

Donating to the Portage County Historical Society

Thank you for your interest in preserving history through a donation to the collections of the Portage County Historical Society (PCHS). Donations are considered by a standing Collections Committee that evaluates based on our collections guidelines, summarized here.

Please know that not all materials can be accepted into the collection. Condition, conservation needs, historic relevance, and provenance are all considered by the committee before accepting an item into the collection.

The PCHS is recognized as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization and your donation may be tax deductible. Professional and ethical guidelines prevent us from providing appraisal information to donors for tax purposes. Please consult with your tax preparer for guidance.

Purpose of Collections Guidelines

The purpose of the PCHS's collections guidelines are to give focus to collections-related activities; ensure high professional standards when acquiring and preserving artifacts and archival materials; and to promote education through hands-on experience which can serve as a resource for the study, interpretation, and enjoyment of its visitors.

Mission Statement:

Sharing the stories of Portage County through preservation and education.

Overview of Types of Collections

The types of collections in the PCHS include permanent and teaching.

- A. Archives – Permanent Collection. Manuscripts, organizational records, visual images, and historically significant maps, which clearly and directly adhere to PCHS collection criteria.
- B. Artifact/Object – Permanent Collection. Significant objects which clearly and directly adhere to PCHS collection criteria.
- C. Education – Study and Teaching Collection. Objects that contribute to education programs that are developed and supported by the PCHS. These objects/items are not accessioned into the permanent collections.

Review of Existing Collections

There will be periodic reviews of the existing permanent and teaching collections to ensure that all objects/items are relevant to the mission of PCHS. If the objects/items are found to no longer adhere to the mission they will be returned to the donor, sold, or disposed of.

Collection Criteria

Criteria – Permanent Collection

Artifacts and archives (including visual images) in the Portage County Historical Society's collection shall meet one or all of the following criteria:

1. All items must be considered suitable to the collection and meet the PCHS's stated mission.
2. They must be documented as having been created or used in Portage County or have a significant impact on Portage County history.
3. They must significantly document or illustrate the history of Portage County or Portage County's role in Wisconsin and United States history.
4. All items accepted into the collection must be in good and original condition to permit their use for research or exhibition purposes, or be sufficiently important to warrant the cost of conservation. The Curator of Collections will limit collecting to items that the Society can reasonably preserve, care for, store, and make accessible.
5. All items must have provenance identified, must be accompanied by clear title, and must comply with all local, state, federal laws and regulations governing possession, ownership of cultural, historical and archaeological artifacts.

Criteria – Study & Teaching Collection

Education collection materials in the Portage County Historical Society's collection shall meet one or all of the following criteria:

1. All items must be considered suitable to the collection and meet the museum's stated mission
2. Objects in this collection must represent activities in Portage County or represent a significant impact on Portage County history.
3. Object(s) must be educational tool(s) used to significantly illustrate or narrate the history of Portage County or Portage County's role in Wisconsin and United States history.
4. All objects accepted into the collection must be in good condition to permit their use for demonstration purposes or hands-on experiences. Objects in this collection may be damaged, lack provenance, are duplicated in the permanent collection, or may be reproductions.
5. All objects must be accompanied by clear title, and must comply with all local, state, federal laws and regulations governing possession, ownership of cultural, historical and archaeological artifacts.