



Geelong Heritage Centre  
Collection and Acquisition Policy

2016-2019

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guiding principles for influencing decisions and actions in determining the Geelong Heritage Centre (GHC) collection and acquisition of records for permanent retention within the GHC collection; and providing a framework for creating procedures and services for supporting this aim.

The policy will provide guidance to support decision making and assist in the identification of records for collection and acquisition and to ensure consistency in decision making for Heritage Centre staff and stakeholders.

## 1.2. GHC Mission

The Geelong Heritage Centre is guided by its mission to:

- Preserve our community's records in their place of origin
- Provide access to our community's records and encourage their use
- Strengthen our work through partnerships and relationships

## 1.3. Legislation

With the assistance of Public Record Office Victoria, GHC seeks to observe its obligations in relation to the *Public Records Act 1973* (hereafter referred to as the *Act*) and the relevant Standards in relation to the identification and disposal of public records.

GHC also seeks to observe its obligations in relation to the following Acts:

- *Information Privacy Act 2000*
- *Health Records Act 2001*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Copyright Act 1968*

## 1.4. Scope

The Geelong Heritage Centre (GHC) brings together both government (public records<sup>1</sup>) and non-government records/published items and/or items which in particular document the history of the City of Greater Geelong, Shire of Golden Plains, Surf Coast Shire and more broadly across the South West Region of Victoria. The collection items date from pre European arrival and more extensively from the beginnings of European settlement to the present day. This policy applies to both government (public records) and non-government records that GHC may collect and acquire.<sup>2</sup>

This policy includes public records identified by PROV as having permanent or ongoing value with open access arrangements.

This policy excludes those public records that are identified as being closed for public access under the Sections s9, s10, s10AA of the *Act* or having access

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in the *Public Records Act 1973*  
[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol\\_act/pr1973153/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/pr1973153/)

<sup>2</sup> See 2.1.1 for definition of government and non-government records

restrictions. Closed records will be held with PROV until such time as they are open for public access.

This policy excludes the collection of the Geelong Regional Library Corporation.

This policy applies to staff involved in managing the GHC collection, the GHC Collection Advisory Committee and the Geelong Regional Library Corporation Board.

## 1.5. Background

The Geelong Heritage Centre was established as the Geelong Historical Records Centre under direction of a Supreme Court Order (1067-1957) and commenced operations in 1979. The GHC was established with the aims of collecting, preserving and making accessible for research and display purposes, primary and secondary source material pertaining to the history of Geelong and the broader Barwon region from pre European arrival and more extensively from the beginnings of European settlement to the present day. That is, item(s) that reflect our local indigenous culture and history as well as Geelong's historical, developmental, cultural, economic and political life including records and/or items of state and local government, private industry, community groups and individuals following European settlement.

GHC formally transitioned its operation from the City of Greater Geelong Council in October 2015 to fully integrate with the Geelong Regional Library Corporation. The Heritage Centre Reading Room and Repository is a key feature in the new Geelong Library & Heritage Centre that opened in November 2015. In order to facilitate the legal transfer of the GHC function and its collection an Alteration to the original Supreme Court Order was made in the Practice Court of the Supreme Court of Victoria in April 2012.

GHC is an approved Place of Deposit which has been authorised to provide storage and access to public records of temporary and permanent or ongoing value as State archives by the Keeper of Public Records under the authority of the *Public Records Act 1973*. This policy will act in accordance with the relevant disposal authorities issued by the Keeper of Public Records under Section 12 of the *Act*.

## 1.6. Related Documents

- Agreement between the Geelong Heritage Centre and the Geelong Historical Society
- Annex A - Geelong Historical Society Collection in the GHC Collection
- Deed of Gift / Donation form
- Exhibitions Loan Policy, Public Records Office Victoria
- Regional Repositories Loan Procedure, Public Record Office Victoria

## 2. Policy Statement

The main objectives of the Collection and Acquisition Policy are:

1. To acquire by transfer, deposit, purchase or gift, archival records and/or other historical material as defined in the acquisitions policy.
2. To provide the framework to ensure consistency in determining the selection of appropriate records and/or historical material for the GHC collection.
3. To provide guidance on the conditions and processes for acquiring records and/or historical material.
4. For Public Records: To comply with relevant disposal authorities and standards issued by the Keeper of Public Records under Section 12 of the *Public Records Act 1973*.
5. For non-government records and/or other historical material – To comply with any legal or other provisions relating to the records and/or other historical material proposed for acquisition and provide a framework for the selection of records and/or other historical material to be included in the GHC collection.

### 2.1 GHC Collection

#### 2.1.1 Geographical area

The GHC seeks to acquire and make available records and/or other historical material worthy of permanent or ongoing preservation, specific to the local government areas of the City of Greater Geelong, Shire of Golden Plains and Surf Coast Shire (and their predecessor Councils/Shires/Boroughs) and will also consider acquiring records and/or historical material from the broader Barwon region of South West Victoria if the context of such, has a relationship to the specific areas listed above that is considered in keeping with the overall aims of the Collection Policy.



We aim to acquire item(s) that represents the cultural, social and historical record of our region. These may include records which best illustrate the purpose, activities, membership, events and policies of an organisation (or an individual's life), or other entity or institution which has long-term historical value to the community. These records and/or historical material broadly encompass the following examples:

### **2.1.2 Government records**

Public Records which are defined by the *Public Records Act 1973* and as determined with the authority of the Keeper of Public Records.

This comprises of records created by Local government authorities and State government agencies and defined by relevant Record Disposal Authorities which include:

- Permanent records of the Greater Geelong City Council, Shire of Golden Plains, Shire of Surf Coast and their predecessor Councils/Shires & Boroughs.
- Permanent records of neighbouring local government authorities as negotiated with relevant parties.
- Permanent records created by other government agencies as defined by the *Public Records Act 1973* such as Courts, Hospitals and Water Authorities.
- Permanent records that fall within the GHC collection catchment area.
- Temporary records that are appraised and determined by GHC Collection Advisory Committee as having local or community value and add to the collection.

### **2.1.3 Non-government records**

Local organisations, individuals, businesses, community groups, clubs, societies or other entities that meet GHC's appraisal criteria which include;

- Records and/or historical material created by companies and other businesses, community groups, societies, incorporated bodies and other organisations relevant to the history of Geelong and the broader Barwon region of South West Victoria
- Records of individuals or records collected by individuals relevant to the history or connected to Geelong and the broader Barwon region of South West Victoria.
- Records of religious denominations in Geelong and the broader Barwon region of South West Victoria as approved by their governing bodies.
- Records of sporting clubs and local affiliate associations, Arts & cultural clubs, community based organisations and local affiliate associations in Geelong and the broader Barwon region of South West Victoria.

### **2.1.4 GHC Reference collection**

The Heritage Centre collects and manages items in a non-lending reference library collection. Items in the reference library collection include:

- Formal published works
- Informal/unpublished works including guides/source materials/student thesis and private unpublished research works.

### **2.1.5 The Geelong Historical Society Collection**

The GHS has had a close relationship with the GHC since its establishment and part of the GHS collection is stored with and made accessible from the GHC.

An Agreement was signed by both parties in 1996 to clarify the extent of the GHS collection stored and managed by the GHC and to provide clarity around respective operational responsibilities and the nature of the formal relationship between the GHC & GHS.

Annex A to the Agreement documents the GHS collection entrusted to GHC and which subsequently forms part of the overall GHC archive collection

Included in the Agreement is a number of specific guidelines including:

- Storage and access of GHS items in the GHC collection.
- The contribution of new GHS item(s) into the existing GHS documented collection entrusted to GHC.
- The temporary withdrawal of GHS item(s) from the GHC collection
- The permanent removal of GHS item(s) from the GHC collection

## **2.2 Acquisitions**

### **2.2.1 Transfers of new acquisitions**

Records and/or other historical material may be acquired by the following means:

- Legislated Transfer (from government agencies subject to the *Public Records Act 1973*) and on authority by the Keeper of Public Records
- Transfer from non-government organisations, entities etc.
- Donation (Deed of Gift)
- Bequest
- Purchase
- Memorandum of Understanding
- By other formal agreement

### **2.2.2 Acceptable media and format for records and other historical material**

GHC will accept records and/or other historical material in the following media and formats;

- Printed or textual records (files, documents etc.)
- Photographs
- Negatives
- Artworks
- Slides
- Films
- Maps, plans and architectural drawings
- Sound recordings and oral histories
- Digital or born digital item(s)
- Physical objects

- Or as determined as appropriate by the Manager, Geelong Heritage Centre collection and/or the GHC Collection Advisory Committee.

The records and/or other historical material must be gifted originals, or the only copy (or best example) without restriction including transfer of copyright to GHC collection where legally possible.

### **2.2.3 Records and/or historical material not acquired**

Records and/or other historical material will not be accepted without clear and authoritative right to ownership. This does not include estray public records that have left the custody of the government agency.

Some local records and/or other historical material may not be accepted by GHC with consideration of the following:

- They do not meet GHC's Appraisal criteria
- Records and/or other historical material may be deemed to be more appropriately held elsewhere
- Condition of the records and/or other historical material: Records and/or other historical material that require significant preservation, conservation or that may impact on resources or compromise the collection may not be accepted. Rarity or historically significant item(s) may be considered by the GHC Collection Advisory Committee if funding for conservation or appropriate short term storage is available. Items damaged beyond repair will not be accepted.
- Duplications: GHC will seek to acquire the best quality of records and/or other historical material (e.g. programs, images etc.) Surplus copies may be deaccessioned in accordance with GHC's deaccession criteria.
- Access considerations; GHC reserves the right not to accept records and/or other historical material which are subject to prohibitive access or usage restrictions.

There are some specialist types of records and/or other historical material that the GHC may not collect, if storage equipment is lacking or a particular medium is required to view or access the item. This may include film archives or records stored on computer storage devices.

GHC staff may provide advice on a more suitable or specialist repository for such items.

## **2.3 Acquisition Conditions**

Before transfer GHC requires that records and or items transferred into its custody must meet the following minimum conditions:

- Records and/or other historical material are no longer being used for day to day administrative purposes by the creator or owner.
- Records and/or other historical material are covered by an authorised Retention and Disposal Authority or approved by the Keeper of Public Records (in relation to public records only) for storage at GHC.
- Donors of non-government records and/or other historical material have legal authority to transfer title of the said items and sign the Deed of Gift and Copyright Agreements.

- That the records and/or other historical material must comply with GHC appraisal criteria.
- All donor access and use restrictions and conditions must be specified in the donation agreement.

Responsibility for the records and/or other historical material in GHC custody is transferred to GHC at the point of physical acceptance of the collection or item and all appropriate forms and documentation (including transfer of ownership) have been signed. Unless subject to specific arrangements GHC will assume responsibility for preservation or conservation measures, arranging and describing records to professional standards with the exception of permanent public records.

GHC retains the right to reproduce items within the collection (subject to copyright considerations) by mechanical, electronic or photographic means for access, research purposes, conservation, preservation, promotion, outreach, education or security measures.

## 2.4 Approval of Acquisitions

All new acquisition proposals must be submitted to the Manager GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services. A report with a recommendation on each acquisition proposal will then be presented to the GHC Collection Advisory Committee for consideration.

The Manager GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services has the sole authority to approve a new acquisition in circumstances where a decision must be made specific to a donation offer within a time frame that will expire prior to the next scheduled meeting of the GHC Collection Advisory Committee.

The Manager GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services in direct consultation with PROV as required will recommend transfers from new agencies, organisations or donors for approval by the GHC Collection Advisory Committee.

Records and/or other historical material proposed for transfer must undergo an appraisal and satisfy the minimum criteria for recommendation to the GHC Collection Advisory Committee for retention.

### ***GHC Collection Appraisal Criteria:***

- Records and/or other historical material meet the objectives of the Collection and Acquisition Policy
- Records and/or other historical material provide the best examples or evidence of the creator, decision making processes, implementation of decisions, influence or significant contribution to the community, individual's lives, society, culture, events and the region's history.
- Records and/or other historical material are unique or the only existing copy.
- The authenticity and integrity of the records and/or other historical material is documented.
- Their historical or archival value can be demonstrated.
- They are in reasonable physical condition.\*
- GHC has the facilities to be able to care for the records and/or items properly.
- Records and/or other historical material are not subject to legal encumbrances or excessive access restrictions.

\* A special exemption may be applied to items of special significance that normally don't meet the accepted standards of condition.

### **Exceptions**

Approval for acquisition is considered to be ongoing where:

- Records and/or other historical material are included in current PROV retention and disposal authorities and they have received authority of the Keeper of Public Records for GHC storage and access (permanent public records only).
- Records and/or other historical material are included in GHC retention and disposal schedules.
- Records and/or other historical material nominated for transfer are a continuation of series already in GHC custody.

Where records and/or other historical material are in immediate threat or high risk, the Manager GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services may authorise transfer if the records meet the objectives of the Collection and Acquisition Policy. This decision and reasons for transfer (including threat or risk) must be documented and submitted to the GHC Collection Advisory Committee as soon as practical. All transfer documentation must be completed at the time of acquisition.

GHC actively encourages the return through donation of government records which have found their way into public hands or other collections. These records will be accepted through GHC in consultation with Public Record Office Victoria. Individuals or organisations returning estray public records may be eligible to apply for tax deductibility for the value of the record donated.

## **2.5 Access and Considerations**

Unless specific access arrangements have been agreed to, records and/or items transferred to GHC will normally be open to public access as soon as transfer procedures have been completed.

Access may be restricted where the physical condition of records would be at risk to further damage through handling.

Records may be restricted to comply with privacy or cultural considerations at the discretion of the Manager GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services.

Public records will be subject to access provisions as determined by PROV at the time of transfer. Only records with open access provisions will be stored at GHC, closed records as defined in the *Act* will remain in PROV custody until such time as they are opened.

## **2.6 Documentation**

All items considered for acquisition should comply with the documentation required in the relevant acquisition procedures. Procedures should include at the minimum:

- Appraisal recommendation and approval
- Signed GHC Deed of Gift Form from the donor, or the executor of bequests,
- Acknowledgement and transfer of copyright,

- Letter of acknowledgement for the donor or executor for Deed of Gift bequests and donations,
- Appropriate accession number and documentation for records accepted into the collection,
- Documentation required by PROV.

## 2.7 De-accessioning and Disposal

### 2.7.1 Public Records

All public records remain under the custody and control of the Keeper of Public Records, GHC may not dispose of public records without the Keepers authority and follow direction detailed in PROV Local Government General Disposal Schedule *PROS/98/01*.

### 2.7.2 Private Records

GHC reserves the right to re-evaluate or reappraise non-government items in its holdings and to deaccession them if appropriate in accordance with its de-accession procedures. Where the donor does not wish to reclaim items or cannot be located, GHC reserves the right to dispose of records the in accordance with GHC collection methods of disposal (see 2.7.3).

As a general rule, non-government GHC collection item(s) may be de-accessioned unless there are specific restrictions to the contrary. Items may be disposed with on assessment of the following considerations;

- Item does not comply with collection development aims and principles
- Item is found to be duplicated elsewhere
- Item is no longer relevant
- Item may not be conserved properly
- Item has deteriorated to the point where it cannot be repaired or copied.

### 2.7.3 Methods of disposal

Items that are surplus to requirements will be removed from the collection and disposed of either by:

- Return to donor or donor's family
- Transferred to another collecting agency
- Sale
- Destruction.

## 2.8 Collection Loans

### 2.8.1 Authority to authorise collection loans

- The authority to loan item(s) (except permanent public records) from the GHC Collection rests with the Manager, GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services.
- The authority to loan items(s) which are permanent public records from the GHC collection rests with the Director and Keeper of Public Records, Public Record Office Victoria.

- The authority to accept collection items on loan from individual(s), organisations and/or cultural institutions for display, research and/or other general purposes rests with the Manager, GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services.

### **2.8.2 Loans of item(s) from the GHC Collection**

Loans may be made in order to encourage research and appreciation of the item(s).

- Collection item(s) will only be made available on loan to an individual/organisation/cultural institution who can clearly demonstrate that the items will be stored and displayed in secure display cases, that adequate levels of safety and protection of items will be applied and that they have appropriate risk insurance for loaned items.
- All GHC collection items on loan are to be noted in the 'Loans Register' and signed by the borrower and an authorised Heritage Centre officer when removed and returned. The specified time of the loan and the condition of the item(s) are also to be noted.
- Permanent public records in the GHC collection will only be made available for loan to an individual/organisation/cultural institution that meets Public Records Office Victoria's exhibition loan conditions. Refer Exhibition Loans Policy, Public Record Office Victoria.
- Loan requests for permanent public records must follow Public Record Office Victoria's Exhibition Loan procedure. Refer Regional Repositories Loan Procedure, Public Record Office Victoria.

### **2.8.3 Items on loan to GHC**

Loans may be made in order to support Heritage Centre public programs, displays, exhibitions and/or special events.

- Any items borrowed by the Heritage Centre that are subject to conditions specified by prospective lenders must be approved for borrowing by the Manager, GHC Collection & Heritage Centre Services prior to delivery to the Heritage Centre.
- A condition assessment of any loaned items is to be conducted and recorded by either the Manager GHC collection and/or suitably qualified/trained Heritage Centre staff at the time of delivery, and before any physical interaction of any loaned items with GHC Collection item(s) is made.

**END OF DOCUMENT**