



## Acquisition Policy

*Approved by the Board of Trustees 5/3/1984*

For the purpose of this policy, acquisition is defined as the discovery, preliminary evaluation, negotiation for, taking custody of, documenting title to, and acknowledging receipt of materials and objects.

1. Since the quality and relevance of its collections are vital to the usefulness of a museum, certain conditions must be carefully considered before items are added to the collection.
  - a. Acquisitions should be directly related to and further the goals and priorities of the museum indicated in its statement of purpose. (Bylaws of the Shiloh Museum, Article II)
  - b. The museum must be able to provide proper storage and care for its artifacts.
  - c. The museum must be able to properly record, research, and catalog items to insure their availability for research, education, exhibit, and loan.
  - d. Acquisitions will not be accepted with the express purpose of selling, trading, or in any other way immediately disposing of the item(s).
  
2. The director and/or the Acquisitions Committee will be responsible for the addition of artifacts to the collection.
  - a. The museum must be satisfied with reasonable certainty that a specimen or collection was obtained legally and ethically by the donor.
  - b. The primary area of interest in new acquisitions should relate to Northwest Arkansas, which may be defined as Washington, Benton, Madison, Newton, Carroll, and Boone Counties and adjacent areas which are closely related historically or geographically.
  - c. Special collections or individual items which do not fit the collection policy as stated (section 2B) may be added to the collection after acceptance has been approved by a majority of the members of the Acquisitions Committee.
  - d. Artifacts accepted for the collection will have an age of 50 years or more, but other items of less than 50 years may be accepted if they are of unique historical value and/or of public interest.
  - e. Items may be refused for these reasons:
    - Not in the museum field of interest or mission statement
    - Museum already has better examples
    - Storage space not available
    - Staff not available for care and processing
    - Artifact has lost its value because of deterioration
    - Authenticity cannot be established
    - Not old enough
    - Legal ownerships of the item(s) is not clear
  - f. Some items that are not suitable for the museum's permanent collection may be accepted and designated as property. These items might then be used as tools or for such things as exhibit backgrounds or educational hands-on activities.

3. Titles to objects should be obtained free and clear of any restrictions and qualifications of any kind. Promise of permanent display of any items shall not be given. Any restrictions and/or qualifications must be approved by the Acquisitions Committee. If restrictions are unavoidable every effort will be made to impose a reasonable time for which they will apply and define the conditions under which the restrictions will be terminated. Restrictions and conditions shall be made part of the permanent documentation of the item(s). All property donated to or purchased by the museum may be used or disposed of by the museum at its discretion as outlined in the deaccessioning policy.

4. Instrument of gift forms must be signed, one copy being held in the museum, one copy deposited in the City administration files, and one copy be supplied to the donor. Information on the form shall include: donor's name, address, phone number, date donation received, accession number (if it is to be added as part of the permanent collection), and donation description.

5. The director will keep the Acquisition Committee informed as to special needs relating to artifacts. Members of the committee will seek such items by donation or purchase and will cooperate with the director in selection and purchase.

6. Donations of specimens or collections to the museum are tax deductible. However, museum personnel cannot appraise the monetary value of such collections.

7. Museum staff members may not collect privately in the areas covered by the museum or, if they do, they must offer the museum first chance at any object they plan to acquire, or offer to sell, at cost, any object they have acquired while employed by the museum.

8. As a public service, the staff may attempt to attribute, identify, or authenticate items brought to the Shiloh Museum by the public. The museum is not responsible for items left at the museum. Such objects are not to be deposited on museum premises longer than thirty days. The museum accepts no responsibility for notification of individuals for the return of such deposits. Items not claimed within sixty days of deposit are considered abandoned property and as such are subject to state law pertaining to same. Abandoned property of negligible value may be disposed of by the director. Property of greater than negligible value may be disposed of under law by the board of trustees.

9. This policy will be reviewed at least every five years.