

## **The Vigo County Historical Society Museum Policy on Donating to the Collections**

Thank you for considering a donation to the museum. The Vigo County Historical Society Museum is an active steward of a large collection which it holds in the public trust. All donations must conform to our stated mission, our Scope of Collections, and have either research or exhibition potential at the museum. In addition, the long-term curation of the individual objects and archives in our collection require consideration of physical space, man hours and financial resources. To meet all of those requirements we must carefully consider the appropriateness of each and every object or archival material that is being offered for acquisition through donation. Please read our acquisition guidelines below. Once you are satisfied that your potential donation meets our criteria please submit our donation questionnaire (below) for review. Once reviewed we will contact you if the museum decides to accept your donation to the collection and make arrangements for the physical transfer as well as a deed of gift form that must be signed to legally transfer ownership of the object to the museum. Donations to the museum will not be accepted “at the door” or without being vetted by staff. This policy will be reviewed annually and adjusted as deemed appropriate by the VCHS staff and sent to the Board of Directors for approval.

### **ACQUISITION GUIDELINES**

The museum’s guidelines on accepting collections is outlined below and includes the requirements that must be met **prior** to the museum agreeing to accept any object, artifact, record, photograph or archival material.

1. Donations to the collections will no longer be accepted without completion and submission of a donation request form that has been reviewed and approved by the Executive Director.
2. The item(s) must be consistent with and to the stated purpose, scope, and activities of the Museum.
3. Primary consideration will be given to the Museum’s ability to provide proper care and storage for any object. No item(s) will be considered for acquisition if future care and preservation needs exceed the Museum’s resources. Donations that include financial support for long-term storage and preservation are encouraged.
4. Items must have clear title and be free of copyright restrictions.
5. Donors must provide verifiable record of authenticity and provenance for all proposed donations. The Museum will make every effort to ascertain that items offered are not stolen, wrongfully converted, or acquired under false pretenses. The Museum is bound by international antiquities laws. Foreign antiquities must have documentation indicating that they were exported from their country of origin prior to the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. The provenance of acquired items shall be a matter of public record.
6. If the Museum discovers that it has acquired item (s) in violation of the above statement, the Museum shall seek to return the item(s) to the legal owner or shall seek to determine the proper means of disposition through recognized authorities.
7. A 30-day examination period may be requested for any proposed acquisition.
8. All acquisitions are to be outright and unconditional. The Museum cannot guarantee that objects donated will be placed on exhibition, or that they will be exhibited or stored intact as a

single collection. In addition, please be aware that curatorial decisions made during cataloging of new collections may result in objects being deemed more appropriate for use in our education department or to be offered for sale to benefit the Museum.

9. All donations to the Museum's collections are irrevocable upon the formal and physical transfer to the Museum.
10. Where appropriate, all legal instruments of conveyance and warranty of title, signed by the donor/seller/agent setting forth an adequate description of the items involved and the precise conditions of the transfer shall accompany all acquisitions.
11. All acquisitions by gift or bequest to the Museum will remain in the possession of the Museum for as long as they retain their physical integrity and authenticity, and as long as they remain useful for the purposes of the Museum.
12. Federal law prevents the Museum from providing identification services or appraisal values for donated items. Donors are responsible for appraisals of value.
13. Donations are fully tax deductible within IRS guidelines. Please consult your tax advisor.