

Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum
Prince William Sound Community College
Collections Management Policies

These policies have been established to provide the staff guidance to insure that the museum's collection remains consistent with its purpose and responsibilities.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum is to:

Support Prince William Sound Community College, its students, and its instructors as a resource in educational pursuits

Safeguard the valuable natural history and cultural heritage materials entrusted to us by Maxine Whitney

Foster a thirst for knowledge and understanding of value regarding historic and cultural arts and artifacts, as well as items from our natural world

Ensure that the collection is displayed and available for instructional and research purposes, in keeping with the mission of an educational institution, and within the boundaries of the safety and security of the collection

Definitions

Collection:

The permanent collection of the Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum includes artifacts and archival materials which were collected by Maxine Whitney and donated to Prince William Sound Community College. This collection is managed in a manner consistent with professional standards of the American Association of Museums.

Acquisition:

To enter donated object(s) or archival material into the museum or archives collection by means of donation or purchase.

Accession:

To enter donated object(s) into the permanent records (Past Perfect) of the Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum for future identification and accountability purposes. All historical artifacts and/or archival materials accepted by the Museum for the permanent collection are accessioned.

De accession:

The permanent removal of an object from the Museum collection. This procedure provides a mechanism for removal of objects/materials which are not appropriate to the Museum's purpose yet consume resources [i.e., staff time, storage space, etc.]; were collected after the donation of the collection to PWSCC, are not related to Maxine Whitney's original collection or are inconsistent with the Museum's purposes; or are, after inspection by a conservator, deemed beyond saving or as a danger to other artifacts. Transfer or exchange with other historical organizations is the preferred method of disposing of de accessioned objects and materials. All disposals of objects and materials will be consistent with American Association of Museums standards. De accessioning of an item must be approved by the President of PWSCC.

Acquisition/ Accessioning

The Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum is a non-collecting museum at this time. Without collection storage, curatorial staffing, or further display space, the museum cannot ethically accept further donations for display. The collection is meant as a unit, encompassing items collected by Maxine & Jesse Whitney and displayed in its entirety, or a reasonable percentage thereof, excluding duplicate objects. As such, no further artifacts will be accepted, unless donated by Maxine Whitney herself, or from her personal collection donated by her immediate family on her behalf. This does not apply to the collection of resource materials, which support the ongoing research of the collection and relevant topics.

Further, any items having been already accepted by the museum outside of the scope of the original Maxine Whitney donation may be, on the decision of the President of PWSCC, returned to their original owner. Any such items which are kept in the museum's collection will be properly labeled as not having been part of the original Whitney collection.

All Whitney Museum acquisitions will comply with the State of Alaska and Federal laws governing antiquities, and natural resources, including the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Agreement and any laws and ordinances pertaining to ownership or sale of endangered or protected wildlife materials. Objects and informational materials collected under exploitative, irresponsible or illegal circumstances and, in particular, archeological materials collected in an unscientific manner will not be further acquired.

All items acquired by the Museum will be documented in the Accessioning Software, for the purposes of research, tracking, maintaining, etc.

Loans

Any materials which have been or may in the future be loaned to another museum or party shall have proper and thorough documentation and contract, outlining terms of condition, scheduled return date, treatment, and display thereof. Loans may, at the decision of the President of PWSCC, be renewed once original contract has expired. With the exception of desk copies of museum reference books and media, all artifacts loaned must be by permission of the President of PWSCC.

Purchases

With the exception of reference materials pertaining to the study of items in the museum collection, no purchases may be made of further artifacts for display in the museum. This is in keeping with the collection policy outlined above. Purchases for the purpose of keeping, protecting, researching, displaying, conserving, or otherwise improving the state of current museum artifacts, are allowed and encouraged.

De Accessioning

If an artifact has been acquired after the original collection was donated to PWSCC by Maxine Whitney, if it is deemed to be a hazard to the collection as a whole, or if it is not in keeping with the Museum's mission and theme, it may be de accessioned, with the approval of the PWSCC President. In this event, the original donor must be given the opportunity, in writing, to retrieve the artifact. If the donor or donor's estate, if no longer living, claims no further ownership of the item, it may be traded or donated to another museum or appropriate organization. Alternatively, the item may be de accessioned and used for educational purposes.

Appraisals

Museum staff will not make appraisal of any item's financial value, whether it be a museum item or an item belonging to a private citizen. Museum item valuations should not be discussed openly, for ethical and loss prevention reasons.

Research

Any access to the collection for the purpose of research must be approved by and supervised by a qualified member of the museum staff. Access may be limited regarding fragile or otherwise sensitive material. Researchers must handle all items in the manner instructed by the museum staff and observe all security regulations. Researchers assume full responsibility for any damage, accidental or otherwise. Researchers must appropriately acknowledge, footnote, or credit the museum for any information derived from the collection. Researchers must share any knowledge gained from the study of a museum object with the museum and allow use of such information in furthering the educational value of the collection.

Copyright

Photographs or video taping of the museum objects may be used for personal use only unless written permission has been given by the museum or the college president. Any publication of a photograph or visual file taken of a museum object must give credit to the museum and college. The museum shall receive a copy of this publication without charge.