



NANTUCKET HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

COLLECTIONS POLICY

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Table of Contents

Section 1. Purpose 3

Section 2. Ethical and Legal Considerations 3

Section 3. Scope of Collections 5

Section 4. Responsibility for Collections 9

Section 5. Public Access 10

Section 6. Third-Party Use of Historic Properties 10

Section 7. Collections Care 11

Section 8. Collections Records 12

Section 9. Acquisitions and Accessions 12

Section 10. Loans 15

Section 11. Deaccessioning and Disposal 17

Section 12. Deaccessioning and Sale of Historic Properties 19

Section 13. Intellectual Property 21

Section 14. Review/Revision 21

Section 1. Purpose

The Nantucket Historical Association (NHA) is a nonprofit 501(c)3 public-benefit corporation established in 1894. The association's mission is to educate by telling the inspiring stories of Nantucket through its collections, programs, and properties.

The NHA encourages the appreciation of Nantucket's unique history by collecting, preserving, presenting, and interpreting to the public relevant artifacts, documents, and historic properties. This *Collections Policy* defines the scope of the NHA's collections and establishes standards for the ethical acquisition, management, and disposal of those collections. Procedures developed by staff to carry out these policies are contained in the association's *Collections Management Manual* and *Library Procedures Manual*.

Section 2. Ethical and Legal Considerations

2.1. Professional Ethics

The NHA abides by the professional ethics statements of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), and New England Museum Association (NEMA), the American Library Association (ALA), the Society of American Archivists (SAA), and other appropriate professional ethics standards.

2.2. Laws and Regulations

The NHA complies with all state and federal laws and regulations that apply to the management of its collections, including the Endangered Species Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The NHA will not knowingly acquire or exhibit artifacts that have been stolen, illegally exported from their country of origin, unethically taken from their society of origin, illegally or unethically salvaged, or removed from commercially exploited archaeological or historic sites. The NHA strives to collect only those archaeological artifacts that have been acquired through properly documented excavations.

2.3. American Indian Artifacts

The NHA is dedicated to the preservation of Native American grave and religious sites on Nantucket and conforms to all applicable provisions of the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA), and the Massachusetts Unmarked Burial Law.

As required by NAGPRA, the NHA produced inventories of Nantucket Indian skeletal materials and funerary, sacred, and cultural-patrimony objects in 1993 and 1994. The Indian remains were turned over to the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs in 1996 for reinterment at the Miacomet Indian Burial Ground.

The NHA no longer accepts donations of excavated or found human remains. Any human remains found on NHA property as part of archeological activity will be treated in accordance with the requirements of NAGPRA and other applicable laws.

2.4. Secretary of Interior's Standards

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties guides the NHA in preservation and rehabilitation decisions concerning historic buildings and landscapes.

2.5. Appraisals

NHA staff, trustees, committee members, and volunteers may not provide appraisals of donated or bequeathed material nor of material offered for donation. Staff may provide a list of multiple independent appraisers to donors, but it is the responsibility of the donor to select one, secure the appraisers' services, and pay for the appraisal. The NHA will provide a donor's selected appraiser access to relevant objects if they are already in the NHA's custody. Collections staff may assign values to objects for insurance purposes only; such values are not to be considered an appraisal by the association.

2.6. Personal Collecting

The NHA recognizes that staff members, trustees, committee members, and volunteers may collect works of artistic or historic interest for personal enjoyment. Those who do are asked to keep the institution's best interests in mind and to make best efforts to avoid competing with the institution's collecting activities. The NHA will make best efforts to inform staff, trustees, and committee members when it plans to bid on items at auction or is engaged in other collecting activities where competition might arise.

NHA affiliated individuals may not present themselves as representatives of the NHA when collecting in their own personal interest, nor may they use their institutional affiliation to promote their, or anyone's, personal collecting activities.

The ownership, inheritance, or sale of family heritage property, and the acceptance of personal gifts and bequests made in good faith, are not considered to compete with the NHA's interests.

NHA staff may not actively deal in the purchasing or selling of historic artifacts or works of art within the museum's areas of interest.

2.7. Personal Gain

NHA staff, trustees, committee members, and volunteers may not use their positions nor their association with the NHA for personal gain.

2.8. Personal Use

The NHA collections are not for any personal use whatsoever nor for any purpose contrary to the NHA's mission and collecting objectives, selected property uses as described in section 2.3 notwithstanding.

2.9. Disposition of Collections

NHA collections may not be publically or privately sold, transferred, exchanged, or given to staff members, trustees, committee members, volunteers, or family members of the same, nor to individuals working for or representing any business or government agency currently doing business with the NHA. Objects that are properly deaccessioned may be disposed of in the following order of priority:

1. Transferred, exchanged, or sold to an appropriate nonprofit educational institution, either on island or off
2. Sold at public auction
3. Sold through a dealer
4. Destroyed if unsaleable or of no market value

Section 3. Scope of Collections

To achieve its mission, the NHA maintains collections of artifacts, art, photographs, maps, books, manuscripts and institutional records, and historic properties. The NHA safeguards and stewards its collections in the public trust and provides public access to them through exhibitions, programs, research, and publications in accordance with professional standards. In general, the NHA only accepts and accessions objects, archives, and properties that are relevant to its mission and are consistent with its public purposes and activities. Occasionally artifacts are retained whose origins are not limited to the geographical boundaries of the island but which make significant contributions to understanding Nantucket's history.

3.1. Museum Collections

The museum collections consist of material culture made or used by Nantucketers from throughout the island's history. The association specifically seeks objects that document the island's cultural, social, political, religious, economic, architectural, and artistic development and that represent specific individuals, families, or groups and their stories. The collections' strengths include whaling tools and gear, clothing and textiles, lighting, domestic items, fine and decorative arts, South Seas ethnography, and Nantucket archaeology.

Key subsets of the museum collections are:

Whaling implements and gear. The NHA holds a substantial and important collection of whalecraft – the tools used to hunt whales in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Fine arts, furniture, and decorative arts. The works in these areas document the island's people and history and represent artists and artisans who worked on the island. Strengths include paintings and prints, furniture, scrimshaw, silver, ceramics, embroidered samplers, wood carvings, and woven baskets.

Clothing and textiles. The NHA has a strong collection of quilts and coverlets; women's, men's, and children's clothing and accessories; and carpets, flags, and tapa cloths.

Domestic life. Everyday life on the island, particularly in the nineteenth century, is represented by ceramics, cooking and dining implements, household hardware, lighting, and a wide variety of personal items.

House-museum collections. Macy-Christian House (12 Liberty Street), Hadwen House (96 Main Street), Greater Light (8 Howard Street), and Thomas Macy House (99 Main Street) came to the NHA complete with collections of furniture, art, clothing, and domestic objects owned by the houses' last private owners. Although these collections contain many individual pieces of distinction, it is the stories they tell in the aggregate about these buildings and their owners that give these collections their true historical value.

Archaeology. The archaeological collection includes prehistoric and historic artifacts relevant to understanding the history and culture of the island's native people and its later settlers. Although numerous artifacts currently included in the archaeology holdings were acquired in the past through unorganized or informal excavations and surface discoveries, the NHA strives to collect only those archaeological artifacts that provide significant insight into the culture and lives of Nantucket's first peoples and that have been acquired through legitimate, organized archaeological excavations. Because the significance of archaeological artifacts arises largely from their field documentation, the association strives to maintain proper field notes, stratigraphic records, registry systems, radio-carbon dating records, photographs, and maps that properly document artifacts acquired through excavation and surface discovery.

Ethnography. The ethnography collections contain objects collected from the peoples of the South Pacific, East and Southeast Asia, and South America by Nantucket whalers and travelers over time. Although collected haphazardly, the collection contains numerous important individual items, such as a ca. 1850 model of a Maori *waka* from New Zealand.

Natural history. The natural history collection comprises animal bones (including two complete whale skeletons), biological specimens, seashells, and geological samples. Many of these artifacts were collected by whalers in the nineteenth century and brought to the island from the far corners of the globe.

3.2. Research Library and Archives

The NHA Research Library contains primary and secondary sources related to the history of whaling and the social, economic, cultural, political, and religious history of Nantucket from prehistoric times to the present. Priority is given to materials that document activities of particular significance in the development of the island, such as accounts of events or persons written by participants, eyewitnesses, or contemporaries; records of local businesses and organizations; images of people, places, and events; oral histories; and books.

In addition to collecting materials about Nantucket specifically, the library collects secondary materials that, while not directly related to Nantucket, provide contextual information that helps place the history, culture, and activities of the island and its inhabitants into perspective.

The library avoids collecting materials merely owned by Nantucketers if the items do not refer or relate to Nantucket. In general, the library does not collect autographs.

The holdings of, and potential for, collections sharing with other Nantucket libraries, as well as other New England maritime libraries, is considered in evaluating the appropriateness of potential acquisitions. The NHA uses electronic media for the storage and dissemination of collections information and aims to expand and share collections with sister institutions and broad audiences.

The library collections include:

Books. The library maintains both a reference collection and a rare book collection focused on the subject of Nantucket. The library also collects books about whales and whaling; exploration and travel; ships and navigation; maritime history; the Society of Friends (Quakers); genealogy; lighthouses and lightships; archaeology and architecture; natural history; decorative arts; and chanteys and sea stories. Works of general history, reference, and fiction that illuminate the activities, occupations, values, and culture of the island community are particular interests, as are titles written by Nantucketers. The NHA preserves at most five copies of each Nantucket title.

Maps, charts, and prints. The library collects maps, charts, and plats detailing Nantucket or areas in which Nantucketers settled or traveled as well as scrapbooks, research papers, architectural reports, periodicals, broadsides, and genealogical charts that document or describe Nantucket's history. The library also collects broadsides, prints, and posters.

Manuscripts. The manuscript collections contain materials created by Nantucket individuals, families, mariners, businesses and trades, churches, schools, clubs, and associations of all kinds. These materials include letters, diaries, receipts, bills, and marine and other documents. Logbooks, journals, and account books are a particular strength.

Photographs. The library collects photographic prints, film negatives, glass-plate negatives, ambrotypes, cartes de visite, daguerreotypes, tintypes, postcards, slides, color transparencies, and digital scans depicting Nantucket people, places, and events.

Audio and video recordings. The library collects oral histories and their transcripts, home movies, and films featuring Nantucket and its people.

Institutional archives. The library holds the permanent corporate records of the NHA, including correspondence, publications, business papers, and other documents relevant to the association's history and development. The library also maintains the permanent records relating to the association's historic and real properties. These records include copies of deeds and titles, historical reports, preservation and repair documentation, and other material related to the history and care of the properties.

3.3. Historic Properties

The NHA's real-estate holdings fall into two categories:

Historic properties. The historic properties consist of real property acquired to illustrate important aspects of Nantucket's cultural, social, and architectural history or to preserve open land or historical monuments in a manner consistent with the association's mission. The majority of the NHA's real property falls into this category.

Purpose-built facilities. The NHA owns purpose-built facilities erected within the last fifty years to assist it in carrying out its mission.

The NHA uses its properties, both historic and purpose-built, in a variety of sometimes overlapping ways:

Museum and educational purposes. Selected properties are open to the public in part or in whole to further the association's educational mission, either as museums, library space, landscapes, or classrooms.

Support services. Some properties are used to sustain the NHA's educational activities, either as collections storage or as maintenance facilities. In general these properties are closed to the public.

Commercial uses. Selected properties have been set aside by the Board of Trustees for commercial use to generate income to support the association's operations.

Housing. The NHA maintains staff and visitor housing in certain buildings. NHA staff housing is rented to staff members at subsidized rates to help alleviate the lack of affordable housing on the island.

The *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* guides the NHA in its treatment of historic properties and landscapes. Treatment approaches may include preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, or reconstruction, as the needs of individual buildings and situations may necessitate.

The NHA does not consider purpose-built facilities that are less than fifty years old to be historic and does not apply the *Secretary of Interior's Standards* to their care.

The NHA holds a small number of preservation restrictions (easements) related to real property on island owned by others. The association is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the provisions of these restrictions, which were accepted in the past to aid in the preservation of historically important buildings or facades.

See Appendices I and II for lists of the NHA's properties and preservation restrictions.

3.4. Nonaccessioned Collections

The nonaccessioned collections contain artifacts and reference materials that the NHA retains for research, educational, or public programming use but which are not of sufficient quality, stability, or historic value to accession. Typical nonaccessioned items include general collection library books, exhibition props, duplicate artifacts; artifacts of inferior quality; artifacts intended to be used up through handling or study; and artifacts that cannot be preserved in the long term.

3.5. Excluded from Collections

The NHA owns many items, both large and small, that are not part of its collections and that, therefore, do not fall under the purview of this policy. These include office furniture, company vehicles, landscaping equipment, power tools, audiovisual hardware, exhibit cases and display furniture, and similar utilitarian items. Although it is important for the NHA to keep track of these things, they are tracked by mechanisms separate from the accessioning process outlined below. They are also not subject to the deaccession requirements given in this policy and may be disposed of at the association's discretion.

Section 4. Responsibility for Collections

4.1. Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for protecting, preserving, developing, and maintaining the NHA's collections and for establishing policies to effect these responsibilities.

4.2. Board Committees

Various board committees work together to develop collection- and property-related recommendations for the Board of Trustees.

The Collections and Exhibitions Committee is charged with advising the Board of Trustees on collections policy and with assisting, in consultation with the Executive Director and the professional library, curatorial, and properties staff, in the development of the association's collections. As established by the NHA's bylaws, the committee comprises members of the Board of Trustees as well as members of the community who possess significant knowledge of collections, collections-related issues, exhibitions, interpretation, and public history. The board president appoints the committee's members and chair. All must be members of the NHA; the chair must be a member of the Board of Trustees. The committee is required to report its activities to the board on a periodic basis.

The Housing and Properties Committee advises the Board of Trustees on all matters relating to the acquisition, disposition, and management of the NHA's properties as defined in section 2.3.

The Finance Committee is charged with determining procedures for the purchase and sale of properties as approved by the Board of Trustees and the association membership. The committee also advises the board on the commercial use of properties.

4.3. Collections Staff

The Executive Director, the Chief Curator, the Library Director, and the Director of Properties are responsible for maintaining intellectual control of the various collections through accurate recordkeeping, careful research, thorough cataloging, periodic inventorying, routine housekeeping and maintenance, and the creation of plans for board approval covering the development, security, conservation, preservation, and use of the NHA's collections. The Executive Director and the professional staff are responsible for keeping the Board of Trustees, through the Collections and Exhibitions and Housing and Properties committees, informed of relevant collections matters in a timely fashion.

4.4. All Staff

Everyone at the NHA shares responsibility for safeguarding the collections so that they remain available to be enjoyed and studied today and in the future.

Section 5. Public Access

The NHA is committed to providing public access to its collections. It does this by exhibiting appropriate items in its museums, historic properties, and public programs. It lends objects to qualified educational institutions. It provides online access through searchable databases, digital surrogates, and digital exhibitions. It makes research collections available to researchers during public hours at the Research Library. It makes those portions of the collections not on exhibition available to researchers by appointment.

The NHA is committed to collaborating with allied organizations in its efforts to make its collections more accessible. The association works toward the goal of open and universal access to knowledge and collections through partnerships with such initiatives as the Digital Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Digital Public Library of America and through the licensing of NHA intellectual property through Creative Commons attribution.

Conservation and security concerns dictate whether access is possible and under what circumstances. The Chief Curator and Library Director, in consultation with the Executive Director, are responsible for determining all relevant conditions for public access to the collections.

NHA staff respond to all reasonable requests for collections-related information, although public access is not provided to donor personal information and insurance and appraisal records. The Chief Curator and Library Director are responsible for determining the extent to which collections staff can fulfill outside research requests, given overall demands on staff time.

The NHA will periodically adjust and publish guidelines and fee schedules for commercial use of its collections and properties.

Section 6. Third-Party Use of Historic Properties

Use of NHA historic properties and museum facilities by small groups and organizations for the conduct of programs of broad public interest is encouraged with the understanding that the

operational requirements of the NHA and the security and maintenance of its buildings, exhibition areas, and historic collections be given first consideration. In addition, the NHA offers rental opportunities to private parties and organizations at some of its historic sites, including the Whaling Museum. In such cases, direct supervision of collections and properties is conducted by members of the NHA staff who oversee such events. Rentals will not be approved that risk endangering the association's historic properties or its collections.

Section 7. Collections Care

7.1. Security

The NHA makes every effort to protect its collections and historic properties from mishandling, theft, vandalism, fire, and natural disasters. The NHA clearly delegates security responsibilities, appropriately limits access to the collections and properties, and maintains specialized security systems. The NHA establishes and regularly reviews its security, emergency, and disaster plans and procedures.

7.2. Preservation

The NHA ensures the preservation of its collections and of loan items in its custody through the maintenance of proper storage and exhibition conditions. Proper conditions include environments in which light levels, temperature, and humidity are controlled and monitored and in which protection is given against damage from handling, contaminants, and infestations.

The NHA recognizes the need to preserve digital assets in perpetuity and strives to adhere to digital preservation guidelines as established by the Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines Initiative.

The *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* guides the NHA in its treatment of historic properties and landscapes. Treatment approaches may include preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, or reconstruction, as the needs of individual buildings and situations may necessitate.

7.3. Conservation

All conservation treatments to historic materials shall be consistent with professionally accepted conservation standards as specified in the American Institute of Conservation's *Standards of Practice*. The Chief Curator and the Library Director are responsible for selecting outside conservators and supervising their work. Care of historic properties follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and all applicable state and local codes.

7.4. Handling and Transportation

Collections staff oversee the handling, packing, moving, and shipping of collections items in accordance with professional best practices.

Section 8. Collections Records

The NHA is dedicated to complete and accurate documentation of its collections in accordance with professional standards. Accessioning, registering, cataloguing, lending, deaccessioning, and inventorying procedures are clearly delineated in appropriate planning and procedural documents. These documents are updated periodically to meet current museum practices and NHA needs. The association's collections records are kept in secure locations with limited access; its collections databases are kept secure and properly backed up.

Section 9. Acquisitions and Accessions

9.1. General

Recognizing that objects and archives require space and money to store and maintain, the NHA exercises great care in selecting additions to its collections. The NHA is particularly interested in artifacts that come with stories, documented connections to island people or groups, archaeological support, or other supporting information. Preference is given to artifacts that are well documented or that fulfill specific exhibition, research, or historical needs. When accepting or purchasing materials, the NHA ensures that it has the ability to store, preserve, and properly care for all new acquisitions.

Objects, archives, and structures must be received in stable condition or with contributed funds sufficient for stabilization, conservation, and preservation in perpetuity. Exceptions for special research purposes or for rare or unique items may be made at the discretion of the Executive Director working with the collections staff.

Objects accepted by the NHA shall have satisfactory provenance and clear title. Except in exceptional circumstances, objects will not be accepted with preconditions nor restrictions on use or future disposition. Some library materials, however, may be accepted with restrictions if a donor wishes to restrict access to a collection for a fixed and agreed upon period of time. All terms and conditions of a gift are explicitly spelled out in the Deed of Gift.

The NHA does not accept objects into its collections merely for the purpose of eventually selling, transferring, exchanging, or otherwise disposing of them.

For the purposes of financial accounting, the NHA does not capitalize the value of its collections, as the collections are held for the public good and not for financial gain.

Exceptions to these acquisitions policies require approval by the Board of Trustees after review and approval by collections staff, the Executive Director, and the Collections and Exhibitions and/or Housing and Properties committees.

9.2. Criteria for Acquisition

The following questions are used to evaluate potential acquisitions.

- Is the item relevant to the NHA's mission?
- Does the item further our understanding or appreciation of Nantucket's history and people?

- Does the item retain its physical and historical integrity?
- Does the item strengthen the existing collections?
- Does the item fulfill a specific research or exhibitions need?
- Does the item open a new collecting area of relevance to the NHA?
- Can the item tell multiple stories?
- Does the item have satisfactory provenance and clear title?
- Does collecting the item jeopardize the NHA's public trust or good will with any part of the communities it serves?
- Is the item in sound, stable condition and free from active deterioration and infestation?
- Does the item pose a health or safety hazard to staff, visitors, or other collections?
- Is the item offered free of any restrictions from the donor regarding use, display, public access, or future disposition?
- Can the item be safely stored and protected within the association's current financial and staff resources?
- Will the display, conservation, or storage of the item require future expenditures that the NHA may not be able to meet?

9.3. Purchases, Donations, Bequests, and Exchanges

The NHA may acquire objects through purchase, unrestricted donation, unrestricted bequest, or through exchange with other non-profit educational institutions. The NHA is chartered as a nonprofit educational institution; therefore, the value of accepted gifts to the association may be tax deductible for donors within the limits of applicable law. The NHA and its employees adhere to the Internal Revenue Service regulations regarding the processing of non-cash gifts; donors are fully responsible for obtaining and paying for any appraisals that may be needed for personal tax records. NHA affiliated individuals will not provide appraisals nor select nor hire appraisers for donors. Staff may provide donors with lists of qualified appraisers. NHA staff will cooperate in making donated materials available to a donor's selected appraiser. The NHA will also cooperate in the prompt completion of any tax forms the IRS may require the association to provide.

9.4. Collecting Authority

Gifts and bequests. The Chief Curator and the Library Director are authorized to accept object donations, working in consultation with the Executive Director.

NHA purchases. The Chief Curator and the Library Director are authorized to make purchases under the acquisitions lines in their annual budgets up to a limit of \$2,000 per purchase. Purchases in excess of \$2,000 require approval from the Executive Director.

NHA purchases off-set by gifts from individual donors. The Chief Curator and the Library Director, with the approval of the Executive Director, have the discretion to accept verbal or written offers from individuals to fund specific collections purchases. Upon completion of such purchases, the financial underwriter will immediately be sent an invoice for reimbursement, which will include all agreed costs, including any buyer's premium, taxes, shipping, and related expenses.

Gifts of the Friends of the NHA. The Chief Curator and the Library Director, with approval from the Executive Director and from the President and/or Acquisitions Committee Chair of the Friends of the NHA, are authorized to make purchases that meet with the reasonable consensus approval of the Friends and fall within the acquisitions budget of the Friends.

9.5. Historic Property Acquisitions

The acquisition and disposal of real property is governed by the NHA bylaws, which provide:

“Any transaction involving buying, selling, exchanging, making or receiving a gift, mortgaging, giving or receiving an easement or restriction, leasing, or the placing of an encumbrance of any kind, affecting real property interests owned or to be owned by the Association, requires the affirmative vote of A.) a two-thirds majority OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING (with the votes of at least fifty-one percent of all elected Trustees being cast in favor) at a duly called and held meeting of the Board of Trustees and B.) a majority at a duly called and held meeting of the membership. However, no action of the membership shall be required for the making of leases for terms not to exceed three years, or the acquisition of preservation restrictions by gift.”

When acquiring historic property either through purchase or donation, the NHA makes every effort to secure sufficient funding to ensure the perpetual preservation and maintenance of the property. Historic properties without accompanying endowment funds will be purchased or accepted only in extraordinary circumstances.

The acceptance of preservation restrictions beyond those already held by the NHA is discouraged.

9.6. Nonaccessions

In general, objects are only accessioned into the collection if they can and should be retained permanently. Objects with research or exhibition value that do not rise to the level of care required of accessioned objects are nonaccessioned. Typical nonaccessions include duplicate objects; objects of inferior quality; objects intended to be used up through handling or study; and objects with inherent vice that cannot be preserved long term.

Nonaccession items are assigned numbers for recordkeeping and tracking purposes but are not accessioned into the NHA’s permanent collections. In instances where items are accepted as nonaccessioned gifts, donors will be advised of the NHA’s intended use of the items and any relevant impact this may have on the donors’ tax benefit. Accessioned items may be converted to nonaccessioned status, if appropriate, by following the association’s deaccessioning procedures.

General collection library books, library reference materials, architectural and student reports, and items that are not germane to the library’s principal research collections are similarly not accessioned. They may be assigned nonaccession numbers if needed for tracking and recordkeeping purposes.

Section 10. Loans

10.1. Objects in Temporary Custody

The NHA may take temporary custody of items that do not belong to it to consider them for acquisition, to scan or photograph them for the archives, or to provide an examination or inspection. A Temporary Custody Receipt is always issued, with a copy given to the lender and a copy retained with the items in custody. Temporary-custody objects are cared for in the same manner as objects in the permanent collections, except that the NHA will not insure them unless specifically requested to do so or when collections staff determine that insuring them would be in the NHA's best interest. Collections staff are responsible for evaluating items in temporary custody promptly and returning any items not accepted for acquisition without undue delay. Collections staff will make all reasonable efforts to return temporary-custody items to their owners, but responsibility for the items ultimately lies with the owner. Objects in custody that become abandoned may be converted to NHA ownership following procedures specified in Massachusetts General Laws. (See "Unclaimed loans," below.)

10.2. Outgoing Loans

The NHA recognizes the importance of making its collections available to other museums, archives, and nonprofit educational institutions for their exhibition and research needs. Outgoing loans are considered to institutions that meet professional museum and library standards for the care, handling, and exhibition of artifacts. Loans are not made to individuals or for private use except that items may be lent for short terms to conservators, framers, or other museums to allow for conservation treatment, framing, or identification.

Loan requests. Each object requested is considered for loan individually, taking into account the purpose of the loan, the object's condition, the object's suitability for transport, and the NHA's anticipated future use of the object. Loan requests must be submitted to the Chief Curator, the Library Director, or the Executive Director at least three months prior to the proposed loan period, although exceptions will be considered. Loan approval comes from the Chief Curator or the Library Director in consultation with the Executive Director. A fee may be charged to cover the costs incurred in processing loans in accordance with an established fee schedule.

Loan agreements. Borrowers are required to sign the NHA outgoing loan agreement to certify that they will abide by the guidelines and restrictions it contains. Prospective borrowers are required to complete a detailed facilities report. All loans will be for specific and limited periods of time defined in the signed loan agreement, generally no longer than one year. Loans may be renewed if appropriate. Borrowers are responsible for the costs of preparing objects for loan, packing and shipping, and couriering. The Nantucket Historical Association must be credited in all labels and catalogues as the owner of the borrowed objects and the original donors of the objects to the NHA must also be credited.

Insurance. Borrowers are responsible for insuring items lent to them, and they will be asked to provide proof of sufficient insurance coverage before items are lent. If the

borrower arranges for lent objects to be covered by the NHA's insurance while on loan, the borrower is responsible for reimbursing the NHA for its insurance costs.

Long-term loans. Long-term outgoing loans may be considered in special circumstances to keep objects on public view (such as the loan of the finback whale skeleton to Nantucket High School). Preexisting long-term loans are evaluated annually to verify the borrower's continued care of the loan and to confirm the loan's compatibility with the NHA's programmatic goals and needs.

Loan recall. The NHA may recall outgoing loans without cause upon thirty days notice to the borrower and with cause at any time.

10.3. Incoming Loans

The NHA periodically solicits loans from individuals and institutions of items desired for research or display. In accepting objects on loan, the NHA exercises the same care and discretion in the handling, storage, and display of borrowed items that it does for its permanent collections. Items are not accepted on loan simply for deposit or storage, except by special repository agreement (see below). All loans are for specific and limited periods of time that are explicitly specified in a signed loan agreement, which is executed for every loan.

Insurance. The NHA insures incoming loans under its own fine arts policy. Lender's insurance may be used to cover incoming loans if the NHA is named as additionally insured on the lender's policy.

Condition reporting. Collections staff will examine borrowed items upon receipt to verify and document their condition and will inform lenders promptly of any concerns or discrepancies. Changes in the condition of lent items during the course of a loan are to be reported to lenders immediately.

Long-term loans. Open-ended loans are not accepted. Long-term loans of no more than five years may be accepted if borrowed items are to be actively used or displayed by the NHA. Long-term loans already in the NHA's care are reviewed annually to evaluate the loan's continued relevance to the NHA's objectives. The NHA will work to return long-term loans that are no longer useful or to convert them to gifts.

Unclaimed loans. Massachusetts General Laws, part II, title II, chapter 200B, "Disposition of Museum Property," govern the disposition of unclaimed loans. Among other provisions, the law provides that "property in the possession of a museum for which the museum does not know, and has no reasonable means of determining, the identity of the lender or claimant shall become the property of the museum if no person has claimed the property within 7 years after the museum can document the museum's possession of the property."

Conservation of loan items. In general, the NHA will not alter, repair, or perform conservation treatment on any loan item without the lender's specific prior written permission. Massachusetts law on the "Disposition of Museum Property" provides,

however, for conservation treatment of loans without permission in situations where conservation is necessary to protect the object or to safeguard public or staff health and safety.

10.4. Repository Agreements

The NHA may store collections for other island nonprofits by mutual agreement. All repository arrangements are governed by written agreements specifying accessibility of the collections, care and management expectations, time limits, and any compensation. Repository agreements must be approved by the Executive Director.

Section 11. Deaccessioning and Disposal

In general, objects are thoughtfully collected and accessioned with the intention that they can and will be retained permanently. The NHA reserves the right, however, to deaccession objects from its collections if the association determines the objects are no longer relevant to its mission or if they have lost their physical integrity, their authenticity, or their research and interpretive value. The process of deaccessioning should strengthen the collections and allow for considered and intentional collections growth while also improving the NHA's ability to fulfill its mission.

The NHA recognizes that deaccession decisions must avoid harming the confidence, trust, and good will of the public the association serves and the beneficiaries who support it.

In accordance with professional ethics, any and all funds accrued from the sale of deaccessioned items may be used only for the acquisition of collections or for the conservation of existing collections.

Funds from deaccessioning are kept as restricted funds. Funds from artifact deaccessions and from Research Library deaccessions are accounted separately so that they may, if desired, be used separately.

11.1. Standards for Deaccessioning

Collections and properties must meet one or more of the following specific conditions to be considered for deaccession.

- The item fails to meet the exhibition, research, or programming needs of the association.
- The item unnecessarily duplicates other collections material.
- The item is a fragment or a part of a set that is only meaningful as a whole.
- The item has lost its essential integrity or has been found to be a forgery or a reproduction.
- The item requires extensive restoration that would essentially destroy its integrity or authenticity.
- The item's physical condition is so poor that it cannot be used for study or exhibition and conservation is not feasible.
- The item cannot be safely stored or has deterioration or infestation that threatens other items.
- The item presents a danger to the health or safety of staff or the public.

- The item has been found to be stolen property, or was improperly acquired, or was illegally or unethically excavated, exported, or imported in violation of applicable laws.
- The item fails to comply with state and national laws concerning the repatriation of native materials, the protection of endangered or threatened species, or the possession of banned or controlled substances and materials.
- The item has been stolen, lost, or missing for a period of at least ten years.
- The item has been destroyed.

11.2. Procedures for Deaccessioning Objects

All deaccession actions will be fully documented in the permanent record.

Deaccessions are proposed by the Chief Curator or Library Director. An artifact's accession and catalog records are thoroughly researched to confirm that the NHA holds legal title to the object and to determine if any restrictions attach to the original acquisition of the object. A deaccession proposal will state the reason for the proposed deaccession and the recommended method of disposal. All deaccession proposals are reviewed and approved by the Executive Director, the Collections and Exhibitions Committee, and finally the Board of Trustees.

Once a deaccession is approved, the object's accession file is clearly marked and retained with the NHA's other deaccession records. Accession books are annotated with the date that the object was deaccessioned. Deaccessioned artifacts are also clearly noted in the collections database. The object is photographed for the file as part of the deaccessioning process.

Living artists are contacted when one of their works is deaccessioned, as a professional courtesy. While the NHA may, as a courtesy, attempt to contact the original donor of an object, or his or her surviving family, to inform them that their gift is being deaccessioned, the association may not return a deaccessioned item to the original donor, the donor's family, or their representatives, to prevent a conflict of interest.

Items for which neither original accession paperwork nor a donor's name can be found require additional care and attention, and all decisions regarding them must be carefully and fully documented for the permanent record.

11.3. Disposition of Deaccessioned Objects

Objects that are properly deaccessioned may be disposed of in this order of priority:

1. Transferred, exchanged, or sold to an appropriate nonprofit educational institution, either on island or off
2. Sold at public auction
3. Sold through a dealer
4. Destroyed if unsaleable or of no market value

The NHA strives first to transfer, exchange, or sell deaccessioned objects to other museums, archives, or nonprofit cultural or educational organizations, whether on island or off. Failing this course, the NHA may offer objects for sale through third-party public auction. Objects may also be consigned for sale through a dealer with due public notice, but auction sale is preferred. A written appraisal should be obtained for potentially high-value objects.

To prevent apparent conflicts of interest, the private sale, gift, or exchange of deaccessioned objects directly to individuals is not permitted, nor is the gift, exchange, or sale of objects, either privately or publically, to any NHA staff member, trustee, committee member, advisory board member, volunteer, or to their immediate families.

Deaccessioned objects may not be sold in the museum shop.

Severely deteriorated objects and those with no or little resale value may be destroyed in an appropriate manner.

11.4. Nonaccessions

Nonaccessioned items may be sold, transferred, exchanged, or disposed of when no longer useful. Their disposal must be approved by the Executive Director, Chief Curator, or Library Director. Their disposal should be properly documented in the collections records.

Section 12. Deaccessioning and Sale of Historic Properties

12.1. General

The NHA is committed to preserving the goodwill and confidence of the people of Nantucket and of its beneficiaries in all its property transactions. The Director of Properties, the Executive Director, the chairman of the Housing and Properties Committee, and the chairman of the Collections and Exhibitions Committee may make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for the deaccessioning of real property. Final decisions on historic property deaccessions are made by the Board of Trustees and the membership as specified in the NHA's bylaws.

In the sale or transfer of a historic property, the NHA will be led by its chief interest of preserving the property in perpetuity in cooperation with allied interests and organizations. Priority in the sale of historic properties will be given to community interests and organizations who share a commitment to the preservation of significant historic features of the property.

Funds derived from the sale of historic properties may be put toward the acquisition of additional historic properties; toward the conservation, preservation, or restoration of collections properties; or into restricted endowment funds for direct care of collections properties. Funds from the sale of non-historic properties may be spent as needed.

12.2. Standards for Deaccessioning Historic Properties

Historic property will be considered for deaccessioning under specific limited conditions, which are:

- The property fails to meet collections criteria in terms of historical significance, architectural integrity, or unique or exemplary value.
- The property lacks potential to fulfill the NHA's mission or public, educational, and research priorities
- The property has physical deterioration that precludes use for study or exhibition or exceeds the NHA's ability to rectify.

- The property has been replaced in the collection by a more authentic or historically significant example.

12.3. Disposal of Historic Properties

Historic property holdings from the collection may be disposed of by one of four methods: sale, trade, donation, or destruction. If offered for sale, the NHA will ensure, through easements or restrictions, the preservation of historic characteristics the association determines are significant and important to the integrity of the property.

Significant consideration is given to placing historic properties, through donation, exchange, or sale, with another nonprofit educational institution which can care for the property. The Housing and Properties Committee, in consultation with the Collections and Exhibitions Committee, and with the approval of the Executive Director, makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees as to the appropriate method of disposal. In deciding a method of disposal, the board will give primary consideration to the interests of the NHA, the interests of the historic property collection, and the interests of the Nantucket community to limit any possible harm to public confidence.

12.4. Property Sales Procedure

When a property is to be disposed of by sale, the NHA will offer the property through a public offering. Prior to disposal, the NHA will document the property through accurate and thorough measured drawings and photographs, if not already done, to ensure that an accurate record of the property's configuration and condition is on file in the association archives prior to any transfer of ownership.

The NHA Finance Committee has established the following procedure for selling deaccessioned properties.

1. The Finance Committee will identify three to five real-estate firms familiar with the Nantucket real-estate market to visit the subject property for the purpose of preparing a written assessment of market value. Any members of the Finance Committee who are real-estate brokers on Nantucket or have a financial interest in a real-estate brokerage firm on Nantucket will be asked to recuse themselves from the process.
2. The Finance Committee will evaluate the market value assessments and select one firm as the listing agent, with a requirement that the property be entered into Nantucket Link.
3. The Finance Committee will evaluate all offers and will present viable offers to the Executive Committee with its recommendation for acceptance or a counter offer.
4. The Executive Committee will consider the Finance Committee's recommendation and vote whether to authorize the Finance Committee to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement based on the offer or to authorize a counter offer. Any members of the Executive Committee who are real-estate brokers on Nantucket or have a financial interest in a real-estate brokerage firm on Nantucket will be asked to recuse themselves from the vote.

5. When the Executive Committee has agreed to a final offer, the Finance Committee will oversee the negotiation of the purchase and sale agreement and present the agreement to the Executive Committee for review.
6. The Executive Committee will vote whether to submit the purchase and sale agreement to the full board for approval. Any members of the Executive Committee who are real-estate brokers on Nantucket or have a financial interest in a real-estate brokerage firm on Nantucket will be asked to recuse themselves from the vote.
7. The board will vote whether to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Any members of the Board, including immediate family members, who are real-estate brokers on Nantucket or have a financial interest in a real-estate brokerage firm on Nantucket will be asked to recuse themselves from the vote.

Section 13. Intellectual Property

The NHA complies with federal copyright and trademark law in its acquisitions, publications, and exhibitions. Efforts to obtain clear copyright are made at the time of transfer of ownership for new acquisitions, although lack of copyright will not preclude acquiring an item. Requests for reproduction of museum-owned and copyrighted materials are handled by the Library Director, the Chief Curator, and their designated staff. Toward the goal of open and universal access to knowledge, the NHA licenses some of its intellectual property through Creative Commons attribution. The Executive Director, in consultation with curatorial staff, has the authority to license the manufacture and sale of reproductions based on the collections and is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and appropriateness of such items, the manner in which they are advertised, and the conditions under which they are sold. The NHA holds copyright to all materials created by its employees within the scope of their employment and to materials created by consultants as "work for hire" as defined in United States Copyright Code. The NHA reserves the right to limit the use, reproduction, and/or publication of all works of art and photographic and manuscript materials in the collections regardless of copyright status.

Section 14. Review/Revision

The NHA Collections Policy should be reviewed by staff periodically, but not less than every five years, with any revisions proposed, discussed, and approved by the Collections and Exhibitions Committee, the Housing and Properties Committee, and the Board of Trustees.

**APPENDIX I:
NHA PROPERTIES LIST**

PROPERTY NAME	ADDRESS	PROPERTY TYPE		USE			
		HISTORIC	PURPOSE-BUILT	M	S	C	H
Old Mill	50 Prospect St	X		X			
Old Mill shed	50 Prospect St		X		X		
Oldest House	16 Sunset Hill	X		X			
Oldest House shed	16 Sunset Hill		X		X		
Macy-Christian House	12 Liberty St	X					X
Greater Light	8 Howard St	X		X			X
1800 House	4 Mill St	X		X			
1800 Hse Carriage House	4 Mill St		X	X			
Old Gaol	15R Vestal St	X		X			
Old Gaol old shed	15R Vestal St		X		X		
Old Gaol education shed	15R Vestal St		X	X			
Thomas Macy House	99 Main St	X		X			X
Quaker Meeting House	7 Fair St	X		X			
Fair Street Museum (Research Library)	7 Fair St	X		X			
Hadwen House	96 Main St	X		X			X
Thomas Macy Warehouse	12 Straight Wharf	X				X	
Whaling Museum Complex	11-15 Broad St	X	X	X		X	
Fire Hose Cart House	8 Gardner St	X		X			
Tristram Coffin Homestead Site	Capaum Pond Rd	X		X			
Mill Hill	West York & South Mill streets	X		X			
Folger-Franklin Memorial Boulder and Bench	3 Wannacomet Rd	X		X			
Eleanor Ham Pony Field	10 Mill St	X		X			
Bartholomew Gosnold Center	89 Bartlett Rd		X		X		
Gosnold Center Annex	89 Bartlett Rd		X		X		
Bartlett Road Duplex	89A-89B Bartlett Rd		X			X	X

Uses:

M = Museum and educational use

S = Support services

C = Commercial use

H = Housing

**APPENDIX II:
PROPERTY RESTRICTIONS HELD BY THE NHA**

7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 Centre Street

Land Court Document 35330, April 10, 1986

"The purpose and intent of the owner in executing and delivering this instrument is to effect permanent preservation of the facade of the building, as restored and reconstructed under the provisions of paragraph 2.04 hereof"

Amendment to Restriction

Land Court Document 38024, November 25, 1986

"Facade shall mean the exterior face of the side of the building facing Center Street, including the windows, doors, and other architectural features thereof, but not the roof, chimneys, or other exterior faces of the building."

37 Hulbert Avenue

Land Court Doc. 65461, July 15, 1994

"It is the purpose of the restriction to assure that the property will be forever predominantly in its present historic, scenic, and open condition for preservation purposes and to prevent any use of the property that will significantly impair or interfere with the historic values of the property." Prohibited Uses listed in section 4a-f.

16 Main Street

Land Court Doc. 72118, May 20, 1996

"The facade of the building shall not be altered or modified without the prior written consent of NHA. No articles, signs, or fixtures may be affixed to or placed upon the Facade, without the prior written consent of NHA."