



Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

COLLECTIONS

MANAGEMENT POLICY

ADOPTED MAY 5, 2005

Name of Educational Corporation:

National Railway Historical Society – Rochester Chapter

Collection Management Policy

Purpose: To establish rules, guidelines and procedures for the acquisition, care, preservation, public access and deaccessioning of items in the collections of the above-named educational corporation, hereinafter referred to in this document the "Corporation."

I. Collections Committee

The Board of Trustees of the Corporation shall establish a Collections Committee. Pursuant to the Corporation's By-Laws, the President shall appoint the members and chair of this Committee. The Committee shall recommend items for accession to and deaccession from the collections of the Corporation.

The Collections Committee shall include in its deliberations, whenever deemed necessary, the advice of professionals with the goal of making well-considered and timely recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

The final decision to accession, to acquire without accessioning, or to deaccession items to or from the collections of the Corporation shall rest with the Board of Trustees.

II. Acquisition

A. Scope.

The Corporation's collections encompass the history of the railroad industry, its people, equipment, development and operational infrastructure, with emphasis on the Rochester, Monroe County and Western New York region. This includes railway vehicles from the contiguous geographic areas of Western New York as well as equipment from the railroads that served Rochester and Western New York. Also included are railway equipment manufactured by Rochester area concerns, a limited selection of railroad and transit equipment and related artifacts whose significance can be traced to manufacturers or operators located in Western New York and other vehicles which lend to the accurate interpretation of the history of Rochester's railroads. This would include equipment from outside the geographical area, but that represents technologically what would have been used by the railroads of Rochester. Also included is historic construction equipment representative of that which would have been used to build and maintain the physical plant of Rochester's railroads and transit systems.

The Corporation's collections comprise items in the following categories:

1. Steam, diesel, freight passenger, MOW, street and electric railroad vehicles
2. Related railroad and transit vehicles
3. Historic construction equipment
4. Wayside structures and structural appointments
5. Examples of signal equipment and track tools and materials
6. Pictorial records, artifacts, documents, publications, etc. ("Archival Materials")
7. Selected tools, shop equipment and spare vehicle parts*
8. Support vehicles both railroad & construction*

* These items are not generally accessioned but are needed to maintain accessioned items.

Collection Scope Details

- **Vehicles**

- **Accessioned:** Vehicles are the primary collection items and form the operating section of the Corporation and its Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum. The Corporation wholly owns all accessioned vehicles. Vehicles are defined to include railroad and railroad related vehicles such as MOW hi-rail trucks and historic construction equipment of all types including, but not restricted to cranes, shovels, excavators, bulldozers, tractors, and trucks.

Operating some of the railroad vehicles on the Corporation's demonstration railway or railroad related and historic construction equipment on the property of the Corporation and its Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum is an effective means to interpret railroad history. The Corporation will preserve, maintain and operate vehicles for the public's education and enjoyment, where it is economically feasible to do so without serious detriment to the vehicle. The collection will have some duplication, necessary from an operational viewpoint to provide operations consistent with Corporation's mission.

- **Non-accessioned:** Not all vehicles will be accessioned. Non-accessioned vehicles can be replicas, re-constructions or adaptations of historic or non-historic vehicles that are required or created to demonstrate significant elements of railroad technologies where no genuine examples are available to the Corporation.

Non-accessioned vehicles may also be considered those to be used in the support of the Corporation and its Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum. These are vehicles that are useful in the day-to-day operation of the Museum. These will include the same types of objects found in the

accession collection, such as rail vehicles that have been acquired for utility purposes, including demonstration railway operation or for trading with other organizations or individuals for the benefit of the accessioned collection. The Corporation intends to preserve these items as long as feasible, but ultimately they may be expendable.

- **Future Acquisitions:** Vehicles that fall within the collection's scope and are not already represented in the collection could become available to the Corporation in the future. Before such items are accepted in the Corporation's collection, the Collections Management Committee will prepare an acquisition, restoration, preservation and maintenance plan.

- **Spare Parts**
Spare parts are primarily non-accessioned items and will be accumulated for the maintenance and restoration of the vehicles. Some spare parts that are determined to have no use as maintenance or restoration items but are historic may be accessioned as exhibits.

- **Tools and Equipment**
The Corporation may house, operate and maintain authentic tools and equipment once used in the railroad industry. Some of these items may be accessioned.

- **Demonstration Railway**
The Corporation maintains and operates a demonstration railway at its Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum in cooperation with the New York Museum of Transportation for the purpose of interpreting the vehicle collection. One portion of the railway is built to represent a steam or diesel powered branch line and will be preserved with this appearance. Other portions of the line are built on contiguous rights of way where the railroad will be constructed and maintained to give the appearance of either a steam or diesel powered branch line or a street railway line as is within the mission of the New York Museum of Transportation.

- **Signal and Track Materials**
Components used in the construction of the demonstration railway are generally non-accessioned. Some of these components, for use in the construction of the demonstration railway, may be accessioned.

- **Wayside Structures**
Wayside structures and structural components will be collected to complement the demonstration railroad. A conservation plan will be developed for these items to guide how they will be preserved and maintained in their historic state. These items are generally accessioned.

- **Archives**

The following will routinely be included in the Corporation's XXXX Memorial Library:

- **Accessioned Archival Materials**

The archivist will prepare conservation plans, for the various types of accessioned archival material, for the Collections Management Committee. These plans will be reviewed and updated as necessary and submitted to the Board of Trustees. Archival materials can include:

- Representative materials of significance (including, but not limited to: transfers and other ephemera, correspondence, orders, company records, pamphlets, rule books, flyers, advertisements, annual and quarterly reports, passes, tokens, timetables, photographs, negatives, motion pictures, video tapes, audio recordings, posters, news clippings, tickets, maps, etc.) issued by or relating to freight railroads, passenger railroads, electric railways, street railways, inclines, cable railways, horse railways, interurban railways, light rail and other public transit within the primary geographical area of interest:

New York
Northern Pennsylvania
Northern New Jersey

- Representative materials presenting overviews of transit systems (including books, articles or maps covering a system, city or company, and photographs thereof) of electric railways, street railways, inclines, cable railways, horse railways, interurban railways, light rail and other public transit in areas outside the primary geographical area.
- Materials relating to the history of the transit industry in general.
- Local (regional or community) histories, that help to interpret the development of streetcar and interurban lines.
- Materials related to the political, industrial, technical, economic and social environment in which the transit industry operated.

- **Technical Materials**

- Materials relating to the design, manufacture, construction, maintenance and operation of electric railways, street railways, inclines, cable railways, horse railways, interurban railways, light rail and other public transit within the primary geographical area of interest, including information on rolling stock, track, overhead,

signals, power supply, structures, business procedures, accounting, etc.

- Materials (including catalogs, blueprints, drawings, instruction manuals, diagrams, fact sheets, maintenance manuals, maintenance records, etc.) relating to the design, manufacture, construction, maintenance and operation of rolling stock and exhibits in the collection of the Corporation, or of potential future additions to that collection.
 - Technical histories of the transit industry.
- **Other Railroad Material**
- Representative materials of significance (including, but not limited to: transfers and other ephemera, correspondence, orders, company records, pamphlets, rule books, flyers, advertisements, annual and quarterly reports, passes, tokens, timetables, photographs, negatives, motion pictures, video tapes, audio recordings, posters, news clippings, tickets, maps, etc.) issued by or relating to selected steam railroads which relate to street railway development within the primary geographical area of interest.
 - Printed materials and photographs presenting a general description, history and technical information on electrification of mainline railroads.
 - Books and maps presenting an overview of mainline, steam or freight railroads in the primary geographical area of interest.
- **Museum-Related Information**
- Publications of the Corporation and corporate predecessors.
 - Articles and publicity about the Corporation and corporate predecessors.
 - Technical publications on museum practice, including but not limited to ethics, exhibit design, archival methods and procedures, restoration, conservation, etc.
 - Catalogs and guidebooks from other trolley and transit museums.
 - Publications of the Association of Railway Museums.
 - Records and correspondence of the Corporation and corporate predecessors.
 - Other items that will assist in carrying out the museum's mission.

Every effort will be made to keep archived materials in a secure environment that meets conservation needs with regard to housing, temperature, relative humidity and light levels.

B. Guidelines. Acquisitions to the Corporation's collections by purchase, loan, gift, bequest or other means shall accord with the following rules:

- The owner must have clear title and must sign a deed of gift transferring title to the Corporation. In the case of a bequest, the donor must also have had clear title.
- A transfer or ownership file containing gift agreements and other proofs of the Corporation's legal ownership of acquisitions shall be maintained.
- Acquisitions by purchase shall not exceed the annual budget for such purchases unless additional proper financing has been arranged.
- No acquisition shall be appraised by a trustee, staff member, or any other person closely associated with either. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)
- The Corporation must be capable of housing and caring for the proposed acquisition according to generally accepted professional standards.
- Proposed acquisitions shall be free of donor-imposed restrictions unless such restrictions are agreed to by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
- Acquisitions approved by the Board of Trustees for accessioning shall be promptly accessioned upon receipt and acceptance under a system approved by the Collections Committee and the Board of Trustees.
- Donors and prospective donors, whenever deemed appropriate, should be asked by the Collections Committee whether they would be willing to provide funds for the full or partial cost of accessioning and subsequent maintenance of materials gifted to the Corporation. Willingness or unwillingness to provide such funds should usually not be a determining factor in the Board of Trustees decision to accept or reject a gift for accessioning.

III. Care and Preservation

The Corporation realizes its obligation to protect its collections which are held in the public trust. Therefore, the Corporation shall act to the best of its ability, according to the following guidelines:

A. When possible, a stable environment for items in storage or on display shall be maintained by protecting them from excessive light, heat, humidity and dust. The environmental needs of different materials shall be considered.

B. When possible, materials shall be protected against theft, fire, and other disasters by a security system and by a written disaster plan.

C. When possible, paper materials shall be copied on microfilm, photocopied on acid-free paper, or otherwise made redundant and stored in a separate location.

D. When deemed necessary, conservation of materials shall be undertaken with the advice of a trained conservator.

E. Records shall be kept using appropriate forms for documentation: i.e., temporary receipt form, deed of gift, accession forms, relevant correspondence, conservation reports and deaccession records.

F. Inventories and location records shall be kept up to date to facilitate public access and to prevent loss.

Specific Care Requirements for the Corporations Collections

- **Vehicles**

- **Care**

- It is the policy of the Corporation to restore each accessioned vehicle to an appearance and functionality consistent with an appropriate period of the piece's history. Each vehicle will have a detailed historical record prepared for it. This record will include photographic and written details pertaining to the vehicle and include its history from both before and after its acquisition by the Corporation.

- With this documentation the Collections Management Committee will prepare a conservation survey for each accessioned vehicle, identifying the period to be represented. The committee will determine the priority for restoration. The committee will authorize each project, using the conservation plan for that vehicle as basis for work to proceed. This plan includes the desired results of the project in terms of the appearance, functionality, and proposed museum use.

- **Modifications to Vehicles**

- It is the Corporation's policy to avoid modifications to accessioned vehicles that are visually obvious, and not in keeping with the vehicle's history, regardless of the quality of the work involved. Any modifications must be carefully documented and put in the vehicle's file. When required by safety, necessity or practicality, certain modifications and substitutions may be permitted in the course of a vehicle restoration project.

- **Spare Parts**

- **Tools and Equipment**

- **Demonstration Railway**

- **Signal and Track Materials**

- **Wayside Structures**

- **Archives**

IV. Public Access

The Corporation shall make research materials in its possession available to legitimate researchers with legitimate justification, but with the following stipulations:

A. Inventories, relevant files and the assistance of a staff member or trained volunteer shall be available to users.

B. A registration form listing rules for usage shall be read, filled out and signed by all researchers.

C. The Corporation may limit the use of fragile or unusually valuable materials.

D. Hours of operation may be by designated hours or by appointment, depending on the availability of staff or trained volunteers.

E. Photographic and xerographic reproduction:

1. A Request for Copies form containing a notice of copyright restriction shall be signed by each user before copies are made.

2. Copies may not be used "for any purpose other than private study, scholarship or research." (United States Copyright Law, Title 17)

3. Reproduction by the corporation in no way transfers either copyright or property rights, nor does it constitute permission to publish or to display materials.

4. All prices for copying shall be determined by the Board of Trustees.

5. In some cases, the Corporation may refuse to allow copies to be made because of the physical condition of the materials, restrictions imposed by the donor, copyright law, or right-to-privacy statutes.

F. A fee may be charged for research work done to meet requests: the amount shall be set by the Board of Trustees.

G. The Corporation may refuse access to an individual researcher who has demonstrated such carelessness or deliberate destructiveness as to endanger the safety of the materials.

In addition, the Corporation is committed to bringing to the public information culled from its documents, photographs, artifacts and oral histories by presenting public programs, including slide shows, live acts, videos and films; mounting exhibits; and publishing newsletters, pamphlets, checklists and guides to the collections whenever possible.

V. Deaccession

No accessioned object or collection shall be removed from the Corporation's auspices except in conformity with the following rules:

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A. A deaccession recommendation shall be prepared by the Collections Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Whenever deemed necessary, professional advice shall be sought before an item is deaccessioned.

B. The decision to deaccession should be cautious and deliberate and follow generally accepted museological standards. One of the following criteria must be met:

1. The material is not relevant to the mission of the Corporation.
2. The material has failed to retain its identity or has been lost or stolen and is not recovered.
3. The material duplicates other material in the collection of the Corporation and is not necessary for research or educational purposes.
4. The Corporation is unable to conserve the property in a responsible manner.

C. No donated material shall be deaccessioned for two years after the date of its acquisition. (See U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1984 and Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to the act.)

D. A complete record of deaccessions shall be kept. A copy of this record shall be retained permanently.

E. Proceeds derived from the deaccessioning of any property from the collection of the Corporation shall be placed either in a temporarily restricted fund to be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections, or in a permanently restricted fund the earnings of which shall be used only for the acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections. In no event shall proceeds be used for operating expenses or for any purpose other than acquisition, preservation, protection or care of collections.

F. Disposal may be by exchange, donation or public sale with scholarly or cultural organizations as the preferred recipients.

G. Materials deaccessioned shall not be privately sold, given or otherwise transferred to the Corporation's staff or trustees.

Collection Management Policy

This Policy was formally approved and adopted by the
Board of Trustees of the National Railway Historical Society – Rochester Chapter

at a meeting held at (location)

40& 8 Club, 933 University Avenue, Rochester, New York

on May 5, 2005.

Signed (Officer)

Printed or typed name of officer

Title

National Railway Historical Society – Rochester Chapter

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