even a rough draft is a good idea for SO many reasons

Priorities – how to decide or can you?

Caring for collections now and for the future – think farther out

Electronic material coming in to support collections – ACK!!!!

Your best defense is a good offense – by that I mean taking the time to have policies and procedures in place



Thanks for listening.....

Good Enough

Collections Care on a Shoestring
Scott County Historical Society –
Stans Museum

Constraints

- Large lobby windows
- Basement collection storage area
- Limited collection space
- Limited staff & budget

Large Lobby Windows



- Installed UV filters
- We try not to display sensitive materials

Center Hall Gallery – Light spills from lobby windows into galleries



- Closely monitor light levels
- Rotate items on display
- Use facsimiles when possible



Purchased light meter through a grant from MN Valley Electric Cooperative



For exhibits, we...

- create body forms out of ethafoam, poly & stockinette,
- paint/prime exposed wood
- adjust light cans (using a light meter)

- Secure collection items, in cases, encapsulate
- monitor items and rotate as needed...



Collection Storage Area

Florescent Lights

Overhead water pipes

Furnace vent

Damp wall

Cramped shelving

Wood Flooring

Four HVAC furnaces





Landscaped to mitigate water infiltration

Organized – in PastPerfect

Dehumidifier

Ethafoam buffer

Raised 4" off cement floor

Sump pump

Locked collection cages

Limited Collection Space



Curator's Office

- Store sensitive collection items including paper items, negatives, photographs...
- House collection paperwork files



- Organize limited space
- Hang items
- Use stairwell



Limited Staff & Budget



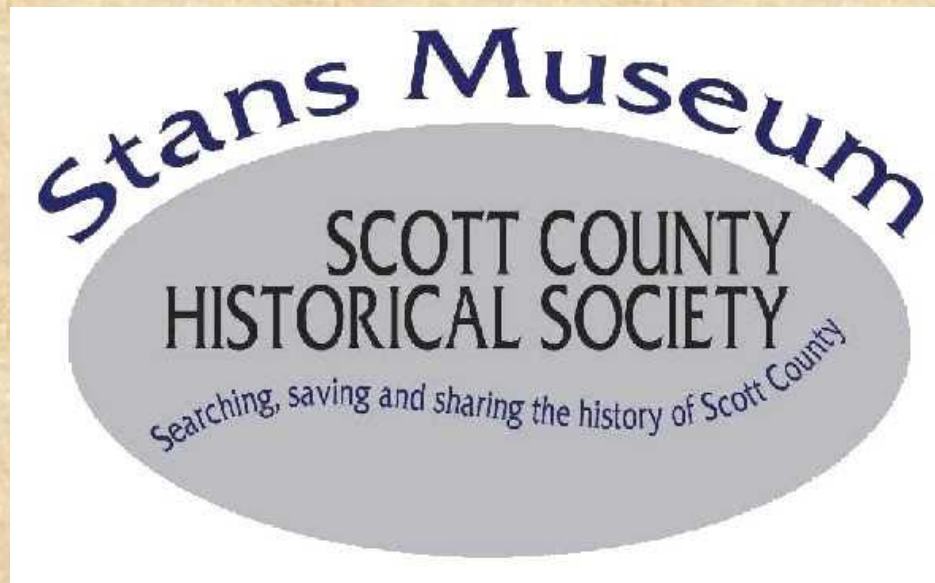
Volunteers – *Gotta LOVE 'em*

- Inventory boxes
- Repack items
- Sew muslin bags for oversized textiles
- Sew in labels, ...
- Work on specific projects in depth

(ex: digitize oral history tapes, enter information into PastPerfect, organize deed of gifts & related paperwork)



We write grants, and seek sponsorships and donations to purchase archival supplies, light meter, hobos and various other items related to collections care.



Executive Director: Kathleen Klehr

Curator: Theresa Norman

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Conservation Supply Sources

Acid-free tissue paper:

- Conservation Resources, 4432 Port Royal Rd., Springfield, VA 22151, 800-634-6932, www.conservationresources.com
- Light Impressions, PO Box 787, Brea, CA 92822-0787, 800-828-6216, www.lightimpressionsdirect.com
- Talas, 20 West 20th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011, 212-219-0770, www.talas-nyc.com
- University Products, 517 Main St., PO Box 101, Holyoke, MA 01041-0101, 800-628-1912, www.universityproducts.com

Unbleached, unsized muslin:

- TestFabrics, Inc., 415 Delaware Ave., Po Box 26, West Pittston, PA 18643, 570-603-0432, www.testfabrics.com

Acid-free textile storage boxes:

- Conservation Resources, 4432 Port Royal Rd., Springfield, VA 22151, 800-634-6932, www.conservationresources.com
- Light Impressions, PO Box 787, Brea, CA 92822-0787, 800-828-6216, www.lightimpressionsdirect.com
- MuseuM Services Corporation, 385 Bridgepoint Drive, South Saint Paul, MN 55075, 800-672-8954, 651-450-8954, www.museumservicescorporation.com
- University Products, 517 Main St., PO Box 101, Holyoke, MA 01041-0101, 800-628-1912, www.universityproducts.com

Textile and Conservation Related Websites:

- www.conservation-us.org - American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works
- www.americanquilter.com - American Quilter's Society
- www.cci-icc.gc.ca - Canadian Conservation Institute
- www.preservation.gc.ca - Canadian Conservation Institute, Preserving My Heritage
- www.nps.gov/hfc - Harpers Ferry Center
- Midwest Regional Conservation Guild
- www.seregistrars.org/Tools.html - Southeastern Registrars Association

Textile Care Bibliography

- **Alig, D. and H. Mailand, *Preserving Textile: a guide for the nonspecialist*. Indianapolis, IN: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1999.**
- **Emery, I. *The Primary Structure of Fabrics: an illustrated classification*. London, Thames & Hudson, 1994**
- **Perry, D., et al. *Identification of Textile Materials*. Manchester, UK: The Textile Institute, 1985.**
- **Sullivan, Brigid. *Guidelines for Furnishings Maintenance and Protection*. Harpers Ferry Center: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1991.**

Thanks for coming and listening...

Questions or comments?

****Note: all of the information presented will be on the MAM site**

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