

The Rhode Island Historical Society  
Collections Policy

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## **1 Purpose of Collections Policy**

This Collections Policy establishes policies regarding all activities related to the development and management of the collections of museum, library, and educational materials owned by the Rhode Island Historical Society in fulfillment of its mission. The Policy seeks to ensure that all RIHS collection-related activities meet current professional standards for collections of historic materials, including archival, library and documentary materials, and that the policies and procedures of the Society are in accordance with local, state, and federal laws governing ownership and transfer of ownership of these materials.

### **1.1 Mission statement, core values and vision statements**

Mission Statement Adopted by the Board of Trustees January 22, 2004

*The Rhode Island Historical Society, believing that a sense of history is fundamental to understanding human experience, collects, preserves, and shares materials from Rhode Island's past, so that present and future generations can comprehend more fully their predecessors, their communities, and themselves. Pursuing the highest standards of collection, preservation, presentation, and management, the Society encourages and assists people of all backgrounds and interests to learn more about Rhode Island's varied history.*

Core Values Adopted by the Board of Trustees January 22, 2004

*We are stewards of the history of Rhode Island; as such, we strive to make our collections representative of the whole state.*

*We recognize the inherent cultural and historical significance of our collections and are therefore committed to meeting the highest professional standards for their development, care, and preservation.*

Vision Statements Adopted by the Board of Trustees January 22, 2004

By 2009, the RIHS will:

*Store, conserve, catalogue, and share collections with the public using the highest professional standards. The collections will continue to grow and include a focus on acquisitions from the 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-centuries.*

*Present and share its rich collections to interpret the unique and diverse history of Rhode Island.*

### **1.2 Delegation of responsibility for implementation of Collections Policy**

Final responsibility for this Policy rests with the Board of Trustees of the Rhode Island Historical Society, which approves the Collections Policy reviewed and recommended by the Board Collections Committee. The responsibilities of the Board of Trustees regarding the Collections Policy shall be carried out by the Executive Director (By-Laws of the Rhode Island Historical Society, Article IX-Executive Director) or by the staff of the RIHS designated by the Executive Director.

The Board Collections Committee shall consist of the Executive Director, Deputy Director for Collections, Museum Curator, Library Director, Registrar, two members of the RIHS Board of Trustees, and four professionals from employed in the museum/library/archives/research community appointed by the Board of Trustees.

The Board Collections Committee is charged with the following duties:

- approving deaccessions from the Permanent Collections of the RIHS based on the criteria as defined in Section III of this Policy
- reviewing and approving the Collections Policy
- advising on and approving Collection Development policies for the RIHS

The staff Collections Committee shall consist of the Executive Director, Deputy Director for Collections, Museum Curator, Library Director, Registrar, and area specialists as designated by the Executive Director.

The staff Collections Committee is charged with the following duties:

- review and develop Collection Development plans for RIHS
- review and approve all donations offered to the RIHS
- review and present to the Board Collections Committee any items for deaccession from the Permanent Collections

### **1.3 Provision for review by staff and Board of Trustees**

The Collections Policy will be reviewed by the RIHS Executive Director, the Deputy Director for Collections, Museum Curator, Library Director, and Registrar at least every five years. Should revisions be required, the revised policy will be presented to the Board Collections Committee for review and approval before final approval by the RIHS Board of Trustees. Revision might also occur at times when the Mission Statement or the Long Range Plan of the Society will affect the collections.

## **2 Types of Collections**

“Collections” is the term used for all material holdings of lasting historical, cultural, or artistic value belonging to the Rhode Island Historical Society.

### **2.1 Permanent Collection**

Significant items that directly relate to the mission of the Society are considered part of the permanent collection and are accessioned as such. Items accessioned into the permanent collection are cataloged, documented, preserved, and managed according to prescribed procedures meeting current professional museum standards.

Within the major divisions (Museum and Library) the Items collected include, but are not limited to the following:

- Museum Collection
  - Textiles and costumes
  - Household furnishings

- Art
- Toys, dolls, sports equipment
- Tools
- China and glass
- Musical instruments
- Architectural relics and fragments
- Archaeological and ethnographic material
- Library Collection
  - Printed Collection
    - Newspapers
    - Monographs
    - Genealogies
    - Periodicals
  - Manuscript Collection
    - Business records
    - Personal papers
    - Government records
  - Graphics Collection
    - Photographs
    - Prints
    - Film and moving images
    - Negatives
    - Maps
    - Works of art on paper
    - Audio formats

## **2.2 Items “Found in Collection”**

Items designated as Found in Collection (items that lack significant documentation as to how they were acquired by the RIHS) are part of the Permanent Collection and are subject to all the same policies and procedures as outlined in this Collection Policy. The provenance of an item is considered confidential information unless indisputable documentation is available as to its history. The Found in Collection designation of an item will not be part of the public record.

## **2.3 Education Collection**

The Education Collection comprises items maintained by the Education Department for use in educational and public programs are not accessioned into the Society’s permanent collection and are stored and maintained by the Education Department separately from the permanent collections. These items usually duplicate permanent collection materials, and can travel to schools or other sites and may be handled and used under supervision but without the same restrictions as permanent collection items.

2.3.1 Items are added to the Education Collection by transfer from the Library or Museum Collections of unwanted or duplicate items, through deaccession of duplicate items, or by direct acquisition specifically for the Education Collection. Items taken in by the Education

department for addition to the Education Collection must be offered to the staff Collections Committee for review for the Permanent Collection first.

### **3 Acquisition**

#### **3.1 Policy**

The RIHS may acquire objects by donation, bequest, purchase, or transfer. Authority for acquisition of materials resides with the staff Acquisitions Committee comprised of the Executive Director, Deputy Director for Collections, Museum Curator, Library Director, Registrar, and area specialists designated by the Executive Director. The Acquisitions Committee must approve all materials offered as gifts, bequests, or considered for purchase before they are accessioned into the permanent collection.

#### **3.2 Basic criteria**

Materials must be relevant to and consistent with the Society's mission. Broadly, the RIHS collects materials documenting Rhode Island families; Rhode Island towns and villages; Rhode Island businesses, especially agricultural, maritime and manufacturing; Rhode Island buildings and architecture; political figures and movements; military history; ethnic and racial groups in Rhode Island; Rhode Island institutions, particularly religious, educational and charitable; Rhode Island organizations, particularly labor, social service, and cultural; and people who spent a substantial portion of their productive years in Rhode Island.

##### **3.2.1 Items accepted must meet at least six of the following criteria:**

1. Items must be documented as having been made or used in Rhode Island, or must have significant documentation to a national figure with Rhode Island connections.
2. Items must significantly document or illustrate the history of Rhode Island and its people.
3. Items should not duplicate or excessively duplicate extant collections.
4. The Society must be able to provide professional-level care and storage for the materials.
5. The Society shall obtain clear title to the item(s) without restriction to future use and disposition.
6. The Society shall receive or make copies of all documents and information in the current owner's possession documenting the historical significance and provenance of the item(s).
7. Acceptance of the item(s) will not result in major conservation expenses out of proportion to the significance of the material.
8. Items collected must meet certain ethical and legal concerns regarding collecting. Considerations may include, but are not limited to, the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), policies regarding art acquired during WWII, or other criteria as established by the professional organizations to which the RIHS belongs.
9. Items must be given unconditionally and without restriction. The RIHS does not accept restricted gifts to its collections, with the exception of Library materials

carrying term-limited restrictions for the purpose of protecting the privacy of individuals or corporate entities.

### **3.2.2 State laws pertaining to the Rhode Island Historical Society**

The Rhode Island Historical Society will abide by the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island that pertain to the Society's status as a depository.

## **3.3 Procedures**

### **3.3.1 Deed of Gift**

A deed of gift will be issued for items acquired by donation. The deed of gift will be sent by, and upon return filed by the Registrar.

### **3.3.2 Purchase**

The bill of sale shall constitute transfer of title for purchased items, and be kept in the accession folder, along with any other supporting documentation.

### **3.3.3 Purchase Authorization**

The Library Director and Museum Curator are authorized to spend up to \$500 per item of Library or Museum acquisition funds, as appropriate, without consulting the Acquisitions Committee when such purchase is time-sensitive. The items will be presented at the next staff Collections Committee meeting; if the Committee declines the items, they must be sold or returned and the proceeds returned to the acquisitions fund.

### **3.3.4 Bequest**

Bequests of items are not considered binding without a formal written agreement between the donor or donor's representative and the RIHS, and must meet collecting goals and serve the mission of the Society.

3.3.4.1 A copy of the donor's will and testament shall be maintained instead of a deed of gift. Copies should be forwarded to the RIHS Development Office.

Items donated from an estate by an executor but not specified in a will or bequest agreement will be treated as a gift from the estate rather than as a bequest.

### **3.3.5 Items not accepted**

Items not approved by the staff Collections Committee are not accepted into the permanent collection. These are returned to the donor, transferred to the Education Collection, or disposed of as noted on the Incoming Receipt.

### **3.3.6 Conditional or restricted gifts**

In general the RIHS does not accept conditional or restricted gifts of collection items. The RIHS may elect to accept a conditional or restricted gift if:

1. The item is of extreme significance in documenting Rhode Island history

2. The restrictions are term-limited and expire on a mutually agreed-upon date
3. The restrictions will not place an undue burden on the RIHS in the execution of the gift, storage or maintenance of the items, or in any other manner as determined by the Executive Director or his designee.

### **3.4 Unaccessioned items**

#### **3.4.1 Legacy Items**

Any item(s) appearing to belong to the Permanent Collection and appearing to be owned by the RIHS should be considered part of the Permanent Collection until proven otherwise. Item(s) will be examined by the Museum Curator, Library Director and Registrar, and accession books will be checked for references to objects in question. Use of such items may continue while the item(s) are researched.

### **3.5 Record keeping**

#### **3.5.1 Permanent Collection**

All items acquired for the permanent collection are to be accessioned, catalogued according to standards appropriate to item type, and are numbered, and photographed when appropriate, following currently accepted professional standards. Accession records are maintained by the Registrar in the Museum Department at the John Brown House and in the Library. The accession books are maintained by the Registrar and kept in the Library. Catalog records are maintained by each department.

#### **3.5.2 Education Collection**

Items acquired for the Education Collection (expendable items which contribute to the educational programs of the RIHS and are available directly to the public) are not accessioned, cataloged, numbered or photographed. A list of items in the Education Collection is maintained by the Registrar.

## **4. Deaccession**

### **4.1 Policy**

The permanent removal of items from the collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society is permitted but has ethical, legal, and financial considerations which must be fully reviewed by the Executive Director, Deputy Director for Collections, Museum Curator, Library Director, and the RIHS Board of Trustees with reference to the mission of the Society. Deaccessioning should be carried out on an item-by-item basis, weighing scholarly and research value, the Society's professional needs, the public interest, the possible effect on future donations, and public relations.

### **4.2 Basic criteria for deaccessioning**

Permanent Collection items may be considered for deaccession under the following circumstances:

- When an item does not meet the collecting criteria outlined in II (b) of this policy.
- When an item is of insufficient scholarly or research value to merit retention
- When an item is duplicated in the collection without clear professional need or meritorious variation

When the Society is not able to preserve or conserve the item properly with a reasonable amount of effort

When the item has deteriorated beyond usefulness for study or exhibition

### **4.3 Special cases**

#### **4.3.1 Brown Family Items**

It is the policy of the Board of Trustees of the RIHS that items which belonged to John Brown, Sarah Brown, or their children are to be treated as a special collection and should never be deaccessioned, but remain under the protection of the Society as long as it collects and displays three-dimensional objects and maintains the John Brown House.

#### **4.3.2 Board-initiated Exceptions**

In the event of extraordinary circumstances threatening the RIHS's survival, or severely curtailing its ability to carry out its published mission, the Board of Trustees of the Society is authorized to deaccession items of extreme value for sale. The action requires the approval of the President of the Board of Trustees and two-thirds of the Board of Trustees.

### **4.4 Procedures**

Items proposed for deaccession must be reviewed by the staff Collections Committee, and require the approval of two-thirds of the staff Committee before they are presented to the Board Collections Committee. The Board Committee must also approve the deaccession by a two-thirds margin; after this approval has been granted, the Chair of the Collections Committee will present the deaccession to the full Board of Trustees for final approval. The action requires the approval of two-thirds of the Board of Trustees.

### **4.5 Record keeping**

The Registrar will maintain records of all deaccessioned items, as well as the Deaccession Forms detailing the item history and reasons for deaccession.

## **5. Incoming Deposits and Loans**

### **5.1 Policy**

Due to limited storage and exhibition space, the Museum and Library no longer accept new long-term deposits except in the case of material of special historical value. Exceptions to this policy will only be made upon the recommendation of the staff Collections Committee and the approval of the Board Collections Committee.

#### **5.1.2 Long-term loans and deposits**

The RIHS discourages long-term loans but has accepted them in the past. The item(s) currently on long-term loan will be treated with care and insured to a limited value as stated on the loan forms. The RIHS will attempt to turn those loans especially important to the Society's mission into gifts, and return other items. A review of status of the long-term loans will be made annually.

### **5.2 Procedures**

Items will be borrowed primarily for temporary (under two years) rather than long-term exhibition. At the close of an exhibition, Items will be returned to their owners in a timely manner. Incoming loans for exhibition do not require the permission of the Board Collections Committee, but the staff Collections Committee should be notified of the loan request.

### **5.3 Custodial Loans**

Both the Library and the Museum may accept items for research, attribution, identification or study, or for consideration as a gift to the Collections. Items accepted for these purposes are considered Custodial Loans, and will be insured and cared for in the same professional manner as the Society's permanent collections.

## **6. Outgoing Loan**

### **6.1 Policy**

#### **6.1.1 Loan of items differentiated from library circulation**

The RIHS Library is not a lending institution. The Library does not loan materials to private individuals or businesses for any reason.

Library collections may leave the building only for:

1. Loan to another museum or historical organization for formal exhibition
2. Loan to RIHS staff members for professional use
3. Off-site conservation treatment
4. Off-site duplication

#### **6.1.2 Qualifying borrowers**

Outgoing loans will be made of Library and Museum items only to other museums and educational organizations meeting professional standards for collections care and management. Items will not be loaned to private individuals.

Exceptions may be made for outgoing loans to organizations with the approval of the Collections Committee and recommendation of the Museum Curator, Library Director, and Executive Director.

### **6.2 Procedures**

Museums and other historical organizations must submit a formal, written loan request to the Executive Director stating the specific items requested, the purpose and duration of the loan, and guaranteeing payment of all costs associated with the loan including but not limited to conservation, packing, shipping, transit and on-site insurance.

6.2.1 All loan requests must be accompanied by a current Standard Facilities Report, which will be supplied to the requestor if necessary. The Standard Facilities Report must be completed and returned before a loan request will be considered.

6.2.2 The Museum Curator or Library Director (as appropriate) and the Registrar and Executive Director will jointly review the loan request before making a recommendation to the Collections Committee.

6.2.3 All loan requests must be approved by a majority vote of the Collections Committee.

6.2.4 All outgoing loans must be covered by a written loan agreement between the RIHS and the borrower. The loan agreement must include loan start and end dates, transportation methods and costs, security, insurance, credit lines, restrictions on photography, and any applicable loan fees.

6.2.5 The borrower will insure all loaned items against all risks on site and in transit, and a certificate of insurance will be presented to the Society.

A condition report form will be completed for each object loaned, and condition checked upon return.

6.2.6 The RIHS may charge loan-processing fees to cover the staff time necessary to locate and prepare items and necessary paperwork to process the loan.

The Registrar will maintain all outgoing loan files.

## **7. Access to and use of collections and collections records**

### **7.1 On-site use of the collection**

The RIHS collections shall be open to the public for research except where restricted below. All researchers shall have reasonable access in accordance with procedures necessary to safeguard items, restrictions intended to protect the privacy and safety of donors, and restrictions required by limitations of normal operating hours, exhibition requirements, available study space, facilities, and staff time.

7.1.1 RIHS staff members reserve the right to control access to collections to prevent:

1. Deterioration, mutilation, loss or dislocation of objects and/or collections records
2. Undue impact on the furnishing of services to other RIHS researchers or patrons

### **7.2 Procedures**

All researchers must provide positive current proof of identification in the form of a governmentally controlled photographic identification card such as a driver's license or passport (college student ID cards are not acceptable).

7.2.1 Entrance fees may be charged to researchers and visitors to RIHS research facilities, museums, or exhibitions. In addition, the Museum Curator may charge a fee for access to museum items not on public exhibit to discourage frivolous requests and to account for staff time in providing secure access.

7.2.2 The Museum Curator, Library Director and designated staff under their supervision, are authorized to make items available for research and study at the Library building, the John Brown House Museum and any other authorized locations where staff supervision of the researcher can be accommodated at all times. An RIHS staff member shall always be present when RIHS items not on public display, or on public display in unsecured areas or

display furniture, are accessed by the public. An effort will be made to balance the conflicting demands of patron access and preservation.

7.2.3 Unsupervised access to collections storage areas by persons not on the RIHS staff, or by RIHS staff members not directly responsible for collections care, is not permitted. The Museum Curator and Library Director shall designate staff members authorized to access collections storage areas.

### **7.3 Reproductions**

The RIHS reserves all rights for the reproduction of items in its collections. No reproduction (including replica manufacture of any sort) is permitted without a written agreement approved by the Rights and Reproductions staff in consultation with the Museum Curator and/or Library Director. The RIHS reserves the right to license vendors, collect royalties, initiate fees, or otherwise control the use of its items as may be deemed appropriate and lawful.

7.3.1 Any money realized from the sale of reproductions from the RIHS collections shall be credited to the Museum and/or Library restricted funds for acquisition or conservation treatment. Attention to the Society's copyright stipulations will be considered.

7.3.2 Licensing for the reproduction of RIHS collections is granted for one-time non-exclusive publication only.

7.3.3 The RIHS abides by federal law regarding fair use of copyrighted materials.

### **7.4 Photography of Collections**

#### **7.4.1 Policy**

Photography of RIHS items by researchers, visitors or patrons at any of its locations, exhibitions or research facilities will not be permitted using any type of analog or digital photographic equipment.

7.4.2 Request for reproductions of items will be submitted in writing to the Rights and Reproductions department.

7.4.3 Service fees, royalties and permission fees may be charged in accordance with the Rights and Reproductions policy.

7.4.4 Requests to publish photographic reproductions of RIHS items must be submitted in writing to the Rights and Reproductions department. A Permission to Publish agreement will be created stipulating that the photograph will be properly credited and that the RIHS will receive a complimentary copy of the publication in which the photograph appears.

7.4.5 Purchase of copyrighted reproductions in any format does not convey to the purchaser any rights of copyright.

7.4.6 The RIHS reserves the right to deny a request for photographic reproduction of an item if fulfilling the request would lead to one or more of the following conditions:

- endanger the physical security and integrity of the item(s)
- undermine the intellectual integrity of the item(s)
- pose an excessive administrative burden
- violate the terms of a loan
- infringe on copyrighted material
- involve a use for illegal or unethical purposes
- violate privacy, publicity, or other personal rights of any party
- libel, slander, or cause undue ridicule or embarrassment to any person or organization
- imply an institutional endorsement of any product, company, or enterprise.

7.4.7 The RIHS reserves the right to deny permission to publish images of its collections.

## **8 Appraisal and Authentication**

### **8.1 Appraisal**

No RIHS staff member or volunteer shall provide a monetary appraisal of any object, except for insurance purposes in the case its own items are being sent out for transport or exhibition. In the case of insurance appraisals, the staff shall consult catalogs and/or qualified appraisers for reference. The Society does not capitalize its collections or place a financial value upon them in any other way.

### **8.2 Authentication**

Identification, authentication and evaluation (but not monetary appraisals) may be given for educational purposes or in compliance with the legitimate request of governmental bodies or their agents. The RIHS educational evaluations are not to be published, displayed, or publicly cited and the RIHS is not responsible for damages caused by such uses.

## **9 Documentation of Collections**

### **9.1 Policy**

The RIHS will maintain adequate documentation both on the items it owns and the items that are placed in its custody. This responsibility is shared by the Museum Curator, Library Director and Registrar. All records pertaining to the collections will be properly maintained and securely housed in archival materials. Permanent records created by the Registrar shall be created on acid-free archival bond paper. Such documentation will include, but not be limited to:

- accession files containing a Deed of Gift or other documentation of the RIHS' legal titles (such as sales receipts) to the item/collection and other information pertinent to the acquisition of the object.

- an accession log, on acid-free paper and bound in a strong archival binding and written in permanent black ink, containing information about the donor, donor contact information, method of acquisition, description of the items/collection, and disposition information.

- copy of the incoming/outgoing receipt

- donor or source card

inventory file  
catalog record and/or card(s)  
finding aid  
Incoming loan agreement file  
Outgoing loan agreement file  
Deaccession file  
condition reports  
conservation treatment records  
photographs of museum objects

Duplicate copies of the following records will be maintained in an off-site, secure storage area as back-ups:

Records documenting the legal ownership of items by the RIHS (Deed of Gift or other documents such as sales receipts)  
Accession list (computer back-up)  
Catalog record, inventory and/or finding aid (computer back-up)  
Loan records for active in-coming and out-going loans

## **9.2 Inventory**

The Registrar is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date location record for all items owned by the RIHS as well as those objects borrowed by the RIHS. The Registrar will complete a comprehensive inventory of the collections every ten years and will complete a spot check inventory on an annual basis. Inventories will be conducted according to specific procedures outlined in the inventory annual maintained by the Registrar.

## **9.3 Ownership Challenges**

In the event ownership of an item in the Permanent Collection is challenged, the RIHS shall maintain custody of the item(s) until a claimant fulfills all of the following:

presents to the RIHS clear explanation why the claimant believes he/she hold title, with supporting evidence, and  
presents a notarized statement from the claimant that he/she is either the sole party at interest or he/she is authorized to represent all parties at interest and present supporting proof.

9.3.1 The RIHS shall exercise its right to review all relevant documents carefully to see if the RIHS has evidence that may counter the claimant's demand before relinquishing custody of the item(s) to the claimant.

9.3.2 The RIHS shall defend its custody of the item(s) claimed if any of the following apply:

1. Evidence that the claimant knew, or should have known, that the RIHS thought it owned the item(s) and that the claimant delayed in bringing his/her action to the detriment of the RIHS.
2. Evidence that the claimant failed to use due diligence in seeking out his/her property.
3. Evidence that the RIHS has publicly displayed the item(s) as its own or otherwise publicized it as such.

9.3.3 In cases where the RIHS cannot defend its custody of the item(s), the RIHS shall make an effort to obtain ownership by suggesting to the claimant the possibility of formally donating the item(s) to the RIHS.

## **10 Care of Collections**

### **10.1 Handling Collections**

Items in the RIHS Permanent Collection will be handled only in a manner that enhances their preservation. Items in the Permanent Collection are to be handled only by trained staff members or, on occasion, by trained volunteers. The Museum Curator, Library Director, and Registrar are responsible for training staff and volunteers in proper handling procedures. Written guidelines for handling items shall be included in the Collections Management Manual maintained by the Registrar. The manual will provide written guidelines on the following collections care topics: handling, numbering, cleaning, pest control, photography, packing and shipping, storage, security, condition reports, environmental monitoring, conservation, and exhibition.

### **10.2 Conservation**

The RIHS holds and cares for its Permanent Collection as a public trust and is committed to the standards of collections care and conservation established by the American Institute for Conservation and the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property.

10.2.1 The RIHS recognizes the importance of preventive maintenance and environmental monitoring and control in enhancing the preservation of the Permanent Collection.

10.2.2 A professional conservator will undertake all conservation treatments. All conservation treatments will be properly executed and documented.

10.2.3 The Museum Curator and the Library Director share the authority for initiating and contracting for conservation treatment.

10.2.4 Written guidelines and training for basic conservation procedures to be undertaken by RIHS staff will be prepared and delivered by trained professional conservators.

## **11 Risk Management**

### **11.1 Policy**

The RIHS will make every attempt to minimize risks to the collections, the buildings, the staff, and the visitors. The Executive Director is responsible for the overall physical safety and security of the collections and the building, staff and visitors.

### **11.2 Procedures**

Procedures to protect the safety of the staff, visitors, collections, and buildings in the case of an emergency are fully explained in the RIHS Disaster Preparedness Manual. The Manual

will be reviewed and updated, at a minimum, annually to maintain current contact information of essential personnel both within and outside the RIHS or whenever changes occur that impact the effectiveness of the manual.

### **11.3 Insurance**

The RIHS shall maintain adequate insurance coverage to cover loss or damage to its buildings and collections due to natural disaster, theft or vandalism. The RIHS will not provide insurance coverage for any items put on deposit.

11.3.1 RIHS staff member may establish insurance values for items in the Permanent Collection by consulting current auction catalogs and/or qualified appraisers for reference.

## **12 Ethics**

### **12.1 Code of Ethics**

The Board of Trustees of the RIHS and all RIHS staff members and volunteers will adhere to the current Code of Ethics for Museums adopted by the American Association of Museums (AAM) and to the current Code of Ethics adopted by the Society of American Archivists.

### **12.2 Personal Collecting**

No individual will use his/her position with the RIHS to obtain for personal use and benefit items falling within the collecting policy of the RIHS. In no instance shall a staff member become involved as a dealer of items collected by the RIHS. If a staff member elects to remove an item from his/her personal collection, he/she will be expected to first offer the item to the RIHS as a gift or at fair market value. The RIHS concurs with the prevalent thinking that it is unethical to engage in the buying and selling of archeological artifacts.

**Glossary**

Accessioning - the formal process of accepting and recording an item or group of items for the permanent collection acquired from the same source at the same time for which the RIHS has legal title.

Accession Number – a number assigned to an individual item or group of items during accessioning to identify and distinguish that item or group of items from all others.

Acquisition – the formal process of discovering, evaluating, negotiating for, taking custody of, and documenting title to an item or group of items.

Cataloging – the formal process of classifying items according to established local, national and international classification standards appropriate to the medium and fully documenting items with complete descriptive detail to allow staff and researchers to locate materials relevant to their work.

Collections records – Documentation which provides information about the provenance, restrictions, location, or other important identifying information regarding a particular item or collection.

Deaccession – the formal process of removing an item or group of items from accessioned status in the Permanent Collection.

Disposal or Disposition – the formal process of disposing of a deaccessioned item or group of items.