

**EDITH WHARTON RESTORATION, INC.**

**COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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**Approved by the Board of Trustees on June 19, 2004**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. Statement of Purpose</b>	<b>4</b>
A. Mission Statement	
B. Collections Authority	
C. Collections Fund	
<b>II. Scope of Collection</b>	<b>5</b>
A. Permanent Collection	
B. Prop Collection	
C. Collecting Goals	
<b>III. Guidelines and Procedures for New Acquisitions</b>	<b>7</b>
A. General Statements	
B. Criteria for Acquisition	
C. Authority for Acquisition	
D. Accession Process	
<b>IV. Guidelines and Procedures for Deaccessions</b>	<b>10</b>
A. General Statements	
B. Deaccession Criteria	
C. Deaccession Process	
D. Disposal	
E. Proceeds from Deaccessioning	
F. Deaccessioning Records	
<b>V. Guidelines and Procedures for Incoming and Outgoing Loans</b>	<b>12</b>
A. Authority	
B. Temporary Deposits	
C. Outgoing Loans	
D. Incoming Loans for Wharton-era Period Rooms	
E. Loan Process	
<b>VI. Guidelines and Procedures for Access to and Use of the Permanent Collection</b>	<b>17</b>
A. Statement of Purpose	
B. Authority	
C. Requests for Access to the Collection	
<b>VII. Guidelines and Procedures for Care of the Permanent Collection</b>	<b>20</b>
A. Authority	
B. Care and Maintenance	

<b>VIII. Guidelines and Procedures for Documentation of the Permanent Collection</b>	<b>22</b>
A. Authority	
B. Methods	
C. Security	
<b>IX. Ethics</b>	<b>23</b>
A. General	
B. AAM's <i>Code of Ethics for Museums</i>	
C. Use of Collections	
D. Personal Collections	
E. Gifts and Compensation	
<b>X. Appendices</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>XI. Credits</b>	<b>25</b>

## **I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

This Collections Policy sets forth Edith Wharton Restoration, Inc. [EWR]'s guidelines for the day-to-day management of its collections by the organization's Board of Trustees, staff, and volunteers. Any amendment or revision of these policies requires the approval of EWR's Board of Trustees. Any exceptions to this policy must be formally approved by the Interior Restoration Committee and the Board of Trustees.

### **A. Mission Statement**

Edith Wharton Restoration, Inc. was founded in 1980 to preserve and restore The Mount as a tribute to its remarkable creator and to establish it as a center for recognizing women of achievement.

EWR's guiding principles are: preservation, restoration, education, and quality in all endeavors.

### **B. Collections Authority**

EWR's Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility for collections management oversight to the Interior Restoration Committee. The Interior Restoration Committee is an Edith Wharton Restoration governance committee comprised of EWR board members and other volunteers possessing experience and skills related to interior restoration and collections management. The Board Chairman, President, Vice President, Curator of Collections, and Restoration Manager are ex officio members of the Interior Restoration committee.

The Interior Restoration Committee assumes responsibility for the following duties:

1. Periodically review EWR's Collections Policy and ensure that it remains germane to the organization's collection activities.
2. At the close of each fiscal year, review, approve, and submit to the Board of Trustees a report detailing the year's collections activities prepared by the Curator of Collections.
3. Approve, disapprove, or in special cases provide the Board of Trustees with a formal proposal recommendation for Board action, proposals for collections acquisitions, deaccessions, and loans.
4. Oversee and authorize the disposal of funds from EWR's Collections Fund.
5. Perform other duties and functions as assigned by the Board of Trustees.

### **C. Collections Fund**

The Collections Fund shall consist of proceeds from the disposal of items from the Permanent Collection and from designated contributions. The fund shall be applied toward the acquisition of items for the Permanent Collection or conservation activities benefiting items in the Permanent Collection.

## II. SCOPE OF COLLECTION

EWR's collections are comprised of the following groups:

### A. Permanent Collection

EWR possesses a Permanent Collection as part of and in accordance with its mission to preserve and restore The Mount. The Permanent Collection is defined as works of art, decorative arts, artifacts, archival materials, memorabilia, architectural fragments, and other items related to or illuminating the history of The Mount. Items in the Permanent Collection are owned for educational and documentation purposes related to EWR's mission and managed according to generally accepted professional museum standards and practices.

Following is a selected list of items currently in EWR's Permanent Collection:

1. Items original to The Mount. These items include a *Pan of Rohallion* sculpture by Frederick MacMonnies in The Mount's Entrance Hall and a set of 15 oil paintings set into the walls in The Mount's Stair Hall, Den, Dining Room, and Boudoir.
2. Items formerly belonging to Edith Wharton. These items include two steamer trunks; a silver punch bowl and christening cup; three books from her library; several pillowcases, sheets, and other linens; a brush marked "Wharton" given to her coachman; a pair of Wharton family crystal decanters; a watercolor portrait of Wharton as a young child; three portraits of Wharton's father and two brothers by John Ehninger; and two watercolor views of Wharton's house Pavillon Colombe by Robert Norton.
3. Furnishings and decorative arts items displayed in The Mount to interpret Edith Wharton's interior design for The Mount and residence at The Mount between 1902 and 1911. These items include a French wall clock; a French oil still life painting attributed to Monnoyer; a marble portrait bust; and several pieces of furniture.
4. Library and archival items pertaining to The Mount and Edith Wharton's life and works. These items include architectural plans for The Mount by Ogden Codman, Jr. and Francis Hoppin; editions of Wharton's work; original Wharton manuscripts; copies of original Wharton manuscripts; publications and manuscripts about The Mount and Edith Wharton, both primary and secondary; original photographs and postcards depicting The Mount and Edith Wharton; and copies of photographs depicting The Mount and Edith Wharton.
5. Architectural and archaeological fragments from The Mount. These items include documents of original building components, techniques, and practices; samples of elements that were not retained during restoration work; and items excavated on The Mount's property.

## **B. Prop Collection**

The Prop Collection is defined as modern or historic items used for educational and visitor services purposes related to EWR's mission. Items in the Prop Collection are considered in service and expendable and therefore are not subject to this collection's management policy. However, items acquired by EWR for its Prop Collection will be documented and marked according to the discretion of the Curator in a manner that will ensure their differentiation from items in the Permanent Collection.

## **C. Collecting Goals**

### **1. High Priority Collecting Goals**

- a. To acquire items original to The Mount.
- b. To acquire items formerly belonging to Edith Wharton, with a special emphasis on those pieces that may be used for exhibition and display purposes.
- d. To acquire items that replicate missing or unavailable original pieces from The Mount for exhibition and display purposes. In cases in which historic photographs are known to exist, such items should replicate the original pieces as closely as possible. In cases in which historic photographs are not available, such items should reflect well-researched conclusions regarding Wharton's known preferences and/or common practices of her time and social position.

### **2. Other Collecting Goals**

- a. To continue to acquire items for the archives and library augmenting our understanding of The Mount and Edith Wharton.
- b. To continue to acquire architectural and archaeological items, such as documents of original building components, techniques, and practices; samples of elements that were not retained during restoration work; and items excavated on The Mount's property.

### **III. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR NEW ACQUISITIONS**

#### **A. General Statements**

1. EWR accessioned items into its Permanent Collection after thoughtful deliberation, recognizing the boundaries of its Collections Plan and its ethical obligation to store, maintain, conserve, document, and make accessible to the public accessioned items.
2. Items may be acquired for the Permanent Collection by gift, bequest, purchase, exchange, excavation, or other means. An item can be accessioned only after it is in EWR's possession. A legal instrument adequately describing the items and the conditions of transfer must accompany the acquisition. Once EWR has acquired title to the item through a legal instrument of conveyance, the donor or seller no longer has any legal claim to the item. All items accepted into EWR's collections become the exclusive property of EWR, and, if unrestricted, may be displayed, loaned, retained, or disposed of in the best interest of EWR and the public it serves.

#### **B. Criteria for Acquisition**

Items considered for acceptance into the Permanent Collection should meet the following criteria:

1. Relevance. Items should be relevant to and consistent with EWR's mission and Collections Plan.
2. Nonduplication. Items should fill a unique gap in the existing Permanent Collection. With rare exceptions, items that duplicate existing holdings should not be acquired.
3. Duration. EWR should intend to keep the item in the Permanent Collection as long as it retains its physical integrity, authenticity, and relevance to EWR's mission.
4. Title and Provenance. Title to all items should be obtained free and clear through the form of a Deed of Gift or Bill of Sale. No item should be acquired if there is any doubt as to the legality of its ownership or origin. Specifically, items that are illegally appropriated or imported into the United States in violation of its laws or the laws of the country of export should not be acquired.
5. Restricted Gifts. Title to all items should be obtained free and clear without restrictions as to the items' use, display, or future disposition, including conditions that the items be displayed as a memorial to the donor or his or her assignee. Exceptions for extraordinary cases may be made with the recommendation of the President and approval of the Interior Restoration Committee and Board of Trustees. If items are accepted with restrictions, the conditions will be stated clearly in an instrument of conveyance, will be made part of the accession records for the items, and will be strictly observed by EWR.
6. Physical Condition. Items should not be considered for acquisition unless they are in good physical condition and do not require extensive conservation. Exceptions may be

made in cases in which items are original to The Mount, were owned by Edith Wharton, or replicate an element that is otherwise impossible to acquire.

7. Rights. Items should be transferred to EWR with all, or as many as feasible, pertinent literary rights, property rights, copyrights, patents, or trademarks.

### **C. Authority for Acquisition**

1. Responsibility for administering the acquisition process is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the President and by the President to the Curator.
2. The President delegates responsibility for preparation of formal acquisition proposals to the Curator. Acquisition proposals should be completed for each prospective purchase and each acquisition by means other than purchase that does not fully meet the acquisitions criteria set forth herein. The proposal should provide sufficient information to allow the President, Interior Restoration Committee, and Board of Trustees to render an informed decision.
3. The Interior Restoration Committee delegates expenditure authority not to exceed \$10,000 per annum to the President for the purchase of items that support EWR's Collections Plan. In situations where quick decisions must be made, the Curator is authorized to spend up to \$1,000 without first consulting the President. The Curator will submit an acquisition proposal to the President, and once approved by the President, formal notice of the acquisition and copies of the acquisition proposal will be provided to the Interior Restoration Committee. The exercise of this expenditure authority must be consistent with and adhere to the acquisition criteria set forth herein.
4. Once the President has exhausted the \$10,000 of allocated acquisition funds, the Curator will submit acquisition proposals directly to the Interior Restoration Committee. The Committee authorizes the purchase of items with an appraised value of \$30,000 or less. The Board of Trustees, acting on the recommendation of the Interior Restoration Committee, will authorize the purchase of objects with an appraised value exceeding \$30,000.
5. Items offered to EWR as gifts which meet the acquisition criteria set forth herein may be accepted by the Curator or President at their own discretion. Formal notice of receipt of these gifts must be provided in writing to the Interior Restoration Committee.
6. The acquisition of items will be documented as set forth herein in a manner consistent with generally accepted professional museum standards and practices. The documentation will be recorded and maintained as part of the EWR archives by the Curator. Formal notice of each gift must be provided in writing to the EWR staff member managing development records to ensure that the donor receives proper acknowledgement.



7. Items should normally only be accepted if the intent of EWR is to accession them. With the donor's prior agreement, items not suitable for accession may be accepted by EWR with the intent of using the items for educational purposes or selling the items.

8. Gifts of collection items must be in compliance with applicable tax law and subject to the scrutiny of applicable review or audit. Donors who provide gifts of collection items must comply with various tax laws and regulations in preparing their income tax returns.

#### **D. Accession Process**

1. Items entering the temporary custody of EWR for the purpose of their evaluation for possible acquisition will be considered temporary deposits. The Curator will document such temporary deposits according to accepted museum standards and practices. Items in temporary custody are not generally insured by EWR.

2. Items acquired by EWR for accessioning into the Permanent Collection will be properly registered by the Curator in a timely manner.

3. The accessioning process will involve completion of such documentation as a Deed of Gift and Bill of Sale and the establishment of a unique control number and permanent record for the item or group of items being accessioned. The item's permanent record will include a brief description of the item and its provenance, title and legal status, and a condition photograph.

## **IV. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEACCESSIONS**

### **A. General Statements**

EWR deaccessions items from its Permanent Collection after thoughtful deliberation and with careful consideration of the interests of the public.

### **B. Deaccession Criteria**

Deaccessioning is justified when one or more of the conditions exists:

1. The item no longer fits within the framework of the EWR Collection Plan and the stated mission of EWR.
2. The item is a duplicate of an existing item in the Permanent Collection.
3. The item is not authentic. An accurate description provided during sale or exchange of the item must reflect this fact.
4. The item's physical condition severely hinders its usefulness for exhibition and/or research.
5. The item's deteriorated condition is of such magnitude that EWR is unable to properly care for the item.

### **C. Deaccession Process**

1. The responsibility for administering the deaccessioning process is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the President. Trustees and recognized authorities both inside and outside of EWR may recommend to the President that a specific item in the Permanent Collection be considered as a candidate for deaccessioning. The President will consult with the Curator to evaluate the recommendation within the framework of the EWR Collections Plan. The President will forward recommendations for deaccessioning to the Interior Restoration Committee in the form of a written proposal.
2. The President will delegate responsibility to the Curator for preparing the formal deaccession proposal. The written proposal should provide the Interior Restoration Committee, and in certain situations the Board of Trustees, with sufficient information to render an intelligent decision regarding the proposed deaccession. This information should include a recent appraisal of the proposed deaccession.
3. The Interior Restoration Committee may approve the deaccessioning of items appraised at \$5,000 or less. The Board of Trustees, acting on the recommendation of the Collections Committee, will authorize the deaccessioning of items with an appraised value in excess of \$5,000.
4. When considering items for deaccession, every reasonable effort must be made to establish that EWR holds clear title to the items and to determine if any restricting conditions apply. EWR reserves the right to take appropriate legal action to remove

restricting conditions if such action is judged necessary or proper by the professional staff and the Board of Trustees.

5. If an item proposed for deaccession was acquired by EWR by donation, the President will make reasonable efforts to notify living donors of the pending action if deemed advisable and appropriate by the professional staff, the Interior Restoration Committee, or the Board of Trustees.

#### **D. Disposal**

1. The method utilized for the disposal of the item must be one that reinforces the thoughtful and deliberative nature of the deaccessioning process. The order of preference for the method of disposal is:

- a. The direct sale or exchange of the item to another museum or nonprofit organization
  - b. The sale of the item at public auction
  - c. The consignment sale of the item via a private dealer
  - d. The direct sale of the item to a private dealer
  - e. In the case of poor condition or inability to dispose of through the previous four forms of disposition, through destruction
2. EWR will not engage in the private sale, exchange, or gift of deaccessioned items to individuals. The disposal process must provide no opportunity for EWR Trustees, employees or volunteers, or members of their immediate families, to acquire ownership of the item being disposed.
3. It is unacceptable for a deaccessioned item to be disposed of by sale at EWR's bookstore or gift shop.

#### **E. Proceeds from Deaccessioning**

Proceeds resulting from the disposal of items from the Permanent Collection shall be credited to EWR's Collections Fund. Such funds shall be applied in accordance with Section 1.C hereof.

#### **F. Deaccessioning Records**

1. The deaccessioning of items from the Permanent Collection will be documented in a manner consistent with professional museum standards and practices. All deaccession records will be maintained as part of EWR's archives.
2. The annual Collections Report to the Interior Restoration Committee and Board of Trustees will include information regarding deaccessioning proposals that have been approved or rejected during that year as well as proposals that are pending.

## **V. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR INCOMING AND OUTGOING LOANS**

### **A. Authority**

1. The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for administering the collections loan process to the President, who in turn delegates this responsibility to the Curator.
2. The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for approving outgoing and incoming loans to the Interior Restoration Committee.
3. The request for an incoming or outgoing loan will be submitted to the Interior Restoration Committee via a formal loan proposal. The President delegates responsibility for preparing the formal loan proposal to the Curator. The formal loan proposal will provide the Interior Restoration Committee, or if necessary, the Board of Trustees, with sufficient information to render an intelligent decision regarding loan approval.

### **B. Temporary Deposits**

EWR may temporarily take items into its custody for gift and loan approval, photography, or study. Temporarily deposited items are recorded by means of a temporary deposit receipt and are monitored for changes in condition and location. EWR is not liable for any loss or damage to the items on deposit and will not cover the items with insurance unless expressly agreed.

### **C. Outgoing Loans**

#### **1. Criteria for Outgoing Loans**

- a. EWR lends items from its Permanent Collection to appropriate organizations for educational purposes. EWR does not normally lend items to individuals or commercial institutions unless there is a significant educational benefit gained by the public from such a loan.
- b. EWR also lends items from its Permanent Collection for conservation and reproduction purposes.
- c. In reviewing loan requests, EWR considers the long-term well-being of the requested item. Items may not be lent if there is more than a reasonable risk of damage to the requested item from transit, the environment in which the loaned item is placed, or other factors.
- d. In reviewing loan requests, EWR considers its own needs for the requested item during the prospective loan period.

#### **2. Conditions for Outgoing Loans**

Approval of prospective loans for educational purposes is made subject to the borrowers' agreement to the following conditions:

- a. The prospective borrower will submit a formal loan request to EWR a minimum of 6 months in advance of the desired commencement date of the loan.

b. EWR's Outgoing Loan Agreement will be used as the legal contract for lending items from its Permanent Collection. Under no circumstances will a borrower's loan agreement also be signed and used for the same transaction.

c. The borrower will comply with all aspects of its previously submitted Facilities Report. Particular attention will be paid to the areas of loan insurance, loan packing and transportation, loan security, loan photography, and loan exhibition environment.

d. Outgoing loans are normally approved for periods not to exceed one year. Should the borrower desire an extension of the loan, 60 days' notice is required prior to the expiration of the initial loan period. The Interior Restoration Committee will consider requests for loan extensions utilizing the same criteria as for the original loan request.

e. EWR's Curator must review and approve each plan for transportation of loaned items to and from the location of the loan.

f. The borrower will reimburse EWR for all of its expenses resulting from the loan. Such expenses include loan insurance premiums, mutually agreed-upon conservation and loan preparations, required frames, mounts, packing materials and packing cases, loan transportation fees, forwarding agents' fees, loan photography, travel and subsistence costs incurred by any required loan couriers and/or EWR staff inspection of loans. Further discussion of insurance matters for incoming loans and temporary deposits is included in sections B (page 12) and D.2 (page 14).

g. No mark, labels or other adhesive material will be made or applied on any loaned item from EWR's Permanent Collection, whether it is intended that they be temporary or permanent in nature.

h. The content of any acknowledgements and/or descriptions in exhibit labels, loan catalogues, brochures, graphic tables, or other similar publications or visual aids must conform to information supplied by EWR for that specific purpose.

i. The Curator may authorize the borrower to reproduce or obtain official EWR photographs on a limited-use basis to promote exhibitions containing items on loan from EWR. Photographs representing EWR and/or its collections must be obtained from EWR for such purposes at the borrower's expense.

j. The borrower must not photograph, film, televise, or reproduce images of individual loan items provided by EWR without prior written permission of the Curator. To publicize those exhibitions that include loan items provided by EWR, the borrower may generate visual images providing a general view of the collective assembly of exhibited items.

k. In the event that EWR authorizes the borrowing organization to conduct photography, the borrower must ensure that any photographic lights utilized during the photography are placed no closer than 6 feet from the loan items.

l. The borrower must ensure that the loan items are not moved or touched while in the borrower's possession except by trained personnel.

m. The use of any loaned item from EWR for any commercial purpose is prohibited without prior written permission of the President.

n. In extenuating circumstances, or in cases where the borrower has failed to comply with EWR's Conditions for Outgoing Loans, EWR shall reserve the right to terminate a loan at any time during the period of the loan agreement. Upon written demand, the borrower shall return the loan within 10 working days.

#### **D. Incoming Loans for Wharton-Era Period Rooms**

##### **1. Criteria for Incoming Loans**

a. EWR borrows items from individuals and organizations for educational purposes in accordance with its mission.

b. EWR must be able to exercise reasonable professional care for the items it borrows.

c. EWR will not knowingly borrow items of questionable origin. If a question about the item's origin should arise after EWR receives the item, EWR may elect to withdraw the item from exhibition. If the ownership of a loaned item comes under question, EWR may at its discretion retain custody of the item until proper ownership has been established. In either situation, the Curator will notify the President and Interior Restoration Committee immediately.

##### **2. Conditions for Incoming Loans**

Approval of the prospective loan is subject to the following conditions:

a. EWR will not normally borrow items for a period exceeding one year. If the EWR staff should desire use of a loaned item past the approved loan period then an extension of the loan will be required. In this circumstance the Curator will make a formal recommendation to the Interior Restoration Committee that an extension of loan request be submitted to the lender. The period of the loan extension will not normally exceed one year; exceptions for extraordinary cases may be made with the approval of the Chairman of the Board and the Interior Restoration Committee.

b. Unless the lender expressly elects to maintain his own insurance coverage, EWR will insure loaned items under its fine arts insurance policy against certain physical loss or damage while on location at The Mount during the period of the

loan. EWR's fine arts policy is subject to the following standard exclusions: wear and tear; gradual deterioration; insects and animals; inherent vice; repairing, restoration, or retouching process; war, invasion, hostilities, or insurrection; terrorism; confiscation by order of any government or public authority; risks of contraband or illegal transportation and/or trade; business errors; and loss of market. Insurance will be placed in the amount specified by the lender, which must reflect fair market value. If the lender fails to indicate an amount, EWR, with the implied concurrence of the lender, will set a value only for purposes of insurance for the period of the loan. Said value is not to be considered an appraisal.

c. If the lender elects to maintain his own insurance, then prior to shipping EWR must be supplied with an Evidence of Property Insurance form, including a waiver of subrogation. EWR can accept no responsibility for any error or deficiency in information furnished to the lender's insurers or for lapses in coverage.

d. The lender must certify that the loaned items are in such condition as to withstand ordinary strains of packing, transportation, and handling.

e. Unless otherwise notified in writing by the lender, EWR may photograph, telecast, or otherwise reproduce the loaned items for educational, catalogue, or publicity purposes related to the purpose of the loan.

f. Incoming loans will be returned only to the lender or authorized agent, or, in the event of the death of the lender, to the authorized legal representative of the lender's estate. It is the lender's responsibility to notify EWR of any change of address. EWR assumes no responsibility to search for a lender who cannot be reached at the address of record. If EWR is unable to return the loan to the lender within 30 days after the termination of the loan period due to change of address and no arrangements have been made for the return, the loan will be stored at EWR at the lender's risk.

#### **E. Loan Process**

1. The Curator prepares a formal loan proposal and submits it to the Interior Restoration Committee.
2. The Interior Restoration Committee votes on the formal loan proposal and informs the Curator of its approval or rejection of the loan. In the case of a loan approval, the Interior Restoration Committee authorizes the Curator to enter into a loan agreement with the borrower or lender, subject to the borrower's or lender's acceptance of EWR's loan conditions. In the case of the rejection of a proposed outgoing loan, the Curator will immediately notify the borrower that their request has been denied.
3. The Interior Restoration Committee may decide that the extenuating circumstances surrounding a proposed outgoing or incoming loan warrant approval of the loan by the

Board of Trustees. In such cases the Interior Restoration Committee will present the Board of Trustees with the proposal and a recommendation to approve or reject the loan.

4. Loan proposals which are approved by the Interior Restoration Committee and/or Board of Trustees will be acknowledged in the annual Collections Report. The report will also note loan proposals that fail to receive approval from the Interior Restoration Committee.

5. In the case of loans made for conservation purposes, the Curator is authorized to approve the loan. In the case of loans made for reproduction purposes, the Curator is authorized to approve the loan in consultation with the Director of Retail. After approving loans for such cases, the Curator is responsible for informing the President of the decision.

6. The Curator will oversee the administration of each outgoing and incoming loan.

7. A written report as to the condition of each loaned item will be made at The Mount upon its arrival and departure. If a loaned item is damaged while in transit or while in possession by EWR, the lender will be notified immediately.



## **VI. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS TO AND USE OF THE PERMANENT COLLECTION**

### **A. Statement of Purpose**

EWR's Permanent Collection is preserved for the enjoyment and benefit of all and is made accessible to the public through exhibition, research, publication, reproduction, conservation, and educational programs. Professional standards guide the use of the Collection, ensuring its safety and protection.

### **B. Authority**

Responsibility for overseeing the access to and use of EWR's Permanent Collection is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the President and by the President to the Curator. Use of EWR's Collection for internal purposes, including exhibition, research, and educational programs, requires approval by the Curator. Outgoing loans require the approval of the Interior Restoration Committee.

### **C. Requests for Access to the Collection**

#### **1. Access to Collections Items and Collections Records**

- a. Individuals who wish to view items in the library, archives, or collections storage areas, or closely inspect items on exhibit, must seek permission from the Curator.
- b. Individuals viewing items in the library, archives, or collections storage areas, or closely inspecting items on exhibit, must be accompanied at all times by the Curator or a staff person designated by the Curator.
- c. Those given access to collections items must comply with EWR's approved policies regarding examination, handling, photography, and use and/or dissemination of information.
- d. Individuals who wish to access information in collections records must seek permission from the Curator. Such requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Certain kinds of information, such as donor identification and appraised values, may be considered privileged and therefore withheld.

#### **2. Photography**

- a. Personal Use. Building interiors and collections items may not be photographed during regular tours. Photography of building interiors and collections items requires prior written permission from EWR. EWR staff supervision is required and a fee may be charged to cover staff time and other associated expenses.
- b. Publication or Other Commercial Uses.
  1. Photographs of EWR collections items are supplied by EWR at the expense of the requesting party.

2. Building interiors may also be photographed with prior written permission. EWR staff supervision is required at the expense of the requesting party.

3. Fees associated with the publication or other commercial use of photographs of EWR collections items and building interiors are established by the Curator with the approval of the President. Such fees may be reduced or waived in certain cases where the President deems appropriate. Such cases include instances where the publication or commercial use of the images provides a substantial publicity benefit to EWR and The Mount.

3. Reproduction. No item in the EWR Permanent Collection may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, for any purpose other than personal use or educational purposes, without the prior written permission of the Curator or his/her designate. Reproductions from EWR's collections will be clearly marked as such. Collections items are reproduced only if reproduction can be carried out without jeopardizing the safety or condition of the original. EWR reserves the right to decline to authorize reproduction of items in its Permanent Collection. Reproductions fall into the following categories:

a. Commercial. EWR licenses reproductions of collections items with the approval of the President. EWR's Director of Retail is authorized to oversee the reproduction licensing process.

b. Individuals and non-profit organizations. Individuals may be allowed to reproduce collections items for personal use only. Nonprofit organizations may be allowed to reproduce collections items for educational purposes. The reproducer will sign a release form specifying the use of the reproduction before beginning the reproduction. For these users, fees may be charged to cover staff time.

4. Functions. Functions held within museum spaces heighten the risk of damage or loss to collections items from deterioration and accidents. Functions may only be held within designated museum spaces, and careful consideration must be given to the selection of these spaces.

a. The Curator and President are responsible for the designation of such spaces. The Curator may also designate essential or particularly fragile collections items that must be removed from designated spaces before each function.

b. Functions that may be held in designated museum spaces consist of events sponsored by EWR and those in which the space is rented by an outside party.

c. EWR staff must be present during functions to ensure the protection of collections items. For events in which the space is rented by an outside party,

fees may be charged to cover staff expenses and liability insurance for ensuring such collections protection.

5. Display and Storage of Collections Items in Offices.

a. Items from the Permanent Collection are only exhibited in administrative spaces when approved by the President in consultation with the Curator.

b. EWR will strive to create and improve separate collections storage rooms and facilities with the goal of removing all accessioned collections items from offices and other administrative spaces.

## **VII. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE CARE OF THE PERMANENT COLLECTION**

EWR acknowledges its legal and ethical responsibility to provide prudent care and protection of its collections, which are preserved for the benefit of the public.

### **A. Authority**

Responsibility for overseeing the care and protection of EWR's Permanent Collection is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the President and by the President to the Curator.

### **B. Care and Maintenance**

1. Environmental conditions. Environmental conditions, including temperature, relative humidity, light levels, dust and pollution levels, pests, and housing, are a critical factor in the care of EWR's collections. The improvement of the environmental conditions to levels in accordance with professional museum standards is a high priority. Any improvement, however, must be made in recognition of the importance of the fabric of the historic buildings in which many of EWR's collections items are exhibited and stored.

2. Handling and Transit.

a. Only those members of EWR's staff who must handle and move collections items as part of their regular responsibilities are authorized to do so. These personnel include the Curator, Housekeepers, and Facilities staff members. Exceptions may be made in emergency situations where the safety and/or security of the collections item is believed to be jeopardized.

b. All personnel authorized to handle and move collections items must be trained in object handling.

c. The Curator must approve each request to handle or move collections items beyond that required for regular housekeeping and maintenance purposes. Exceptions may be made in emergency situations where the safety and/or security of the collections item is believed to be jeopardized.

d. EWR holds harmless staff members authorized to handle and transport items in the Permanent Collection except in the case of gross negligence, fraud, or illegal conduct.

3. Conservation.

a. All items in EWR's Permanent Collections must be treated in accordance with the standards established by American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. No conservation techniques or materials that will result in an irreversible change to an item will be used. Treatments must be fully documented in writing through treatment proposals and reports and in photographs. If any significant original materials are removed during the treatment process, they must be preserved as part of the item's record.

- b. Only conservators who meet the highest professional standards will be selected.
  - c. All treatment proposals must be approved by the Curator. The Curator is responsible for overseeing the conservation process.
  - d. Conservation surveys setting out short and long-term goals for items in the Permanent Collection will be conducted as deemed necessary by the Curator and President.
4. Emergency Situations. EWR's first responsibility during emergency situations is to ensure the safety of its visitors and staff. Once their safety is assured, EWR will make every effort to protect its historic buildings and Permanent Collection from damage or loss resulting from emergency situations, such as loss of electrical power, fire, flooding, and windstorms. Such actions will include the preparation of an emergency plan and the installation of fire detection systems, fire suppression systems, and backup generators. However, any improvements must be made in recognition of the importance of the fabric of the historic buildings in which many of EWR's collections items are exhibited and stored.
5. Security. EWR shall undertake every effort within its means to protect the Permanent Collection from against loss or damage from theft or vandalism. Security is the responsibility of all EWR staff.
6. Insurance.
- a. EWR insures items in its Permanent Collection with a fine arts insurance policy.
  - b. The Interior Restoration Committee periodically reviews insurance matters as related to the collections and authorizes the Curator to oversee the day-to-day management of EWR's fine arts insurance policy.
  - c. EWR insures incoming loans if required by the lender under its fine arts insurance policy.
  - c. Outgoing loans must be insured by the borrower.

## **VIII. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE DOCUMENTATION OF THE PERMANENT COLLECTION**

EWR recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to maintain complete, accurate, and up-to-date collections records in an orderly and retrievable manner.

### **A. Authority**

Responsibility for overseeing the documentation of EWR's Permanent Collection is delegated by the Board of Trustees to the President and by the President to the Curator. The Curator is responsible for assuring the orderly management of information about the collections and for securing preservation of EWR's permanent collections records.

### **B. Methods**

1. In accordance with professional museum standards, EWR maintains paper records and computerized records of its collections items. The files include deeds of gift; bills of sale; staff correspondence with the donor, seller, lender, or borrower; photographs of collections items; appraisals of collections items; and records documenting the location and movement of collections items. Information relating to provenance, research, exhibition, publication, and conservation treatment histories is also contained in these files.
2. The Curator will conduct regular inventories of the collections to confirm their whereabouts.

### **C. Security**

1. The Board of Trustees authorizes members of the Interior Restoration Committee, the President, Vice President, and Curator to access the complete collections records. Selected items from collections files may be shared with other EWR staff and volunteers and other individuals as deemed appropriate and necessary.
2. EWR should maintain backup copies of accession records and inventories in an off-site location at all times; computer files should be regularly backed up, and paper records should be stored in fire-proof cabinets whenever possible.

## **IX. ETHICS**

### **A. General**

EWR holds its Permanent Collection in trust for the public, and its management of the Collection must ultimately be in the best interests of the public. The following ethical principles are endorsed by EWR in order to help its Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers meet this obligation. Some guidelines stated above are restated here in order to emphasize their importance.

### **B. AAM's *Code of Ethics for Museums***

EWR's Board of Trustees, volunteers, and staff employed in executive, administrative, curatorial, and supervisory positions should be aware of the broad ethical principles endorsed by museum professionals, specifically the American Association of Museum's *Code of Ethics for Museums*, approved by the AAM Board of Directors in 1991. EWR supports the *Code of Ethics for Museums* and expects its employees to observe its recommendations.

### **C. Use of Collections**

No EWR Trustee, volunteer or staff member should use or display in his or her home, or for any other personal purpose, any item that is part of the museum's collections or under the guardianship of the museum.

### **D. Personal Collections**

The following procedures are established to avoid conflicts of interests pertaining to the personal collections and collecting activities of EWR Trustees, volunteers, and staff.

1. No EWR Trustee, volunteer or staff member should compete with EWR in the acquisition of items that fall within the scope of EWR's collecting interests as detailed in the EWR Collections Plan. If uncertainty exists regarding the possible interest of EWR in a particular item, the EWR Trustee, volunteer, or staff member should make every effort to alert the museum in order to resolve the uncertainty before completing the purchase.
2. Family-related bequests, bona fide personal gifts from family members, and purchases of items from family members are exempt from EWR's option to acquire and any disclosure requirements.

### **E. Gifts and Compensation**

1. Gifts exceeding \$200.00 in value from gallery owners, dealers, or collectors may not be accepted by employees of EWR.
2. EWR staff may not financially profit from the knowledge and experience gained while employed by EWR. Any compensation for lectures, publications, and other activities directly related to work at EWR must only be accepted on behalf of the organization.

3. EWR's curatorial staff may not participate in the regular buying and selling of antiques and other works of art for profit. Accepting compensation from a dealer for time, expertise, or other services, or retention of a financial interest in a dealership, represents a conflict of interest.



## **X. APPENDICES**

- A. Receipt Form**
- B. Deed of Gift Form**
- C. In-Kind Donation Form**
- D. Incoming Loan Form**
- E. Incoming Loan Condition Report Form**
- F. Object Removal Form**

## **XI. CREDITS**

Sources for this policy include:

Historic Deerfield, Inc. *Collections Management Policy*. Unpublished 1994 document provided to the author by David E. Lazaro, Collections Manager.

Preservation Society of Newport County, Inc.. *Collections Management Policy*. Unpublished 2002 document provided to the author by Paul Miller, Curator.

Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now Historic New England). *Collections Management Policy*. Unpublished 1999 document provided to the author by Melinda Talbot Nasardinov, Assistant Curator.

Trustees of Reservations. *Collections Management Policy*. Unpublished 1998 document provided to the author by Will Garrison, Historic Resources Manager.

Edith Wharton Restoration, Inc., a private, non-profit organization, owns and operates The Mount, Edith Wharton's 1902 country estate in Lenox, Massachusetts.

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