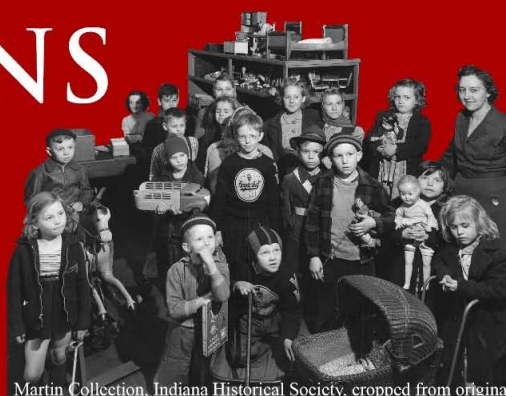


This publication is a service of the [Hoosier Heritage Alliance](#) Connecting to Collections project.

# COLLECTIONS

## Advisor



Martin Collection, Indiana Historical Society, cropped from original

Issue 20, June 2013

### So You Would Like to Make a Donation?

From the Porter County Museum of History, Valparaiso, Indiana  
Kevin Pazour, Executive Director

[www.portercountymuseum.org](http://www.portercountymuseum.org)

The volunteers and staff at the Porter County Museum of History give the following document to everyone who would like to make an object donation to the museum. It clearly outlines the decision-making process for accepting objects into the collection. The document also explains the deaccessioning process. Using a document like this one, makes the accessioning and deaccessioning processes more transparent and lets the potential donor make a informed decision about whether to donate the object to the museum.

#### **So You Would Like to Make a Donation?**

Thank you for thinking of the Porter County Museum of History in making a decision to find a new home for your cherished possessions. We at the Museum take pride in the privilege of accepting artifacts/materials and creating exhibits for the Porter County Corporation (PCHC), the actual potential owner of the artifacts/materials.

We want you to understand just how we deal with accepting and processing donations so that you are comfortable with the process from start to finish.

Please know that we do not accept all artifacts/materials we are given. We take donations in on a temporary custody basis while we assess whether or not to accept. You will receive a Temporary Custody Receipt at this time. Please check all boxes appropriate to your donation, sign, and return. During this time, you, the potential donor, retain ownership. Once our Collections Committee makes a decision, you will be notified.

If the committee declines acceptance, you will have 60 days to reclaim your artifacts. At this time, you will be given a list of institutions that may be better suited to accept them.

If we accept your donation, two copies of a Deed of Gift (or loan agreement) will be mailed to you. Please sign and return one copy and retain the other for your files.

If your donation is accepted and you would like a receipt for tax purposes, you must furnish the committee with a fair market

value (and the source of the estimate) or an official appraisal.  
The PCHC does not appraise artifacts.

Our acceptance of your donation means that the PCHC will accrue costs of cataloguing, storing, exhibiting, and preserving each artifact. We take this responsibility very seriously.

### **Accepting Artifacts**

Only artifacts that meet the conditions and rules of the Collections Policy of the Porter County Heritage Corporation (PCHC) will be accepted. The PCHC reserves the right to keep, lend, or otherwise dispose of donated materials.

### **Your artifact should...**

- A. Be safe to handle.
- B. Have intrinsic value.
- C. Have a free and clear title. We reserve the right to turn matters over to the police if we feel something has been stolen.
- D. Be consistent with the stated purpose, scope, and activities of the Porter County Museum of History. In other words, it should have some connection to Porter County.
- E. Be museum quality. Primary consideration is given to our ability to provide proper care and storage for our artifacts.
- F. Be accompanied by a great story, accurate historical information, or provenance.
- G. Be lawful. We abide by the policies of UNESCO and NAGPRA.

All donations are considered as outright, unconditional, and irrevocable, although the PCHC Board of Trustees reserves the right to make exceptions. Exceptions and special considerations will be noted in writing on the Deed of Gift Form.

It is important to remember that the Museum manages thousands of artifacts that rotate on a regular basis. Your artifact may not be on display when you come to visit. Please know that this does not mean that your artifact is any less important to us or to our mission.

### **Deaccessioning Artifacts**

With few acquisition policies in place for nearly a century of acquiring artifacts, we have identified more than a few pieces that do not belong in our collection.

Thankfully, we now have policies in place that specify what we may want to keep in our collections and what we may want to deaccession.

The PCHC Collections Committee may deaccession artifacts that have been determined to be no longer relevant and useful to the purposes and activities of the Museum. Artifacts that have lost physical integrity, pose a threat or danger, and/or cannot be properly stored, used, or preserved may also be deaccessioned.

### **Deaccessioning means that...**

- A. The Executive Director recommends deaccessioning an artifact to the Collections Committee.
- B. The Collections Committee approves of the deaccessioning.

C. Records of deaccessioned artifacts are permanently maintained by any one of the following means:

- a. Sale or donation to a nonprofit institution.
- b. Sale to a reputable for-profit institution.
- c. Public auction outside of the Museum's immediate locale.

It should be noted that no artifact can be accepted by the Collections Committee with the intention of immediate sale. All money generated from the sale of an artifact can only be used to acquire new artifacts and/or preserve artifacts in the current collection.

#### **Resources**

Connecting to Collections Online Community

[www.connectingtocollections.org](http://www.connectingtocollections.org)

Indiana History Society Lending Resources Center

[www.indianahistory.org/our-services/local-history-services/lending-resources](http://www.indianahistory.org/our-services/local-history-services/lending-resources)

This is a free publication. Anyone may subscribe.

Collections Advisor is provided for the benefit of local historical societies and museums throughout Indiana. It is emailed to a subscriber list maintained by the Local History Services department of the Indiana Historical Society.

To be added to or removed from the mailing list, simply email [collectionsadvisor@indianahistory.org](mailto:collectionsadvisor@indianahistory.org).

For more information about the Hoosier Heritage Alliance, please visit [www.indianahistory.org/hha](http://www.indianahistory.org/hha).



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