



## Redland Museum Inc.

### Collection Procedure Document 01

## Collection Management Policy

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This collection management document provides policy level guidance to staff and members of Redland Museum Inc. ("RMI") in the management of the museum's collection; including acquiring, documenting, conserving, handling, storing, securing and disposing of objects held in the collection.
- 1.2. RMI has a duty of responsibility for every object entrusted into its care. To fulfill this duty RMI will maintain a comprehensive and secure system of record keeping that will track the identification, location and disposition of every object; from the time of its receipt by donation or other means, until its eventual disposal.
- 1.3. This collection management policy is to be read and implemented in conjunction with supporting collection management documents which detail how tasks are to be carried out. These will be written as required and approved by the collection subcommittee.

### 2. Responsibilities and Positions.

- 2.1. The management committee has overall responsibility to ensure that the museum's collection is correctly developed, documented, conserved, stored, displayed and secured. It may delegate all or part of those activities to a subcommittee.
- 2.2. Any RMI member may nominate or be recommended by the collection manager for the positions described below.
- 2.3. The management committee, with advice and recommendations from the collection manager will give the final approval for these positions (this is the same for all museum subcommittees)
- 2.4. Collection Manager.
  - 2.4.1. The collection manager reports to the management committee and has the delegated responsibility for the management of the collection including policy and procedure execution, documentation, storage, security, conservation, and inward and outward loans.

2.4.2. The collection manager, on behalf of the collection subcommittee, is to report in writing prior to the monthly management committee meetings on activities including the outcome of accession and de-accession meetings.

2.4.3. The collection manager will under normal circumstances be the collection subcommittee chairperson.

## 2.5. Collection Store Manager.

2.5.1. The collection store manager will act as deputy collection manager.

2.5.2. The collection store manager is responsible for training and coordination of cataloguing staff, managing the cataloguing function, ensuring the efficient organization and operation of the collection store, stocktaking and conservation of store objects as required, and maintaining the location records of all collection objects.

## 2.6. Collection Subcommittee.

2.6.1. The collection subcommittee will include a member of the management committee the collection manager plus up to three other museum members.

2.6.2. The collection subcommittee will meet at a minimum of once per month to direct the development and management of the collection, including all accessions and de-accessions, in accordance with this policy. The collection manager may invite other museum members with special interests in the collection to participate in accession and de-accession meetings as required.

2.6.3. The collection subcommittee accession and de-accession meetings must have a quorum of four of its members.

2.6.4. The collection manager and collection subcommittee are to work closely with the display subcommittee, which is charged with displaying and interpreting the museum's collection.

2.6.5. The collection manager and collection subcommittee are to work closely with the exhibition officer who is charged with the task of curating and constructing temporary displays and exhibitions using both the museum's collection and loaned objects.

## 3. Ethics

3.1. The management of RMI and its collections is to be carried out in accordance with the standards of the Museums Australia Code of Ethics 1999 as revised.

## 4. Laws and Conventions.

4.1. In its collecting activities RMI will implement the requirements of applicable UNESCO conventions, and federal, state and local laws on the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

## 5. Conflict of Interest

5.1. The museum must maintain the highest level of integrity in managing the collection. Any employee or member who has a conflict or a potential conflict between the interests of the museum and his or her own personal or working activities must notify the management committee in writing as soon as the situation is known.

## 6. Collecting Aims.

6.1. RMI will develop a collection with the following aims:

6.1.1. To collect and conserve significant artifacts and archival materials portraying the social history of the Redlands in particular, and the surrounding areas in general. For this purpose, the Redlands is defined by the geographical boundaries of Redland City.

6.1.2. To collect artifacts and archival materials that will contribute to the creation of outstanding displays that will attract visitors to the museum.

6.2. The Redlands community is culturally rich and diverse, and continues to change. The collection should reflect this cultural diversity, including age, gender, geographical location, ethnicity, religion, and nationality.

6.3. Objects in the collection are to reflect the social history of agriculture, transportation, education, domestic life, buildings, religion, childhood, entertainment, occupations and trades, business and commerce, local government, military service and any other relevant spheres of interest throughout the Redlands.

6.4. Items that did not originate in the Redlands may be collected if it is believed that similar items existed within the collecting area and that no similar items possessing local provenance and in reasonable condition are available for collection. Objects with a proven Redlands provenance are to be given precedence.

## 7. Object Significance

7.1. The decision to accession an object into the collection will be based on an assessment of its significance. Significance defines the meaning or value that objects have relative to the collecting aims of RMI. Significance is assessed against a set of standard criteria described below.

7.2. Primary Assessment Criteria. Four primary criteria apply when assessing significance.

7.2.1. *Historical Significance.* An object has historical significance if it is identified with people, events, places and themes important to the history of the Redlands.

7.2.2. *Social Significance.* An Object has social significance if it is representative of the everyday life and activities of the community. Objects of social significance may be unique or mass produced, precious or handmade.

7.2.3. *Aesthetic Significance.* An object may be aesthetically significant for its fine

craftsmanship, style, technical excellence, beauty, or skill of design and execution.

7.2.4. *Research Significance.* An object may have research significance if it has potential for further academic examination or study.

7.3. Secondary Assessment Criteria. Four secondary criteria are used to modify the main criteria and evaluate the degree of significance.

7.3.1. *Provenance.* An object has provenance if the history of its creation, ownership and use is known and verifiable. Provenance is central to the historical and research significance of an object.

7.3.2. *Rarity.* An object may be significant as a rare, unusual, or particularly fine example of its type.

7.3.3. *Condition.* An object may be significant because it is unusually complete, or in sound, original condition. Changes and adaptations made in the working life of an object do not necessarily diminish significance, and may be recognized as an integral part of the object and its history.

7.3.4. *Interpretive Capacity.* Objects may have significance for their capacity to illustrate or interpret the stories of historical themes, people and activities.

## 8. Acquisition

8.1. RMI acquires objects by donation, bequest, purchase (from private individuals, dealers, or at auction) and by gift through the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme.

8.2. *Donation.* A donation is the process of acquiring an item whereby a donor gives that item to RMI. Donations are to be proposed in writing using a Donation Proposal Form, together with a photograph, for assessment and review by the accessioning committee. Objects accepted by the accessioning committee will then be called in to the museum. Under some circumstances a donated object may be accepted prior to review by the accessioning committee, but only if the donor waives the right to have the object returned if the accessioning committee subsequently declines it. Receipt of the donated object will be recorded using an Object Receipt Form that incorporates a deed of gift passing legal title of the donated object to RMI. RMI is under no obligation to accept any object proposed for donation.

8.3. *Purchase.* Acquisition by purchase involves the exchange of legal ownership of the object by exchange of money. The management committee is to assess and approve all purchases of collection objects.

8.4. *Bequest.* Acquisition by bequest involves transferring title of an item to RMI upon the death of a person, through execution of their will. RMI is under no obligation to accept a bequest item. The management committee is to assess and approve the bequest proposal before it can be accepted. If the item is refused it must be returned to the estate trustee.

8.5. *Taxation Incentive for the Arts Scheme.* RMI is a registered gift recipient under the Taxation

Incentives for the Arts Scheme. Valuation and receipt of objects gifted through the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme will be carried out in accordance with the regulations of the scheme. RMI is under no obligation to accept an object gifted under the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme.

## 9. Legal Title to Collection

9.1. RMI requires clear legal title to its collections. Without clear title to objects the museum could be restricted in the way it can use its collection, making it difficult to display, lend or publish images of its objects, and RMI carries an unacceptable administrative, ethical and legal burden. RMI will not accept conditional donations, and will not accept objects on long term or indefinite loan.

## 10. Accessioning

10.1. Accessioning is the formal process of assessing the significance of an object, and if found to be adequately significant, accepting that object into the museum's collection.

10.2. The collections manager is to call an accession meeting of the collection subcommittee as required. The accession meeting will assess object donation proposals against the collecting aims, significance criteria, current and future collection goals and any other accompanying documentation. An object will be accessioned into the collection upon a simple majority vote of the members attending the accession meeting.

10.3. A permanent record is to be kept of the date the decision is made, the reason each object was accepted or rejected, and the names of the members attending the accession meeting.

10.4. Any member of the collection subcommittee can lodge an appeal against the majority decision of members at the accession meeting if they believe there are justifiable reasons. The appellant should inform the president of the reasons for making the appeal. The president will promptly refer the issue to a meeting of the RMI executive to determine the matter.

## 11. Receipt of Objects.

11.1. Reference to the Object Receipt Form in this document and all supporting collection management procedure documents also includes the superseded Donation Form.

11.2. Any object accepted by the accessioning committee and delivered to RMI, whether by donation, purchase or bequest, is to be documented on an Object Receipt Form, which will record the following information:

11.2.1. Name and contact details of the donor or supplier of the object.

11.2.2. A short description of the object sufficient to correctly identify it.

11.2.3. A deed of gift transferring legal title to RMI (to be completed only for donated objects).

- 11.2.4. As much information about the provenance and history of the object as can be ascertained from the donor or supplier.
- 11.3. Object Receipt Forms are pre-printed in triplicate, serially numbered, and bound in books. The Object Receipt Form is to be completed in triplicate, with distribution of the copies as follows:
- 11.3.1. One copy (white) to the donor or supplier.
- 11.3.2. One copy (pink) to remain with the object until it is accessioned.
- 11.3.3. One book-fast (blue) copy.
- 11.4. Object Receipt Forms for all objects, whether they have been either accepted or rejected by the collection subcommittee, are to be kept on file, in numerical sequence, in perpetuity.

## 12. Collection Records

- 12.1. The collection manager will ensure that a comprehensive recording system (known as the Redland Museum Collection Database) is set up and maintained to keep the known information about each object in the collection. The preferred method of keeping this information is on a commercial cloud-based collection management system called eHive. RMI subscribes to an eHive service. Supplementary records on paper and other formats may be kept where practical and necessary.
- 12.2. RMI will maintain five collection record types. All records will be maintained on the eHive system, but are to be identified by letter prefixes, as follows.
- 12.2.1. The Main Collection. This comprises all three-dimensional physical social history objects. The object number is to be prefixed with R.
- 12.2.2. The Library Collection. This comprises all paper based printed or written objects, as well as video, audio and other multimedia objects. The object number is to be prefixed with L.
- 12.2.3. The Photograph collection. This comprises all still photographs. The object number is to be prefixed with P.
- 12.2.4. The Art collection. This comprises all art works. The object number is to be prefixed with A.
- 12.2.5. The Historical Archive Collection. This comprises all recorded historical information held in digital format (historical records held in printed form are held in the Library collection). The object number is to be prefixed with H.
- 12.3. As a minimum, the following information is to be kept on each collection object:
- 12.3.1. The date of acquisition, name and contact details of donor or supplier.

- 12.3.2. The date and reason for accession, including significance assessment.
- 12.3.3. Full description of the item, including maker, brand, model, and any information inscribed on the item.
- 12.3.4. Physical description of the item, including materials, dimensions and physical properties.
- 12.3.5. One or more photographs of the item sufficient to identify the item and depict significant aspects of its description.
- 12.3.6. The current location of the item.
- 12.3.7. A detailed record of all conservation and restoration measures implemented.
- 12.3.8. If the item has been de-accessioned, the date and reason for de-accession, and the method of disposal.
- 12.4. Where information or documents supporting a collection object are not easily converted to digital format, or where it is desired that the original supporting documents be kept, they are to be kept in an object file bearing the same object number as the parent object.
- 12.5. When an object is de-accessioned, all collection records for that object are to be retained in perpetuity.

### 13. De-accessioning

- 13.1. De-accessioning is the process by which RMI determines that an object in the collection is no longer required, the object documentation is appropriately amended, and the item made ready for disposal.
- 13.2. De-accessioning should be an ongoing part of the collection management process, and is an important part of continually improving the quality of the museum's collection. The process is to be cautious, deliberate and scrupulous. De-accessioning is not to occur in response to fashions and fads, or on the basis of any individual's personal preferences.
- 13.3. To be de-accessioned an object must meet at least one of the following criteria:
  - 13.3.1. The object is determined, against the significance criteria, to have no significance.
  - 13.3.2. The object is outside the scope of the RMI's collecting aims.
  - 13.3.3. The object has deteriorated beyond practical conservation, or lacks physical integrity as a result of substantial changes to its original fabric.
  - 13.3.4. The object is unnecessarily duplicated in the collection.
  - 13.3.5. The object is unable to be properly preserved by RMI.

13.3.6. The object is unlikely every to be placed on display

13.4. The collection manager is to call a de-accession meeting of the collection subcommittee at a minimum once per month at a set time. The Collection Manager is to identify objects for possible de-accession, and make a recommendation to the de-accession meeting. The recommendation must include the reason for de-accessioning, and any relevant information or documentation about the object, and similar objects in the collection.

13.5. Members at the de-accession meeting may, by majority vote, approve or reject the de-accessioning recommendation, or may seek additional information.

13.6. The collection manager is to ensure that the date and reason for de-accessioning are permanently recorded:

13.7. Any member of the collection subcommittee can lodge an appeal against the majority decision of members at the de-accession meeting, if they believe there are justifiable reasons. The appellant should inform the president of the reasons for making the appeal. The President will promptly refer the issue to a meeting of the RMI Executive to determine the matter.

#### 14. Disposal of Not-accessioned or De-accessioned Objects

14.1. Disposal is the process whereby RMI removes not-accessioned or de-accessioned objects from its possession. Members must remain constantly aware that objects donated or bequeathed to RMI frequently have great emotional value and significance to the donors. RMI has an ethical and moral responsibility to donors and to the community to ensure that not-accessioned or de-accessioned objects are disposed of sensitively, and in accordance with collection management policy and procedures, and the donor's instructions if applicable.

14.2. Objects shall not be given or sold to Redland Museum employees, officers, volunteers or their immediate families or representatives. If objects are disposed of at a public auction or public sale, Redland Museum employees, officers, volunteers or their immediate families or representatives must not be given any preference or advantage in procuring the objects.

14.3. The collection subcommittee has the authority to dispose of not-accessioned or de-accessioned objects following the priorities below:

14.3.1. Return the object to the donor.

14.3.2. Offer the object to another museum or collecting organization.

14.3.3. Use the object for parts and material to conserve other similar objects.

14.3.4. Sell the object at public auction or public sale.

14.3.5. Appropriate disposal of the object.

- 14.4. If objects are to be sold, the selling process is to be done ethically and with discretion to protect the integrity and reputation of the museum.
- 14.5. The collection manager is to keep a permanent record of the method of disposal, and if the object is sold, the amount received.
- 14.6. Funds received from the sale of unwanted collection objects are to be receipted and credited to the museum's self-generated income and used for the benefit of the museum.

## 15. Conservation

- 15.1. RMI recognizes that it has a professional responsibility to maintain the physical integrity of all objects under its care, whether they are part of the museum collection, or material on loan to RMI. The primary aim of conservation must be to stabilize the object and prevent further deterioration. The main method of achieving this is to maintain environmental protection for the collection, to the greatest degree practicable.
- 15.2. No object is to be brought into the collection storage areas until the collection manager is satisfied that it is clean and free of biological or hazardous contamination.
- 15.3. All staff, volunteers, students and others using the collections are to be trained and conversant with proper handling techniques.
- 15.4. RMI is to aim, wherever possible, to use appropriate archival materials in the storage and display of collection objects.
- 15.5. Restoration of an object may only be undertaken with the specific approval of the collection subcommittee in consultation with the display subcommittee. A written record of this decision is to be kept identifying the future use and display potential of the object, the scope and objectives of the restoration, and that costs can be met from the budget allocation to the collection subcommittee. If restoration costs cannot be met from the collection budget, the collection manager may submit a proposal to the management committee for consideration.
- 15.6. As a social history museum, RMI aims to depict objects on display in used but well maintained condition, representing their state when in use and cared for by the original owner. The degree of restoration should ensure that the object's historical significance is not lost. Evidence of use, such as normal wear, should be retained.
- 15.7. The restoration process must be fully documented and photographed. This information is to be kept in the object file of the item.

## 16. Inward Loans

- 16.1. An inward loan is a temporary loan of an object borrowed on request by RMI for a specific purpose and limited time. Inward loans must be approved by either the collection manager or the exhibitions officer. No object is to be accepted on loan as a convenience or favour to the lender.

16.2. Inward loans are to be documented by using the Inward Temporary Loan Agreement form, or equivalent agreement document as required by the lender, and are to be reviewed at least quarterly.

16.3. Inward loans are not to be negotiated if the object requires conservation treatment to be undertaken by RMI.

#### 17. Outward Loans

17.1. An outward loan is the temporary loan to another organization of a registered object from the RMI collection for a specific purpose and a limited time.

17.2. RMI may lend objects from its collection to other museums, schools, community groups or other organizations, for the purpose of exhibition, research, demonstration or performance. As a general rule the RMI does not lend to individuals. Requests to borrow objects from RMI must be approved by the collection manager, with additional agreement of the coordinator of the display subcommittee if the object is to be removed from a display.

17.3. Outward loans are to be documented by using the Outward Temporary Loan Agreement form and are to be reviewed monthly.

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