

Cyrenius H. Booth Library Archives Collections Management Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library ["library"] was established in 1932 through the bequest of Mary E. Hawley. In addition to funds for the construction and operation of the library, Miss Hawley's gift included a donation of books, documents, furniture, textiles and other historical artifacts related to the Hawley, Booth and Edmond families. These materials and objects comprise the foundation of the library's archives, which has grown over the years to become an extensive and varied collection of items representing all aspects of life in the community of Newtown, Connecticut, over three-and-a-half centuries. The following Collections Management Policy describes standards and procedures for acquisition, deaccession, access, preservation and use of all materials in the Cyrenius H. Booth Library Archives ["the Archives"] collections.

II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The library, through its Archives, organizes and preserves documents, artifacts and other primary source material which promote an understanding of and appreciation for the history of the library as an institution, and of the Town of Newtown, Connecticut, in order to make these collections available for research, education and public enjoyment.

III. SCOPE OF THE COLLECTIONS

The Archives collections are comprised of analog and digital formats. The collections include, but are not limited to:

Books, pamphlets and other print material;

Non-print material including photographs;

Furniture and other artifacts;

Textiles including clothing;

Scrapbooks;

Framed artwork;

Newspapers and other serials;

Artifacts associated with library and/or town traditions or commemorating significant events or persons;

and,

Administrative documents such as minutes, correspondence and financial records.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Trustees and the Library Director have ultimate authority over and responsibility for the library, including its archival collections. Primary management authority [“the Authority”] of the Archives is invested in the Art and Historical Committee of the Board of Trustees, and in the Library Director, who oversees the daily implementation of this policy by the Head of Reference Services.

V. ARCHIVES ACQUISITION POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

Development of the Archives collections will be guided by the Statement of Purpose (see Section II). Both analog and digital materials are eligible for acquisition.

A. Materials Relevant for Acquisition

The library will acquire materials that have historically significant value for the library as an institution, and for the Town of Newtown, Connecticut. These materials may include: books, manuscripts, audiovisual materials, photographs, biofacts, artifacts, artwork, correspondence, and newspaper clippings. Any item selected for the Archives must undergo an assessment to determine whether or not it is appropriate for inclusion.

B. Method of Acquisition

Gifts and Bequests: Gifts and bequests may be accepted for the Archives if they meet the criteria of this acquisition policy.

Exchange: Exchanges with other institutions may be made in accordance with collection objectives outlined in this policy.

C. Selective Acquisition

Acquisition will be selective to prevent indiscriminate growth of collections. In addition to criteria outlined above in sections A and B, when making decisions regarding acquisition, the Authorities will consider the ability to provide adequate storage and preservation for materials, as well as the ability to make accessioned materials available for research, education and public enjoyment.

D. Declining Acquisitions

Items and artifacts not conforming to Materials Relevant for Acquisition outlined above in section A or meeting any Selective Acquisition criteria in section C above will not be acquired by the library. Wherever possible, the library will direct the owner of materials declined for acquisition to another institution, archives or public collection.

E. Library Discretion

The library will not accept any materials it has reason to believe were acquired by unethical or illegal means.

F. Acknowledgement

All gifts to the collection will be acknowledged by the Library Director in writing in accordance with the Library Gift Policy. The Library Director will provide the donor with a copy of the Gift Policy.

G. Appraisals

The library will not provide appraisal services to donors or other interested parties.

VI. DEACCESSIONS

Although one of the primary purposes of the Archives collections are to preserve and maintain objects for the long-term use and enjoyment of researchers and the general public, it is occasionally appropriate to deaccession items in order to refine and improve the collections. Due to constraints of budget, staff time and space, the ability of the library to adequately care for all of its collections while providing for future growth must be taken into consideration.

Deaccessioning may be considered when materials no longer contribute to the stated purpose and collection objectives of the library, when their retention violates the Collections Management Policy, or when they are in such seriously deteriorated condition that they have lost their research and education potential. An item proposed for disposal is considered on the basis of its documentation, attribution and provenance, condition, quality, research and education potential and restrictions of use. The presence of duplicate items in the collections will also be considered in making deaccession decisions.

A. Initiating Deaccession

A written deaccession proposal will be made to the Authorities. The proposal will include a statement of justification for recommending deaccession and the proposed method of disposal.

No object may be deaccessioned without the signature of the Library Director. The entire process will be documented and permanent records will be kept in the library.

B. Methods of Disposal

The method of disposal will be determined on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Library Director. Methods of disposal may include, but are not limited to: return of the item to the donor; trade or donation of the item to another institution; sale of the item; destruction of the item.

VII. ACCESS

The library is committed to making research materials available to users on equal terms of access. This is in accordance with the standard professional policy on access adopted by the Society of American Archivists and the American Library Association.

A. Physical Access

The Archives collection will be open to researchers for reference use by special appointment.

The Reference Services Department staff will assist researchers in the use of catalogs and finding aids and retrieve items as requested.

The library reserves the right to restrict use of materials which are exceptionally fragile. Duplicates such as photocopies, typescripts, or digital surrogates may be supplied in place of original materials.

The library is under no obligation to facilitate access to the Archives collections for purposes that are inconsistent or in conflict with its commitment to preservation, education and public enjoyment.

B. Collections Care

The library recognizes the need for adequate storage for all collections, based upon approved professional standards regarding temperature, light, and humidity levels. Every effort will be made to ensure that the conditions of storage, use, and exhibition are conducive to prolonging the life of Archives materials, consistent with the mission and institutional goals of the library.

C. Insurance

The library building and contents are covered under the property coverage section of the library's insurance policy through the town of Newtown. The Authorities will schedule appraisals of the archival collections as needed to aid in the estimate of necessary coverage. Additions/deaccessions that affect value estimates will be reported as requested by the Library Board of Trustees. Should they warrant, specific items may be individually insured as determined by the Authorities

D. Records and Documentation

The Library Director shall oversee the establishment and updating of any inventory, catalog or finding aid pertaining to the collections of the Archives. All records regarding the acquisition, accessioning and deaccessioning of archival materials will be maintained and retained according to the regulations of the State of Connecticut.

E. Restrictions to Access

The library strives to promote broad use of all of its collections. Catalogs and other finding aids will be developed to ensure easy access to archival materials. In rare cases where information is deemed confidential by the staff, every effort will be made to extract or copy relevant non-confidential information from the document.

F. Loan Policy

The archival collections are non-circulating; materials are not loaned to individuals. Loans to other institutions are made as determined by the Authorities. Each loan request is judged on its own merits. Some objects in the collection are not available for loan, including those judged to be too fragile or uniquely integral to the archival collection.

G. Rights and Reproduction

The library is responsible for safeguarding and preserving the physical and intellectual integrity of all of its collections. All requests for duplication will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Head of Reference Services will provide photocopies or digital scans of materials which are suited to these processes, within any limits determined to be necessary to protect the originals from damage.

Requests for permission to publish must be submitted in writing to the Library Director. The library does not hold copyright on all materials in its collections. Users are responsible for obtaining permission to publish from any other copyright holders. The researcher assumes all responsibility for complying with libel, privacy and copyright laws.

VIII. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library Archives collections exist to provide access to unique, irreplaceable and culturally valuable materials that reflect the long and vibrant history of the library and its community. Any eventuality or circumstance not addressed in this Collections Management Policy will be informed by the principles of preservation and by an enduring commitment to retaining the historical heritage of the library, and of the Town of Newtown, Connecticut, through its archival records.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees, 4-10-2018