

# SURREY HILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## COLLECTION POLICY

### 1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OR MISSION STATEMENT

The Surrey Hills Historical Society through its collection seeks to collect, preserve, research and display items which reflect life and development in the Surrey Hills and Mont Albert area.

### 2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION POLICY

This policy will guide the development and management of the Surrey Hills Historical Society collection in line with standards set by Museums Australia guidelines.

### 3. SCOPE OF COLLECTION

#### 3.1 KEY THEMES

These include personal histories, house histories, important people, businesses or social groups, and important changes over time.

#### 3.2 GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The collection focuses on the suburbs of Surrey Hills and Mont Albert (post code 3127) but also includes material relating to geographical and other features lying beyond this post code area, where they have had significant social impact on the area. This includes Beckett Park, Wattle Park and the Surrey Dive.

#### 3.3 PHYSICAL ITEMS TO BE COLLECTED

The collection is primarily comprised of paper-based material including:

- Unpublished material such as manuscripts, plans, drawings, correspondence, diaries
- Published material including books, journals and periodicals
- Images including photographs, negatives, transparencies, films, videos, DVDs
- Selected newspapers and newspaper cuttings
- Personal histories, and reminiscences in the form of written or recorded oral histories
- Ephemera such as posters, programs, advertising material, brochures.

The collection will also include records of the above that may have been produced in electronic or digital format.

A limited selection of artefacts will be collected, subject to storage limitations.

### 4. CRITERIA FOR COLLECTION OF MATERIAL

#### 4.1 METHOD OF ACQUISITION

The Surrey Hills Historical Society shall acquire objects for the permanent collection by donation, bequest, purchase or transfer. Conditional donations will not be accepted.

#### 4.2 ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT

The collection will be managed the Surrey Hills Historical Society with delegated responsibility for management, including acquisitions, given to the Archivist and authorised volunteer(s). All decisions regarding acquisitions will be appropriately documented and retained as permanent records.

### 4.3 ACQUISITION CRITERIA

The Archivist will consider the following criteria before approving acquisition of an object:

- **Relevance**  
The Surrey Hills Historical Society will only collect objects that relate to its purpose and key collecting areas.
- **Significance**  
Priority is given to objects which are significant for their historic or social value.
- **Provenance and Documentation**  
Priority will be given to objects where the history of the object is known and associated documentation and support material can be provided.
- **Condition, intactness, integrity**  
The condition of the object must be taken into consideration when acquiring material. Badly damaged material will not normally be accepted into the collection.
- **Duplications**  
Objects that duplicate items already in the collection will not generally be accepted unless they are of superior condition and/or historic value. In such a case, the duplicate may be considered for deaccessioning. Where storage is not an issue, a duplicate may be retained for display purposes, so that there is also an archival item.
- **Legal Requirements**  
The Surrey Hills Historical Society will only accept objects where the donor/vendor has legal title to the object.

## 5. COLLECTION CARE: DOCUMENTATION, CONSERVATION & STORAGE

### 5.1 DOCUMENTATION & RECORD KEEPING

The Surrey Hills Historical Society through the Archivist aims to maintain an effective documentation system. Donation forms for acquisitions must be completed; a copy of the completed form should be given to the donor. All donation forms, correspondence and catalogue information will be kept at the office of the Society.

#### **Guidelines for acquiring and processing collection material.**

As far as possible these guidelines will be followed when acquiring material:

- Owner or agent brings/ sends the object to the office of the Society
- A record is made including the object name, address of the owner and contact number and date. (This record does not mean or imply the object has been accepted as part of the permanent collection.)
- The Archivist or volunteer deputising will contact the donor and make notes on the history and associations of the object to better assess the object for acquisition.
- Objects deemed to be outside the collection policy will be returned to the owner with an explanatory letter. If the object is not claimed within 90 days, it will become the property of the Surrey Hills Historical Society and may be disposed of.
- If the object is accepted, the donor signs the Donation form. The original is kept by Surrey Hills Historical Society and a copy is given to the donor with a letter of thanks.
- The donation(s) must be recorded in the accession register, numbered and catalogued. Where documentation relating to the significance of the object is available, this should be kept along with the donation form.

## **5.2 STORAGE & CONSERVATION**

Within its limited resources, the Surrey Hills Historical Society will store and care for items in a manner that will preserve them:

- Storage areas must remain clean, secure and sealed against the weather
- Access to storage areas is to be controlled
- Original material will only be displayed for limited lengths of time
- Archival quality storage materials will be used for all significant material
- Storage areas must be regularly checked for pests and other problems
- Untrained personnel should never attempt to clean, treat or restore collection objects.

## **5.3 ELECTRONIC BACK-UP**

Photographs and some other paper-based items in the collection will be scanned. These digital images will be regularly backed-up onto portable external hard drives or similar.

The collection will be catalogued and uploaded to the Collections Victoria website.

Back-ups of the digital collection of images, correspondence related to the collection's management and other material as deemed to be of permanent relevance to the collection will be made on a regular basis on an external hard-drive.

## **DEACCESSIONING AND DISPOSAL PROCEDURES**

### **6.1 CRITERIA FOR DEACCESSIONING**

An object can be de-accessioned from the collection if:

- It does not comply with the current collection policy
- It is damaged beyond repair
- The conservation and storage costs for it are beyond the means of the Surrey Hills Historical Society
- It is a lesser quality duplicate of another object in the collection
- It lacks any supporting information to enable proper identification or to establish its relevance to the collection
- A substantiated request for the return of the object to its original owner/donor is received.

### **6.2 DEACCESSION PROCEDURES**

Disposal of collection items should be discussed and by the Archivist and relevant volunteers.

In priority order, the object must be:

- Returned to the donor or family.
- If after a thorough search this is impossible, the object should be:
  - Transferred to another appropriate institution or individual
  - Used as an educative/interpretive tool
  - Sold
  - Destroyed or recycled.

Any funds acquired from the sale of the de-accessioned item should be used for acquisitions or care of the collection.

A record must be kept of all items removed from the collection.

## **7.0 ACCESS**

The collection and non-sensitive collection records will be made accessible to researchers and the general public.

The collection will be open for research at times advertised and by appointment.

Physical access to the collection will be limited to times when such access can be supervised.

Records of collection items will be made available through the Victorian Collections website. Links to this will be made from the Surrey Hills Historical Society's website.

Collection items may be used for displays and facsimiles / lesser duplicates will be loaned for talks and other presentations.

## **8.0 LOAN PROCEDURES**

Permanent and long-term loans will not be accepted.

Any loan request must be made on the appropriate form and reviewed by the Archivist. In general, only duplicate or facsimile items will be lent for display outside the Society's premises.

## **9.0 ORAL HISTORY POLICY**

An Oral History Agreement must be signed by the person interviewed. This will clearly state the purpose and intended uses of the interviews and what copyright provisions apply.

The Surrey Hills Historical Society will follow the Guidelines of Ethical Practice of the Oral History Association of Australia.

## **10.0 REVIEW YOUR COLLECTION POLICY**

The Surrey Hills Historical Society will review its Collection Policy every five years.

## **11. DATE OF ENDORSEMENT**

Date of endorsement:

Committee members: