

# *Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society's Collections Policies & Procedures*

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## **1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of culturally significant objects relating to the history of Canada's West Coast fishing industry. To achieve this purpose, the Society will pursue the proper care and maintenance of its collections, which provide a basis for its exhibition and educational programs, for research and study, and for cultural and educational enrichment of the community.

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society is also responsible for the care and maintenance of the Parks Canada collections. The Parks Canada collections objectives are outlined in the 1999 *Scope of Collections Statement* (Page 5):

- i) to ensure artifacts, moveable objects, collections and records are inventoried, evaluated, managed, maintained and presented according to currently accepted conservation practices and in accordance with Parks Canada's Cultural Resource Policy;
- ii) to ensure information surrounding the collections can be accessed for research purposes;
- iii) to ensure access to historic objects for research and interpretation purposes; and
- iv) to maintain an updated data management system for Site collections that will describe the collections, and be useful for exhibit and interpretation needs.

## **2. MANDATES**

### *Collections Mandate*

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society preserves and presents artifacts related to the people, events, and places of the West Coast fishing industry in general, and the Gulf of Georgia Cannery in particular, for the purposes of research, education, exhibition, and enjoyment.

### *Archives Mandate*

The purpose of the Archives of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society is to acquire, preserve, and make accessible to the public the records of enduring archival value that comprise the documentary history of the affairs of Canada's West Coast fishing industry in general, and the Gulf of Georgia Cannery in particular.

## **3. SCOPE OF COLLECTIONS**

The Society's collection consists of historic objects, archival materials, and library documents that relate to the history, development, and cultural significance of Canada's West Coast fishing industry.

## **4. DEFINITION OF TYPES OF COLLECTIONS**

The collections of the Gulf of Georgia Society fall into two main categories:

- a) Historic objects and materials acquired by the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society, which were used at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery and/or in the West Coast fishing industry;
- b) Programming objects and materials (including facsimile materials) of either a contemporary or historic nature, acquired by the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society for use in interpretive displays, demonstrations, and educational programs, and for reference purposes.

## **5. CARE OF COLLECTIONS**

- a) The Society shall maintain in its annual budget funding for the ongoing care and conservation of objects in the collections. It shall be the responsibility of the Collections Manager, through regular periodic inspections, to assess the physical needs of objects in the collection. On an annual basis, the needs of the collections should be communicated with the on-site Executive Director, for upcoming annual budget approval.
- b) It is the responsibility of the Society to ensure that the collections are adequately protected against fire, theft, vandalism, and natural and/or environmental disasters. Proper exhibition and storage conditions must be a high priority at all times. Consideration must be given to maintaining a high level of awareness and understanding of professional collections standards and procedures.
- c) An important part of the collections care procedures shall be the implementation and maintenance of a comprehensive records system that includes the following:
  - i. Documents recording the legal status of title of an object;
  - ii. All correspondence, minutes and documents pertinent to an accessioned object;
  - iii. Accessioning, cataloguing, and deaccessioning records;
  - iv. Photographic documentation;
  - v. Exhibit, condition, and conservation history;
  - vi. Current location, loan, and inventory records.

The Collections Manager is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the records system on an ongoing basis.

## **6. PROCEDURES FOR ACCESSIONING**

Items accepted for accession must be approved by both the Collections Manager and the Executive Director. Once the item is approved for accession the following procedure shall be followed in order to maintain precise records of the collection.

- a) Gift Assignment form: Used to secure legal title to all objects donated. This form includes donor contact information, a brief description of the item(s) donated and provenance, if known. The form must be signed by the donor and the Collections Manager or the Executive Director. One copy of this form must be given to the donor and one copy must remain on file with the accession record.
- b) Accession Record form: This form is used to keep track of the donated item(s) and for reference. This form is a more detailed breakdown of the information found on the Gift Assignment Form. It also includes a place for physical description of the item, provenance, conservation notes and digital photos of the item. Each item donated to the collection will have one of these records (one form may be used for a group accession). Each item donated will be assigned an accession number. The number is comprised of three parts and is unique to each object. The first number represents that it is a Society item and its year of accession. The second number represents which accession it is in that calendar year. The third number represents where that item falls in that particular donation. For example, with G2009.015.018, G2009 represents a Society accession in 2009, .015 refers to it being the 15<sup>th</sup> accession that year, and .018 means it is the 18<sup>th</sup> item in that particular donation. In cases where a donor only donates one item, the third number should still be indicated as .001. Copies of the Gift Assignment form and the Accession record must be filed by year in the Collections file cabinets in the Administration building.
- c) InMagic Database Record: The accession record information must then be added to the computer database. During this process, preapproved InMagic database fields must be used to maintain consistency.

- d) Cleaning and Labelling: The object must be cleaned as required and labelled before storage or display. The label should include the object description and accession number. A Tyvek artefact tag and archival ink pen will be used in labelling.
- e) Storage: This object is stored or displayed and the location is marked on the appropriate forms and in the database.

\* A note on storage: Exhibitory materials may continue to be housed in the collections areas, providing they do not interfere with the safety and preservation of the collections, accessibility to storage areas, or emergency exit routes. Programming materials already housed in the Main Mezzanine may continue to be stored there, so long as they stay contained to the Programming shelving unit at the north end of Unit 4. Decorations for events, such as Halloween and Christmas, shall not be housed in the collections areas, as they interfere with the ability to provide proper care for the collections.

Following the above procedures will ensure that the Society's collections procedures remain aligned with its contractual obligation to "inventory, evaluate and manage its collections to provide for their conservation and presentation for the benefit of this and future generations," which is outlined in the site's *Commemorative Integrity Statement* (section 4.3).

## **7. PROCEDURE FOR DEACCESSIONING**

The Society reserves the right to deaccession any Society-owned object under the following criteria:

- a) Objects shall be considered for deaccessioning for the purpose of improving the museum's collections and interpretive programs.
- b) Objects shall be considered for deaccessioning if they are not relevant or useful to the purposes and activities of the Society, or have failed to retain their physical integrity and authenticity and cannot be properly used, stored, or preserved. Multiple duplicates of identical items, objects beyond the mandate of the Society's collections shall also be considered candidates for deaccessioning
- c) Objects shall be deaccessioned if they have been identified as hazardous or toxic, or if they could damage other objects or materials in the collections.

The procedure for deaccessioning shall proceed thusly:

- a) Upon the recommendation of the Collections Manager, the Collections Committee must determine that the object is an appropriate candidate for deaccessioning and give direction for its disposal.
- b) All records of any deaccessioned object shall continue to be permanently maintained by the Collections department.

Disposal of deaccessioned objects (excepting those designated as hazardous materials) shall be made by one of the following means, listed in order of preference:

- a) The object will be offered back to its original donor, if applicable.
- b) The object will be offered to other national historic sites.
- c) The object will be offered to other cultural institutions.
- d) The object will be culled from the collection and suitably disposed of.

Professional safety personnel, such as firefighters or WorkSafe officers, will assess those objects that are believed to be hazardous. Said personnel shall either dispose of the objects in question, or give proper instructions as to the safe removal of the material from the collections area and its disposal.

In the event of dissolution of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society, the Society artefact collection will be offered first to Parks Canada before other institutions, so that it may remain on-site for the continued purposes of research, education, exhibition, and enjoyment.

## **8. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- a) No Board Member, committee member, Society employee, or their immediate family member shall take advantage of information available to him or her concerning the acquisition or deaccessioning of collections object(s) for his or her own personal collecting activities unless they are the original donor.
- b) No Board Member, committee member, Society employee, or their representative or immediate family member may compete for personal gain in the purchase of any object which is being considered or is likely to be considered for the Society's collections.
- c) No Board Member, committee member, Society employee, or their representative or immediate family member may, directly or indirectly, purchase or otherwise acquire objects from the collections through the act of deaccessioning or any other means.
- d) Should conflict develop between the needs of an individual and the Society, those of the Society are always considered priority and shall always prevail.

## **9. INCOMING AND OUTGOING LOANS**

The Society may borrow objects from other historic sites, museums, galleries, cultural organizations, and private sources for the purposes of exhibition or research. In addition, the Society shall lend objects from its collections to responsible institutions for the purposes of exhibition or research. Loans will be made under the following conditions:

- i. Specific terms of agreement between lender and borrower for incoming and outgoing loans shall be negotiated on an individual basis.
- ii. All incoming and outgoing loans must be approved by the Collections Manager
- iii. Loans will be made only if and when a formal written loan agreement has been received.
- iv. Copyright restrictions are to be observed at all times.

### **A) Incoming Loans**

- i. Incoming loans shall be for specific purposes and time periods.
- ii. Objects on loan shall receive the same care as those owned by the Society.
- iii. If damage occurs to a loan object or group of objects, it is the responsibility of the Collections Manager to contact the lender at the earliest possible date. No conservation work may be undertaken without prior consent of the owner.
- iv. No modification of a loan object shall be made by the Society unless it is of a cosmetic nature (e.g. matting or framing) and is carried out with the complete and written consent of the owner.
- v. The Society shall not borrow any object which is physically or chemically unstable and/or in need of conservation treatment.
- vi. Long-term or "permanent" loans are to be executed only after careful consideration and a full discussion by the Collections Manager, the Collections Committee, and the site Executive Director of the perceived advantages and disadvantages. The Society will only accept such loans if there is reason to believe the object(s) will be frequently used or exhibited.
- vii. The Society will comply with all restrictions and conditions placed on borrowed objects.

Incoming loan items must be insured by the Society for the duration of the loan period. The insurance value for these items will be based on the recommendation of the loaning institution.

#### **B) Outgoing Loans**

- i. Objects from the Society's collections may be loaned to other museums and institutions for a finite period of time.
- ii. All requests must clearly state in writing the intended use, including both exhibit and publication purposes and period of use.
- iii. No loan request will be considered if it exposes the object to undue risk because of exhibit conditions, means of transportation, or any other factor.
- iv. A thorough examination and assessment of the physical condition of the object must be made before formal approval is given. Any pre-existing weaknesses, imperfections, deterioration, inconsistencies, fractures, tears, repairs, or other alterations must be documented in a written report and photographed.
- v. The borrower will bear full cost for handling, crating, insurance, and transportation of objects, unless otherwise specified.
- vi. The borrower shall, at his/her own expense, insure the historic documents, objects or reproductions being loaned for their stated value and provide the Society with satisfactory proof of such insurance. The insurance policy shall show that the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society is the owner of the object(s).
- vii. The borrower may not clean, restore, or make any modification to an object in any way, either for exhibit or research purposes, unless it is of a cosmetic nature (e.g. matting or framing) and is carried out with the complete and written consent of the Society.
- viii. The borrower shall bear full responsibility for any object that is lost or damaged during transit or while in the physical custody of the borrowing institution.
- ix. If damage occurs, the borrower must immediately notify the Society and follow its recommendations. The Collections Manager must be notified at the earliest possible date of the damage and the actions to be taken to correct the problem.
- x. The Society may require that certain loans be accompanied by one or more staff members, and that packing and unpacking, mounting and dismounting be supervised by such members.
- xi. When the loaned object is returned to the Society, it shall be the responsibility of the Collections Manager to examine it for any changes in physical condition.
- xii. The borrower will be furnished with two condition reports. One is to be completed, signed, and returned upon the initial unpacking of the object. The second is to be completed and signed upon re-packing and returned with the object to the Society.
- xiii. Permission must be obtained from the Society for the publishing of graphic material derived from historic documents, objects or reproductions on loan. Suitable credits must be given and a credit line must appear as follows: "...courtesy of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society/ Accession #."
- xiv. No borrowed documents, objects or reproductions may be loaned to a third party.
- xv. Historic documents, objects or reproductions being loaned must be, upon reasonable notification, made accessible to Society staff.
- xvi. The Society reserves the right to cancel the loan.

#### **10. ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS AND RECORDS**

- a) The collections storage facility, including the library and archives, shall be off-limits to the public and accessible only by the Collections Manager, the Executive Director, the Maintenance Officer, the Parks Canada Site Liaison Officer, temporary collections staff or interns, or other professionals as

designated by one of the above staff members. All other staff or volunteers will have access to the collections storage facility only when accompanied by one of the above staff members.

- b) The Collections Manager shall make every effort to comply with requests for access to and information from the collections that are in keeping with the stated objectives of the Society's goals, programs, and activities.
- c) Access to objects as requested by qualified outside researchers shall be granted by the Collections Manager on an appointment basis. Such requests must be made in advance, and will be scheduled based on the availability of the Collections Manager, and access must be supervised by the Collections Manager or her designated representative. Objects may not leave the collections facility. The researcher may take photographs for private use only, but may not photograph the artefacts for any publication purposes without prior written permission. The Society reserves the right to request references from an established institution regarding the researcher in question.
- d) Collections records shall remain restricted in use to all individuals, with the exception of the collections staff. Only the basic accessioning information shall be made available for viewing. Donor files, object appraisals or values, location records, and insurance records shall remain confidential.
- e) The Society reserves the right to obtain copies of scholarly publications that result from the utilization of information and/or materials from its collection.

#### **11. REVISIONS TO POLICY**

The Collections Committee will review the Collections Policies and Procedures no less than once every three years to ensure it is meeting the Society's needs. The Collections Policies and Procedures may be revised at any time based on the recommendation of the Collections Committee and subject to the final approval of the Board of Directors.