



Donating an Artefact - Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

Justification for accepting/rejecting artefact donations are based on our Collections Management Policy, which can be found on our website for reference. More often than not, we are not able to accept artefact donations as part of our responsibility to ensure appropriate and ethical care of the collection as a whole. Currently the collection is at maximum capacity, and any new acquisitions are carefully considered for their merit and potential historic contribution to the Fort la Reine Museum.

1. How does the Museum decide what it will accept for its collection?

The decision to either accept or decline an artefact is based on criteria set out in our Collections Management Policy, which was approved by the Association of Manitoba Museums. Any item that is accepted as a donation must meet the following criteria:

- Is historically significant, and related to our collecting mandate (no earlier than 1700, no later than 1950).
- Must tell of a larger history of Portage la Prairie and District, or Manitoba/Canadian heritage.
- Is in good shape without physical damage
- Is not a duplicate of an item already in our collection

An example of an accepted donation may be a one of a kind item that was either made or used by a prominent Portage la Prairie figure or Manitoban (such as an article of clothing from William Cochrane or Louis Riel).

2. Are there any donations that you absolutely will not take?

Unless proven to be a unique and historically significant piece, we will not consider any of the following items (as we have too many in our collection):

- Pianos or organs
- Doilies, lace tablecloths, linens
- Dolls
- Sewing machines
- Farm equipment
- Books or magazines

3. How do I go about donating something?

The donation consideration process is lengthy, and requires direct consultation with the Executive Director/Curator and sometimes with the Board of Directors. The following steps must be taken:

- An initial conversation with the Executive Director/Curator about the potential donation/item (photographs, a description, and justification for historic significance must be provided by the potential donor)
- If the item is deemed appropriate for the collection, the donor may arrange a time to meet with the Executive Director/Curator or seasonal Collections Management Assistant to sign ownership transfer documents and to drop off the item at the Museum.
- The donor may be provided with a charitable receipt for the fair market value of the item at the donor's request. Donors are responsible for obtaining an assessment from an accredited third party to be presented to the Museum. Museums of our size do not have the resources to employ personnel who specialize in assessing the market value of items.

4. Can't I just drop off something at the door?

No. Items that are dropped off without initial consultation with the Executive Director/Curator or left at the door step will be either turned away or considered abandoned and will be disposed of.

5. My family donated an item a few years ago, and now I want it back. Is that possible?

No. Once an item has been donated and transfer of ownership paperwork has been filed, the item in question is considered the legal property of the Museum. This is to ensure the long-term preservation of artefacts. If it can be legally proven that an item was donated illegitimately or illegally, we may return the item in question to the rightful owner.

6. Do you ever repatriate artefacts that are culturally sensitive?

Yes. If an artefact existing in our collection has proven to have been donated illegitimately, is culturally sensitive, and can be proven that it may be better preserved/exhibited by the cultural owners, we do practice repatriation.

7. Can I donate something to the Manitoba Softball Hall of Fame?

Yes, but we are not the right contacts. The Manitoba Softball Hall of Fame rents a gallery space at the Fort la Reine Museum and displays their own artefact collection. If you wish to donate to their collection, we can provide their contact information.