

12/13/05

NATIONAL WATCH AND CLOCK MUSEUM

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICIES

MISSION AND GOVERNANCE

The collections of the National Watch and Clock Museum fall within the mission of the NAWCC, as stated in 1977, to 1) preserve the horological history of the world; 2) through study, exhibition and interpretation of its collections, to enhance the enjoyment and education of the public in horology; 3) support and encourage scholarly research and publication in fields relevant to the horological history and the science thereof; and 4) to interpret the role of horology in the development of society.

Policies regarding the scope and use of the collections, including new acquisitions, deaccession and disposal, loans, exhibits, and collections use, are established and overseen by the Museum Collections Committee, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, Inc.

THE COLLECTIONS

The National Watch and Clock Museum holds several different types of collections, requiring different levels of care, access, and security. These include:

1. Exhibit quality collections. These are the rarest, best, and most valuable objects in the collections. They are intended for exhibit, and can be handled and studied only for the most important reasons and in the most restricted circumstances.
2. Study collections. Important objects of somewhat lesser quality, or duplicates that may be used for research by members or other individuals with a legitimate scholarly interest.
3. Education collections. Objects of poor quality, incomplete, or duplicates that can be considered ultimately expendable, and may be used for education classes either through the School of Horology, the Suitcase Courses or the Museum's Education program.

Acquisition of Specimens: Transactions involving artifacts offered to the museum by gift or sale will be referred to the committee for review along with a deed of gift offering the collection to NAWCC and a staff recommendation evaluating the proposed artifacts' conformity with the museum collecting plan, relevance to the museum, condition and duplication of other collections held by NAWCC. All specimens accepted must be accompanied by clear title to be conveyed to the NAWCC. Specimens accepted will be without any assurance given to the donor as to exhibit, use or retention in the museum's

permanent collection. IRS regulations do permit fractional deeds of gift whereby a collection may be accepted in equal parts by the museum over a total of not more than three years, provided that the entire collection is irrevocably donated in the initial transaction. No other encumbrances or promises made to donors are acceptable. No cash appraisals may be made for the donor by museum staff or committee members.

The committee will vote on all transactions offered based upon criteria of relevancy to the mission of the museum, a need for the object (s) based upon a review of the collections, integrity and condition of the artifact(s), and considerations as to whether the museum can properly care for the specimen(s) in accordance with accepted standards within the museum profession. A simple majority vote by the committee will accept or reject the collection. A record of specimens accepted or rejected will be forwarded to the Board of the NAWCC board for informational purposes.

Upon acceptance, the specimens will be properly photographed, numbered and cataloged by museum staff using the standard that the specimen can be identified by its description alone if the number should be effaced. All relevant documents, correspondence, articles, photographs etc will be included in accession folders organized by transaction and maintained in the museum curator's office.

Deletion of Specimens: Normal museum practice holds the institution to an even higher standard in de-accession of specimens than in their acquisition. Therefore, upon review of the collections by the museum committee, staff and any outside experts called upon, a recommendation as to specimens not wanted in the collections will be drafted by the Museum Committee. If the committee vote is favorable to the de-accession recommendation, it will be referred to the NAWCC board of directors for action. Only the NAWCC board can approve a de-accession recommendation.

When a recommendation is approved by the board, the methods of disposal are limited to exchange or gift to another 501 (c) (3) museum or sale at public auction by a qualified auctioneer recommended by the Museum Committee and approved by the BOD. Having the actual sale by a third party is to ensure that there can be no insinuation of favoritism or preferential treatment. No specimen will be directly sold to or by any individual except through the medium of public auction. A listing of specimens to be auctioned as well as the place and date of the sale will be included in NAWCC publications such as the Mart in order to give interested members the greatest possible opportunity to acquire deleted specimens. However, with BOD approval a donor may be allowed to reacquire the specimen for the price determined by a current cash appraisal, the presumption being that a tax advantage was received for the initial donation. The proceeds of de-accession must be used solely for the benefit of the collections by either the acquisition of more relevant artifacts or conservation of items from the remaining holdings. Current members of the staff and BOD are not permitted to bid for items being de-accessioned from the collections.

Items donated to the collection must be retained for a minimum of one year before being considered for de-accession.

Study Collections: The same procedure and standards govern this collection as the exhibit collection. These collections are kept separate from those maintained for teaching purposes. Their understood purpose is to serve the membership of the NAWCC and such members of the public as have a legitimate reason to review them.

Teaching Collections: Teaching collections are not museum specimens and are neither accepted nor maintained in the same manner as the other specimens in this manual. These items may be accepted with the permission of the NAWCC Executive Director on a gift form. Donors must be notified in writing that they have donated items to be used in teaching collections and that they understand that the specimens will be most likely used up in the course of these programs.

Loans: Loans are of two categories, Loans-Received and Loans-out. Loans-Received are normally for inclusion in the museum's exhibit program and are understood to be accepted by the museum for the duration of the exhibit for they are accepted. These must be accepted by the museum on a form spelling out the conditions of the loan, its duration, insurance value and be accompanied by a photo or condition assessment of the piece noting its any damage evident at time of receipt. These materials are all insured by the museum. Normally, long term loans, where the items are not immediately placed on exhibit are in fact free storage and are to be discouraged as they incur long term costs and discourage collecting similar specimens directly for the museum. However, it may occasionally be recommended that a specimen be borrowed that is unconnected with any actual exhibit. Such recommendations will be handled by the Committee on a case by case basis and may have to be referred to the NAWCC board for action.

Loans-out involving cataloged museum specimens are ordinarily made to other 501 (c) (3) institutions for exhibit or study with Museum Committee approval. Loans may also be made to NAWCC organizations for educational purposes, provided that staff evaluation finds that such loans are to be handled, transported, and exhibited in conformity with standards of care and use commonly practiced within the museum profession. The Museum Committee may agree to lend these items upon recommendation of museum staff who will comment on their need for forthcoming NAWCC exhibits and their physical condition. Loans-out will be fully insured by the borrowing institution to standards set by NAWCC staff. These loans may be made for a maximum of three years with an additional three year maximum renewal after which they should return to the NAWCC.

The museum staff will also set the standards if clocks lent may be wound or in any way used.

Traveling exhibits may be arranged with other museums but these are unusual events and may be made only with BOD approval. Itineraries involving more than three locations are discouraged.

Collections Care: NAWCC collections must be fully cataloged by museum staff and volunteers to the standards set above. Lists of artifacts requiring conservation should be maintained and conservation priorities referred to the Director. Recommendations may be made to the Committee to assist in locating conservation funding and to establish priorities. A current inventory of collections and their locations should be maintained by staff.

Collecting Priorities: One of the charges given to the Museum Committee is to review the collections comparing the actual specimens to the museum's collecting plan and, working with staff, evaluate whether the holdings in certain areas are sufficient for the museum's needs or if there are either too many or too few specimens to adequately tell the museum's story. To accomplish this, the Committee may from time to time call upon recognized authorities in each field to help in this review and may apply to the BOD for a small budget to achieve this purpose, if volunteer assistance is insufficient. The committee will report to the BOD and to the membership concerning the completeness of the collection and make known specific artifacts needed to make the collection more useful to the museum and to the membership of NAWCC.

Uses of the Collection: The NAWCC collection will be used to serve the educational and research interests of the membership of the association and the general public as appropriate. While it is important to be able to display parts of the collection in as many locations as possible, considerations as to security, proper transport and handling of specimens often have to take precedence over use. Where possible, the use of on-line and other media programs that make research relating to important specimens in the collections available to the membership are greatly encouraged.

The Collecting Plan: The 1977 mission statement states that the museum collects in the field of world wide horology. This is important as it helps define NAWCC vis a vis other American clock museums in the US and the national museums of other countries. While inevitably the museum will have a better collection in some areas than in others, it is important for the uniqueness of our mission to be telling a more general story imparting an understanding of time and the devices used in its measurement. In this way the NAWCC has carved out an unusual role. This broad mission has been a founding

characteristic of the museum. The collecting plan to be used as a yardstick by the Museum Collections Committee in evaluating proposed additions to the collections will be based upon this broad collections objective and will evaluate whether the collections assist in

5

furthering its attainment. In furtherance of this general collecting goal, the comparison of the national and regional characteristics of timepieces over the years is defined as important to the museum's mission as is the scope and characteristics of production of individual clock makers or clock making companies.