



AURORA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
East Aurora, New York

COLLECTION POLICY

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The Collection Policy Committee thanks the following who helped in the writing of this Collection Policy:

Melissa N. Brown, our Get Set Grant Consultant who spent several hours with the trustees as well as with the Collection Committee in formulating the outline for the policy as well as giving the committee guidance, input, and revision of the Policy.

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The Collection Policy Committee

**Tom Alcamo
Dorothy Haselbauer
Cheryl Hurlburt
Diane Meade**

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Aurora Historical Society

Collection Policy

1.1 Mission Statement and History

The Mission of the Aurora Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and interpret the rich heritage of the Town of Aurora including documents, artifacts, and historical sites as well as to be stewards of the Society's museums, structures, and collection for the educational benefit of present and future generations.

History of Aurora Historical Society:

In 1951 the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) was founded by a like minded group of citizens interested in history. The Society received a temporary charter from the New York State Department of Education in 1959 and a permanent charter was presented on December 3, 1964. Since then, the Aurora Historical Society's physical plant has evolved and its collection has grown.

Town Hall Site:

Before the Aurora Historical Society Museum in the (Aurora) Town Hall was formed, artifacts were donated to the Town Historian. After the AHS was founded, items were donated to the Society. The Aurora Historical Museum in the Town Hall located in the Roycroft chapel was officially opened on September 15, 1978. It was re-located to the new Town Hall at the Southside Municipal Center, 300 Gleed Avenue, in October 2012.

Millard Fillmore Museum:

In 1966, the first Millard Fillmore Museum opened in the General Riley House, 644 Oakwood Avenue, East Aurora. The Fillmore collection, including furniture from Fillmore's homes in East Aurora, Buffalo and the White House was installed in several restored rooms. The Millard Fillmore House, located at 24 Shearer Avenue, East Aurora, built by Millard Fillmore for his bride, Abigail, was acquired by the Society in 1975 after a public fund raising campaign. It was purchased from the estate of Margaret E. Price, deceased, and Irving L Price. The AHS purchased additional property from the estate of Harriett Price Denbo in 1986. Millard Fillmore House, a National Historic Landmark, was dedicated on June 16, 1979.

Elbert Hubbard Roycroft Museum at the ScheideMantel House:

The Elbert Hubbard Museum originated with a gift from the Godfrey family on February 23, 1961. Beautifully bound and illuminated books and original manuscripts formed the nucleus of the Elbert Hubbard Library Museum. Roycroft furniture, copper and other related items were donated to the museum.

In 1985, Gladys ScheideMantel, at the age of 100 years, donated her craftsman bungalow home with its contents to the Aurora Historical Society. The Society combined its acquisitions and the Hubbard Museum collection with the collection of George and Gladys ScheideMantel. The ScheideMantels' 1910 Roycroft crafted bungalow provides a rich environment where the Roycroft collection is interpreted for visitors.

1.2 The Permanent Collection:

The Aurora Historical Society's permanent collection is housed in several locations:

AHS General Collection:

The Aurora History Museum is located in the Town Historian's Office at the Southside Municipal Center at 300 Glead Avenue. Historic memorabilia of people and events, and objects of historic interest are housed in the museum along with murals by Rix Jennings depicting the history of East Aurora from the days of the Native Americans through 1974. Sandor Landeau's gold medal winning oil painting originally exhibited in Paris, hangs on the wall. The Kuster Collection of Indian arrowheads is on display.

Murals by Margaret Evans Price entitled "Imagination" and "Memory" are located at the Aurora Theater.

Judge's stand, originally at Cicero Hamlin Village Farm, is located at 292 Main Street, East Aurora.

A Charles Hall-screen screen is located in the Salon of The Roycroft Inn.

Original documents of Millard Fillmore and Elbert Hubbard are housed in a fire-proof safe.

Presses, type and type cases, and other Roycroft items are located at the Roycroft Campus.

Millard Fillmore Collection

The Millard Fillmore House, a National Historic Landmark, houses original furniture from Fillmore's homes in East Aurora, Buffalo, and the White House. The collection includes Empire and Victorian furniture and artifacts. The original collection began with donations from Irving L. Price, Edward Godfrey, and other interested citizens and organizations.

Elbert Hubbard's Roycroft Museum Collection

The collection includes beautifully bound and illuminated books, original Hubbard and other Roycroft manuscripts, Roycroft crafted furniture, art metal work, oil paintings by Alex Fournier, and other Roycroft memorabilia. A special room houses the leather work and tools of George ScheideMantel.

1.3 Code of Ethics

Trustees/board members owe allegiance to the Aurora Historical Society and must act in good faith with the best interest of the organization in mind. They may not personally benefit from any business derived from the Society without full disclosure to the Board of Trustees. They must avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of such. Acts of self-dealing constitute a breach of fiduciary responsibility that may result in personal liability.

Trustee/Board members are responsible to insure that the Society's resources are dedicated to the fulfillment of its mission. They also have a duty to ensure that the Society complies with all applicable laws and does not engage in any unauthorized activities.

Staff members and volunteers are guided by the following principles:

1. Loyalty to the AHS, and full and conscientious fulfillment of responsibilities
2. Avoidance of conflict of interest and discussion of any potential conflicts with the Board of Trustees
3. Using his/her position within the AHS only for Society's purposes, not for personal gain
4. Maintaining the good name of the AHS throughout the community and appropriate use of its name, reputation, property or services
5. Avoidance of any transaction, through family or friends, that may not be done by the staff/volunteers under these guidelines

2.1 Acquisition

All acquisitions are made by the Aurora Historical Society for the educational and research purposes of present and future generations. The overall direction and goals of collecting activities are governed by the mission of the Aurora Historical Society.

The collecting goals of the Society are documentation of the intellectual, educational, and social history of the Town of Aurora and the Village of East Aurora, including items related to Millard Fillmore, Elbert Hubbard, and the Roycroft Movement.

2.2 Acquisition Criteria

Potential acquisitions must meet three basic criteria:

1. Relevance: the object must support the Museum's mission and fit within its stated collecting goals.

2. Use: the object must have the capacity for use in exhibitions and/or for research and scholarly purposes.

3. Conditions: the object must be in reasonable condition and must not require significant expense or treatment in order to make it relevant or useful unless such funds are pledged in writing by a donor.

In addition, the following questions must be considered when evaluating a potential acquisition. If the answer to any one of these questions casts doubt on the ability of the Society to properly care for or manage the object, serious thought should be given to declining the acquisition.

1. Is the source the rightful owner of the object and are there any conflicts regarding property rights or legal title?

2. Has the source requested that any restrictions or special conditions be placed on the acquisition? If so, is their acceptance justifiable given Society policy?

3. Are there any constraints in terms of intellectual property rights? Will all intellectual property rights be turned over to the Aurora Historical Society? If the source is not the copyright holder, has the holder been identified and can copyright be transferred to the Society or a licensing arrangement be made?

4. Has the provenance of the object been properly documented? Are there any concerns as to the authenticity of the object or its provenance?

5. Does the object unnecessarily duplicate another object already in the collection?

6. Does the Museum have the ability and intention to use and care for the object? Is appropriate storage space available? Is the general collection budget adequate to make the object accessible? If the answer to any of these questions is no, the Society will explore with the prospective donor the possibility of his/her establishing an endowment to support the extraordinary costs of care, storage, and/or access.

7. Are there any safety concerns related to the object which might demand special handling, display, and/or insurance?

8. If the object is being purchased, is the price fair and reasonable? Could the object or its equivalent be acquired by gift or bequest rather than purchase?

2.3 Methods of Acquisition

Gifts For all gifts, a Deed of Gift Agreement must be signed by the donor or the donor's authorized representative at the time of donation. Objects will not be rehoused, preserved, cataloged, or made available for use by researchers until a Deed of Gift has been executed.

The Society accepts donations only if legal title is transferred to the Society. The Aurora Historical Society is responsible only for certifying receipt of the gift and will not establish any valuations, or provide any recommendations as to appraisers. Under no circumstance will the volunteer staff of the Society appraise donations or make arrangement for an appraisal on the donor's behalf.

Unsolicited objects offered as potential acquisitions for the Society's collection are considered to be in the **temporary custody** of the Society. If the acquisition of an unsolicited object is approved, the object will be formally accessioned into the collection and a Temporary Custody Receipt will be retained in the object's Accession File. If the object is not accessioned, Society staff will attempt to locate an appropriate repository for the object and if unsuccessful, the object may be disposed of by witnessed destruction.

Bequests Bequests will be considered for acquisition in the same manner as gifts. The Society reserves the right to refuse bequeathed objects that do not meet its criteria for acquisition, or it may choose to accept only a portion of the bequest. For all bequests, copies of the will including all codicils shall be retained for the object's Accession File.

Exchanges Exchanges are treated as two separate collection management actions. Incoming objects will be considered for acquisition in the same manner as other acquisitions and must be approved before the exchange takes place. Title transfer documentation appropriate to the type of acquisition will be retained in the object's Accession File. Outgoing objects must be de-accessioned in accordance with Society policy. A De-Accession and Disposal Form will be retained in the object's Accession File. An Exchange Agreement will specify the following:

1. What will be transferred?
2. Who will pay for packing and shipping?
3. Specific beginning and ending dates of the exchange will be established before any action takes place.

Purchases The Society maintains an acquisition fund, under the supervision of the Trustees, which is used to purchase objects for the collection and for the direct care of the collection, which is defined as: the conservation of the collection objects or the improvement of collection storage facilities. Funds for a purchase must be in hand or secured in writing prior to submitting an acquisition proposal to the Collections Committee. Objects purchased with funds from the sale of donated objects will be credited to the original donor. The bill of sale or signed Receipt of Purchase will be retained in the object's Accession File.

Books, Papers and Photographs Due to the unique nature of books, papers and photographs, the Aurora Historical Society has adopted a distinct policy for these items.

Anyone donating or dropping off books and/or papers to the Aurora Historical Society agrees that the items become the property of the Aurora Historical Society. Unless special arrangements are made with the Aurora Historical Society Board of Trustees, books, papers and photographs will not be taken on loan, and no restrictions may be placed on their donation to the Aurora Historical Society.

The items may be used for any of the following purposes, as determined by the Collections Committee and Aurora Historical Society Board of Trustees:

1. Accession into the Aurora Historical Society collection, if the Collections Committee and Board of Trustees determine that the item(s) meet the Society's mission and that a

suitable number of other copies are not already in the Aurora Historical Society's collection.

2. Sale of the items for the benefit of the Aurora Historical Society.
3. Transfer of the items to the research center of the Aurora Town Historian's Office.
4. Disposition.

2.4 Loan agreements and policies

The Aurora Historical Society (AHS) loans objects from its collection to qualified borrowers, and may request loans from other organizations or individuals, for exhibition purposes. Documentation of loans is maintained in the object's Loan File. The Collections Committee Chairperson and Director will provide a report on all loans to and from the AHS at the close of the fiscal year.

2.41 Outgoing Loans Requests for loans from the AHS collection will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. The object is not judged to be too fragile to withstand the associated handling, shipping and changes in climate.
2. Conditions during the loan period will not endanger the object.
3. The object is not needed during the requested loan period by AHS.
4. Loans from the collection are at the recommendation of the Collections Committee, with final approval from the Board of Trustees. Loans are not made for personal use or for commercial purposes. The AHS will not consider requests for loans of original documentary photographs unless the borrower can show a need to exhibit the original object.
5. The AHS does not make indefinite or permanent loans. The duration of a loan must be specified on the Loan Agreement. Requests for loan extensions are evaluated by the involved curator and approved or disapproved by the Trustees.
6. Requests for outgoing loans must be made in writing to the AHS for Trustee review thirty days before the loan date. The borrower must include a **Certificate of Insurance** with the request. Non-museum educational organizations must certify to AHS that they are able to provide professional, museum-quality care for loaned objects before an outgoing loan will be approved.
7. All outgoing loans are subject to the conditions set forth on an Outgoing Loan Agreement, which must be signed by the borrower prior to shipment of the object. Any special conditions, requests, or restrictions must be discussed with AHS staff or Trustees in advance and documented on the Loan Agreement.
8. The borrower is responsible for any appraisal, packing, shipping, handling, and insurance costs

associated with the loan.

9. An outgoing loan is insured by the borrower; a Certificate of Insurance must be issued to AHS prior to shipment of the object. If the borrower requests that AHS maintain its own insurance on the object for the duration of the loan, the borrower incurs that expense.

10. Appraisal values for insurance purposes will be based on the fair market value of the object as determined by the AHS Collections Committee. If AHS staff cannot provide an accurate valuation or if the period of the loan is greater than one year, a professional outside appraisal may be requested at the borrower's expense.

2.42 Incoming Loans

Requests for loans to the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) are made by the involved curator and are reviewed by the Trustees using the following criteria before the object is accepted for as an incoming loan:

1. The object's provenance, its condition, the clarity of rights and title, the presence of lender imposed restrictions, and the associated costs of the loan.

2. AHS does not accept incoming loans offered for the purposes of commercial exploitation of the object or to increase the value of the object when sold, nor does it provide long-or short- term storage services. The Society will not exhibit artifacts which have been stolen, illegally removed from their country of origin, illegally salvaged, or removed from commercially exploited archaeological or historic sites.

3. All incoming loans are subject to the conditions set forth on the Incoming Loan Agreement, which must be signed by the lender prior to shipment of the object. Any special conditions, requests, or restrictions must be discussed with the AHS curator in advance, approved by the Trustees and documented on the Loan Agreement.

4. Loans are made to the AHS for the period of time listed on the Incoming Loan Agreement and may not be withdrawn without adequate prior notification. All costs involved with incoming loans must be discussed in advance with AHS and require approval from the Trustees. These can include loan or rental fees, framing costs, insurance fees, and two-way shipping charges.

5. If requested, AHS will provide the borrower with a certificate of insurance as evidence that AHS has **insurance** coverage in place for the object on loan. Loans will be insured based on their fair market value as provided by the lender. It is the responsibility of the lender to inform AHS if the stated value of the object changes during the period of the loan.

6. The lender must inform AHS in writing of any address or ownership status changes during the loan period. AHS will return the object to the lender listed in the Incoming Loan Agreement and will only deliver the object to another party with written authorization from the lender.

2.43 Temporary Custody Objects may be placed in the temporary custody of the Aurora Historical Society (AHS) for the purposes of research, identification, consideration for acquisition into the collection, or evaluation for loan. Placement of an object in the temporary custody of AHS does not constitute a transfer of legal title to AHS.

All Temporary Custody Agreements must be approved by the AHS Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of the Collections Committee. All temporary deposits are subject to the conditions set forth on a **Temporary Custody Receipt**, which must be signed by the owner or owner's representative before the object is delivered to the Society. Objects on temporary deposit will be stored properly and monitored; however, the AHS will not insure objects placed in its temporary custody, nor will it re-house, catalog, or make them available to researchers.

2.5 Records of Acquisition

Since 1951, the Aurora Historical Society has utilized various methods for recording its collection at its three museums and ancillary sites. These records vary in extent. An inventory of the collection continues, with the intent of raising the quality of the records to a consistent level. These records will include:

1. How and when the artifact was acquired
2. A description of the artifact
3. A photo of the artifact
4. The accession number of the artifact when first acquired
5. Provenance/history of the artifact

While the AHS digitally catalogues the Collection, document files are also maintained and kept at the AHS office. The document file contains any additional information on the object.

3.1 De-accession Policy Acquisitions are made with the intention of building the Society's Collection and preserving it for future use. Objects accessioned into the Collection will be permanently retained if they continue to support the mission of the Society. However, the Aurora Historical Society may choose to de-accession, or remove from the Collection, any object which it legally owns that, upon examination, is deemed to be inappropriate for further retention. Once an object has been accessioned into the Permanent Collection, it can only be removed through completion of the de-accession process. The act of de-accessioning presupposes that the object has been formally accessioned into the Society's Collection. Decisions regarding the de-accessioning of objects are based on the same degree of careful examination that is used in the evaluation of potential acquisitions.

3.2 De-accession Decisions Decisions as to the appropriateness of proposed de-accessions are made as follows:

For objects in the Permanent Collection, a recommendation is made by the Society's Collections Committee, operating in accordance with its Bylaws, to the Trustees, who, taking into account the Committee's recommendation makes the final decision as to whether the object should or should not be removed from the Collection.

3.3 De-accession Criteria To be considered for de-accessioning, an object must have been accessioned two or more years and meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Relevance: inclusion of the object in the Collection does not support the Society's mission.
2. Condition: the object has deteriorated or been damaged beyond repair or poses a health hazard.
3. Care of the object: the Society is not able to provide proper care for special preservation requirements associated with the object.
4. Duplication: the object is an exact duplicate or unnecessarily duplicates the subject matter or relevance of another object.
5. Authenticity: the object is found to be falsely attributed or documented, or proved to be a fake or forgery.
6. Quality of the Collection: de-accessioning of the object will improve or strengthen another area of the Collection and, in so doing, further the goals of the Society. In this case, great care must be taken to ensure that an object is not disposed of purely for the sake of acquiring another object.

No action pertaining to the de-accessioning or disposition of an object will be undertaken that would impair the integrity and good standing of the Aurora Historical Society within the community at large or within the museum profession.

3.4 Disposition of De-accessioned Objects Disposition of de-accessioned objects will be carried out in accordance with any local, state, and federal regulations and legal requirements, and in accordance with the policies of the Aurora Historical Society.

AHS employees, officers, members of the AHS Board of Trustees, Collections Committee, and their immediate family members may not purchase or otherwise benefit from the disposition of a de-accessioned object.

When deemed necessary by the Trustees, an outside appraisal or qualified consultation shall be obtained to assist in determining the appropriate disposition method.

Any disposition restrictions placed on an object by a donor will be strictly observed. If the object was a gift or bequest, the donors or his/her heirs will be notified, when possible, of the Society's intention to de-accession the object. Such notification is carried out as a courtesy and does not constitute a request for permission to dispose of the object, nor shall a donor be given preferential treatment in reacquiring the object.

The method of disposition must be approved by the Trustees and documented. Disposition of approved de-accessions shall take place in a timely fashion. In determining the appropriate method of disposition, consideration should be given to the best interests of the Society, the public and scholarly communities it serves, and the public trust. Appropriate methods of disposition are:

1. Donation: the object may be donated to another repository or educational organization
2. Exchange: the object may be exchanged with another repository or educational organization in return for an object of equal or greater value.
3. Sale: the object may be sold at public auction or sold privately to another educational organization.
4. Destruction: if an object has deteriorated or been damaged beyond repair, poses a health hazard, is determined to be a fake or forgery, or holds neither intrinsic nor monetary value, it may be deliberately destroyed.

The Society will place all net proceeds (all proceeds less out-of-pocket expenses) from the sale of de-accessioned objects into its Acquisition Fund. This Fund will be used solely for the acquisition of objects for the Society's Collection or for the direct care of the Collection, which is defined as the conservation of the Collection objects or the improvement of the Collection's storage facilities. The original donor will be acknowledged for acquisitions made with the proceeds from the sale of the de-accessioned object.

A De-accession and Disposition Record will be completed for all de-accessions and retained permanently in the object's Accession File. The Collections Committee Chairperson and/or Director will provide a report on de-accession actions at the close of the fiscal year.

4.1 Loan Agreement Forms and Conditions refer to Section 2.4 Loan agreements and policies

4.4 Temporary Custody Receipt

Conditions:

1. This object does not constitute Aurora Historical Society ownership
2. This object is being left with the AHS at the owner's risk and the AHS has no responsibility for the object.
3. This object is placed with the AHS for research, identification, or for consideration for acquisition into the Collection.
4. All temporary deposits are subject to the conditions set forth on the reverse of the **Temporary Custody Receipt**, which must be signed by the owner or owner's representative before the object is delivered to the Society. Objects on temporary deposit will be stored properly and monitored; however, AHS will not insure objects placed in its temporary custody, nor will it re-house, catalog, or make the item available to researchers.

Temporary Custody Conditions

1. This object if not claimed by the lender will be forfeited to the Aurora Historical Society.
2. This object is left with the AHS at the owner's risk; the AHS has no responsibility for the object.
3. Placement of this object in the temporary custody of the AHS, up to the 90 day limit, does not constitute a transfer of legal title to the AHS.
4. This object is placed with the AHS for research by the Society, identification, or for consideration for acquisition into the AHS' collection.
5. Objects on temporary deposit will be stored properly and monitored; however, the AHS will not insure objects placed in its temporary custody, nor will it re-house, catalog, or make them available to non-AHS researchers.
6. All temporary deposits are subject to these conditions and the Temporary Custody Form must be signed by the owner or owner's representative before the object is delivered to the AHS.

5.1 Care of Collection-Parameters The Collections Committee is responsible to the AHS Trustees for the care of the collection under its supervision. That responsibility insures adherence to all policies and procedures. The Collections Committee, its staff and volunteers are responsible for the tracking of all objects as they enter or leave the Society's control and works with all Society staff and volunteers to ensure the safe handling and accurate documentation of the Collection.

5.2 Conservation Methods:

5.21 Environment Control All objects in the AHS permanent collection are subject to the same standards of professional care. To ensure consistency, the Collections Committee Chairperson and Director issue general guidelines for the care of the collection. It is the responsibility of the AHS to inform interns, volunteers, researchers, consultants, and other with whom they work about these requirements.

Care of Collection Environment Controls

The following environmental agents of deterioration will be addressed to preserve the collection:

- A) direct physical forces
- B) thieves, vandals, displacers and curatorial neglect
- C) fire
- D) pests
- F) pollutants and contaminants

- G) light and radiation
- H) temperature
- I) relative humidity

5.22 Preserving artifacts The Aurora Historical Society continues to preserve the collection, constantly working towards higher standards.

5.3 Risk Management Recognizing the public trust inherently placed in the Aurora Historical Society, the Trustees have the responsibility to develop, implement, and maintain a disaster preparedness plan. This preparation is essential to recovery from potential hazards, including natural disaster, vandalism, theft, and mechanical system failure.

The plan seeks first to identify, and then eliminate or reduce risks to:

- A. the Society's visitors and personnel
- B. the Society's permanent collection
- C. the Society's buildings

A Risk Management Policy will be developed to address the following areas of risk: Security, Natural Disasters, infrastructure and societal.

5.4 Monitoring Collection

Once the cataloging of the Collection has been completed a **Collection Inventory Check** will be conducted on a regular basis (time frame to be established by the Aurora Historical Society's Trustees). The date of the inventory will be recorded on the computer software and printed copy of the accession record for each object in the Collection.

5.5 Record Keeping The maintenance of current, accurate collection records is of primary importance to the management of the Collection. The Collections Committee Chairperson will maintain all accession, de-accession, and loan records, as well as collection-related insurance records and the records and meeting minutes of the Collection Committee. Any original documents relating to these functions must be retained in the AHS office. These records shall only be made available to curators and other Society staff designated by the Trustees. Cataloging, research, and exhibition records on objects will be maintained. It is the responsibility of the Collections Committee and the Director to ensure that duplicate copies of records are maintained in a secure, off-site storage area. The following information is restricted and will only be given out to those individuals approved by the Trustees:

1. Names of donors, former owners, or lenders who wish to remain anonymous
2. Former owners, and lenders
3. Storage location of objects
4. Object values, including purchase prices, appraisals, and insurance valuations

5.6 Insurance The Aurora Historical Society is insured by Selective through Badger and Gunner. On a regular basis, the Director and Collections Committee will review with curatorial

staff the schedule of values for the Collection to ensure that collection descriptions and values are current. The insurance carrier will be notified if the object is being stored or exhibited in an unusual location which may not be covered under the Aurora Historical Society's regular policy. At the lender's request, AHS will insure **incoming loans** under AHS policy for the duration of the loan. The object will be insured based on its fair market value as provided by the lender on an Incoming Loan Agreement and it is the responsibility of the lender to inform the AHS if the stated value of the object changes during the period of the loan. A certificate of insurance can be furnished to the lender as evidence that the property is insured.

Objects placed in the **temporary custody** of the AHS for the purpose of identification, research, or evaluation as a potential acquisition or loan will not be insured.

The AHS requires insurance coverage based on the fair market value of an object for all **outgoing loans**. Insurance must be carried by the borrower and a certificate of insurance supplied to the AHS or the Aurora Historical Society will maintain its own insurance at the borrower's expense. The AHS reserves the right to require that the borrower provide written evidence of ability to pay any deductible limits of coverage. Damage to or loss of objects must be immediately reported to the Director. The Director and Collections Committee will maintain records and coordinate conservation treatment with outside vendors and curatorial staff.

Under no circumstance will the Aurora Historical Society staff or volunteers provide appraisals for donations, loans, or objects placed in the custody of the AHS for identification or research purposes, nor will they recommend, arrange, or appraise on behalf of the donor or lender.

6.1 Access to Collection The Aurora Historical Society cares for an extensive collection of objects. As an active historical society whose mission is to collect and preserve regional history, the future of our collection is as important as its past.

The AHS makes its collection available to a broad audience through a variety of public programs including exhibitions, publications, audio-visual presentations, and educational activities that relate to the history of the Town of Aurora and the Village of East Aurora. These materials may be used with prior permission. The collection may be accessed during regular Society hours. Requests may be made by telephone (716) 652-4735, or in writing to the Aurora Historical Society, P.O. Box 472, East Aurora, New York 14052.

The AHS supports research activities and recognizes the need for researchers to study its artifact collection. Most requests can be answered by mail. Under specific conditions, the AHS makes its objects available to scholars, collectors, and interested members of the public, who can demonstrate a legitimate purpose in their application for access. Permission to undertake this type of hands-on, artifact research depends upon accessibility and the condition of materials. If handling will not jeopardize individual objects, and if existing photographs and information regarding provenance will not provide sufficient documentation, permission may be granted to study these materials. When access is granted, materials may be used by appointment only.

On-site study of the Society's artifacts is requested by completing a **Request for Access to Artifacts Form** and returning it to the Society at least **thirty (30)** days prior to the proposed visit. The applicant must be as specific as possible in the request. Applicants will be notified, by mail, of approval or denial of the request.

The handling of materials will be undertaken under secure conditions. A staff member or volunteer will be present at all times. Researchers will be instructed in the proper methods for handling museum-quality artifacts.

Publication, exhibition, and use of these materials is subject to certain restrictions and fees; written approval for these types of activities must be requested in accordance with the AHS Outgoing Loan Agreement (see 2.4 Loan Agreements & Policies).