

STABILITY FOR A SMALL HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM:
DRAFTING A COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR THE TRINIDAD
MUSEUM

By

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ABSTRACT

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A museum exists and is defined primarily by its collections. It is therefore important for a museum to manage its collection effectively while preserving it for long-term use. The size and scope of the museum's collection will determine the complexity of its policy. As such, all museums, including small ones, need a well-defined Collection Management Policy (CMP). This policy outlines what and how to collect, defines the development and use of the collections as well as procedures for the care of the collection, the loaning of items and removing of items from the museum's collection. The Trinidad Museum, a small non-profit museum located in Trinidad California, has no such written policy. The mission of the Trinidad Museum is to collect, preserve and display the history and natural history of Trinidad. Since the Trinidad Museum lacks a CMP they have no standard procedures documented on what, why and how the museum collects. This has, and without correction will continue to create administrative, legal and ethical problems. The goal of this project is to create a CMP for the Trinidad Museum. Evaluating the problems and needs of the Trinidad Museum the CMP will outline the museums purpose, the acquisition of items, the removal of items, loans, care of the

collections, inventories and insurance. This document will provide the Trinidad Museum with a set of organized procedures to follow and a more stable foundation for museum management, which will also allow the easy transition of museum staff over time in the future.

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INTRODUCTION

Museums of the twenty-first century have shifted their functional purpose from simply collection caretaking to providing educational opportunities for their audience. In the initial stages, as detailed in the next chapter, the museum was a response to the need to house collections brought together by the enthusiasm of collectors. It is unfortunately a commonly held belief amongst the general public and museum going audiences that material artifacts held in museum collections are static, or no longer contribute a purpose. This is a misconception. Objects created in the past are historical evidence that interacts with the present. Material culture studies are significant because they represent a way to understand past life and cultures through the materials they leave behind. But the artifacts need to be preserved in order to study them and discover this data. This is where museums come into play. The foundation for any museum is its collections and the two major imperatives for any museum is to preserve and care for collections and to display them and use them in ways to entertains, educate, and enlighten (Keene 2002). A museum can collect anything but it cannot collect everything. Undisciplined collecting can create serious administrative, legal, and ethical problems for a museum. Many museums commonly claim, unfortunately, that there is never time to address the situation properly, or that every day demands divert attention from drafting a collections management policy. This is a mistake. For order to be maintained and a good reason for a museum's existence to be established there needs to be an established plan that reflects the unique identity of that particular museum. This is done through a well-defined

collection management policy that is understood by the governing board, staff and volunteers. This policy defines goals for the development and use of the collection and prepares the museum to face controversial or unexpected eventualities such as deaccessioning or a disaster endangering the collection. In short, a collection management policy is a detailed written statement that explains what, why and how a museum collects. Overall, when drafting a collection management policy, it is important to take into account that when a museum accepts an object into its collection it is committing time and money to manage that object effectively. Collecting goals must be realistic in order to ward off overextension and taxation of museum resources. It should also be taken into account the types of collections a museum is housing and distinguishing in the policy the guidelines needed to manage each. It is expected that large museums, those on the scale of the British Museum or the Metropolitan Museum, will have a CMP. But more often than not small museums will not have one for whatever reason, most likely due to lack of time or knowledge on the subject. It is my belief that all museums, big and small, require a CMP to help facilitate museum operations and promote long term stability. While smaller museums do not have the same resources that larger museums have access to they still have all the same elements of a larger museum.

This thesis is offering a solution to a problem, which is the Trinidad Museum's lack of a Collections Management Policy (CMP). The Trinidad Museum is a small non-profit historic house museum located in Trinidad California. The Trinidad Museum focuses on collecting, preserving and displaying the history of the local area. Their collection includes historical objects and documents relevant and local to the area, pre

and post contact Native American artifacts and local natural history objects including flora and fauna specimens. I interned at the Trinidad Museum in 2016 through 2017 and became very familiar with the museum's operations. I spent time working in all aspects of the museum from docenting and helping with events to setting up exhibits and working with the museum's collections. It was due to my familiarity with the Trinidad Museum that I choose to conduct this project. I witnessed several problems arise during my time at the Trinidad Museum, which I describe in the methodology section, and knew of a way to fix them so similar issues would not occur in the future. My goal for this project is to determine what the needs are concerning the effective management of the Trinidad Museums collection. The purpose of this research will be to use the compiled data to create a document that sets the standard operating procedures on effectively managing the collection, comprising a collection management policy.

My objectives are to understand the general components that make up a collection management policy as well as determining the needs and requirements of the Trinidad Museums collection. I used a qualitative research approach to collect this data. This consists of searching for all available literature sources on the subject and doing a review of the museum's collection. I have discovered what key areas should be covered by all comprehensive collection management policies and how best to address those issues within the Trinidad Museum collection. The bulk of my data was gathered from literary sources concerning museum management and collections management, as well as accessing the Trinidad Museums collection itself. There are many sources, in books, articles and websites, on what constitutes a comprehensive collection management policy

and guidelines on how to create one. If the Trinidad Museum can collection management policy I have created, it will provide the Trinidad Museum with a more stable foundation for the museum's management as a whole, which will only benefit the museum in the future. A museum exists, is built around, and is defined by its collection. An effective collections policy defines areas of responsibility and sets forth guidelines for those charged with making certain decisions. The finished results of this project are significant in that it will provide a much needed resource for the Trinidad Museum, which will not only benefit the museum itself, but the museum audience and the Trinidad community as a whole. The finished policy model will also be useful for other small historic-house museums by providing a guideline to follow when creating their own collection management policy.

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

What is a museum? What is a museum's purpose or function? These are complicated questions with multiple definitions that have evolved over time due to the fact that museums are complex institutions with diversified natures. The word 'museum' can invoke conflicting visions, from the orderly assemblage to the chaotic junkpile, as well as the rare and precious to the strange and exotic. At its most basic level, a museum is essentially a place in which objects of historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural interest are stored and exhibited. The word museum is derived from the Greek word *mouseios* meaning "a place devoted to the Muses (goddess of art and science), a place for the study of special arts and sciences", as defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary. When trying to define what a museum is the International Council of Museum's (ICOM) definition covers it fairly well. According to the ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria on August 24th, 2007: "*A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.*" The description of what a museum is has evolved, in line with developments in society. Simply put, from today's perspective, a museum is defined as an institution with a permanent collection, governed by an elected or appointed board, founded by civically minded people, existing for the stewardship of its collection and the education of the public. Since its creation in 1946, ICOM updates this definition in

accordance with the realities of the global museum community (<http://icom.museum>).

Museums have moved forward from being simply houses of collections that identify, preserve and present those collections to a select few. A vast majority of museums in this modern age have accepted public responsibility to present significant facts, as far as they know them, and to teach new ideas to their visitors. As keepers of collective memory, museums play a valuable role in providing an understanding of identity and creating a sense connection to a place/time or community/culture for their audience.

Museums have a long history and perceptions of their role and value have changed through time as the political, economic, social and cultural context around them have changed and developed. Before the development of the modern museum, it was common in many societies to appoint a custodian for objects important to a cultural group. For example, in Medieval Europe churches preserved precious treasures and curiosities. In China, during the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) collecting treasures and books was popular amongst the elite (Thompson, 1992). During the sixteenth century two new words appeared in Europe to describe the museum concept. The Italian word *galleria* or gallery, a long grand hall lighted from the side, came to define an exhibition area for pictures and sculpture (Alexander, 1979). The Italian word *gabinetto* or cabinet was usually a square room filled with stuffed animals, botanical rarities, and small works of art and artifacts, this later evolved into what was known as the curiosity cabinet (Alexander, 1979). These types of collection during that time were mainly kept within the private homes of wealthy individuals. Our modern conception of the museum developed in Europe during the seventeenth century when many private collections were donated to

institutions and become open to the public. The Vatican established several museums around 1750, and the British Museum was formed in 1753 when Parliament purchased Sir Hans Sloane's massive natural sciences collection (Alexander, 1979). In 1793, France opened the Palace of the Louvre as the museum of the Republic (Alexander, 1979). While museums were open to the public during this time they were housed in palatial or temple like structures that, unfortunately, actively discouraged the attendance of the average or lower class individuals. The museum movement developed slowly in the United States of America. The first museum in the USA was the Charleston Museum opened 1773 in South Carolina, which was dedicated to natural history (Alexander, 1979). The Smithsonian Institution was established in 1846 and was dedicated toward scientific research for the purposes of increasing and diffusing of knowledge at the bequest of Mr. Smithson. It wasn't until 1873 that the Smithsonian became a national museum devoted to science, the humanities and the arts (Alexander, 1979). It was during the 1870's with the creation of the American Museum of Natural History, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston that the United States established its own large museum institutions and stepped into the museum mainstream (Alexander, 1979).

It was by the mid-nineteenth century that museums became the institutions that we know today through the slow migration of collections from private and exclusive spheres into the public domain. It is not coincidence that the birth of museums coincides with the emergence of a new set of knowledge's - geology, biology, archaeology, anthropology, history and art history. There is a circular cause and effect concerning

these spheres of knowledge and the development of museums. Museums have become more than havens in which to preserve objects in danger of being lost by the passage of time or the advance of human progress, they are now dynamic institutions in which people could learn about the history as it is represented in their present world. It has been observed that the development and emphasized focus of museums in the United States differ than that of the European museums (Alexander, 1979). Museums in Europe mostly began as private collections, reflecting the tastes and wealth of their founders, while major museums in the U.S.A were usually idealistically started for the betterment of mankind. European museums mainly focused on research and scholarship, whereas museums in the United States mainly devoted themselves towards public education (Alexander, 1979). Overall, it can be agreed that the mission of museums include collecting and preserving all manner of human made artifacts and natural specimens, as well as exhibiting, interpreting, and educating in order to expand our knowledge about ourselves, our society, and our world (Genoways and Ireland, 2003).

Museums vary enormously in size, purpose and in their collections types. Museums can range in size from the largest of public institutions, like the Smithsonian, to the smallest one room small town museum. The purpose of one museum could be intended purely for amusement or entertainment while another could be to preserve scientific or historic data for research. When examining the function a museum performs there are two perspectives to take into account, the museums view and the public's view. For example, a national museum would claim to exist to promote national unity by fostering national culture, while critics could claim that it is encouraging the public to

accept the government's propaganda on their acceptable ideals. There are many within the museum profession today who emphasize the museums research function and define museums as a community of scholars believing this to be the purpose for which museums were created in the first place. Generally, a museum can be characterized by the kind of objects it collects. The many types of museums can be grouped into five major classifications. The museums can be classified by collection, classified by management, classified by geographical area, classified by type of audience or classified by the way they exhibit their collections (Ambrose and Paine, 2012). Museums classified by collection include art, history, archaeology, and natural history and science museums. Museums classified by those who run them include government museums, university museums, military museums and private museums. Museums classified by the area they serve include national museums, city museums and local museums. Museums classified by the audience they serve include educational museums, specialist and children museums. Lastly, museums classified by the way they exhibit their collections include interactive, historic house and open air museums. Figure 1 below illustrates an example of the relationships that can exist among the different types of museums. The purpose of this chart is to demonstrate that all fields are interrelated and that any museum object can be used in more than one way. Without this kind of perspective, a museum curator could fail to give full interpretation to collections on exhibit. An example can be drawn from ethnological materials in some art museums. In many instances, the cultural context in which the objects originated is ignored in favor of the aesthetic. With this perspective no object entering the collections of a museum has only one potential use and categorical

place. Placing it in one department or another is done on a traditional basis and for the sake of orderliness and convenience.

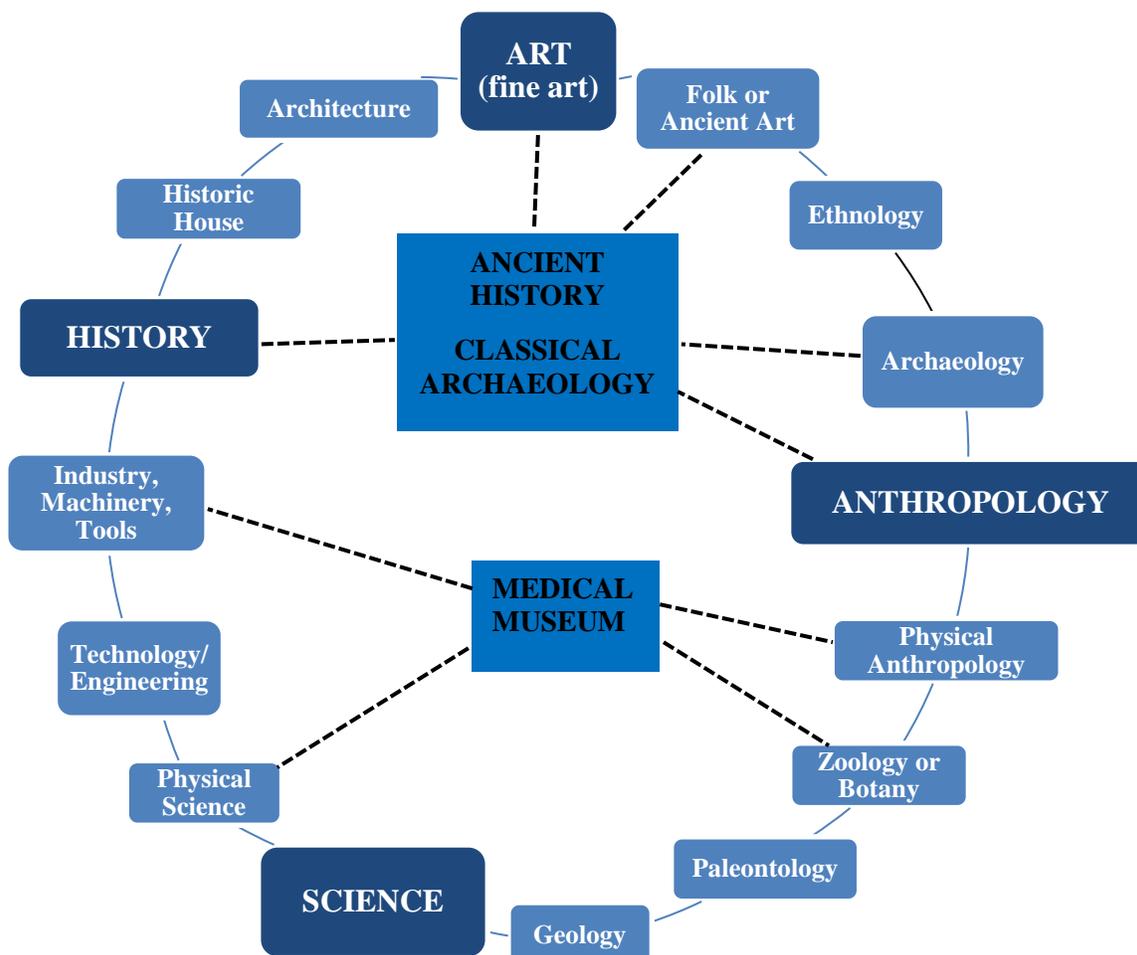


Figure 1. Example of general museum types and their relationships (dark blue boxes in center represent museums or subject areas that incorporate multiple categories (Ambrose and Paine, 2012))

While not always recognized, museums can play a wider role in society and provide major benefits to the communities in which they are located. These include social and cultural benefits, such as contributing to the preservation of a community's culture, engaging with educational organizations of all ages, providing opportunities for

community involvement and developing a sense of identity and community cohesion. There are also economic and political benefits as well. The economic benefits that a museum can provide ranges from temporary to permanent jobs, attracting visitors for tourism and attracting grants or providing skills development. Political benefits provided by museums are more abstract. Simply put, when a museum demonstrates the benefits they provide for their community they gain political support, usually within local and central government authorities due to their connections and accountability to the communities they serve. Obviously what benefits are provided and how much, varies from museum to museum depending on individual circumstances. The role of a museum is thus much more than a simple functional description and more an evolving matrix. The Trinidad Museum fits neatly into the graph above in that it is designated a Historic House Museum. While a small museum, the contributions the Trinidad Museum provides for the community of Trinidad are immense. They are a repository for the heritage of Trinidad and work towards preserving and teaching that cultural knowledge. The Trinidad Museum has close ties to many other organizations and entities in Trinidad, such as the City Council, Trinidad Schools, the local Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Native Tribal entities, as well as engage in many local community events. They are one of the fulcrums of community identity and cohesion within Trinidad. Much of this is due to the efforts of the museum staff.

While it may be the larger museums that gain prominence and public recognition, that in no way negates the importance of smaller museums. Smaller museums are born the same way that larger museums are, through the collections of enthusiastic collectors.

In fact, many of the larger museum started out small and simply grew. The small museum is generally restricted either through income/financial backing, time, space and museum type. There are, however, far more small museums in existence than large museums. In 2014, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) released a report called the “Museum Universe Data File” (MUDF) which is an evolving list of museums and related organizations in the United States. It includes basic information on aquariums, arboretums, botanical gardens, art museums, children’s museums, general museums, historic houses and sites, history museums, nature centers, natural history and anthropology museums, planetariums, science and technology centers, specialized museums, and zoos. Currently, the agency’s count has determined that there are over 35,000 museums within the United States, of those 48% are designated “Historical Sites”, 33.1% are classified as “General Museums” and 7.5% are “History Museums”. The data collected determined that a majority of the museums in the United States are small local museums. Many of these institutions, especially in small towns and rural areas, are Historical Societies and History Museums. These small local museums are incredibly important in that they are community institutions and are cornerstones for informal learning. Most small local museums take it upon themselves to present the totality of their locality, the natural history, history and rise of the little town in which they are situated. They present a comprehensive overview of whatever small world they represent, the macrocosm within the microcosm so to speak. To show visitors the story of their setting and how the way of life of the present is derived from the knowledge and efforts

of the past leads to feelings of appreciation for cultural heritage and connections to past and present.

A museum exists to collect, preserve, and interpret things and it is the museum staff that makes this possible. The staff structure describes the relationship between the people who work for the museum, such as who can tell whom what to do, who does what part of the work and so forth. A museum's size and scope should be reflected in the size and scope of its staff, small museums will have less staff with broader responsibilities while a larger museum will have more staff with more specialized positions. The staff that the museum needs, and their relationships, should reflect the nature and purpose of the museum. For example, in a university museum teaching and research may have a high priority so teaching and research positions will be of most importance. A well planned staff structure will help the museum maintain its policies and achieve its objectives. In the same way that the museum grows so too will the staff structure. There is no perfect structure for the staff of a museum and the governing body will need to develop a structure that meets its needs and allows for flexibility to develop for the future. Figure 2

below outlines a general museum structure that all museums follow in one form or another.

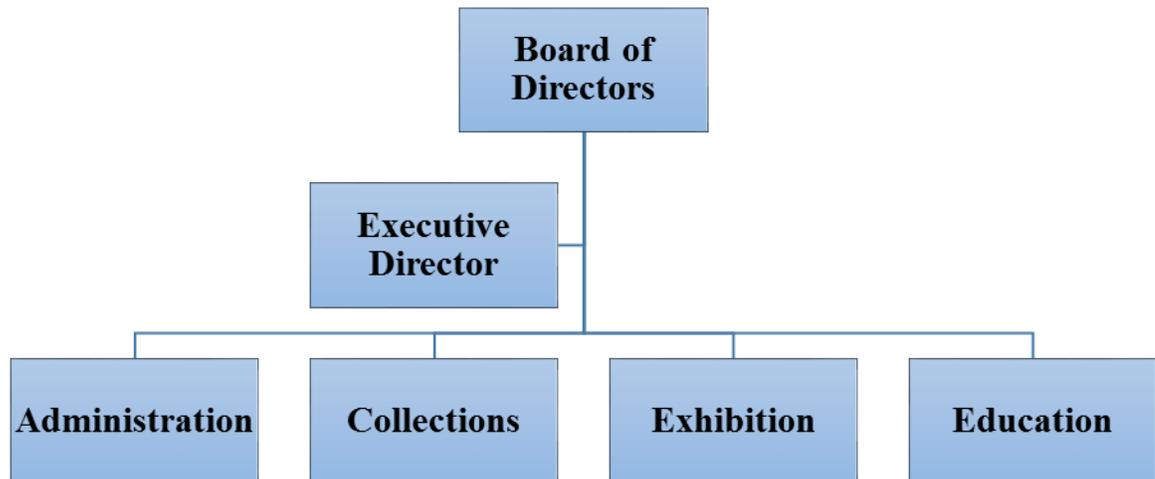


Figure 2. Museum staff structure in its simplest form (Ambrose and Paine, 2012).

This organizational diagram of staff members would be representative of a smaller museum, in a larger museum the diagram would be more expansive with more branches and positions. Many museum professional positions that one would find in a larger museum can be grouped into either one or multiple of the four museum structure areas (Administration, Collections, Exhibition, and Education). How many a museum will have depends on the museum's size. For example, within Administration you would have officers, managers and directors, within Collections there would be curators, archivists, registrars, and collection managers, within Exhibitions there would be curators and exhibit designers/planners, and within Education there would be educators and

docents. Due to its small size the Trinidad Museum staff structure consists of a Board of Directors only, and all contribute to the running of the museum on a volunteer basis. The Board of Directors consists of nine members four of which are Officers; the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The other five members divide their duties amongst the various facets of the museum facilities, these include exhibitions, publicity, the physical maintenance of the museum facilities and the upkeep of the Native Plant Garden the museum hosts on its grounds.

While it is the people that make running a museum possible and are an integral part of any museum, museums require a clear sense of purpose and policies in order to function as a well ordered institution no matter the museum's size. Broadly speaking, there are three touchstone documents that make this possible: the museums mission statement, the museums by-laws, and the collections management plan/policies. Museums are defined by their mission statement. The mission statement outlines the purpose of the museum (who and what they are), the scope and use of the museum's collection, and the goals of the museum (what they stand for and why). The mission statement also directly affects how the institution is managed. The by-laws are the rules by which a museum is governed. The by-laws define, in procedural detail, the roles and responsibilities of the board of directors/trustees, officers, members, and staff (Genoways & Ireland, 2003). This document must cover all aspects of the museum's activities in the broadest sense. The collection management policy is a document that outlines the system the museum will use in managing its collection. This policy describes how the museum cares for its collection, as well as defines responsibilities and goals for the development

and use of the collection. Of these three key stone documents the Trinidad Museum has a mission statement and by-laws, but lacks a collections management policy.

Trinidad Museum: A History of a Small Historic House

The Trinidad Museum is located at 400 Janis Court at Patricks Point Dr. in Trinidad California. The museum is a small historic house museum open to the public Thursday - Sunday during the hours 12:30-4pm. The Trinidad Museum was founded in 1983 and was housed in a small, inconspicuous gear shed until the move in 2009. The museum currently resides in a renovated circa 1899-1900 Victorian Italianate bungalow. Previously known as the Sangster-Watkins-Underwood home, it was donated by the descendants of the original owners and moved from its site near Trinidad State Beach to land donated by Glenn and Janis Saunders in September 2006. The renovated home, with five exhibit rooms, opened to the public in 2009. The museum focuses on the history of Trinidad and the surrounding area as well as on the natural history and environment of the Trinidad area. The museum preserves and displays this local history so that the public may enjoy and learn about it.

The objective and purpose of the Trinidad Museum, as stated in the Trinidad Museum Mission Statement, says that:

“The primary purpose of the corporation is to operate a non-profit organization to collect, preserve, and interpret material and information illustrative of the cultural and natural history of the greater Trinidad area in particular and the north coast in general. Such materials and information will be used for research, publications, exhibitions,

education, and to increase public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the human and natural heritage of the area.”



Image 1. Trinidad Museum

The Sangster-Underwood House is a single story Victorian cottage in the Italianate style. The Sangster-Underwood house has typical Italianate Victorian features, such as the low pitched hip roof with overhanging eaves. A hipped roof is one whose external angles are formed by the meeting of two sloping surfaces. The building has the typical horizontal wood siding and the L-shaped plan of an Italianate Victorian house. The museum houses five rooms: The Front Room which holds the docent desk, gift shop, original Trinidad Cross display, Ericson display and a traditional carved redwood plank canoe, the Photo Exhibit Room which displays photo based exhibits that rotates annually, the Heritage Room which displays historical objects of Trinidad post-contact, the Natural History Room which displays local flora, fauna and geological material in an educational manner and the Native American Room which displays a variety local Native American

objects. The Trinidad Museum is run by the Trinidad Museum Society, which consists of a Board of Directors. The day to day functions of the museum are run by a team of volunteer docents managed by the President.



Image 2. Front Room



Image 3. Photo Exhibit Room



Image 4. Heritage Room



Image 5. Natural History Room



Image 6. Native American Room (Printed with Permission)



Image 7. Women's ceremonial dresses (Printed with Permission)

The museum houses a varied collection consisting of historical artifacts and documents, natural history objects and local Native American artifacts. All hold some level of significance to Trinidad. In the left of Image 2 is an early 1900's printing press that was owned by A.W. Ericson, a famous photographer who lived in Trinidad for a time, when he ran a local print making shop. To the right in Image 2 on the desk is a display case containing the remnants of the original Spanish cross placed on Trinidad head in 1775 by the Heceta and Bodega expedition claiming the land for Spain. Image 3 shows the 2017 photo exhibit documenting the construction of the Old Redwood Highway in 1922, now called Scenic Drive, which was the first road to connect Trinidad to the rest of California. Image 4 shows the 2017 exhibit that was in the Heritage Room called "Pacific Glow Fox Farm on Stagecoach Road" which displayed items relating to the Pacific Glow Fox Farm a well-known fox farm that was running in Trinidad during the 1920' – 1940's. Image 5 shows the Natural History Room. The center display case holds all the flora and fauna that can be found in Trinidad Bay, and to the right is a child friendly touch table that holds many of the objects that are in the display case as well as other types of natural objects. Image 6 shows the 2017 exhibit that was in the Native American Room's large display case called "Quillwork Baskets" which displayed baskets and objects from the Northwestern California area that incorporate porcupine quills. Permission is required from museum staff to take photographs in the Native American Room and unless it is for educational purposes they usually will not permit it. The Trinidad Museum collection is small but comprehensive and there are pieces in the collection that serve purposes beyond that of a museum artifact. For instance, the

museum does not own, but only holds stewardship over certain Native American objects in the collection. Meaning those objects are technically still owned by the people/tribes from which they originated. This was in large part due to the efforts of one of the founding members of the Trinidad Museum, Axel Lindgren Jr. who was a local Native American individual. A significant portion of the objects within the Native American collection were given to the museum by Axel with the understanding that ownership of these objects were to be maintained by his people. The gift receipt form drawn up when the museum accepted stewardship of these items also included stipulations and directions on how to properly handle and display them. Because of this many of these objects are still being used, mostly for ceremonial purposes. An example of this would be the two woman's ceremonial dresses seen in Image 7. The local Yurok people use them in a couple different ceremonies and dances they perform throughout the year. This agreement provides many benefits, the dresses are safely housed and cared for in a culturally appropriate manner and they still perform the functions they were designed for. Due to the close relationship this agreement between the museum and the local Yurok people generates, the Yurok people have a gateway in which they can teach the public about their heritage and the museum has a Native Peoples perspective portrayed in their exhibits instead of just the standard outside academic perspective.

It is not necessarily the size of a collection that matters the most, but the significance and cohesiveness of its content. This means quality of each potentially procured item is considered carefully in the context of the museum's mission and capacity, in the context of the entirety when building and managing a collection. Taking

into consideration the limitations inherent in a small history museum, such as the Trinidad Museum, how then does one deal with items that are offered to or considered by the museum for addition to its collection? A collections management policy helps enormously with this dilemma. While there are many aspects to consider when adding to a collection the first, and most important, question asked is this; does the item fall into the preview of the museums mission and purpose? This question demonstrates the overlap between a museums Mission Statement and a CMP. The Mission Statement outlines who and what a museum is while the CMP lays the foundation for how a museum handles situations pertaining to their collection. A CMP can be looked at like boundaries set in place to help insure that the museum stays true to its mission while also providing the best care for its collection. Each decision, however, should be made at the convergence of two lines of thinking: considering the item in terms of significance and considering the item in terms of significance conveyance. The first thought process is commonly held within the domain of any of the humanities and the second from within the museum field. The significance of the artifact is inherent in its relationship with the history of the area that the history museum has chosen to represent. But, within that area many things happened, some more important than others. It is up to the museum to choose what is significant to them and what and how to convey that to its audience. It is this conveyance that is important, a defining feature of any museum is its ability to teach or educate the public. Determining the significance of an artifact and how to convey that can be difficult. When considering historical significance it's important to determine who or what should be remembered, researched and taught. Museums can do this by using three

criteria: how notable the event or person was at the time, how widespread and lasting the consequences of the event or person were and how symbolic or representative of historical issues or trends the event or person was. A history museum need not be large to be effective at conveying historical significance. The perspective of being able to see the meaning of things and appreciate them is something that small history museums can offer. This is what makes small history museums, like the Trinidad Museum, so important.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I began my research by finding and reviewing any and all literary sources on the subject matter of managing a museum collection. I examined the collection management policies used by other museums and used them as a template from which to build my own collection management policy off of. Literary works include published articles, books and websites. A thorough review and exploration of the literary works currently out on the subject of managing a museum collection will give me an understanding of the methods used by museums to effectively manage and care for their collections.

Reviewing already created collections management policies provided me with a guideline to use when creating my own, outlining the necessary areas and topics that need to be covered in a comprehensive collection management policy. Knowing this gives me the knowledge base from which I started building a collection management policy for the Trinidad Museum.

Having an understanding of what is required in a comprehensive collections management policy and the issues it covers I began my review of the Trinidad Museum collection itself. The first step was a literary review to build an understanding of what constitutes a comprehensive collection management policy. The second step was to perform a review of the Trinidad Museums collection with that understanding in mind, to look at what the museum has and finding what it needs. There are eight issues that should be covered by all comprehensive collection management policies in order for them to be effective (Genoways & Ireland 2003). These issues are: 1) collection mission and scope,

2) acquisitions and accession, 3) cataloging, inventories and records, 4) loans, 5) care of the collection, 6) collection access, 7) insurance, and 8) deaccession. When conducting the review of the Trinidad Museums collection I checked these eight issues to see what the museum has covered and what is needed concerning these eight areas. A collections mission and scope should state the present and future scope of the collection, its use, and its purpose. Acquisitions and accessions are interrelated, acquisitions are the legal obtaining of objects and their associated data for a museum through gifts, purchases or exchanges. An acquisition policy should include procedures for accessioning, which is the process of entering objects and their proper documentation into the museums records. Cataloging is the creating of a full collection record. Museums need an established uniform method to inventory the objects in the collection and their records, a spot-check if you will. Within the museum records there also needs to be photographs, condition reports and conservation reports concerning the objects in the collection. A museum may also receive or provide loans, whether the loans are incoming or outgoing a clear loan policy and loan agreement documentation needs to be established. All museums are responsible for the care of their collection and the safety of their staff and visitors. Issues involving the care of the collection, such as preservation and emergency preparedness, need to be covered. A museum needs to consider how best to provide access to their collection to staff and visitors for study or research purposes. A museum needs to take into account insurance of their permanent collections. Finally, a museum should have a deaccession process, the process of removing accessioned objects from the collection legally and permanently, outlined. All of these issues should be addressed and should

have easy to access standard operating procedures in order for a museum to function efficiently. A collections management policy is the document that provides all that. Due to the fact that museums natural grow and change a collections management policy should reflect that and be frequently reviewed for additions or changes to be added. In order to create a CMP that fits the specific needs of the Trinidad Museum I used these key factors in my review of the Trinidad Museum. The review was conducted and the policy built with frequent input from the Trinidad Museum board.

During my review and keeping in consideration the areas that should be covered by a CMP as stated by Genoways & Ireland I created a template or outline to follow when drafting a Collection Management Policy. This model, which I used when drafting the CMP for the Trinidad Museum, should be applicable for all small historic house museums. This template addresses seven areas:

1. Statement of Purpose
 - a. Mission Statement
 - b. By-Laws
2. Acquisition of Items
 - a. Define types of collection museum maintains
 - b. Establish procedures for collecting goals and adherence to these goals
 - c. Don't accept objects if they are inadequate provisions for caring for them or utilizing them, in bad condition (for display) or if there is no known provenience
 - d. Distinction between accepting items for accessioning and accepting them for exchange or sale
 - e. Acceptance of restricted gifts
 - f. Guidance for handling rights
 - g. Rules for recordkeeping
 - h. Rules regarding authentication and appraisal
 - i. Establish procedures for items placed in museum custody that are not a part of museum collection (stewardship, research, identification ect...)

3. Deaccessioning
 - a. When can a museum deaccession?
 - b. How should a museum deaccession?
 - c. Manner of disposal
 - d. Use of proceeds (through sale)
4. Loans
 - a. Establish loan form agreements
 - b. Who will make loans and who has the authority to approve outgoing loans
 - c. When loans can be requested and who has authority to approve incoming loans
 - d. Establish provenience for incoming loans
 - e. Establish time limitations for incoming and outgoing loans
 - f. Delegate responsibility for establishing procedures for processing and following through on loans
5. Care of the Collections
 - a. Conservation of collection measures
 - b. Storing, packing shipping collection measures
 - c. Who is responsible for governing access to collection? Will there be public access to collection? How?
6. Inventories
 - a. Periodic inventories: when and how
7. Insurance
 - a. Collection insured while on premises
 - b. Guidelines to insure incoming loans
 - c. Guidelines to insure outgoing loans

The key areas listed above is merely a simple guideline to follow, which can be adapted and changed to suit the individual needs and limitations of every museum. To reiterate, a collections management policy specifies the delegation of responsibilities and authority guaranteeing both the increase and the protection of a museum's collections. The best collections management policy is carefully worded, comprehensive, and permanent. Good policies remain unamended except for good reason, such as with museum growth or drastic change. A good comparison for a collections management policy would be the United States Constitution; composed of broad, clearly stated

provisions that occasionally require interpretation. No policy covers every situation. To be effective, the policy needs the support of all parties involved, and it must guide at all times the actions of those who govern. The length of a policy is dependent on the size and complexity of the museum's collection. Museums with small collections, staffed mostly with volunteers, would prefer the informality of a shorter policy. A typical short policy outlines how collections are acquired, documented, preserved, loans and deaccessioned in an orderly and legal manner (Genoways & Ireland 2003). The short policy will usually delegate significant responsibility for its interpretation and enforcement to a few select members of the governing board and staff. This is the type of collections management policy that I drafted which is practical and effective for the Trinidad Museum.

I fell into this project while interning at the Trinidad Museum and came across two particular problems. Working through these problems contributed to the building and creation of the Trinidad Museums CMP. The first was when an object was given to the museum with questionable background and significance. The item in question was a shard of historic glass that was found on a beach in Trinidad. It didn't look interesting in any way, the shard of glass while historic was small and had no notable marks on it. The museum was already in possession of more intact and significant pieces of historic glass. The question then became whether or not to accept the item. What initially stayed the museum's hand on not accepting the item was where it had been found, which was on a public beach where other Native American objects have been found in the past. The glass shard was sent out for a professional appraisal to acquire more reliable information. It was determined that while it was historic bottle glass it had at some point been worked

into a flaked tool. This provided the museum with the significance they had been looking for and the object was accepted into the collection. The second event which drew my interest was when it was discovered that a vast majority of the museums Native American basket collection had been infested with mold. I assisted the museum with the cleaning of these baskets and no permanent damage was done. It was because of these events that I chose to create a Collection Management Policy for the Trinidad Museum. Both of these events demonstrated that the museum had room for development in how they accepted items into their collection and how they cared for their collection, an opportunity and challenge I chose to accept.

BENEFITS OF A COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

The fundamental role of the museum, of assembling objects and maintaining them within a scholarly environment, emphasizes that museums are storehouses of knowledge as well as storehouses of objects. An important factor to consider with this exercise is that in order for the assemblage to have meaning the accumulation of objects must have a rational. This rational which is based a museums foundational principles and purpose, simply put a collection has to make sense. Museum collections embody an important part of the discipline-based intellectual inheritance through which we understand the world, they also pass on the aspirations of collectors from one generation to another. Material comes into the museums possession through a multitude of situations. It can come in all kinds of relationships to the progress of human lives, such as a bequest after death. Materials can come in incomplete, imperfect and with associated documentation and information itself immensely variable in quality and quantity. Once in a museum the materials can subject to a number of complications, such as the rare catastrophe (fire, flood, theft ect...) to inadequate storage and insufficient staff. Every museum needs to have a clear understanding of what it holds in its collection, how it acquired them, why it holds them, how it plans to use them, and how it's going to increase its collection as well as dispose of items from its collection. While the Trinidad Museum is just beginning to gain an understanding in these concepts the museums like the Morris Graves Museum of Art already set procedures for these areas.

Small town museums are extremely prevalent within the United States. Within Humboldt County California there is a large number of diverse small museums. In Eureka there is the Clarke Historical Museum, Morris Graves Museum of Art, Humboldt Bay Maritime Museum, and The Children's Discovery Museum. In Arcata there is the Humboldt State University Natural History Museum and the Phillips House Museum. Ferndale has the Ferndale Museum, Fortuna the Fortuna Depot Museum, Blue Lake has the Blue Lake Museum and Trinidad has the Trinidad Museum. All of these small museums are unique to the places in which they reside, but in the end they all perform similar functions and roles for these places. Of these museums the Clarke Museum and the Morris Graves Museum of Art have the bare bones basic of a Collections Management Policy. Because of this they have a defined understanding of what and why they collect and what they do with their collection. The Collections Management Policy for the Morris Graves is brief and concise. It provides explicit guidelines without being too verbose which is appropriate considering the small size and scope of the museum itself. The collection policy, as directed by the Morris Graves Museum of Art board of trustees, provides the framework for responsible collecting. The methodical acquisition of works of art is an important part of this policy. At the same time, legal ownership, accession methods, documentation guidelines, record keeping, conservation, deaccession and a number of other procedurally processes are fully and carefully addressed in this policy. That these factors are documented and clearly outlined provides an organized structure that promotes activities within the museum to run more smoothly and effectively. These set foundations of knowledge and established standard operating procedures will allow

for the smooth transition from one staff member to another over time without disruption in museum activities cementing the museum existence for future generations. Because the Trinidad Museum is still in the process of developing and cementing their own policies things such as record keeping and documentation procedures are disorganized and chaotic more so than they are at the Morris Graves Museum of Art.

This evolution from a small and disorganized collection to larger more structured museum seems to be a natural evolution in the development and growth of museums in general. The Clarke Historical Museum in Eureka went through a similar development. The Clarke Historical Museum was founded by High School teacher Cecile Clarke and has resided in the historic landmark Bank of Eureka building since 1960. The purpose of the Clarke Museum is in the preservation and display of the history of Humboldt County. This includes, but is not limited to, the local Native American cultures, gold rush settlements, lumber industry, ranching, farming and all the livelihoods wrung from the sea. With the addition of a Collection Policy and other standard operating procedures to their museums management almost ten years ago the Clarke Museum has witnessed a dramatic change in many aspects of their museum. The most visible is in the improvement to their collection's storage area and the display/exhibition areas. What was once cluttered and disorganized is now structured and organized in a visually pleasing way that makes intellectual sense. The objects in the storage areas are stored safely, have permanent homes and are easy to find and put back. The exhibit areas are less busy, more organized and aesthetically pleasing and informative to the viewer. This was not so over ten years ago. Logically, it can be theorized through the observation of the Clarke

Museum and the Morris Graves Museum that with the growth of a small museum comes the creation and implementation of standard operating procedures, such as a Collection Policy. This natural development insures that the institution maintains a structured and organized management in all aspects of the museums facilities, whether they be administration or care of the museum collections. The Trinidad Museum is currently in the process of this development and has already seen the effect of the few small changes implemented in the storage area. The racking and labeling system were recently upgraded to provide more space, easier access and an easier time in locating objects. Two simple changes that effectively improved the safety, access and preservation of the Trinidad Museums collection.

The Trinidad Museum storage room is not the only area that has recently seen improvement with the development of the collections policy. When accepting an object into the museum's collection, the accession process, issues concerning the objects background and provenance are taken into account. If both issues are unknown or questionable the item is not accepted. In the Trinidad Museum's past these concerns were not always taken into full account when accepting an item. For example, a couple decades ago the museum accepted a couple Native American stone tools not questioning how the previous owner acquired them. During a recent review of the Native American artifacts in the museum's collection it was determined that these stone tools were most likely stolen grave good. The museum immediately contacted their connections within the local Native American community, a resolution was reached and the items deaccessioned and returned. This more controlled accession process not only takes into

account the items background history, but the items current physical condition as well.

The museum recently received a donation of historical documents from a prominent Trinidadian family. During the review of these documents it was determined that a couple of them were infested with mold. The moldy documents were quickly removed and cleaned. The smallest changes can have the biggest effect and goes to show the benefits of having a collections policy. With the implementation of a more structured accession process the Trinidad Museum has combated problems concerning stolen property and damaging infestations.

RESULTS

After reviewing literary sources on what a CMP should cover, observing other CMP's from other museums big and small and reviewing what the Trinidad Museum had and its specific needs and limitations I crafted this Collection Management Policy.

Collections Management Policy: Trinidad Museum Society

1. The Purpose of the Collections Management Policy

a. The purpose is to establish policies for management and care of the Trinidad Museum Society collection in its entirety, including but not limited to material culture, natural history and documentary resources. To delineate the circumstances and methods by which materials shall be accessioned and deaccessioned to and from the Museum's collection, to establish policies on outgoing and incoming loans of artifacts, and to state the principles governing access to the collections and records of the museum. It describes the procedures for inventorying the collections and the terms of insurance coverage for the museum.

2. The Purpose of the Trinidad Museum Society

a. The Trinidad Museum Society was established in 1983. The Trinidad Museum addresses the social, cultural and intellectual needs of the Trinidad community and encourages its educational growth through exhibits and programs. Further, the

collection will be available as a primary resource material to the general public, students and scholars.

b. Trinidad Museum Society Mission Statement: “The primary purpose of the corporation is to operate a non-profit organization to collect, preserve, and interpret material and information illustrative of the cultural and natural history of the greater Trinidad area in particular and the north coast in general. Such materials and information will be used for research, publications, exhibitions, education, and to increase public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the human and natural heritage of the area.”

c. A major responsibility of the Trinidad Museum Society will be acquisition and preservation of items suitable for the collection. Items which reflect the Trinidad Museums purpose will be accepted into the permanent collection. The decision to accept or reject an item will be made according to the accession guidelines within the collection policies set forth.

3. Accession Procedures

a. The term “accession” includes gifts, donations, purchases, exchanges and other transactions by which ownership title to incoming material passes to the Trinidad Museum Society. Accessioned items are accepted by the Trinidad Museum Society based on their meeting the criteria of Article II Objects and Purposes of the Trinidad Museum Society By-Laws (see Mission Statement). Acceptance of items is contingent on approval by the Board of Directors at the regularly

scheduled monthly meeting. The Trinidad Museum Society is not committed to accept any items until formal approval is granted by the Board.

b. In addition to its permanent collection, the Trinidad Museum will have established a use collection for objects which are not suitable or needed for the permanent collection. The use of these objects, whether through sale or educational purposes, is to be determined on a case by case basis. Such objects will be recorded but will not be accessioned.

c. Accession Guidelines: Objects must be cataloged, stored and preserved under optimal conditions for exhibition accessibility and possible future research. The following criteria will determine whether or not an item is eligible for acceptance into the collection:

1. Relationship to the greater Trinidad area (meeting the parameters of the museum's mission statement).
2. Good condition or possible to restore to good condition for items of historic quality.
3. Documentation of origin, provenience or historical context, or possible to find this documentation.
4. Fulfillment of a deficiency presently existing within museum collection.

d. The Trinidad Museum Society will not willingly and/or knowingly accept any item illegally imported into the United States (unless confiscated and offered to the museum by government officials), recovered under circumstances the museum has reason to deem unethical or recovered at damaging expense to the

environment, from cultural monuments, or collected from human burial sites.

When the museum is in a position to accept or acquire objects through gift, purchase, or exchange there should be reasonable assurance that it can acquire valid and legal title to them.

e. The Trinidad Museum Society Accession document, to be signed by the donor, shall constitute a legal commitment applicable to the donor, his/her heirs, successors, and personal representatives. This is to insure that title to all objects acquired for the collection be obtained free and clear, without restrictions as to use or future disposition.

f. Should restrictions be attached to an acquisition, every effort should be made to place a reasonable limit on the time for which they shall apply and to define conditions under which restrictions may terminate. Such restrictions and/or conditions should be adequately documented and remain with records pertaining to the accession.

g. When the Trinidad Museum Society agrees to accept an item/items for the collection it also assumes responsibility for the reasonable care in preservation of said item/items.

h. All accessions acquired for the collection should be cataloged and documented in the Trinidad Museum's records including a donation receipt signed by the legal donor, adequate description of all objects involved in the donation, and as comprehensive documentation of each object received and its history as can be obtained.

*See “Policies and Procedures for Acquiring Items” for details on accession process.

- i. The Trinidad Museum Society shall not give appraisals for the purpose of establishing the tax deductible value of gifts offered to the museum. The Trinidad Museum Society will permit access to donated material by the donor’s appraiser. The Trinidad Museum Society will have appraisals done only for validity and insurance purposes when an incoming collection so warrants, and then only after clear, valid and legal title has been transferred to the museum.
- j. A periodic evaluation of the collection should be made to determine current scope of collection and quality. Comprehensive and up to date inventories of the collection in storage, on exhibit and/or in use should be maintained.

4. Deaccession Procedures

- a. The term “deaccession” includes gifts, exchanges, and any other transactions by which title is transferred from the Trinidad Museum Society to another institution or individual/individual’s or status of an artifact is reclassified within the museum, as well as disposal by intentional destruction. If an accessioned item within the collection is to be considered for deaccession, the Trinidad Museum Society Board of Directors shall consider and approve the deaccession. The deaccession of items is contingent on approval by the Board of Directors at the regularly scheduled meeting. The Board may seek the advice of other knowledgeable individuals from the community and/or museum professionals.
- b. Deaccession Guidelines: The collections of the Trinidad Museum Society are held in trust for the people of the community. Objects in the collection should be

retained permanently if they continue to be relevant and useful to the purposes of the Trinidad Museum Society and if they can continue to be housed, preserved, and used properly. Permanent removal of materials should be considered only when these conditions no longer prevail.

c. Objects which have restrictions/conditions attached to them are not eligible for deaccession during the period of restriction/conditions.

d. Removal of materials from the collection should be in the best interests of the Trinidad Museum Society and the public it serves.

e. Any removal of Trinidad Museum Society property will be done in a legal and ethical manner.

f. Items that are deaccessioned may be retained by the museum for other purposes, or transferred, exchanged, or sold to other cultural/educational institutions and/or individual/individuals. Deaccessioned objects that have been damaged or have deteriorated to the point of not being useful for the above purposes may be disposed of in an appropriately deemed manner for the object.

g. When practical, the original donor will be notified of the removal.

h. The gratuities gained through the removal of deaccessioned materials through sale will be dealt with by the Trinidad Museums Society Treasurer and are to be used only for purposes that serve the best interests of the Trinidad Museum Society and the public it serves.

i. The museum will maintain a record of deaccessioned objects and their removal, deaccessioned numbers will not be reassigned. The President of the Trinidad

Museum Society Board of Directors will approve and sign final deaccession forms which will be on file and subject to inspection at any time.

5. Loan Procedures

a. Temporary physical transfers of material to or from the Trinidad Museum Society that do not involve a change of ownership are termed “loans”.

b. Loan Out Guidelines: The loan of items from the Trinidad Museum Society to other historical agencies, educational, research, or cultural institutions will be made for the purposes of study, exhibit, analysis or appraisal. Loans will not be made to individuals or commercial institutions except for repair, analysis or appraisal. Loans out will be approved by the Board of Directors under the guidelines established by the Trinidad Museum Society.

c. Loans out of the Trinidad Museum shall be subject to:

1. The borrower must be able to provide proof that they can provide acceptable care for the item/items loaned while in their possession.
2. The completion of a condition report on each item to be loaned with a dated copy given to the borrower. The borrower will redo the condition report on the return of the item.
3. An accurate and fair appraisal of each item to be loaned will have been done within the last calendar year or will be done before the item leaves the care of the Trinidad Museum.
4. Loans will be accompanied by two copies of the loans form (one for the Trinidad Museum Society records and the other for the borrower) signed

by the President of the Board of Directors and a responsible party of the borrowing institution.

5. Loans will be accompanied by insurance coverage, preferably carried by the borrowing institution.

6. Loans will be made for a period of one year or less. Extensions may be granted after a review by the Board of Directors. A written documentation of the extension will be provided.

7. The loan may be terminated and an object returned within fifteen days if the Trinidad Museum Society feels there has been a failure on the part of the borrower to fulfill loan conditions.

8. Loaned items are not to be altered in any way, unless prior agreement is made in writing.

9. Loaned items are not to leave the custody of the borrowing institution.

10. Packing and shipping of loan items to and from the borrowing institution must meet approved standards of safety and preservation.

11. The borrowing institution will pay any packing and shipping costs if requested by the Trinidad Museum Society.

d. Loan In Guidelines: Loans into the Trinidad Museum shall be subject to:

1. Loans in will be made for the Trinidad Museum Society purposes, such as exhibit or current research.

2. The Trinidad Museum Society must be able to provide adequate care for the loaned item/items.

3. Borrowed item/items will be given same reasonable care as objects within the Trinidad Museums own collections.
4. The Board of Directors will approve loans in at regular meeting.
5. Loans will be accompanied by two copies of the loans form (one for the Trinidad Museum Society records and the other for the lender) signed by the President of the Board of Directors and a responsible party of the lender.
6. Borrowed items will not be altered in any way unless prior agreement is made in writing.
7. Borrowed items will be insured by the Trinidad Museum Society unless other arrangements are made in writing.
8. The Trinidad Museum Society will release borrowed items only to the lender unless otherwise notified in writing.
9. Packing and shipping costs and arrangements will be agreed upon by the Trinidad Museum Society and the lender when loan is negotiated.
10. The Trinidad Museum Society will conduct a condition report on the items when received and when released/returned.

6. Care of Collections

- a. The care of the Trinidad Museum Society's collection will be about ensuring that the museum's collections are displayed, handled, stored and maintained in sustainable ways that do not lead to damage or deterioration, and that they are preserved, as far as possible, in an unchanging state.

- b. It should be understood that “conservation” is the process by which the deterioration of an object is halted and its survival in a stable condition is assured, while “restoration” is the process through which an object is returned to as near its original condition as possible.
- c. Any and all proposed treatments to be conducted on an object need to be agreed upon by the Board of Directors at the scheduled meeting.
- d. Any and all treatments conducted on an object will be done either under the advisement or by a professional conservator and should be reversible and above all do no harm to the object.
- e. All items within the collection should be marked with a museum catalog number.
- f. The storage area should be kept clean, tidy, uncluttered and no smoking, eating or drinking is allowed anywhere in the vicinity of the collection.
- g. The storage space should be secured and accessible only to a limited number of staff members and only those individuals should have authority to handle the collection.
- h. The storage space should have climate controls and monitors for relative humidity (RH), temperature, fire and theft. This equipment should receive regular maintenance.
- i. Environmental conditions (temperature and RH) within storage and display areas must be monitored and recorded daily by a trained individual.

- j. Only designated personnel should have access to the heating system used in storage and display areas.
- k. The collection is open to the public for scholarly use as determined by the Trinidad Museum Society Board. Permission must be granted by the Board before access is permitted. Research conducted must be done under the supervision of a Board member and items from collection may not be removed from museum premises.
- l. Within the storage space objects should be accessioned, inventoried, and arranged according to a system of organization – by cultural/historical grouping, material and size – in storage units fabricated from materials that meet conservation standards.
- m. Climate Control:
1. Relative Humidity (RH) and temperature levels in storage and display areas should be kept at a constant level, as fluctuations in either can cause damage to the collection. An acceptable temperature range is 60 – 70 degrees Fahrenheit (F). The RH should not rise above 60% or fall below 40%, and should be stabilized at 50% - 55% for a mixed collection.
 2. The care of composite objects (objects made of multiple materials) demand special consideration regarding environmental conditions. The materials that make up the object need to be identified and their reactivity and sensitivity towards their environment and each other must be understood to determine proper methods of care. Organic materials

(animal or plant based materials) change dimensions with changes in RH and temp. They are easily damaged by light, heat and are vulnerable to acids. Inorganic materials, such as ceramic, stone, glass, and metals are also affected by these factors, but in a different way.

3. Materials Sensitive to High Relative Humidity:

<i>Materials</i>	<i>Results</i>	<i>Recommended Conditions</i>
Metal	corrosion	40% RH (microclimate w/contained storage)
Paper	mold/stains	45%-55% RH
Textiles	mold/stains	45%-55% RH
Wood	mold/warping	50%-55% RH
Basket material	mold	55%-60% RH

4. Materials Sensitive to Low Relative Humidity:

<i>Materials</i>	<i>Results</i>	<i>Recommended Conditions</i>
Wood	dries out/cracks	50%-55% RH
Leathers/skins	embrittlement	45%-55% RH
Parchment	embrittlement	50%-55% RH
Basket material	embrittlement	55%-60% RH
Inlaid surfaces	detachment/warps	50%-55% RH

n. Lighting:

1. Light, especially the Ultra-violet (UV) component of light, causes color fading, discoloration, and embrittlement in some materials overtime, in organic materials more so.

2. Daylight and fluorescent lamps emit high levels of UV light and can be combated through using light filters, covers, screens or blinds or using alternate light sources, such as LED.

3. The amount of time in which an object is illuminated should be kept to a minimum.

4. Reduce illumination to a level necessary for comfortable viewing by visitors and staff and turn off lights when store room is not in use and museum is closed.

o. Storage Materials and Methods:

1. Storage should be accessible, permit easy movement of objects and be safe for both objects and persons.

2. All storage materials should be archival quality (acid free and inert) and meet conservation standards.

3. Space for expansion to collection should be available.

4. Racking systems and cupboards need to be of an adequate size to cope with the collections and should have adjustable shelving to allow for change in use.

5. List of items in any one storage unit (rack, shelf, cupboard, box) should be attached to the outside of the container.

6. Open shelving units must have padding on their shelves to cushion objects placed on them. Open shelf units should have barriers across the front of its shelves to prevent objects from falling.

7. Small and/or fragile objects should be placed in storage boxes with sufficient cushioning/padding material.

p. Handling and Packing:

1. Understand the characteristics and special needs of different types of artifacts before handling or moving.
2. Only designated, responsible persons should handle collection items. Other persons, such as volunteers, students or researchers should not handle collection items without express permission, guidance and supervision.
3. When necessary use appropriate gloves when handling artifacts.
4. No object should be moved from its present location until space has been prepared to receive it and never place collection items where collections are not normally located.
5. Heavy and/or large and/or awkward objects should never be moved by one person alone. When necessary padded trays or dollies should be used for moving large objects.
6. Objects should be grasped with two hands around or below their widest part or most stable part, and never lift or grasp by a handle, other protrusion or weak point. Never handle or carry more than one object at a time.
7. When objects are moving in transit they need to be carefully protected and cushioned, using archival and/or inert quality materials, to protect against vibration and shock.
8. Label all objects in transit with ID number and FRAGILE/THIS WAY UP notices.

q. Security and Safety:

1. There should be preventive measures in place for theft, flood, and fire as well as emergency plans for all of these events should they occur.

2. All organic materials should first be inspected for insect infestation. If found object will be quarantined and professional help should be sought for safe and appropriate eradication methods. For any and all pest infestation professional help should be sought for safe and appropriate eradication methods.

7. Inventory Procedures

a. Inventories should be regularly scheduled and done by qualified individuals to assess what the museum holds in its collection, both in storage and on display, and what kind of conditions those objects are in.

b. All objects marked with a museum accession/catalog number should be recorded in the museums accession database, or a separate catalog if it's part of a special collection, along with the objects current and permanent location and physical condition.

8. Insurance Coverage Guidelines

a. The insurance coverage policy will be under the direction of the President of the Trinidad Museum Society, any additions, changes, loans and maintenance to policy coverage will be done by the President with Board approval.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a collection management policy is an approved, written statement that directs the museum in achieving its institutional and organizational purpose, objectives and responsibilities. It specifies the delegation of responsibilities and authority that guarantees both the protection and increase of the museum's irreplaceable holdings. The collection management policy is a key-stone document in any museum that provides a foundation for museum operations and facilitates the museums stable growth and development. While every collection management policy, big or small, covers the basic issues; such as documentation, storage and collection's care, each one is tailored to fit the needs and limitations of the museum that created it. The three key-stone documents that every museum should have; a mission statement which states who and what a museum is, By-laws which regulates how a museum and its staff conduct themselves and a CMP which outline how a museum manages its collection. All are important for a museums long term stability and management. Filling a gap in this important triad, the collection management policy developed here for the Trinidad Museum will assist with issues, such as documentation and collections care, by providing guidelines to follow and setting a foundation that will promote the sustainable development of the museum in the future.

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