

# **Town of Clayton Policy & Procedure Statement**

	
Policy Number	LIBRARY 2022-01
Department	Library
Subject	Historical Collections Policy
Approved By	Town Council – Resolution #2022-91
Effective Date	November 7, 2022
Revision Date(s)	

## **Purpose:**

The Library has never had a policy to govern the types of items accepted into its local history collection. As a result, the collection has a number of items that it cannot adequately preserve or maintain without great cost. This new policy guides the development of that collection, which includes acquisitions (what we get) and de-acquisitions (what we do not keep).

## **Policy:**

This policy shall remain in effect until such time as amended by the Town Council

## **Historical Collections Policy**

### **I. The Library's Mission and The Purpose Of Maintaining A Historical Collection**

#### **A. Library Mission.**

The Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library is a welcoming space for building community and connecting people to ideas and resources.

This includes the following vision and values:

#### **Vision:**

The Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library will be the community's preferred resource for local history, recreational reading, lifelong learning, quality collections and exemplary service.

#### **Values**

- Our commitment to **value** is uncompromising. We strive for quality services delivered to each member of the community.
- Our commitment to **inclusiveness** embraces defending the rights of all individuals to use the library's resources and services. We value our community's diversity and strive to reflect that by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the community we serve.
- Our commitment to **integrity** ensures that our town's activities will be conducted with fairness, openness and honesty. We will do the right things, not just the easy things.
- Our commitment to **stewardship** guides us as we wisely utilize all resources to secure the best value for the community.

- Our commitment to **transformation** is achieved by embracing change rather than sustaining the status quo. We work to ensure that the knowledge, skills and abilities of our employees are relevant to the needs of our community.

#### **B. Purpose Of Maintaining A Historical Collection.**

The Historical Collection helps to fulfill HEML's mission by collecting, preserving, sharing, promoting, and interpreting literary, artistic, and intellectual history, with particular emphasis on the heritage of Clayton and its people. The purpose of the Historical Collection is to:

1. Collect, arrange, describe, and preserve the documents, photographs, artifacts, books, and other materials that constitute the historical record of Clayton;
2. Help Clayton residents understand the history and importance of the Town and its citizens and to contribute to the economic and social enhancement of the Town;
3. Provide access to historical materials for educational, research, and scholarly purposes;
4. Arrange for exhibition of materials in the Collection, including loans to libraries, cultural institutions, government agencies, and other appropriate groups, as well as publication and distribution of items in the Collection.

#### **C. General Responsibilities For Historical Collection.**

1. The Library Advisory Board of the HEML is the advisory body of the Library and advises the library over all aspects of its operations, including the acquisition and disposition of items in the Collection and the use and administration of the Historical Collection.
2. Historical materials may be used for purposes that further the mission of the HEML. Appropriate usage shall be determined by the Library Director in consultation with the Library's archival and reference staff. In determining appropriate usage, the Library Director shall consult with the Library's Officers, Library Advisory Board and its Committees as the Director deems appropriate or the Board may require.
3. The Collection is preserved, cared for, and administered by the Library Director and Staff in accordance with approved policies and professional guidelines.
4. The Library Director oversees archival operations and the development of reports, grants, and other documents as required by the HEML Library Advisory Board or other agencies.
5. The Library Staff engages in collection-related activities including arrangement and description, cataloging, preservation, reference services, and exhibit assistance.

**D. Amendment Of Historical Collection Policies.** The Library Advisory Board may alter or amend Historical Collection Policies. The Board may also make exceptions to the policies in particular cases, which shall not permanently modify the policies.

## II. Scope of Historical Collection

**A. General Historical Collection.** The general Collection includes books and similar materials that are not offered as part of a special collection. This includes items and materials authored by Clayton residents. Types of materials include yearbooks, street lists, magazines, and published biographical, historical, and fiction books. Subjects include the history of Clayton, important Clayton residents, and some history of Johnston County and North Carolina when that history relates to Clayton.

**B. Special Collections.** Special collections include, but are not restricted to, personal and family papers as well as club and organizational records that do not originate from Town departments. These materials come in many formats, including digital files, art, videos, and paper documents. The subjects of these materials include the military, commercial, familial, and political history of Clayton.

**C. Image & Audiovisual Collection.** The image and audiovisual collection includes materials that are not offered as part of a special collection. Types of materials include photographs, glass plate negatives, paintings, film, DVDs, and CDs. The materials are related to the town of Clayton in such ways as having been created and/or owned by a Clayton resident, depicting events and/or places in Clayton, and displaying the history of Johnston County and North Carolina.

**D. Museum Collection.** The museum collection includes many different types of artifacts, including textiles, ornaments, and tools. The artifacts are related to the history of Clayton in some significant way, such as having been made and/or used by a Clayton resident, representing an important commercial industry in the town, and depicting the town and/or its residents. Historical items will be collected only as the library is reasonably able to store and preserve such items. When multiple copies of similar items have been collected, the library will retain and preserve the best identifiable specimen.

**E. Genealogy Collection.** The genealogy collection consists of unpublished materials that have been created by current or former residents, as well as descendants of former residents. They include genealogies and family histories from prominent Clayton families prior to the year 2000 that have not been donated as part of a special collection. The materials delineate the history of families and individuals in Clayton, and may include photographs, written life stories, and vital records.

**F. Subject Files.** Subject files include various materials, such as pamphlets, flyers, programs, and newspaper clippings, which are not associated with a special collection. They may have been collected by the Library's staff or volunteers or donated by others. They are arranged by subject, and include information on the military, town departments, local events, residents, and businesses in Clayton.

### **III. Acquisition Policies For The Historical Collection.**

#### **A. Purpose of the Acquisition Policies.**

The purpose of the Acquisition Policies is to provide guidance for the evaluation of historical materials offered to the HEML, considering prevailing professional standards in the archival field.

**B. Guidelines for Acquiring Items.** The Library generally accepts into the Historical Collection only donated items, but depending on the circumstances, items may be added by means of gifts, bequests, purchases, exchanges, or loans. Gifts to the HEML may or may not qualify for deductions under federal or state tax codes. Donors are advised to obtain legal guidance on the deductibility of a prospective donation and their own appraisals for tax purposes. When deciding upon an acquisition, the Library considers many factors, including but not limited to the following:

1. Are the materials consistent with the desired scope of the Historical Collection?
2. Is the condition, size, and physical nature of the material such that the Library can properly store, care for, and maintain them?
3. Do the materials complement other items in the collection? Duplicates are acceptable when appropriate.
4. Generally, there should be no undue restrictions on materials, such as those allowing only certain individuals to access them, imposing long periods during which the materials are closed to research, and the like. Exceptions can be made for rare and extremely valuable materials.
5. Are the materials currently useful or likely to have significant historical value in the future?

#### **C. Conditions for Accepting Materials Into The Collection.**

Unless otherwise agreed,

1. For an item to be considered for acquisition into the HEML Historical Collection, the donor of said item must complete the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library Historical Material Donation Form and submit it to library staff for review.
2. All donations are considered outright and unconditional gifts to be used at HEML's discretion.
3. All donations include any necessary permissions, including copyright, for the reproduction by HEML of materials for commercial, scholarly, and educational use, provided that proper credit is given.
4. For works of art, photographs, audio-visual materials, and manuscripts, HEML reserves the right to reproduce the work(s) for use in catalogs, brochures, and any other publications by the HEML or to use them to publicize the HEML and/or its collections.
5. There is no guarantee that accepted materials will be permanently exhibited.

6. There is no guarantee that Special Collections will be kept physically intact.
7. Subject to the rules and regulations of the HEML governing access, materials accepted into the Collection may be accessed by all members of the public
8. Donors' contributions will be publicly acknowledged, but personal contact information will not be released. Anonymous gifts to HEML are appreciated and can be specially arranged.

#### **D. Procedures For Acquisitions.**

1. Anyone wishing to add something to the Collection or to suggest any additions to the Collection should contact the Library and submit a completed HEML Historical Collection Donation Form to library staff. Proposed acquisitions are reviewed by a Collections Committee, consisting of HEML staff members appointed by the Library Director. The Library Advisory Board will receive a report of all submissions to the Historical Collection.
2. After a due diligence investigation of the provenance and other available information on the proposed materials, the Collections Committee shall meet to evaluate the proposed acquisition and its terms and shall recommend whether to accept or not accept it into the Historical Collection. Two members constitute a quorum. Two votes in either the affirmative or the negative shall constitute a recommendation.
3. After any additional investigation, analysis, or evaluation deemed appropriate, the Library Director shall decide whether to make an acquisition and the terms of the acquisition. The Library Director's decision shall be communicated to the Library Board Chair and is final.

#### **E. Documentation Of Accessions.**

1. Upon the acceptance of a donation, the Donor will be given a Deed of Gift form to complete. The HEML will retain the original and a copy will be furnished to the donor.
2. Once the materials have been accepted, a timely letter of appreciation or other statement of gratitude will be sent to the Donor.
3. The materials will be assigned an accession number based on the current year and the number of collections that have been donated during that year. This will be documented both in a physical record book and a digital spreadsheet or database. This documentation procedure may be amended from time to time by a majority vote of the Collections Committee.
4. Documentation related to the acquisition of the materials, including the Deed of Gift and any correspondence, will be placed in a permanent accession file.

5. Materials will be processed and/or cataloged according to prevailing standard archival practices.

#### **IV. Deaccession Policies for The Historical Collection.**

##### **A. General Statement**

1. The Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library recognizes that the process of removing material from the Historical Collection is a serious action that requires thorough deliberation and careful reflection upon the interests of the public, scholarly and cultural community, and HEML's mission and resources. Material shall be deaccessioned only when it serves the best interests of the Library, not because it benefits any other organizations or individuals.

2. Materials are considered deaccessioned when they have been formally and permanently removed from the Historical Collection.

##### **B. Criteria for Deaccessioning Materials.**

Materials will not ordinarily be deaccessioned within three years after the date they were acquired. HEML considers many factors in making a deaccession decision, including but not limited to the following questions, which should be seriously considered and answered before deaccession takes place:

1. Does the material reflect the mission of the HEML and the purpose of the Historical Collection?

2. In what ways would deaccessioning of the materials affect public access to information and historical research?

3. Would it be more useful to patrons and educators if the materials were located at another organization?

4. Is this duplicate material or can the information it contains be found in another format?

5. Has the material deteriorated so much that it is no longer useful? Is the cost of restoration/preservation higher than the materials warrant or budgets permit?

6. Are the materials accessible? Are the resources available for processing, cataloging, and preserving the materials?

7. Are there any restrictions, including Donor agreements or other legal issues, affecting whether/how the materials can be deaccessioned?

8. Does the material lack physical integrity leading to a loss of historical value (e.g. the materials were found to be inauthentic or were heavily and badly restored)?

9. Does the condition of the materials pose a danger to the HEML, its collections, its staff, and/or visitors (e.g. biological and chemical threats, flammability, size, etc.)?

### **C. Procedures for Deaccessioning Materials**

1. The Collections Committee shall review the Historical Collection to evaluate materials suitable for deaccession and consider suggested removal of materials.

2. *After review and investigation, the Collections Committee shall recommend to the Library Director whether deaccession should occur, and if so, whether a particular disposition is recommended. The Library Director's decision shall be final unless the Library Board Chair determines that the decision should be reviewed by the Board of Directors.*

4. After the materials have been deaccessioned, all identifying numbers and marks shall be removed if feasible.

5. After the materials have been disposed, all written records of the material will be marked "DEACCESSIONED" in a prominent position. Digital records will have a note containing the word "DEACCESSIONED" in bold, capitalized letters.

6. A deaccession form must be filled out and all applicable documentation placed within a permanent deaccession file.

### **D. Disposition Of Deaccessioned Materials**

At the discretion of the HEML staff, deaccessioned materials may be returned to the Donor or the Donor's family. Otherwise, the procedures for disposition of deaccessioned materials are as follows.

1. **Transfer or exchange materials with/to another organization.** The preferred method of disposition is to contact other non-profit organizations and seek to transfer items or exchange them for materials of similar value.

2. **Sale to another non-profit organization.** In some cases materials would be better served at another repository. The Library can sell materials of value to other non-profit institutions after determining their value.

3. **Sale.** The sale of materials to individuals or organizations that are not non-profit should not be considered until the previous two options have been fully explored. The preferred method of private sale is at a public auction when feasible.

4. **Destruction.** This option should not be invoked until all other options have failed, or the materials have deteriorated so much that the other options are not applicable. Materials may be destroyed no earlier than 72 hours from the time of this decision. Duplicate materials may be destroyed as soon as the deaccession decision has been made.

**E. Documentation.** After the disposal of the deaccessioned materials, the Collections Committee will assemble all the documentation related to the deaccession transaction into a Deaccession File

1. A deaccession form will be generated describing the complete details of the deaccessioning process.
2. All related documentation of the deaccessioning process should also be included in the Deaccession File. Such documentation includes:
  - a) Correspondence (including email, faxes, and regular mail);
  - b) All reports generated by staff and outside appraisers (if applicable);
  - c) HEML receipts and checks;
  - d) Signed authorization by the Library Director;
  - e) Final disposition;
  - f) Photographs.