

Old Bristol Historical Society

Collection Policy

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Old Bristol Historical Society (OBHS) is to collect, preserve and share the artifacts and oral, documentary, personal, and physical histories of the communities formerly comprising the old township of Bristol, Maine. The communities include Bremen, Bristol Mills, Chamberlain, Harrington, New Harbor, Pemaquid Beach, Pemaquid Falls, Pemaquid Harbor, Pemaquid Point, Round Pond, South Bristol, Walpole and parts of Damariscotta and Nobleboro.

The history of the old township remains alive in the memories of its older citizens, in official and family documents, in artifacts, and in buildings and other monuments still standing on the landscape. The goal of the Society is to keep this history alive by recording these memories, researching and interpreting these documents, collecting these artifacts, and by visiting, exploring and photographing these buildings and other landmarks before they are lost.

By involving local people and institutions in its work, the Society aims to foster an even greater sense of pride and community in our collective past and future.

II. PRIMARY GOAL

The primary goal of the OBHS is to identify, collect, appraise, organize, describe, and preserve objects, artifacts, photographs, and archival materials pertaining to the communities formerly comprising the old township of Bristol, Maine for the purpose of securing them for posterity and promoting their usefulness in education, exhibition and research. The OBHS serves as the repository for the collection and preservation of historically valuable documents relating to the history of the old township of Bristol.

III. SCOPE OF COLLECTION

A. The OBHS collection serves to fulfill its mission.

B. The items in the OBHS collection exist in the following two categories:

1. Permanent collections and accessioned materials on, by, about, or representative of the old Bristol township and the activities of people who live or have lived in the old Bristol township that are owned outright by the Society for the purposes of research, education and exhibition. The materials include, but are not limited to:

- a. Documents including letters, diaries, notebooks, manuscripts, maps and newspaper/magazine articles in their original form and/or in digitized forms
- b. Records of important town activities and institutions in their original form and/or in digitized forms
- c. Artifacts and specimens including books and objects
- d. Photographs of people, places, and events in their original form and/or in digitized forms
- e. Oral histories/interviews in their original audio/visual formats and /or in transcribed pdf formats

2. Non-accessioned collections that include materials that exist at the Society on a temporary or permanent basis. They consist of

- a. Research and education: supplemental information, for example, from other collections, libraries, genealogical research that can be used in genealogical

research, exhibits, lectures, public education, publications, etc.

b. Duplicates of items in the permanent collection or items without significant importance or lesser historic value to the interpretation of old Bristol township.

IV. GOVERNANCE OF THE COLLECTION

A. The Collection Committee

1. The Collection Committee is a standing committee of the Old Bristol Historical Society.
2. The chair of the Collection Committee is a member of the Board of Directors.
3. The Collection Committee will meet as needed, at least annually.
4. The Collection Committee will endeavor to digitize and/or digitally document all items in its collections as completely and accurately as possible and make these data available to residents and the general public through social media and/or an online web site.
5. The Collection Committee will make recommendations to the Board of Directors with respect to acquisitions and deaccessions.

B. The Collection Policy

1. Copies of the Collection Policy shall be made available on the Old Bristol Historical Society website and to any person who requests them.
2. The Collection Policy shall be reviewed as needed.
3. Any member of the Collection Committee may make recommendations for changes to the Collection Policy. The recommended changes will be sent in writing to each member of the Collection Committee before any meetings at which they will be discussed and voted upon.

V. ACQUISITION, GIFT AND ACCESSION POLICY

The Old Bristol Historical Society is pleased to accept donations that fall within the scope of its collection policy. Due to limited staffing, budget and space, all donations/gifts are subject to review by the OBHS Collection Committee and may be declined. Therefore, the OBHS reserves the right to decline any item or collection for the following reasons:

- Does not fall within the scope of the collection policy and is therefore irrelevant
- Inability of the OBHS to provide suitable space, staffing, supplies and equipment
- Materials irreparably damaged or infested by insects or mold will not be accepted
- Materials in which the donor's ownership is in question or disputed will not be accepted
- Duplicate materials will not be accepted due to lack of space and redundancy
- The OBHS will not accept permanent loans of materials and will not assume liability for materials not owned by the OBHS

VI. DEACCESSION POLICY

A. Deaccessioning procedures

1. The Collection Committee shall recommend items for deaccession if:
 - a. the object is a duplicate of an item already in the collection.
 - b. item is deteriorated.
 - c. the item does not in any way illuminate the history of old Bristol township or the lives of the people who lived here.
 - d. the item cannot be given the necessary care or preservation.
 - e. the item is inferior to others in the collection

2. The Collection Committee will discuss the proposed deaccession and by a simple majority vote confirm or reject the deaccession of the item. If they choose to deaccession the item, the Committee will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors to deaccession the item.

3. The Board of Directors will vote upon the recommendation of the Collection Committee to deaccession the item.

B. Special concerns or situations

1. No donated object shall be deaccessioned for any reason for two years after the date of its acquisition. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and I.R.S. regulations.)

2. Objects designated as unclaimed loans can be deaccessioned as abandoned property only with approval of the Collection Committee.

C. Disposal of items

1. The Collection Committee will attempt to notify the donor or heir of the intent of the Society to deaccession an item.

2. The preferred way to dispose of deaccessioned items is by auction. If auction is not possible, direct sale is allowable.

3. No objects in the collection shall be sold directly to a member of the Board of Directors or staff or their immediate families.

4. In certain circumstances the OBHS may choose to give an item to another institution. Upon the approval of the Board of Directors, the Collection Committee will follow through on these actions.

5. In certain circumstances the OBHS may choose to consider a formal, reciprocal transfer of materials between the Historical Society and another institution or individual. Upon the recommendation and the approval of the Board of Directors, the Collection Committee will follow through on these actions.

6. With approval of the Collection Committee, certain deaccessioned items that are deemed unsalvageable may be destroyed.

D. Collection Fund

1. A Collection Fund will be created into which all net proceeds resulting from the disposition of deaccessioned items are deposited.

2. Withdrawals from the Collection Fund may be made for:

a. purchase of items for the collection

b. purchase of materials for the conservation of collections

c. conservation of artifacts

d. publications related to the collection

VII. DEFINITIONS

Accessioning: the formal process used to create an immediate, brief, and permanent record of an object, assembly, or lot from the same source, at the same time for which the Society has custody, right, or title, and assigning a unique control number to it.

Acquisition: the administrative process of discovering, preliminary evaluating, negotiating for, taking custody of, and documenting title of an object, assembly or lot.

Cataloging: the curatorial process of classifying and documenting objects usually in complete descriptive detail resulting in extensive information in the form of cards, files, publications, and automated data.

Deaccessioning: the formal process used to remove permanently an object from the collections.

Documenting: the process of producing records to identify and enhance the knowledge and

value of collections with the intent of maintaining informational and intellectual control over them.

Inventorying: the overall function of creating, controlling and maintaining information, immediately and briefly, about all objects owned by, and in the care, custody, and control of the Society.

Loans: temporary transfers of collection items from the Society, or temporary transfers of similar items to the Society for stated Society purposes. The transfers do not involve a change of ownership.