



**COLLECTION POLICY  
MACKINAC STATE HISTORIC PARKS  
MACKINAC ISLAND STATE PARK COMMISSION**

**ADOPTED 1991  
REVISED 2000, 2022**

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## INTRODUCTION

The *Collection Policy* is a system of mandatory guidelines for Mackinac State Historic Parks defining the responsibilities of collections management and establishing the conditions for acquiring, loaning, maintaining and deaccessioning collections. While there is no universal law for management of collections held by museums, all professionals within the field acknowledge that the preservation and appropriate, respectful interpretation of collections placed in their care is a moral responsibility. Therefore, minimum standards for collection management have been established and promulgated by the American Association of Museums and through professional groups. As with all standards, these have evolved in response to concerns expressed by museum professionals, various public constituencies, and the government.

The *Collections Policy* is an example of this evolution. Collections management began sporadically by the Park Commission after the opening of a museum in Fort Mackinac's Stone Quarters in 1914. Some documentation of the exhibited objects began in 1937. The earliest collections catalog and registration system date to this period. Systematic collections management began after 1958. Professional museum staff introduced a standard catalog and numbering system and some management procedures. A collection management policy was first written for MSHP in 1981. That policy was replaced by the current version, approved by the commission in 1991 and fully revised and updated in 2000. Further updates were made in 2022.

The policy adopted by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission is implemented through collections procedures. The procedures are prepared by the curator for review by the committee and approval by the director.

**COLLECTION POLICY**  
**MACKINAC STATE HISTORIC PARKS**  
**MACKINAC ISLAND STATE PARK COMMISSION**  
*Adopted 1991; Revised 2000, 2022*

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Created in 1895 as an independent agency of the State of Michigan, the Mackinac Island State Park Commission (the commission or MISPC) was charged with the supervision of Mackinac Island State Park. This park, Michigan's first state park, included Fort Mackinac and several hundred acres of land that was part of the military reservation. An Act of Congress in 1875 had set aside this land as the country's second national park, to be administered by the United States Army. When the military decommissioned the post in 1895, the park was transferred to the State of Michigan with the stipulation that it remain a state park in perpetuity [see Act of Congress 1895, MISPC Policy Book]. Mackinac Island State Park now consists of 1,700 acres of land, the Fort and several other historical buildings located in other parts of the Island.

In 1904, the village of Mackinaw City gave the 25-acre Wawatam Park to the State, which in 1909 placed it under the jurisdiction of the Park Commission. Renamed Michilimackinac State Park, the area includes the site of the 18th century fort and village which originated as a Jesuit mission and became a center of the Upper Great Lakes fur trade. Built by the French, this fort was abandoned and razed by the British during the American Revolution. An ongoing archaeology program, established in 1959, has revealed the remains of Fort and village and has made important contributions in the study of 18th-century North America.

The Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse was added to Michilimackinac State Park in 1960. The lighthouse land had been a federal reserve within the boundaries of the state park, and Michigan acquired title to this parcel when the lighthouse was decommissioned and its navigation aids placed on the new Mackinac Bridge. The deeds to the lighthouse and fog signal station mandated a parks- or museum-related use for 20 years after the transfer of ownership (this period ended in 1980), but the deed to the rest of Michilimackinac State Park requires the lands to be held as public parks [see Quitclaim contracts # GS-05B-7862 and # GS-05B-(s)-942, 20 April 1960 and Trust Deed, 27 January 1904 between the Village of Mackinaw City and the State of Michigan].

When the British garrison left Michilimackinac to establish the fort on Mackinac Island (in 1780/1781), the timber line was five to seven miles from Michilimackinac. This coincided with the location of the only creek in the region with enough fall to power a sawmill. The mill established at what is now Mill Creek State Park provided lumber for buildings on Mackinac Island. The remains of the mill complex were discovered in 1972. In 1975, the 625-acre park was added to the commission's jurisdiction.

These sites are collectively known as Mackinac State Historic Parks (MSHP). Recognizing the historical importance of the sites and its legal obligations, the commission has adopted the following Mission Statement:

We protect, preserve and present Mackinac's rich historic and natural resources to provide outstanding educational and recreational experiences for the public.

## SCOPE OF COLLECTIONS

Mackinac State Historic Parks fulfills its responsibility for managing its properties and collections by adopting a scope of collections. The scope outlines the parameters and themes of collecting.

**Spatial and Temporal Ranges:** The *primary spatial (geographic) range* of interest for all collecting is the area surrounding the sites owned and operated by the MSHP, i.e. Mackinac Island State Park; Fort Mackinac; downtown historic buildings on Mackinac Island; Colonial Michilimackinac; Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse; and Historic Mill Creek. This primary area also includes the City of Mackinac Island, Drummond Island, St. Ignace, Mackinaw City, and a geographical line running approximately from Cheboygan to French Farm Lake to L'Arbre Croche. This line marks the extent of the support region for 18th-century Michilimackinac. A secondary geographical area extends to Petoskey and Sault Ste. Marie.

The *temporal range* for collection artifacts is also broad. Material is collected from all periods to document the history of the sites and the region. This includes material that documents the recent history of the Mackinac Straits region. This long time scale provides depth to current and potential interpretive programs, and allows the most complete exploration of the interpretive framework.

The spatial and temporal ranges are very closely related for collecting activities. The term "Michilimackinac" has been applied to many geographic regions over the centuries but has generally narrowed from the time of European exploration to the present. MSHP collecting interests narrow accordingly. A late 19th-century artifact from Petoskey might be accepted for the Historical Artifact/Regional collection, whereas a mid-20th century piece from the same area might not be accepted. Native American snow shoes from the Great Lakes region might be accepted; American made ca. 1880 snow shoes used in northern Michigan might not; American made ca. 1880 snow shoes used on Mackinac Island, however, might be accepted.

**Themes:** The collections scope is governed by key interpretive themes that have emerged as particularly important to the history of the Straits region. Artifacts which illuminate topics within these themes will be actively collected. Collecting will not be limited to the following themes and topics. The following list defines primary areas of interest from which specialized collecting interests will grow.

### Economic History

#### Prehistoric Cultures

*Upper Great Lakes*

#### Native American subsistence

*Upper Great Lakes*

#### Fur Trade

*Great Lakes (1600s - 1840)*

#### European Exploration/ Settlement

*Upper Great Lakes*

#### Commercial Fishing

*Straits Region*

#### Maritime Trade/ Shipping

*Upper Great Lakes Colonial*

*Straits Region American*

#### Tourism

*Straits Region*

*Marketing*

*Retailing*

*Resorts and Hotels*

*Midwest and Michigan as it relates  
to the Straits*

#### Commercial Trade/Retailing

*Interpreted Sites*

### Social History

#### Ethnic History (especially group interaction)

#### Politics

*At the Interpreted Sites or of the Straits  
communities as it relates to the Parks*

#### Education

*Schooling at Interpreted Sites*

#### Recreation

*Activities at Interpreted Sites*

*Mackinac Island*

#### Family/ Women

#### Religion

*Upper Great Lakes Native American*

*Straits Region*

*French Missions*

*Interpreted Sites*

*Mackinac Island*

*Churches*

*Missions*

*Moral Re-Armament*

#### Arts

*Decorative and Performing Arts at or relating  
to the Interpreted Sites or representative of  
the culture of the Straits of Mackinac*

#### Celebrations

### Military History

French Activity in the Great Lakes Region through  
1761

British Activity in the Great Lakes Region through  
1840

American Activity in the Old Northwest through 1895

### Transportation History

#### Water

*Upper Great Lakes Native American  
Straits Region European and American  
Great Lakes Shipping as it relates to Straits  
Region*

*Lighthouses of the Straits Region  
Lifesaving of the Straits Region*

#### Land

*Winter Transportation*

*Snowshoeing, Skiing, Ice Skating,  
Dog Sledding*

*Upper Great Lakes Native American  
Straits Region European and American  
Snowmobiling, Ice Boating*

*Mackinac Island*

*Horse-Drawn Transportation*

*Mackinac Island*

*Railroads*

*Straits Region Impact*

*Bicycling*

*Mackinac Island*

*Mackinac Bridge*

*Northern Michigan Highways and Interstates  
Impact on Tourism in Straits Region*

#### Air

*Mackinac Island Airport*

### Institutional History

Mackinac Island State Park Commission and Mackinac  
State Historic Parks

**Types:** Since its inception, the collections of Mackinac State Historic Parks have expanded to include more than historic structures and the objects housed in the buildings at the time of acquisition. Various philosophies of management and collecting have expanded the number of properties and collections placed in the public trust. Guided by the spatial, temporal, and thematic parameters the collections of Mackinac State Historic Parks include historic sites, historic buildings, artifacts, archival material, archaeological material, and library material.

Historic sites: In the broadest sense, the primary objects in the collection are the sites themselves. The intrinsic value of Colonial Michilimackinac, Fort Mackinac, Historic Mill Creek and their adjacent lands, or any other site under the jurisdiction of the commission provides the basis for MSHP's work, and these sites must be researched, protected, and interpreted. The importance of the sites and the need to research and interpret the larger place cannot be forgotten when discussing the more traditional definitions of "collection."

Historic structures are buildings with sufficient integrity and provenance to make them worthy of preservation and interpretation. Historic structures currently part of the collection include buildings at Fort Mackinac; Park Commission properties in the downtown Mackinac Island district; the Old Mackinac Point Light Station in Mackinaw City; and archaeological ruins at Colonial Michilimackinac and Historic Mill Creek. These structures represent significant examples of architectural or cultural history. Structures added to the collection must likewise have sufficient provenance and architectural integrity to make them worthy of preservation and interpretation. Historic structure collections also include building components removed in the process of restoration.

Artifacts are historic objects acquired to (1) furnish a historic structure, (2) for exhibition and/or research, (3) provide documentation for the interpretation of a site and/or structure, or (4) enhance the public programs presented at a site. This includes artifacts (1) with a provenance to an interpreted site, (2) that duplicate or closely approximate items original to the interpreted sites that no longer exist or are unavailable for exhibition, or (3) that originated or pertain to the history of the geographic range of interest. The artifact collections may include household furnishings and implements; fine and decorative art objects; military objects; tools and products of trades, crafts, and manufacturing; agricultural implements; objects for transportation; textiles, clothing, and personal accessories; and ethnographic objects.

Archival materials are primary source documents, original photographic prints and negatives, original motion picture material (film and videotape), and paper ephemera. They are acquired because they (1) document the sites and collections administered by MSHP, (2) establish a provenance relationship to the sites collections, or (3) document the institutional history of MSHP. Archival material may include rare published matter such as maps, books, and plans that conform with material identified under the temporal and spatial ranges mentioned above.

Archaeological materials consist of prehistoric and historic ruins, artifacts, and floral and faunal remains (1) excavated on our property; (2) systematically excavated by MSHP staff or other professionals on non-MSHP property in compliance with state and federal laws; (3) surface finds



from MSHP property. The materials include the documentation which gives the artifacts their meaning.

Library materials, as a discrete group from the archival collections, are defined as published and unpublished scholarly works, microfilms, audiovisual materials, digital materials, periodicals, and other research materials relevant to the history of the Straits of Mackinac. Current publications, published period works without a provenance to the sites, and photographic (including motion picture) copy prints are among the items included here.

## **DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Mackinac Island State Park Commission: The legal authority for the approval of collection management policy, acquisition, and deaccessioning rests with the commission. The Collections Committee recommends the implementation of policy for the parks or the acquisition or deaccession of collections items to the director, who recommends action to the commission.

Collection Committee: The Collections Committee is appointed by the director, and consists of the collections staff, director, and other staff members at the discretion of the director. The committee:

1. Recommends collection management policies for approval by the commission.
2. Develops the procedures by which the policies are implemented for approval by the director.
3. Reviews proposed acquisitions and recommends acquisition to the commission.
4. Reviews proposed deaccessions from the collections and recommends deaccessions to the commission.
5. Approves loans from the collections.
6. Acts as an advocate for the resources necessary to meet professional standards for the care and management of collections.

A collections staff member serves as chair. They, or another committee member, serves as recording secretary. The director is liaison between the Collection Committee and the commission. The committee shall generally meet quarterly or as often as is deemed necessary by the chair.

Staff: The collections staff of the Museum Programs Unit is responsible for maintaining collections records and for registering, accessioning, and cataloging artifacts, archival material, and historic structures. The physical care of collection objects, including the archaeological collection, is also the responsibility of the collections staff. The collections staff also catalogs and maintains the library materials. The head of the Museum Programs Unit coordinates with the park managers on the care of historic structures. The curator of archaeology is responsible for recording and cataloging the archaeological collections. Interpretation staff is responsible for non-accessioned objects and reproductions, providing the collections staff with inventories and other records of these collections when appropriate.

## ACQUISITION

Subject to approval by the Collections Committee and commission, objects will be acquired by MSHP. Mackinac State Historic Parks adds to its collections to improve the quality of its research and to enhance the educational value of its programs. The commission accepts these items into the collection upon the professional recommendation of the staff, taking responsibility for stewardship only after establishing clear and legal title.

Mackinac State Historic Parks may acquire collections through donation, bequest, purchase, transfer, exchange, archaeological excavation and documentation of surface finds and non-documented objects. The collections staff will recommend the acquisition of artifact and archival collection items to the Collections Committee. The committee reviews the objects and recommends approval.

### Criteria

Mackinac State Historic Parks will consider items for acquisition and accessioning if the following conditions are met:

1. The item falls within the MSHP collecting scope.
2. MSHP can properly care for or develop a plan for the care of the item in accordance with professionally accepted standards.
3. The item is in reasonable condition and will not adversely affect other items in the collections or pose a threat to human life.
4. The item comes with free and clear title.
5. The item meets collection needs by filling a gap in the collection or replacing an inferior example.
6. The item does not represent an unnecessary duplication of artifacts already in the collections.
7. MSHP intends to keep the item in the collection as long as the item retains its physical integrity, authenticity and usefulness for MSHP's purposes.

MSHP will not knowingly accept materials of illicit origin or doubtful title into the collections. Should accessioned material later prove to be of questionable origin, MSHP will contact the appropriate authorities (which may include seeking an opinion from the Michigan Attorney General) and make reasonable efforts to resolve the problem ethically and in accordance with the law. MSHP supports the legal efforts to protect cultural materials and archaeological sites and follows the guidelines set by the Michigan Antiquities Act of 1929, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and adheres to the standards set by professional archaeological societies.

MSHP will not acquire, through donation, bequest or purchase, items from books that have been dismantled for the purpose of making parts of them available to the Commission.

Items acquired as library materials do not require approval by the commission.

A legal instrument of conveyance which adequately describes the object(s) and the legal conditions of the transfer must accompany each donation, bequest, purchase or exchange. Once MSHP has acquired title to the object, the donor or vendor no longer has any legal claim to the object. All items accepted into MSHP's collections fall under the jurisdiction of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission and if unrestricted, may be displayed, loaned, retained or disposed of in the best interests of MSHP and the public it serves.

Ownership of an object is separate from ownership of copyrights under Title 17, U.S. Code (copyright law), therefore MSHP will attempt to obtain exclusive copyright, when applicable, for new acquisitions to the historical collection. Appropriate language will be included in the muniment to ensure conveyance of all copyrights, including all rights necessary for electronic distribution of work through present or future technology. If the donor does not own the copyrights, MSHP will make a reasonable effort to locate the owner and obtain these rights. For purchases, MSHP will ask the vendor to supply the names of previous owners or descendants of the originator in an attempt to obtain copyrights. These procedures will be followed until, under the law, such artifacts fall into the public domain.

The lack of copyright ownership will not preclude acceptance of an item for the collection, but the records for such an item will be clearly marked regarding its copyright status and the object's use will be limited. Borrowers and researchers will be responsible for obtaining permission from the copyright owner(s) to reproduce these items.

### Donations

Items may be acquired by donation for historic structure, artifact, archival collections and library materials through the transfer of ownership from an individual, corporation, or institution to MSHP. Artifact and archival collections require committee review and commission approval.

MSHP will generally not accept restricted gifts into its artifact, archival and historic structure collections. Exceptions may be proposed for commission approval.

Potential donors will be informed of the unrestricted nature of all donations. A deed of gift executed by the donor and MSHP shall be obtained for all donations in accordance with MSHP procedures. In compliance with the Internal Revenue Service code for non-profit institutions and to avoid possible conflicts of interest, the staff of the MSHP may not appraise items for donors, institutions, or members of the general public (see IRS Publication 561 Determining the Value of Donated Property and Publication 526 Charitable Contributions). Staff members may give the names of at least two appraisers to a donor seeking such information and will co-operate with the donor in

making the materials available for appraisal. The staff may establish values for collection items for insurance purposes only.

Donors must arrange and pay for these independent appraisals on gifts for tax purposes. Gifts will be appraised at fair market value and the donor is allowed to take deductions only to the extent set by law. MSHP staff will promptly complete any Internal Revenue Service forms for a donor seeking tax deductions. The completion of such forms does not necessarily imply MSHP's concurrence with the appraised value.

### Bequest

Collection items may be acquired through bequests where MSHP is named as beneficiary in a will. Bequests of personal property shall be referred to the Collections Committee which will recommend acceptance or refusal. Bequests may be accepted into the collections in total or in part. Items that do not become part of the collections may be disposed of in accordance with commission policy and state law. Any proceeds resulting from such disposal are to be used for the improvement or care of the collections.

An appropriate instrument of conveyance, executed by the donor or agent of the donor and MSHP, shall be obtained for all bequests accepted into the collections in accordance with MSHP procedures.

### Purchases

Items may be purchased for the historic structures, artifact, archival collections and library materials. MSHP will not purchase archaeological collections. Purchased items must follow MSHP purchasing procedures and be accompanied by a bill of sale (MSHP purchase order or vendor's invoice). If a third party is involved in the purchase, the original bill of sale is to accompany the document recording the transfer of ownership of the item(s). These documents, or copies, will be placed in the permanent acquisitions file.

### Transfer

Items may be transferred from another MSHP unit. All transfers must follow approval procedures.

### Exchange

Historical artifacts may be acquired through exchange with another not-for-profit educational institution only if the MSHP and the other institution believe the transfer to be in the best interests of both repositories. The institutions will follow proper deaccessioning procedures as outlined by their respective Collection Policies, and will fully document all aspects of the exchange. Formal appraisals may be required to ascertain the equality of the transfer, and all exchanges will require approval by the Collections Committee and the commission. Since an exchange generally requires the Collections Committee and transfer is legal, open, and in the best interests of the institution.

### Surface Finds

MSHP sites have a long history of human occupation. Visitors and staff members have found and will continue to find artifacts on the ground due to natural soil erosion. Archaeological artifacts found on MSHP property will be accessioned into the historical artifact collection. They do not require approval by the committee or the commission. They will be documented according to procedures established by the curators of collections and archaeology.

Surface finds in the Straits area but not on MSHP property will be referred to the proper authority. For example, artifacts found on the Straits of Mackinac Great Lakes State Bottomland Preserve will be sent to the state archaeologist. If the piece is believed to be relevant to the programs of this institution, the MSHP may request custody of and jurisdiction over the item.

### Excavation

The archaeological collection is added to through excavations on MSHP property or systematic excavation by MSHP staff or other professionals on non-MSHP property in compliance with state and federal law. Archaeological collections do not require the approval of the committee or commission.

### Non-Documented

From time to time, historical artifacts will be found in the possession of MSHP for which no documentation can be found. MSHP will first try to determine if the items are on loan. If the items are determined not to be on loan, they will be classified as “non-documented” and added to the collection.

### Policy Related to NAGPRA

MSHP is committed to the preservation and respectful treatment and return of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony to Native American communities in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). All known objects identified and included in the initial 1992 summaries were ultimately transferred to local Native American tribes. Should any further objects be identified, the information will be submitted to the National NAGPRA Office in accordance with federal regulations and similarly transferred, per established procedures. As a general practice, MSHP will not acquire objects that are identifiably NAGPRA-eligible.

## **DOCUMENTATION AND CARE**

### **Documentation**

MSHP is committed to the prompt recording of all collection management actions, detailed documentation of all items in the collections and the preservation of records and materials in its care. Historic structures, artifact and archival materials are managed by the Collections staff. All items being considered for acquisition will be tagged and marked. For gifts, a receipt describing the donation will be given to the donor when the item is left with the MSHP. This receipt acknowledges MSHP's responsibility for the artifact(s), which will be cared for in the same manner as any collection item. Any item not accepted by the Collection Committee, or the commission will be returned to the owner according to procedures. The actions of the Collections Committee will be recorded, distributed, and maintained by the recording secretary.

Upon acceptance by the committee and commission, the donor will receive a Deed of Gift, transferring title and, if applicable, copyright to Mackinac State Historic Parks. With the approval of a donation, bequest, purchase or transfer, accession records will be generated within one month. Cataloging and photography will follow as expeditiously as staff time allows. Non-documented items will be investigated to find records. Documentation will follow approved procedures. All records will be maintained by the collections staff. All items added to the collections will be numbered according to the systems in place for each collection.

The archaeological collections are numbered and cataloged by the Archaeology Unit. When this unit has finished its documentation, the artifacts are stored and maintained by the collections staff. The records (field notes, daily journal, maps, square sheets, photographs) are part of the collection.

Library materials will be cataloged and classified by collections staff or other designated Museum Programs staff.

### **Care**

MSHP recognizes its responsibilities to preserve and care for its collections. Responsibility for collection care and to request condition improvements and required treatment lies with the professional staff and the Collections Committee.

Basic activities will be performed routinely to maintain and monitor collection condition. The collections staff will work with the maintenance staff to establish schedules of routine building inspection. A housekeeping program will be established to provide for the cleaning of exhibition and storage areas.

Collection objects are not to be handled by the public except under guidelines established by the collections staff and Interpretation Unit. Guidelines for handling of collections by interpretive staff are to be established. Food and drink are not allowed in any collections storage area. Public consumption of food and drink is prohibited in exhibit structures except those designated by

administration. Food and drink will be allowed only where there will be minimum impact on collections.



## DEACCESSION

Subject to the approval of the Collections Committee and the Park Commission, items may be deaccessioned from the collections of Mackinac State Historic Parks.

Deaccessioning is exercised by Mackinac State Historic Parks after careful deliberation and with caution. MSHP considers the needs of the collection, the best interest of the public, the donor's wishes, the clarity of title, the tax status of the item, and the fiduciary responsibilities of the commission. Once a decision to deaccession is made, the method of disposal also is considered carefully.

### Criteria

An object can be considered for deaccession if any of the following conditions are met:

1. The object fails to fall within the MSHP collecting scope.
2. The object constitutes an unnecessary duplication of other collection materials.
3. The object's condition has deteriorated beyond usefulness, the item has been damaged beyond repair, or the item's condition endangers human life or other items in the collection.
4. The authenticity of the object has been refuted because it is not what it was purported to be or is a fake, or the item's research or intrinsic value has been significantly altered due to poor restoration.
5. The object lacks provenance.

### Considerations

Title: Mackinac State Historic Parks must have clear title for any item it may consider for deaccession. Any legally binding restrictions contained in the original terms of the gift or bequest regarding disposal will be followed. In cases where no gift agreement or other documentation of acquisition exists or can be found, the material is considered unclaimed, undocumented, abandoned property and deaccessioning may proceed after public notification as defined in 1992 Michigan Act 24.

Responsibility: The recommendation to deaccession an item will originate from the MSHP Curator of Collections. Recommendations will be presented to the Collections Committee by the curator following procedures established by the collections staff. The committee's decision to recommend deaccession will be submitted by the director to the commission.

Disposal: Deaccessioned items will be disposed of in a manner most beneficial to the public.

Methods of disposal may include: transfer to another MSHP unit for educational use, transfer to another state agency for educational use, donation or trade to a nonprofit educational institution, public sale, or destruction. Preference is given to the placement of an object with a public institution wherein the object may serve the purpose for which it was initially acquired by MSHP. It is preferable for material that is part of the historical or cultural heritage of the State of Michigan to remain in the state. Deaccessioned items may not be acquired for other non-educational MSHP uses, such as to furnish offices or housing units with the exception of deaccessioned reproductions or props. Deaccessioned items may not be given, sold, or otherwise transferred to employees of Mackinac State Historic Parks, members of the commission, Mackinac Associate members, volunteers, or their families or representatives. Private sales or gifts to individuals are not permitted. Any sale of deaccessioned items will be publicized. Deaccessioned objects will not be sold in MSHP museum stores.

Proceeds: The proceeds from the sale of deaccessioned collections are limited to the purchase of new acquisitions for the historical collection or conservation of existing collection items. Proceeds are placed in the segregated Martin and Patricia Jahn Collections Development Fund (see Commission Policy: Collection Development Fund, 2004). Expenditures from the fund are recommended by collections staff, reviewed by the Collections Committee, and approved by the director. New acquisitions are approved by the commission (see Acquisition). The original donor of any deaccessioned artifact may be listed as a contributor to the purchase of a new acquisition.

Exemptions: MSHP will not deaccession items lost or destroyed, and will not reassign accession numbers, files or other documentary references of lost items.

Records: The MSHP collections staff shall maintain a file of all deaccessioned items, including a description, the circumstances of its removal, means of disposal, and photographs. All catalog records pertaining to deaccessioned items will be updated indicating the method and date of disposal. Accession numbers, files, or other documentary references to deaccessioned objects will not be reassigned.

## LOANS

As part of its professional responsibility to make its collections available to the public, Mackinac State Historic Parks may lend objects from, and accept loans to, its collections.

Both outgoing and incoming loans will be for periods of not more than one year, though the loan agreement may be renewed on a yearly basis should the borrowing institution or MSHP require the artifacts for a longer term.

All loans will be presented by the collections staff, reviewed by the Collections Committee and approved by the director.

### Outgoing Loans

Type 1: Items from MSHP artifact, archival and archaeological collections may be lent to any institution which meets the American Association of Museums' definition of a museum (i.e., a non-profit institution essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose, with professional or volunteer staff, and capable of maintaining objects). Borrowers are required to demonstrate high professional standards in their interactions with other museums and historical agencies and in their care and treatment of objects. Archival manuscript collections may be loaned to qualified archives or libraries. Collection items may be loaned to an institution whose purpose is not educational or aesthetic if the purpose of the loan conforms to the educational mission of MSHP and the treatment of the items by the institution complies with the American Association of Museums standard facilities report. Institutions borrowing for exhibition purposes will be required to submit a standard facility report and a brief statement of exhibit methods. Library materials are circulated to staff members and qualified researchers at the discretion of the curator of history, but will generally not be loaned outside MSHP.

Type 2: Items from the collections may be lent to private individuals or organizations that are not open to the general public, if they meet the following conditions:

1. Items may be lent to an individual when that loan is at the request of MSHP for the conservation, restoration, research or identification of the item. In these instances, the person to whom the item is being loaned fulfills the criteria established in the conservation section of the Collections Policy. MSHP will maintain insurance on all items lent for research, conservation or restoration. A facilities report will not be necessary. Any proposals for such a loan shall be made in writing for review by the collections committee and approval by the director. The request shall minimally include an item description, purpose of the loan, benefits to MSHP, the loan period, transportation and storage conditions and the names and resumes of involved individuals.
2. Items may be lent to a crafts person or a manufacturing concern for reproduction

only when all of the stipulations established in the reproduction section of the Collections Policy are met.

Loan requests are to be presented by the collections staff to the Collections Committee. The purpose and conditions of each loan must be presented along with any restrictions. All recommended loans require approval by the director.

Criteria (All apply to both type 1 and 2 loans, except where noted):

Items will be considered for loan only if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Removal of the items from MSHP does not significantly diminish interpretation, exhibition or research during the period of the loan.
2. The item is in stable condition and will not be damaged by shipment, exhibition, use or a change in environment.
3. The object will remain in the condition it was received by the borrower and will not be unframed, removed from mats, mounts or bases, cleaned, repaired, retouched or altered in any way without the written permission of MSHP.
4. The borrowing institution or individual will be able to provide adequate physical care of the object insuring it against loss, damage or deterioration.
5. Type 1 only: The borrowing institution provides proof of insurance, including wall-to-wall coverage subject to standard exclusion throughout the loan period unless the loan request originates with MSHP. MSHP shall be named the beneficiary. The borrowing institution must demonstrate its ability to safeguard the item while in transit and during exhibition or other use, in accordance with acceptable museum standards.
6. The item has been properly accessioned and bears a permanently assigned identification number.
7. A condition report on the item is prepared prior to the loan.
8. Type 1 only: All handling, packing, transportation and insurance costs incurred during the loan are to be paid by the borrowing institution.
9. A credit line citing "Mackinac State Historic Parks" will be displayed with all loaned items placed in a formal exhibit and included in any publication accompanying an exhibition at MSHP discretion.
10. Approval of a loan does not grant any photographic, publication or reproduction

rights, which must be negotiated separate from the loan following established procedures.

11. MSHP reserves the right to recall any items during the loan period.

12. The borrower must agree to the conditions outlined in this policy and other conditions specified in the loan agreement. Any exceptions or additions must be approved by the director prior to the completion of the loan agreement.

### Incoming Loans

Loans shall not be accepted when they place a burden on MSHP facilities or staff. All collection items accepted for loan by MSHP shall be covered by an incoming loan agreement form which specifies the terms, use and dates of the loan. In addition, proof of ownership and the manner in which an item was collected or acquired may be required.

Items may be borrowed from another institution or a private individual. The borrower must be made aware of the purpose of the loan and how the item will be used.

All loan requests must be reviewed by the Collections Committee and approved by the director.

The lender is required to place an insurance value on the item(s) and insurance in this amount will be covered by MSHP, unless other arrangements are made between MSHP and the lender.

### Criteria

Incoming loans may be made under any of the following conditions:

1. The item is required for use in the exhibition or interpretive programs of a site. If the loan is for a one-day program and the item is not continuously in the custody of the lender, an incoming loan agreement is necessary.
2. The item is needed for research purposes, reference or study at the site.
3. The item is needed at MSHP for study as a model for a facsimile reproduction.
4. The item is deposited at MSHP pending consideration of acquisition by gift or purchase. Insurance determination or waivers are to be established with the owner at the time of the loan.

## **INVENTORY**

As part of its ongoing program of collection management and care, Mackinac State Historic Parks will periodically inventory all collection items. The inventory is to be conducted by the collections staff, following the schedule and guidelines in the Collections Procedures.

## CONSERVATION

Conservation is the treatment of an artifact to protect, preserve and maintain its condition and integrity. Conservation includes examination, treatment, preservation and documentation with respect to the existing aesthetic, historic and physical integrity of the artifact. All conservation is reversible and does not modify the known character of the artifact.

Conservation of collection items may be performed only by MSHP collections staff trained in such work or by an outside individual or institution conversant with, and in conformity to, the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works*. The collections staff will coordinate all in-house treatments according to established procedures.

The head of the Museum Unit will approve any conservation treatments to be completed by contract personnel. Collection items may be lent for conservation to conservators who adhere to the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works "Standards of Practice." The conservator will be asked to provide a written treatment proposal, estimate and conservation report. All proposed treatments are to be explained to the collection staff and agreed upon in a written contract.

All conservation work on an object will be fully documented and the report filed with the object record.

## **REPRODUCTION**

Reproductions may be made of original photographs, prints, paintings, and other graphics following the photographic reproduction procedure.

Reproductions crafted or manufactured from items in the collection for interpretive use will be marked as a reproduction, recorded with a reference to the accession number of the collection items they replicate and afforded inventory control. The catalog records of the original item should note that a reproduction of the item was made, when and by whom.

Requests for commercial reproduction of an item by an outside vendor or crafts person must be in writing. The request should state whether the new item is to be a reproduction or an adaptation. All requests to reproduce items in the collections will be reviewed by the Collections Committee and approved by the director.

Items selected for reproduction will be placed on loan to the crafts person or manufacturer. All conditions for an outgoing loan are to be observed, including the completion of a condition report. All of the following guidelines will be met for the reproduction of any item from the collections:

1. Items may not be dismantled in any manner or subjected to invasive technical analysis for the purpose of reproduction.
2. The condition of the item to be reproduced must be such that it will not be damaged by the process.
3. All reproduction items must be marked as reproductions.
4. The director has the right to examine and approve the quality of the reproduction.
5. Items intrinsic to the daily interpretation of the site may not be removed from the site for reproduction purposes. All necessary measurements and photographs must be done at the site.
6. Items made by licensees will be subject to licensing requirements of MSHP as approved by the attorney general.
7. The borrower must sign a reproduction agreement indicating adherence to all reproduction stipulations.



## **PUBLIC ACCESS AND DISCLOSURE**

The Mackinac Island State Park Commission holds its collections in trust for the public. The collection exists for the benefit of all for the advancement of knowledge, and will be as accessible as possible while maintaining proper security and environmental conditions for the objects. The collections are open to researchers or interested members of the public under the supervision of appropriate staff members. Every effort will be made to accommodate researchers and the public, but MSHP reserves the right to limit access based on the physical condition and security requirements of the artifacts.

Collections will be available to the public through exhibitions, either commission-sponsored or by loan to other institutions, and through publications and electronic media.

Scholars and special interest groups will have access to historic and archaeological artifact and archival collections, reference materials and appropriate finding aids by advance appointment with the collections staff following established procedures. Library materials may be shared with researchers as appropriate and feasible. When feasible, MSH staff will respond to telephone or written inquiries for collections-related information.

Collections may not be used for personal reasons by MSHP staff, commission members, Mackinac Associate members, volunteers, or their families or representatives. Collections may not be used by any group or institution for political or non-education functions.

Access to the collections and activities associated to access will occur following all the below conditions:

1. Access to collections is secondary to preservation.
2. All who request access to collections not on exhibition are required to complete the access to collections form, stating their purpose and type of access requested.
3. Authorization for access will be at the discretion of the Curator of Collections. Refusal may be appealed to the director.
4. No item from the collection may be moved from site premises unless all the conditions for an outgoing loan are met.
5. Collection items will be made accessible based upon the condition of the item and the availability of resources at the site.
6. As part of their accessibility, items may be measured, photographed, or photocopied in compliance with appropriate procedures.

7. Any request for access to collection records will be governed by the same criteria as the access to the collection item. Any records made accessible will shield, as allowed by law, the name of the donor, the value of the item and the stored location.
8. Any request for reproduction of objects, including photographs, must comply with the appropriate guidelines and procedures.

The full text of this Collection Policy will be made available to donors, the press or others upon request. Excerpts from the accession, deaccession and loan sections may be printed as part of the appropriate forms, and will be explained to donors, borrowers or lenders before each form is signed. Acquisition and deaccession activity will be fully disclosed to any interested parties.

## **EXHIBITION**

Beyond collecting and preserving material culture, Mackinac State Historic Parks interprets this history in a historic site format so the public can experience the objects in a setting indicative of their use and place in society.

Exhibition is the primary means by which the public has access to the collections. MSHP acknowledges that exhibition of collections within a historic site format places objects at greater risk than in a galleried situation. Therefore, MSHP will exercise a special responsibility to care for and exhibit the collections placed in its trust in a manner which ensures the preservation of the objects, and respects the objects and the traditions of the peoples who produced them.

All attempts will be made to protect exhibited collections from physical harm, disaster and natural agents of deterioration. Guidelines and procedures will be established for exhibition, monitoring and maintenance, disaster preparedness and environmental control.

## **SECURITY AND INSURANCE**

The Mackinac Island State Park Commission recognizes the irreplaceable nature of the collections it holds in trust for the public, and is committed to developing comprehensive preventative security and risk management programs. MSHP will continue to develop and refine security and disaster plans for all locations and collections to minimize the potential for loss or damage. These plans will contain detailed, specific procedures for theft and disasters including fire, flood, storm, vandalism, terrorism and power failure. These plans will be used to instruct all site staff. All staff working in areas where collections are exhibited or stored are charged with security responsibilities relating to collections access and the presence of potentially harmful materials. Security and fire detection systems will be installed where necessary, and the collections staff will conduct regular inspections and inventories of collections on exhibit and in storage.

Though insurance cannot replace the artifacts or original buildings in the collections, it can provide funds for conservation or restoration in case of a disaster. MSHP maintains a combination of insurance policies and self-insurance for its collections, and retain the option of purchasing special policies for borrowed artifacts or exhibits. Commission staff will review insurance policies regularly to ensure adequate coverage is maintained. The curator of collections will review those policies pertaining directly to the collections and will recommend any necessary changes to the director.

Insurance values assigned to individual collection items are at current market replacement cost. Collections personnel must be capable of determining market value and/or be knowledgeable about the sources available for determining market value.

## **REVIEW AND REVISION OF COLLECTIONS POLICY**

In acknowledgment that this policy will require revisions to meet the ongoing needs of Mackinac State Historic Parks and that professional standards for collections management will continue to evolve, the MSHP Collections Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

At least every five years the Collections Committee will review the policy and prepare revision recommendations considered necessary. The final draft will be presented to the commission for approval by the director. Once approved, the revised policy will govern all collection management actions at MSHP.

All collections procedures are also to be reviewed periodically, including after any revision of the policy to ensure that all aspects are in compliance with the policy. The revision of procedures will be made by the Collections Committee and submitted to the director for approval.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Accessioning:** The process of creating an immediate, brief and permanent record of an object, assembly or lot from the same source at the same time for which the museum has custody, right or title and assigning a unique control number to an object, assembly or lot. To accession an artifact implies permanence; a museum only accessions those items it intends to keep.

**Acquisition:** The administrative process of discovering, preliminary evaluation, negotiating for, taking custody of and documenting title to an object, assembly, or lot.

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

**Deaccession:** The action of removing an accessioned object by due process from the permanent collection or from deposit by legal means. The process is thoroughly recorded in a register.

**Document:** The process of producing records to identify and enhance the knowledge and value of collections with the intent of maintaining informational and intellectual control over them.

**Inventory:** The registrarial process of locating and listing periodically accessioned, loaned, and borrowed objects by location, resulting in locator files.

**Manual, Collections:** A professionally prepared set of guidelines, directives and formats describing how to establish, implement and maintain informational control over collections by various means.

**Muniment:** Written documents preserved as evidence of ownership of an object or collection, often comprising deeds, bills of sale, wills, agreements, correspondence and acknowledgments.

**Plan, Collections:** A curatorial inventory, analysis and evaluation of each class of collection held by a museum and utilized to direct predetermined acquisition and deaccession with specific goals and objectives in mind.

**Policy, Collections:** An approved, written statement of beliefs that provides a guidance system to achieve organizational purposes, objectives and responsibilities and adopted by a governing board or authority.

**Registration:** The overall registrarial function of creating, controlling, and maintaining information, immediately and briefly, about all objects owned by, and in the care, custody and control of a museum.

*Adapted from Daniel R. Porter III, "Current Thoughts on Collections Policy: Producing the Essential Document for Administering Your Collections," Technical Report #1, AASLH, 1985.*