



Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. Collection Management Policy

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Mission and Scope of Collection

The focus of the Watson's Mill collection pertains to the original objects of the Mill, its respective time period (1860-1920s), the heritage of the Manotick area, and flour milling technology.

The focus of the Dickinson House collection pertains to the history of the Dickinson family, (including the role that the Dickinson's' played in founding and helping to shape the economic and social development of Manotick) the respective time period (1870-1930), the heritage and people of the Manotick area and the subsequent mill and house owners.

Watson's Mill is committed to preserving and promoting the history Dickinson Square and Manotick through exhibitions and public programming; these activities are based on a growing collection of relevant, well-documented, and accessible artifacts and the continued use of the Mill. The artifacts in the Watson's Mill collection are irreplaceable, unique objects that represent the history of the Mill and the community of Manotick. To retain their information and historical value they are acquired, documented, conserved, exhibited, used, and handled according to the policies and procedures outlined in this document.

Legal Authority

Watson's Mill is the repository for a collection that is representative of Watson's Mill history, under the trusteeship of the Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. which is appointed by Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. Board. The collection is held and managed in the public trust. The President of Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. is ultimately responsible for the collection and the Curator ensures that collection management policies, guidelines, procedures and standards are developed and implemented.

The Curator and Assistant Curator will ensure that staff and volunteers who have physical access to the collection are trained in and use appropriate care and handling procedures. All safety regulations (WHMIS) must be followed by staff and volunteers.

Collection Development

The development of Watson's Mill collection follows the focus established by the mission statement. Collection development will meet both immediate and long-term goals of Dickinson Square. It is recognized that the priorities of the museum may change over time, due to storage capabilities, future exhibitions and recognitions of deficiencies in the collection.

Collections Committee

The Collections Committee is responsible for ensuring museum best practices are followed in regards to accessions and deaccessions. The Committee reviews and makes determinations on possible donations and validity of deaccessioning objects. A Collections Committee ensures transparency and reduces bias on what items are accepted or removed from the collection. The Committee alongside the Scope of Collection confirms that the collection remains relevant to WMMI's mission. The Committee will convene as the needs of the collection demands.

Acquisition and Accession

Acquisition: Acquisition is the process of legally obtaining objects and their associated data for a museum through:

- **Gift or bequest**-given to the museum without restriction or conditions. A gift can be accepted from any source, including a staff member.
- **Purchases**-if deemed necessary and when funds are available, artifacts may be purchased as a last resort approval by the Curator and the Board.
- **Exchanges**-the exchange of artifacts between institutions is an established and useful means of developing and improving a collection. Exchanges may be arranged by the Curator. Exchanges may be provided when:
 - Both parties are in full agreement with the terms and conditions.
 - Both the acquisition and the disposal of artifacts are documented for the permanent records.
 - The removal of the artifact would not impair the collection in any functional way.
 - The removal will be approved through the deaccessioning process.
- **Transfers**-the museum may acquire artifacts from other museums, galleries and public institutions. The transfer must be supported through documentation.
- **Field collecting**-artifacts may be collected by museum staff, or by others acting on behalf of the museum, directly from their context in the field (with legal permissions).

Criteria of Acquisition

- The artifacts must be consistent with, and relevant to, the Watson's Mill Mission and Statement of Purpose and will preferably reflect the museum's collecting priorities.
- The artifacts should be accompanied by a good record of provenance and a relevant history. It is understood that not all artifacts currently in the collection or to be added in the future may not have these requirements.
- Donations are accepted only as unconditional gifts, free and clear of any restrictions and/or conditions.
- The museum must be able to provide proper care and storage for the artifacts.

- The artifacts must be accompanied by warranties of good legal title (who has ownership of the item prior to being donated).
- All donations to the museum's collections are irrevocable upon the formal transfer of title to Watson's Mill.
- Watson's Mill is satisfied that any artifact to be acquired, whether by donation, exchange, or purchase, is not stolen or otherwise illegally acquired or collected.

The Collections Committee has the final say on accepting objects unless the size or the value of the object is deemed excessive. Objects of a large size or value must be discussed by the Board, who will work with the Collections Committee to come to a final decision on its acquisition.

Legal Considerations

The museum staff and the Board will adhere to municipal, provincial, federal and international legislation that impacts collecting and collections management, particularly those pertaining to: firearms, hazardous materials, copyright, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Cultural Property Export and Import Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and the Income Tax Act.

Ethical Considerations

Watson's Mill does not offer appraisal services or ask for unpaid third-party appraisals. Museum staff will not recommend to the public a specific dealer, appraiser, or auctioneer, but may provide a list of such people with the understanding that this does not constitute an endorsement.

Accession: the process of entering objects and their proper documentation into the possession of the museum.

All incoming artifacts must have a completed Deed of Gift and Object Information form, signed and dated. Once accepted, a Thank You Letter should be sent promptly to the donor. Each item will be given an accession number which will be noted on any documents relating to the object. All documents related to artifacts must be signed, dated and digitized.

Cataloguing, Inventories and Records

Cataloguing: the creation of a full collection record.

Each artifact will be catalogued in the Master Ledger, with appropriate information: accession number, date received, name and description, received from, how acquired and current location (see Registrar's Manual). Each artifact will be entered into the digital Master Catalogue with specific details outlined in the Registrar's Manual.

Inventory

Locations of objects will be kept in Master Ledger, which may be updated if changes occur. Inventory should be done every 5 years for a full inventory of the Carriage Shed, the Mill and Dickinson House. The Curator is responsible for the inventory, and may be assisted by a staff member or student.

Record types

In addition to acquisition documents listed above, the collection of Watson's Mill will be photographed. These photos will be included in digital records of the object and will be stored digitally. Condition reports may be made for objects, specifically for artifacts being loaned. Conservation reports will be created any time an object is altered by staff. Both condition and conservation reports will be attached to the artifact's digital record. Back ups for digital records will be made once weekly on an external hard drive, to be stored in the safe. Any hard copies of documents should be made digital and backed up. Hard copies will be stored with a collection's file kept by the Curator.

Loans

Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. may borrow artifacts for exhibition, study or other purposes consistent with the mandate of Watson's Mill for a specified time period. Watson's Mill Manotick Inc. may lend artifacts to other institutions. The purpose of the loan must be consistent with the interests of Watson's Mill and not pose undue risk to the artifact. The Curator is responsible for ensuring that those who borrow or otherwise use material for any purpose are able to provide necessary care. All loans from Watson's Mill must be approved by the Curator, and if necessary, the Board, in the case of larger or more valuable artifacts.

Incoming/Outgoing Loans

Both the lending and borrowing institutions must have:

- Written contract/ Loan Agreement that include: rights and responsibilities of each party, loan conditions, environmental needs, condition report, duration of the loan and dates associated with shipping and exhibition.
- Insurance information.
- Ways to ensure the safety of the artifact.
- Documentation of condition of artifact at all stages (received, during, etc). This documentation should be kept permanently at both the lender and receiver institutions.

Objects Left in Temporary Custody

Items should only be left in temporary custody at the museum in exceptional circumstances. Each object must have a Temporary Custody Receipt. The museum must outline a way to monitor the materials. Permanent documentation of the item must be kept at the museum.

Long Term/Permanent Loans

Objects on long term or permanent loan are items where the original owner has not relinquished the title. These items cannot be deaccessioned or loaned. Watson's Mill holds the Larry Ellis Collection in trust as of 2020 and will continue to do so until Mr. Ellis decides to reclaim possession or donate to the museum.

Undocumented and Found in Collection

Undocumented and found in collection objects are defined as:

Undocumented Objects: Objects found in collection with no numbers, no information or any characteristics that might connect them to documentation.

Found in Collection: Undocumented objects that remain without status after all attempts to reconcile them to existing records of permanent collection and loan objects are completed.

WMMI will make every effort to reconcile any undocumented objects with existing documentation. Objects that are not reconciled will be considered found in collection.

WMMI considers undocumented and found in collection objects to be the property of the museum.

If original documentation is found for a tracked or accessioned objects, the object will be returned to its original status and number. The found in collection number will be retired.

If a claim is made on an undocumented or found in collection object, either accessioned into the collection or disposed of, WMMI will made ad hoc decisions on accepting or fighting the claim.

Unclaimed objects and found in collection objects slated for disposal will follow the approved deaccession processes as if they are owned objects.

See Found in Collection Policy for more details.

Care of Collections

Watson's Mill will care for its collections through various forms of preventative conservation, with the goal of stopping damage to the collection before it occurs. This includes monthly pest control measures, a fully functioning security system, a fire suppression system, emergency preparedness (fire and emergency plans) and proper storage of collection. This also includes the health and safety of staff and volunteers who may work close with the collection. Each staff member and volunteer will receive proper artifact handling training, education on potentially dangerous or hazardous items in the collection.

Access to the Collection

Watson's Mill's collection is unique in that larger artifacts are present, working parts of the Mill, frequently touched and interacted with by the public. This type of interaction between guests and the artifacts should continue unless the safety of the artifacts or guests is threatened. Smaller, more fragile artifacts should have limited interactions and handling by staff and guests. The Curator should determine how much handling is appropriate for each artifact.

Deaccession

Deaccession: the process of removing accessioned objects from the museum's collection legally and permanently.

The Collections Committee has the authority to determine which artifacts may be deaccessioned, if appropriate. Larger items, those original to the Mill or of higher value that may be deaccessioned should have this decision approved by the Collections Committee and the Board.

Criteria for Deaccession

- The object or material is outside the scope of the museum's mission and its acquisition policy.
- The object's condition has deteriorated beyond usefulness, the item has been damaged beyond repair, or the item's condition endangers human life or other items in the collection.
- The object or material has failed to retain its identity or authenticity, or has been lost or stolen and remains lost or stolen for longer than two years.
- The object or material is unnecessarily duplicated in the collection.
- The object or material will not be used in the foreseeable future.
- The object has accidentally been accessioned twice.
- Watson's Mill is incapable of providing the conditions necessary for minimum curatorial care.

- An artifact is unethical or has illegal provenance.
- An artifact has been misidentified or is found to be a fake, forgery or copy with no definable purpose.

Conditions for Deaccessioning

When an artifact is deaccessioned Watson Mill Manotick Inc. must ensure that: it has clear title to the object or in the case of poorly or undocumented material, be able to demonstrate that it has made a serious, diligent and documented investigation to determine ownership; there are no legal restrictions that prohibit deaccessioning the artifact; the reasons for removal of the object from the collection must be thoroughly documented in accordance to professional standards and documentation. If an artifact is undocumented Watson Mill Manotick Inc. must make serious and documented effort to learn more about it before considering deaccessioning.

Methods and procedures for disposal

In preferable order: offer the artifact to another museum or education institution, donate the object, allow the object to be destroyed for research, sell the object, destroy or discard the object. If the artifact is sold, be transparent about why the object is being sold and where the proceeds from the sale are going. Proceeds from any sale will go directly to the care of the collection. A member of the Watson's Mill Manotick Inc., staff, volunteers and their family members may not acquire through any means any artifact deaccessioned by Watson's Mill

If the object is hazardous or poses a danger to staff, public or the collection or if the object has deteriorated or is damaged to a point where it does not serve a definable purpose, the object may be destroyed or disposed of appropriately, if no other measures are possible.

The public must be notified of the decision and step taken. Deaccession records and procedures must be made available to the public if requested. Determine if the donor should be notified about the deaccession. If there are no restrictions on the object and the donor has no legal interest in it, then the museum has no legal requirement to notify the donor.