

Effective Date: May 23, 2022

Local History Collection Development Policy Statement

Mission

The Mission of the Sharon Public Library is to serve the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of all members of the Sharon community by providing access to professional staff, a state-of-the-art facility, and quality materials, programs, and services.

Collection Statement

The emphasis of the Local History Collection is on documenting Sharon's government, settlement, industry, commerce, education, recreation, and historically significant individuals, as well as the history of its civic, religious, cultural, and social organizations. Genealogical materials that help researchers trace their family backgrounds and/or aid in researching the history of individual town residents are also collected.

The collection supports activities related to historical and genealogical research, exhibits, community outreach, organizational events, and publications, among others. The collection mainly serves the general public but also supports the research activities of scholars and professionals, graduate students, undergraduates, and high school students.

Primary Areas of Collecting

Primary areas of collecting include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Materials that record the history, development, and current state of affairs of the Town of Sharon. Images of Sharon sites and individual residents are an important part of this collection.
- Personal manuscripts and other materials that record the history, experiences, and ancestry of Sharon individuals and families.
- Records that chronicle the history of Sharon organizations and institutions.
- Materials that record the social and cultural heritage of past and present ethnic, immigrant, and religious groups in the community.
- Materials that contribute to a better understanding of the area's geography, demographics, and architecture.
- Materials that record and provide context for understanding the lives of historically significant figures associated with the Town of Sharon.
- Materials that provide instruction in the practice of genealogy, local history, preservation, oral history, and similar topics.

Acquisitions from any time period and in any language may be considered. The geographic scope of the collection focuses specifically on Sharon and its environs.

Current strengths of the collection include the history of settlement and early families of Sharon, historical photographs, genealogies of multi-generational Sharon families, maps of Sharon and surrounding areas, historical Sharon newspapers, records that document the military service of Sharon residents, the history of select churches, and information about historically significant Sharon residents, including Deborah Sampson.

Formats

Formats collected include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Atlases
- Audio recordings
- Biographical dictionaries
- Books
- Broadsides
- Brochures
- Census records
- City and county histories
- Town directories
- Digital files
- Organizational directories
- Ephemera
- Government documents
- Institutional or organizational records
- Manuscripts
- Maps
- Newspapers
- Pamphlets
- Periodicals and journals
- Personal papers: account books, diaries, financial records, letters, memoirs
- Photographs
- Scrapbooks
- Serials
- Video recordings

Three-dimensional artifacts will not be added to the collection unless, in rare instances, they are deemed appropriate to the collection and can be properly housed and displayed. In most cases, the Sharon Historical Society will be a more appropriate destination for such items.

Selection Criteria

- Relevance to the history of Sharon and surrounding areas.
- Suitability of the subject to the Local History Collection.
- Available space in the library to house materials.

- Non-duplication of material within the collection.
- Authenticity and completeness of the record.
- Quality of the physical form of material.
- Ease of use for patrons.
- Ability to store, display, or otherwise care for the item properly.
- Cost to preserve, store, and process.
- Security requirements to store and/or display.
- Lack of restrictions by the donor.

Donations

The library welcomes donations to its Local History Collection. Each donation to the collection will be recorded in a donor file that will contain a copy of the Gift Agreement and all correspondence and memoranda relating to the transaction. All donors must complete a Gift Agreement to establish the transfer of ownership of donated materials (and copyright, if appropriate) to the library. The transfer to the library of the copyright owned by donors of individual items makes it easier for the library and its users to use the items in unique and creative ways. Once the Gift Agreement is signed by the donor, the donated material becomes the unrestricted property of the library.

The library reserves the right to refuse an offered donation. The library will not accept material that shows damage from mold, mildew, water, insects, smoke, or dirt, as such material can harm other items in the collection. The library may also refuse a donation based on the Selection Criteria.

The library reserves the right to decide how the donated material will be displayed or stored, how the material may be used by the public, and how long the material will be retained. Donated materials may be scanned and placed on the Internet for viewing or otherwise reformatted. They may also be moved from the Local History Collection to other sections of the library, sold, transferred to another library, or discarded.

The library will not, and cannot, conduct any monetary appraisals for donors nor give tax advice. If donors plan to take a tax deduction for their donations, they should consult a tax accountant or attorney. Any monetary appraisals are the responsibility of the donor and should be conducted before transferring materials to the library.

Access

The Local History Collection is primarily housed in the Local History Room, as much of it is fragile or irreplaceable. Some duplicate copies of frequently used items are housed in the reference and/or circulating nonfiction areas of the library. A portion of the collection has also been digitized and is available through the library website.

Research materials in the Local History Room may only be used on-site under the supervision of a Sharon Public Library Information Services Librarian. Researchers should make an appointment with the Information/Adult Services staff well in advance to ensure that adequate

assistance and supervision are available. Photocopies or photos of research materials may either be made with permission by the Information Services Librarian/Library Director or refused, depending upon the condition of the item.

Anyone who copies or reproduces materials from the collection should be aware of Title 17 and especially the provisions of Section 108 of the U.S. Code (Copyright Law) and takes full responsibility for complying with it. An Information Services Librarian can help point users to resources that can aid in determining a work's copyright status. Exceptions to the above procedures, such as loans to other organizations for educational or publication purposes, may be made at the discretion of the Library Director.

Review and Deaccession

From time to time, the Local History Collection will be reviewed, and the deaccession of some materials may take place. An object may be deaccessioned if it meets one of the following criteria:

- It does not fall within the scope of the library's mission or its Collections Management Policy
- It lacks provenance
- It cannot be salvaged, even with conservation, because of advanced deterioration
- It is not authentic
- A better example exists in the collection
- The library is unable to maintain it
- It poses a threat to the safety of the public or other collections
- It is subject to a legislative mandate, e.g., repatriation

Disposal of materials will be by one of the following methods:

- Gift, sale, or exchange to other local historical or educational institutions
- Sale, preferably by public auction or specialized dealers (When working with dealers, efforts should be made to obtain at least three opinions of the material's value.)
- Destruction and disposal in a sensitive manner (of deteriorated material). Two members of the library staff must be present at their disposal.

All ID numbers and other references to the library will be removed before the material leaves the library's premises. All proceeds from the deaccessioned material are to be used for the purchase of materials for the collections or the collections' conservation. Deaccessioned materials are not to be given or sold privately to an individual without public notice.