



**Sheringham Point Lighthouse  
Preservation Society**

**Archives  
&  
Collections Management  
Policy**

**August 31, 2019**

# ARCHIVES & COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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# ARCHIVES & COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSES

In October 2015, the Sheringham Point Lighthouse was designated a National Heritage Lighthouse, under the auspices of the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act. Subsequently, ownership of the Lighthouse was transferred from the Government of Canada to the Sheringham Point Lighthouse Preservation Society (in November 2015), under the auspices of the same Act.

With that transfer came the responsibility to care for and protect the Lighthouse in perpetuity to a standard that would be expected for any National Historic Site in Canada. Also, the Society's mission includes the intention to ensure public access to the Lighthouse and its surrounding lands, and to document and provide public education and information about the Lighthouse, its history and operations.

In achieving these goals, it is to be expected that, over time, the Society will – and should – acquire numerous documents, artifacts and other materials that will be pertinent to the Lighthouse and its history. As a diligent, responsible organization, the Society will endeavour to be good stewards of this material and, although it is anticipated the Society will remain predominantly a volunteer-based organization, it will strive to maintain these archival and artifact collections in as professional a manner as possible.

**The purpose of this policy** is to set out the scope of the archival and artifact collections, the criteria by which materials will be retained and disposed of, and the manner in which these materials will be used, managed and cared for.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

***“The Sheringham Point Lighthouse Preservation Society will acquire, protect and conserve information, records and objects of educational, historical and cultural value that relate to or enhance the understanding and appreciation of Sheringham Point Lighthouse.”***

### 3. ARCHIVES

- a) The archival collection will contain:
  - i. historical documents, records and materials.
  - ii. documents, records and materials produced by the Society.
- b) Archival materials will include:
  - i. paper documents
  - ii. photographs and other images (any media, including electronic files).
  - iii. films and videos (any media, including electronic files).
  - iv. paintings and drawings (any media).
  - v. music and other sound recordings (any media, including electronic files).
  - vi. electronic files with pertinent content.
- c) The scope of the archival collection will include documents, records and materials that are:
  - i. of direct provenance or pertinence to Sheringham Point Lighthouse, its history and its operations.
  - ii. of pertinence to the local community and which provide context for the history, operations and development of Sheringham Point Lighthouse.
  - iii. of pertinence to other lighthouses in Canada or elsewhere and which provide context for the history, operations, development and better understanding of Sheringham Point Lighthouse.
  - iv. produced by the Society, and in accordance with the Society's Records Management Policy (see below).

### 4. ARTIFACT COLLECTION

- a) The artifact collection will include objects, equipment and materials that are:
  - i. of direct provenance or pertinence to Sheringham Point Lighthouse, its history and its operations.
  - ii. of pertinence to the local community and which provide context for the history, operations and development of Sheringham Point Lighthouse.
  - iii. of pertinence to other lighthouses in Canada or elsewhere and which provide context for the history, operations, development and better understanding of Sheringham Point Lighthouse.

### 5. SOCIETY RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- a) As the owner/operator/steward of Sheringham Point Lighthouse, the Society's operational record is of value as a fundamental part of the ongoing and still-developing history of the Lighthouse. While, for the most part, the Society's documents, records

and materials will be kept in the Society's operating files, there are certain documents, records and materials that, at appropriate times, should be transferred to the archives. These documents will include corporate and governance documents, key correspondence, published materials, operational reports, photographs and other documents and materials that significantly illustrate the purposes, policies and activities of the Society.

- b) The Society will adhere to a File Retention Policy that will govern which operational files will be retained, and for what period of time, in order to comply with functional and legal requirements for maintaining financial and other records. The Archival Policy and File Retention Policy will be compatible.
- c) As the Society currently has no significant physical base of operations (other than the Lighthouse structures themselves), and is not anticipated to have such facilities in future, space considerations for the storage of paper files is critical. Also, as it is the information contained in the Society's records which is of paramount importance (as opposed to the physical record itself) the Society adopts the following approach:
  - i. Except for those documents which, due to their nature, need to be retained in a paper format, Society documents will be retained as digital files.

## 6. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- a) The proper care and management of archival materials and historical artifacts is, in some respects, a highly technical, detailed discipline, requiring a wide range of specialized knowledge and expertise. As a small, predominantly volunteer-based organization, it is not expected that SPLPS will have the capacity to hire such specialized technical staff to manage its collections. Rather, the collections will be managed and cared for primarily by volunteers, with specific expertise brought in on either a volunteer or contractual basis as required.
- b) To ensure that the Society has, at all times, adequate specialized knowledge to properly and effectively manage its collections:
  - i. The Board will establish a Collections Management Committee, comprising three to five individuals/volunteers, at least one of whom will be a Director of the Society. The Committee will be authorized by the Board to make all necessary decisions, on an ongoing basis, with respect to the acquisition, care, use and disposition of the materials contained in the archives and artifact collections.
  - ii. The Committee will report directly to the Board as a whole, and the Board will retain the authority to review any decisions made by the Committee, upon a majority vote of the Board.
  - iii. The Board will allocate an annual budget for the committee to cover appropriate ongoing costs of storage, care, and use and disposition of the materials. Requests

for additional funds for acquisition or special circumstances will be addressed on a case by case basis.

- iv. The Board will ensure that its committee members, and other Society volunteers as appropriate, have access to educational materials, workshops and other training opportunities so that the Society always has in-house expertise (to a reasonable extent) in order to manage and/or oversee the management of the collections.
- c) Either the Chair of the Collections Management Committee or any Director of the Society is authorized to formally accept gifts of items for the Society's collections, on the recommendation of the Collections Management Committee.
- d) To facilitate effective management and use of the collections, the Society will acquire and use dedicated Collections Management software to keep track of all materials and related information.
- e) To the extent possible, the Society will strive to ensure broader public access to its collections by digitizing as much of the material as feasible, and publishing those digitized materials on the Society's website.
- f) The Society will seek to establish ongoing partnerships with like-minded organizations which have greater technical capacity, with the intent that archival materials and artifacts which cannot be directly displayed at the Lighthouse or in the Society's other facilities, and which are in need of specialized storage will be transferred (either by loan or gift) to those organizations.

## **7. ADDITIONS TO THE COLLECTIONS**

- a) The Society will add materials to its collection at its discretion only, and in accordance with its collections criteria. The Society is under no obligation to accept gifts or bequests of any materials from any source.
- b) The Society will, as necessary, and at its discretion, either purchase materials for its collections, or accept them as gifts. Its preference, in all cases, will be to receive materials as gifts. It may also accept loans from other institutions, agencies or individuals, on a case by case basis.
- c) The Society will, upon request, provide tax receipts for the donation of materials. In accordance with the requirements of the Canada Revenue Agency, the Society will assess the value of donated materials less than \$1,000, and will require an independent professional appraisal for materials deemed to be greater than \$1,000 in value.

- d) Decisions on whether to accept materials into the collections will be made by the Collections Management Committee, with the support of the Board as required, using the following criteria:
  - i. Materials that are within the scope of the collections, as outlined in sections 3 and 4 above.
  - ii. The physical space required for the proper and effective storage, use and/or display of the material.
  - iii. The nature of the care required for the material, and whether or not that care is within the technical or financial capability of the Society.
  - iv. Whether or not the material would be suitable/acceptable for donation (or loan) to another institution or agency, if it is deemed that the Society is unable to acceptably care for the material.
- e) All materials accessioned by the Society will be accompanied by a Deed of Gift form or Deed of Sale form, as appropriate. (See section 11 below).

## **8. REMOVALS FROM THE COLLECTIONS**

- a) From time to time it may be necessary to remove items from the collections, due to space limitations, acquisition of other materials (redundancy), changes in care requirements (e.g. serious or irreparable damage), relevance, or other issues pertinent to the Society.
- b) Prior to a decision being made on disposition, the Collections Management Committee will consider all options for retaining information or historical or educational value from the item(s) to be deaccessioned, including such things as photography, further research, and dismantling (to retain portions of the item). The Committee will also consider the preferred options for disposition.
- c) Items to be deaccessioned will be offered first to other museums, or to First Nations, as the Committee deems most appropriate. If neither of the above options are available, the item(s) will be offered to other non-profit societies, schools or other government agencies, as the Committee deems most appropriate.
- d) If none of the options listed in clause (c) above are available, and, if no tax receipt was issued for the item(s), the Society will offer to return the item(s) to the original donor.
- e) If none of the options listed in clauses (c) and (d) above are available, the Society will offer the item(s) for sale.
- f) If an item to be deaccessioned is not salable, or does not sell after a reasonable period of time, the Society may discard or destroy the item at its discretion.

## 9. USE AND CARE OF THE COLLECTIONS

- a) The Society maintains both archival and artifact collections in order to further the understanding and appreciation of the history of Sheringham Point Lighthouse, including its surrounding environs.
- b) Where appropriate, from both an educational and technical perspective (including consideration of the impact on the material) the Society will display certain materials in the Lighthouse Tower, the Engine Room, other facilities that may be on the Lighthouse site, or on the site itself.
- c) The Society will establish an appropriate storage facility or facilities, to the extent it is able, in order to provide adequate protection and care of the materials in its collections. Ideally, the storage facility will be temperature and humidity controlled.
- d) The Society will, upon request, and under the guidance of the Collections Management Committee, make its collections available to researchers, schools and others for educational purposes. All other access to the collections will be determined on a case by case basis, at the discretion of the Collections Management Committee.
- e) To the extent feasible, and in consideration of such factors as cost, copyright and sensitivity, the Society will digitize its records and materials, and post them for public access on its website.
- f) The Society will ensure, to the extent possible, that its collections are cared for in accordance with accepted archival and collections management standards, and will implement a cyclical cleaning and/or maintenance schedule for all items under its care.
- g) In accordance with clauses 6(c), 9(c) and 9(f) above, if in the opinion of the Collections Management Committee any item cannot be adequately cared for by the Society, efforts will be made to transfer the item to another institution or agency with the ability to care for that item.

## 10. PROCEDURES

- a) All acquisition and disposition decisions will be made by the Collections Management Committee in accordance with this policy, to the best of their ability, and will be documented in writing.
  - i. At the Committee's discretion, third party assistance may be sought.
  - ii. At the Committee's discretion, the Board of Directors may be consulted for advice.
- b) Any access to collections must be authorized by the Collections Management Committee. If any items are to be removed from the collections, for research, display or other reasons, that removal must be authorized by the Collections Management Committee and must be documented.



- c) All items in the collections will be monitored annually to assess their condition, and where appropriate and/or necessary will be cleaned, repaired or moved. Any repairs or moves will be documented.
- d) Digital files will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, to ensure they can be accessed, and that the storage medium is still viable and functional. Due to the short life-span of much computer software and hardware, all digital files will updated, as required, at least every five years. At least every ten years, all digital files will be relocated on to new storage hardware.
- e) Standard forms will be developed in order to manage input and consistency of information to be recorded with respect to the collections. (See section 11 below).

## 11. FORMS

- a) **Accession/Information Form**  
This form is to be used to collect as much information from the donor/source as possible when an item or items are offered to the Society for inclusion in our collections. It will be used by the Collections Management Committee to determine whether or an item can be accepted into the collection. If the item is accepted for the collection, the information collected will enhance the historical value of the item, and will be transferred to the collections management database as appropriate.
- b) **Guide for Completion of Accession/Information Form**  
This guide will accompany the Accession/Information Form and provides explanatory information and leading questions to enhance the completeness of the information collected.
- c) **Deed of Gift / Receipt Form**  
When an item is accepted as part of the collection, this form will itemize the gift and the conditions of the gift, including the value assessed. If a third party appraisal was acquired, it should be attached to this form. This form will be duplicated, with one copy for the donor and one copy for the collection records. It will also serve as a (non-official) receipt for the donation. (Note: a separate Official Receipt, for income tax purposes, will also be issued for qualifying donations).
- d) **Loan/Temporary Removal for Use Form**  
When an item is removed from the collection for loan to another institution or agency, or for any use other than for display by the Society or for the day-to-day use of the Collections Management Committee, this form will be used to indicate the purpose of the removal, by whom, where it is being loaned/used, and the duration of the removal. It also sets out the conditions and expectations set by the Society for the removal and use of the item.

- e) Disposition (De-Accession) Form  
When the Collections Management Committee determines that an item should be removed from the collection or transferred to another institution/agency, this form will be used to itemize the rationale for the decision and the method of disposition to be used.

## 12. CATALOGUING SYSTEM

- a) All acquisitions will be identified with a unique acquisition identification number, regardless of whether the acquisition is a physical object (artifact), a physical document, photograph, recording, video, or other artwork, or a virtual (electronic file) copy of a document, photograph, recording, video or other artwork.
- b) The numbering system shall be as follows:

Artifacts:	A-001-001
Historic Document:	D-001-001
Society Document:	S-001-001
Photograph:	P-001-001
Recording:	R-001-001
Video:	V-001-001
Other (including artwork):	M-001-001

The letter denotes the type of acquisition.

The first set of three numbers is the actual identification number for the item. It is assigned sequentially, from the previous acquisition.

The second set of three numbers is for use if the acquisition has multiple distinct components (as part of a series) that can/should be identified and/or described separately. This is assigned sequentially, from the previous component. If there is only one component, the designation 001 is still to be used.

- c) A searchable index file of all acquisitions will be maintained to provide coordination of the acquisition databases.