



THE FAVERSHAM SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1962

FLEUR DE LIS HERITAGE CENTRE

ESTABLISHED 1977

Acquisition and Disposal Policy

May 2009

This is the Acquisition and Disposal Policy of the Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre, 10-11 Preston Street, Faversham, Kent which is governed by The Faversham Society. This large and successful civic society is a Registered Charity run by entirely voluntary effort and which exists to preserve the historical integrity of Faversham and material culture associated with the town and its personalities.

This Policy was agreed by the Board of the Faversham Society in 2009 and will be reviewed every five years which dictates the next review will be completed by the end of 2014.

1. Museum's statement of purpose

The Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre will collect and preserve artefacts and any associated evidence relating to the society, culture and environment of the Faversham area and it will share these collections and related knowledge with the widest audiences, whilst also contributing to cultural tourism in the Faversham area.

2. Existing collections, including the subjects or themes and the periods of time and /or geographic areas to which the collections relate

The collections owned by the Museum have been accumulated by the Faversham Society and the Museum over the last 45 years, mostly through donations from the general public, but also through targeted acquisitions and occasional purchases. The collection has grown to around 40,000 objects and archival artefacts and represents the largest and most significant collection of material culture in the Borough of Swale.

The collection relates to the history and archaeology of Faversham and surrounding area with particular reference to the local industries of agriculture - especially fruit and hop-picking, brewing, brick making, ship building and explosives manufacture. The collection also includes domestic social history material; a significant collection of photographs, slides and photographic equipment; telecommunications equipment; and a substantial archive of documentary evidence from varied sources.

At present, the Museum's collections can be divided into the following subject areas:

General social history	c. 5,000 items including items from domestic and personal life, various industries: railways, brewing, explosives, shipbuilding, agriculture (especially hops), as well as wartime/military items.
Costume	c. 1,000 items. Large amount of costume from 1900's. Collection also includes a Polonaise Dress (18 th century) and a court dress from the late 19 th century
Photographic collection	c. 5,000 photographs, also glass negatives, slides, cameras, magic lantern projectors etc; Crosoer Slides

	(important collection of hand-coloured lantern slides taken by the Crosoer brothers - extensive photography around Faversham from 1890-1910); also movie archive with some digitized films. Also projectors, inc rare 3-D projector.
Coins and medals	Large general collection, in locally important explosives medals (awarded following the big explosion in 1916).
Sound and telecommunications	Oral history recordings, old records, audio equipment including a collection of radios, a Strowger telephone exchange (relay driven, still working and connected to the museum's internal phone and used by visitors), old switchboard.
Archaeology	Local archaeology, but including important material from Faversham Abbey; collection also includes archaeological human remains.
Geology	Small number of fossils from the local area.
Fine art	Framed and unframed works
Decorative art	General items but includes an important collection of Osborne Ivorex Plaques (manufactured in Faversham)
Maps & Plans	Large collection of material relating to Faversham and its buildings.
Large objects	A Victorian horse drawn fire engine, now adapted to manual use, with tank and operating bars. Originally used by Faversham Corporation in 1900s, in very good condition. Georgian Shop Front. A Gilbert Scott red telephone box and two others.
Archives	Archives contain c.25,000 items: Main document archive containing wills, deeds and other locally important documents Subsidiary doc archive Ephemera Faversham Society Papers Faversham Oyster Fishery Company ephemera Prints and Drawings Magazines (General) Magazines (Unique / Historical)

Magazines (Local History)
Newspapers
Posters
Faversham Maritime Archive
Explosives Archive
Railways Archive
Brick-making Archive
Brewery Archive
Local Schools Archive
Church Magazines and Newsletters
Faversham Town Council Minutes
Swale Council / KCC Material
Sheet Music

Archive of local maps and plans

Books

Large, varied library but also includes two very significant collections which are stored at the Museum on behalf of their owners: the Doddington Parochial Library with volumes dating from 1501 to the 1750's, and the Marlowe Society Library housing works relating to the Elizabethan playwright.

3. Criteria governing future acquisition policy including the subjects or themes, periods of time and/or geographic areas and any collections which will not be subject to further acquisition.

The Museum will collect artefacts and associated evidence relating to the history and personalities of Faversham and the surrounding area – defined as the historic Hundreds of Faversham and Boughton, and part of the historic Hundred of Teynham. The Museum will also collect from any period of history. Artefacts to be acquired should have originated in, or have a strong link to, Faversham.

The Museum would particularly like to strengthen its collection of material relating to the manufacture of explosives in the area, as this type of material is difficult to obtain due to the proper and systematic decontamination of such manufacturing sites upon decommissioning.

At present, the Museum does not have any significant natural history collections but will accept historically significant local material into the collections.

The Museum will also acquire secondary material which relates to the above geographical area for handling use with schools etc, but this will not be accessioned into the permanent collection.

4. Limitations on collecting

The Museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

5. Collecting policies of other museums

The Museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

- Maison Dieu Museum, Faversham
- Shepherd Neame Brewery Museum, Faversham
- Kent Life, Cobtree, Maidstone
- Maidstone Museum & the Bentriff Art Gallery, Maidstone
- Canterbury Museums & Art Galleries
- Sittingbourne Heritage Museum
- Dolphin Yard Sailing Barge Museum (recently destroyed by fire but may well be rejuvenated somewhere locally)
- Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway
- Other museums in Swale Borough

6. Policy review procedure

The Acquisition and Disposal Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above. MLA East (or any formal body which replaces it) will be notified of any changes to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

7. Acquisitions not covered by the policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the Council of the Faversham Society, having regard to the interests of other museums.

8. Acquisition procedures

- a) The Museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the Trustees or responsible officer is satisfied that the Museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- b) In particular, the Museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- c) In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the Museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The Trustees will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.
- d) So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.
- e) The museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the Trustees or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures:

For finds in England, Northern Ireland and Wales the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996. In Scotland, under the laws of bona vacantia including Treasure Trove, the Crown has title to all ownerless objects including antiquities. Scottish archaeological material cannot therefore be legally acquired by means other than by allocation to Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre, Faversham by the Crown. Where the Crown chooses to forego its title to a portable antiquity, a Curator or other responsible person acting on behalf of the Trustees of the Museum, can establish that valid title to the item in question has been acquired by ensuring that a certificate of 'No Claim' has been issued on behalf of the Crown.

- f) Any exceptions to the above clauses 8a, 8b, 8c, or 8e will only be because the Museum is either:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or
- acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded; or
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or
- in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.

In these cases the Museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

- g) As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the “Guidance for the care of human remains in museums” issued by DCMS in 2005.

9. Spoliation

The Museum will use the statement of principles ‘Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period’, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

10. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The Museum’s Trustees, acting on professional advice may take a decision to return objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The Museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 12a-12d, 12g and 12o below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

11. Management of archives

As the Museum holds and intends to acquire archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its Trustees will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002).

12. Disposal procedures

Disposal preliminaries

- a) The Trustees will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.
- b) By definition, the Museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The Trustees therefore accept the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the Museum's collection.
- c) The Museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.
- d) When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the Museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

Motivation for disposal and method of disposal

- e) When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 12g-12o will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.
- f) In exceptional cases, the disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below in paragraphs 12g-12m and 12o will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the Trustees will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:
 - the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection,
 - the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit),
 - the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored.

The disposal decision-making process

- g) Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the Trustees only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit,

Responsibility for disposal decision-making

- h) A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the Trustees of the Museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.

Use of proceeds of sale

- i) Any monies received by the Museum Trustees from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from MLA.
- j) The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

Disposal by gift or sale

- k) Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- l) If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- m) The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other

Disposal by exchange

- n) The Museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Documenting disposal

- o) Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.