



# ARTHUR WALTER KEDDIE RAILROAD LIBRARY COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

*Effective Date:*

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## **I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

1. The Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library (Library) is a department of the Feather River Railroad Society (FRRS), a California 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, which also operates the Western Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, California.
2. The purpose of the Library is to:
  - a. Manage and establish policies and modes of implementation for the successful maintenance of collections held the Feather River Rail Society.
  - b. Inspire, educate, promote and preserve archival material in accordance with the Feather River Rail Society Mission Statement.
  - c. Actively collect artifacts to compliment its educational mission, and that are within its mission's scope. Railroad history is presented to the public through permanent and temporary exhibitions, educational programs, guided tours and research collections.
3. The purpose of this "Collection Management Policy" is:
  - a. To provide the Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library staff with sound guidance to ensure the proper management of this unique and valuable railroad collection.
  - b. To serve as a public statement of the Feather River Rail Society and the Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library's professional standards regarding objects in its care, donated in the public trust.
  - c. The Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library in this document below will be referred to as the Library.

## **II. USE AND TYPES OF COLLECTIONS**

The Library collects, preserves, and interprets the history of Western Pacific Railway/Railroad culture through its collections, educational programs and exhibits. The collections are used to objectively interpret the history of the Western Pacific Railway/Railroad. Items that are not obviously relevant to the stated mission may also be acquired as part of special collections if approved by the Collections Committee as being of future relevance to the mission of interpreting Western Pacific Railway/Railroad history.

1. Permanent Collection: A *Deed of Gift* (Attachment 1) is used for these gifts. These items possess historic, scientific, technological or educational significance, and/or a high aesthetic quality. Accessions to the permanent collection are used for exhibition, examination, research. In order to improve existing collections, make best use of storage space and to best serve the public interest, objects that do not contribute to the purposes and goals of the Library will be considered liabilities and subject to deaccession, such as duplicate, irrelevant or badly deteriorated objects.
2. Research/Education Collection: A *Donation Receipt* (Attachment 2) is used for these

gifts. Items designated to this category may not meet all the requirements of the Permanent Collection, but may be used for educational programming, exhibition, examination, or research. This material will not be accessioned although the donation will be acknowledged and a record of its receipt will be maintained. Examples include excessive duplicates of items already in the permanent collection or photocopies of data for research.

3. Expendable Commodities: A *Proffer of Gift* (Attachment 3) is used for these gifts. These items shall be used for utilitarian, trade or sale purposes. Examples include excessive duplicates, serviceable items donated for practical, functional or utilitarian purposes, or items unrelated to the scope of the Library.

### **III. THE COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE**

The Collections Committee is composed of at least four members of the Feather River Rail Society as well as the Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library Archivist. The responsibility of this committee is to determine the content of the Library's collections. All decisions are made in accordance with the guidelines within this policy. The committee will meet regularly to review collections offers. The committee will assign for the objects accepted the type of collection category in which it will reside, and is empowered to change the assigned category as the collection of the Library evolves.

### **IV. ACQUISITIONS**

1. Items are added to the Library collections through gifts, bequests, purchases, exchanges, or other means of transferring ownership to the Feather River Rail Society.
2. The FRRS cannot engage in indiscriminate acquisition.
3. Permanent Collection accessions must fill a recognized deficiency or upgrade the existing collection.
4. Donors must declare in writing that they have full ownership of the item(s) donated and have absolute authority to make said donation. Donations to the FRRS are tax deductible as charitable contributions. However, it is the responsibility of the donor (s) to secure appraisals to support deductions (see current IRS policy). The FRRS cannot assume responsibility to appraise donations for tax purposes.
5. Gifts to the FRRS are considered outright, unconditional and unrestricted donations to be used in the best interest of the FRRS, without condition that object(s) be kept intact, exhibited, permanently or temporarily, or that the FRRS keep the object(s) indefinitely. Any exception, when required, may be made only with the approval of the Collections Committee and must be well documented.
6. Accessioned objects may be used for exhibition, study, research, loan, examination or may be deaccessioned if they do not contribute to the purposes and goals of the Library. Exhibition of any object is entirely at the discretion of the Archivist. When considering an item for acquisition into the collection, the Collections Committee should review the following guidelines:
7. Is the item consistent with the scope and purpose of the FRRS?
8. Will the object enhance collection categories that lack representation?
9. Is the object's condition stable enough for interpretive use? Can it be properly preserved for the future?
10. Will the item be used in the foreseeable future? Is it a duplicate of objects already in the

collection?

11. Will the item be donated with imposing restrictions regarding specific use and exhibition of the object?
12. Is the use of the object encumbered by intellectual property rights (copyright, patent, trademark)? (Any property restrictions should be detailed in writing on accession documentation.)
13. Is the object obscene, defamatory, or an invasion of privacy?
14. Is it made of hazardous material? Acceptance of hazardous materials is prohibited.
15. Will the acceptance of this item carry with it a future expense to the FRRS?
16. Does the Donor/Seller/Lender have clear legal title to this item? (The Collection Committee will not accept items that have been illegally obtained, imported or exported.)

## **V. REFUSALS OF OFFERS**

1. The FRRS should never collect objects outside its stated scope, nor more examples of any one specific object than are needed for exhibition and research purposes. Collecting numerous examples of an object, thereby creating excessive duplicates, must be limited to only Collections Committee authorized transactions. Insuring against over-collecting is necessary because of the FRRS's public trust responsibility to care in perpetuity for the objects it accepts into the permanent collection.
2. Considerations to be weighed when collecting numerous examples of objects include limited storage space, costs for adequate archival housing, potential exhibition and research suitability, and avoidance of later deaccessioning. Items that do not contribute to the purposes and goals of the Library are considered liabilities. Examples include hazardous, duplicate, and irrelevant or badly deteriorated objects. The FRRS reserves the right to refuse any unsolicited or anonymous donations.
3. It is the responsibility of the FRRS Archivist (or appointed representative) to discuss with potential donors the reasons why an object(s) is refused for acceptance into the permanent collection. It is essential to recognize potential donors' generosity and their efforts in attempting to preserve historical objects.
4. When the FRRS refuses acceptance of objects offered to it, the FRRS will attempt to aid the potential donor in finding a worthy and suitable repository for the object(s). Typically, the Archivist (or appointed representative) will refer the potential donor to other possible organizations that may be interested in acquiring the object(s). In order for the FRRS to refuse duplicate or unwanted objects, the FRRS must maintain a realistic inventory of the objects it currently has in its possession.

## **VI. LOAN AGREEMENTS**

1. Loans will be accepted only for temporary exhibition, research or duplication. The FRRS will not accept loaned objects, nor loan out objects, for a long-term or indefinite period of time such as a "permanent loan." A term longer than one year will not be accepted. The Collections Committee at the end of the initial tenure can consider requests for loan renewals.
2. The FRRS loans only properly accessioned and catalogued material. FRRS loans are not made to individuals. An outgoing loan may be approved to non-profit educational organizations only for the purpose of exhibition, research, or teaching, only if the FRRS, through affirmative action of the Board of Directors, and the Borrower agree upon the

following conditions:

- a. Each object shall remain in the condition in which it was lent. The object(s) shall not be altered in any way, cleaned, repaired, retouched or unframed, except with the express written authorization of the FRRS. To ensure compliance with this request, a condition report is to be filed by the Library prior to loan, and upon return of the object(s) to the Library. The Borrower should also file a condition report and signed copies should be sent to the Library.
  - b. Each object shall be given all due care and protection to ensure it against loss, theft, damage, and deterioration. Should loss, theft, damage, or deterioration occur, whether in transit or on the Borrower's premises or in his/her possession, the Borrower must report all loss or damage immediately to the FRRS in detail. The Borrower will be responsible for cost of damages and/or losses.
  - c. Each object shall bear a proper descriptive label and a credit line shall always be given to Courtesy of the Feather River Rail Society, Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library, Portola, California.
  - d. Unless prior written agreements are made, the Borrower shall be responsible for all costs associated with sending and returning the object(s), including but not limited to: packing, shipping, insurance if requested, photography and special crating or shipping requirements. All containers lent by the Library with the object(s) shall be returned with the object(s). Advance payment may be required.
  - e. The Borrower may request in writing to create photographs of the borrowed object(s) at Borrower's expense, but only for purposes of documentation, publicity or reproduction in an exhibition catalogue. Credits for photographs of loaned items should read: Courtesy of the Feather River Rail Society, Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library, Portola, California.
  - f. Loans may not to be transferred by the Borrower to any other institution or individual.
  - g. The Borrower is responsible for returning the loan by the time stated on the loan agreement and agrees to use the loaned item(s) only for stated purposes.
  - h. It is the responsibility of the Borrower to notify the FRRS of any change of address or change in ownership.
  - i. The FRRS shall secure a *Outgoing Loan Agreement* (Attachment 4) signed by all responsible parties, and shall be cautious about committing the FRRS to any financial or other obligations
3. For incoming loans, the Collections Committee shall determine if objects considered for loan to the FRRS are relevant to its scope, purpose and activities. Traveling exhibits are also considered as incoming loans and the same criteria shall apply. Any fees and freight charges must also be considered.

Incoming loans may be approved from organizations or individuals for the purpose of exhibition, research, duplication, teaching, or for review by the Collection Committee as a pending donation, only if both the FRRS and the Lender agree upon the following conditions:

- a. Objects accepted for loan shall remain in the possession of the FRRS for the duration of the time stated unless prior written agreements have been filed. Exhibition of loaned object(s) is entirely at the discretion of the Archivist.

- b. The FRRS will exercise such precautions of safeguarding and preserving the property as is done for the same general kind of objects owned by the FRRS, and shall not otherwise be responsible for said property. Loaned items may be insured, but only at the Lender's request and expense. Object(s) shall not be altered in any way, cleaned, repaired, retouched or unframed without the approval of the Lender.
- c. The FRRS shall secure a *Incoming Loan Agreement* (Attachment 5) signed by all responsible parties, and shall be cautious about committing the FRRS to any financial or other obligations.
- d. It is the responsibility of the Lender to notify the FRRS of any change of address or change in ownership of the loaned property. Loaned property will be returned only to the Lender of Record, unless the claimant can provide proof satisfactory to the FRRS that he or she has the legal authority for the return of the loan.
- e. When the loaned object is returned to the Lender, the loan record must be completed with the date of return and signed by the Lender and the Archivist. This updated loan record becomes a permanent part of the collection records. Additionally, a letter of appreciation to the Lender from the FRRS should accompany the returned item and a copy shall be filed with the updated loan record.
- f. If after reasonable efforts and through no fault of its own, the FRRS is unable to contact the Lender of Record following the expiration of the loan the FRRS will have the right to store the loan object(s) in any manner at the Lender's expense. If after three years the loaned object(s) has not been withdrawn by the Lender, and in consideration for its storage and safeguarding during this period, the object(s) shall be deemed as an unrestricted gift to the FRRS.

## **VII. ACCESSION-DEACCESSION & DISPOSITION**

### **1. REGISTRATION**

- a. Registration serves to maintain legal control of the FRRS collections. The Registrar, under direct supervision of the Archivist, is responsible for the initiation and maintenance of all collection records.
- b. For every object that is accepted as part of the Library collection, a purchase invoice, a *Deed of Gift* (Attachment 1), or a *Incoming Loan Agreement* (Attachment 5) must be filed. When items are transferred from a loan to gift status, a *Deed of Gift* (Attachment 1) must be filed. If appropriate, thank you letters are sent in acknowledgment. Proper documentation for the newly-acquired object should be established immediately following acquisition. This includes accession ledger entry, filing a completed accession record worksheet for each object, (kept in numeric order), completing card catalogue files and/or computer data entry in the master catalogue database, and filing of gift forms and correspondence in donor files (kept in alphabetical order).
- c. The FRRS utilizes a nomenclature hierarchy based on a system developed by the Robert G. Chenhall's System for Classifying Man-Made Objects as revised and expanded.
- d. Permanent records are kept in the administration offices, while duplicate copies will be stored in another building for disaster preparedness reasons. Updating of duplicate paper records will take place on a quarterly basis. A back up copy of any computerized records will be made whenever the records are updated and another copy will be kept off site and updated as needed.

### **2. ACCESSIONING**

Accessioning is the process of accepting and recording objects as part of the FRRS permanent collection. A single accession is an object or group of objects acquired from a single source at a single instance. Use the *Accession Worksheet* (Attachment 6) for a working copy and then transfer the information to the *Accession Form* (Attachment 7) for final registration.

3. IDENTIFICATION

- a. Accessions are numbered, or identified, as follows:
- b. The first number will be the year the donation was received. For the year 2003, the number will be 2003.
- c. The next number will be the number of the gift or purchase of that year, assigned by numerical order. The number 2003-02 represents the second donation of the year 2003.
- d. The third number denotes each individual item within the gift or purchase. The number 2003-02-29 represents the 29th object in the second donation in the year 2003.
- e. If one of the items is composed of more than one part, such as a pair of shoes, then each part is assigned a lower case letter. Example: The accession number 2003-02-15a-b denotes that the 15th item in the 2nd gift received in the year 2003 is composed of two parts, such as a pair of shoes.
- f. Specifics on how and where to mark objects in consistent, safe and reversible ways will be developed in a Collections Management Guidebook.

4. DEACCESSION

- a. The term "deaccession" describes the permanent removal of an object or objects from the Archives permanent collection. The permanent removal of permanent collection items is a topic of great debate in the museum community. The Archives will approve deaccessioning only under strict conditions and after careful consideration of the following:
- b. Is the object no longer relevant and useful to the mission of the Library?
- c. Is there danger of not being able to preserve the object properly?
- d. Has the object deteriorated beyond usefulness?
- e. Is it doubtful that the object will be used in the foreseeable future?
- f. Will this deaccession provide means for improving or enhancing the collections in order to further the mission of the FRRS?

5. DEACCESSION PROCESS

- a. The procedure for deaccessioning should be as follows:
- b. The Archivist will prepare a written recommendation of the items considered for deaccession using the *Item Condition Report* (Attachment 9). Use the *Deaccession Form* (Attachment 8) for the deaccession process.
- c. The Collections Committee must approve the recommendation.
- d. All deaccession recommendations shall be brought to the Feather River Rail Society Board of Directors for approval.
- e. All markings of ownership by the Library shall be removed before transfer of title. Before approving any deaccessions, the Archivist should decide how to dispose of the items.

6. DISPOSITION PROCEDURES

- a. Disposition procedures will largely depend on the responses to the preceding considerations for deaccessioning. If the items identified are in poor enough condition then the Registrar should use the *Item Condition Report* (Attachment 9) to start the

- disposition process.
- b. For example:
    - i. If the object is deaccessioned because it has deteriorated beyond usefulness, then it may be designated for educational "hands-on" use for the FRRS's educational programs.
    - ii. If the object is deaccessioned because it may be more suitable for use in another scholarly or cultural organization, then it may be transferred to that organization.
    - iii. If the deaccessioned object has substantial market value, then the choice must be made between a negotiated private sale or a public auction. In accordance with the standards formed by the museum community at large, the Library prefers a public auction to a private sale, and any money gained from the sale will be placed in the Library account for the purchase of other relevant artifacts to enhance one or more collection categories lacking representation.
  - c. The Library strongly prefers the transfer of deaccessioned objects to other scholarly or cultural organizations, rather than to private individuals or commercial entities.

## **VIII. PRESERVATION OF COLLECTIONS**

1. As stewards of historical cultural objects, the livelihood of such organizations lie within their ability to acquire and preserve objects that collectively illustrate its purpose for existence. One of the major responsibilities of the Society's staff is to protect and preserve the collections. The following guidelines are observed:
  - a. The FRRS will only collect items for which it feels it can give proper care for an indefinite period of time.
  - b. As preservation of the collections is a continuing responsibility, all Society staff should be familiar with and adhere to basic housekeeping requirements. Food, drinks and tobacco use are prohibited where collections will be at risk.
  - c. The Library staff managing artifacts may be trained in the proper procedures for their best treatment.
  - d. The condition of all objects entering the FRRS's permanent collections shall be noted on the *Accession Worksheet* (Attachment 6).
  - e. All handling, storage and disposal of hazardous materials, such as radioactive objects, foodstuffs, nitrate film, ammunition, operational firearms and chemicals will be performed in accordance with professional standards and California State law.
  - f. The collections should be inspected on a regular basis. When an object shows signs of deterioration, a *Item Condition Report* (Attachment 9) should be filed including appropriate recommendations regarding prioritization for treatment and subsequent storage.
  - g. No photograph or printed matter should be on permanent display under unfiltered fluorescent lighting.
  - h. No photograph or printed material over 25 years old shall be placed on display. Copies should be made for display.

## **IX. INVENTORY**

An inventory should be performed at least every two to five years. All objects should be examined for active deterioration. If during an inventory an item appears to be missing, a thorough search should be made. After the object is determined to be lost, the Archivist shall be

notified immediately and a statement of lost item should be filed as soon as possible.

## **X. SECURITY AND ACCESS**

1. The Archivist responsibly controls access to all collections.
2. No object of the collection is to leave its assigned location without a written record noting its new location.
3. Only under supervision may scholars and other qualified persons request and obtain access to the permanent collections.
4. Visitors to Collections areas must file a *Application For Access to Collection Materials* (Attachment 10). This allows the Library to document how its collections are used, and who is using them.
5. Strict key control of collections storage areas limits access to only those who require entry for legitimate reasons.
6. Doors remain locked at all times and all lights extinguished when not in use.
7. Purses, briefcases, parcels, and backpacks must be stowed in offices.
8. Cameras are not allowed without express permission.
9. Any request for copies of documents or photographic images shall be made on a *Document-Photo Reproduction Request* (Attachment 11) and are subject to the *Reproduction Fee Schedule* (Attachment 12).

## **XI. ATTACHMENTS**

The following attachments are in support of this policy and not subject to the policy review process. These attachments are subject to change from time to time as necessary in the performance of day to day activities associated with the FRRS collections.

Attachment 1	Deed of Gift
Attachment 2	Donation Receipt
Attachment 3	Proffer of Gift
Attachment 4	Outgoing Loan Agreement
Attachment 5	Incoming Loan Agreement
Attachment 6	Accession Worksheet
Attachment 7	Accession Form
Attachment 8	Deaccession Form
Attachment 9	Item Condition Report
Attachment 10	Application for Access to Collection Materials
Attachment 11	Document-Photo Reproduction Request
Attachment 12	Reproduction Fee Schedule

## **XII. GLOSSARY**

**ACCESSIONING:** The creation of an immediate, brief and permanent record utilizing a control number for an object or group of objects added to the collection from the same source at the same time, and for which the FRRS has custody, right or title. Customarily, an accession record includes among other data the accession (control) number, date and nature of acquisition (gift, purchase, bequest, etc.), source, brief description and identification, condition, provenance, value and the name of the staff person recording the accession.

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** The control number, unique to an object that is used for



identification, not description. It is part of the numbering system encompassing the permanent collection.

**ANTIQUÉ:** For U.S. Customs purposes, an object made at least 100 years prior to date of entry.

**ARCHIVIST:** An individual responsible for management and oversight of an archival repository or of records of enduring value, appraising, acquiring, arranging, describing, preserving, and providing access to records of enduring value, according to the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control to protect the materials' authenticity and context.

**CATALOGUING:** The creation of a full record in complete descriptive detail of all information about an object, assembly, or lot, cross-referenced to other records and files, and often containing a photograph or sketch. Catalogue data are usually in the form of cards, sheets, or automated data.

**CLASS:** A number of objects that have been grouped together because of common characteristics.

**CONDITION:** The physical state of an object. Also, a contract provision or stipulation.

**CONSERVATION:** The application of science to the examination and treatment of museum objects, also the study of the environment in which they are housed.

**CONSERVATOR:** One who is trained to utilize scientific techniques for the technical study, preservation, and treatment of museum objects.

**CURATOR:** An individual responsible for oversight of a collection or an exhibition. The administrative head of a museum or collection.

**DEACCESSION:** An object that has been permanently removed from the FRRS collection, usually through sale or exchange. Also, the process of permanently removing an object from the FRRS collection through the procedures detailed in the collection management policy.

**GIFT AGREEMENT:** The contract or deed that transfers ownership of an object or objects from a donor to the FRRS. This document should contain all conditions of the gift.

**INCOMING LOAN FORM:** A document prepared by the FRRS that states the conditions governing the objects it is borrowing. A receipt is also sent by the FRRS to the Lender for signature when the objects are returned as acknowledgment of their receiving the objects lent.

**INVENTORY:** The creation of an itemized list of objects that identifies each accession's physical location and movement. The act of physically locating all of the items for which the Library is responsible.

**LOCATION RECORD:** A file noting the exact and current location of all objects in the FRRS

collection, or for which the Archives has assumed responsibility.

**NOMENCLATURE HIERARCHY:** The standardized classification system used to catalogue like objects into main groups, and then further subdivide them into subgroups.

**OUTGOING LOAN FORM:** A document prepared by the lending organization which states the conditions governing loaned objects from the FRRS to which the Borrower must agree. A receipt is also sent by the FRRS to the Borrower for signature and returned to the FRRS as acknowledgment of receiving the objects lent.

**PERMANENT COLLECTION:** Those objects that are legally owned by the FRRS which are of intrinsic value in supporting the mission of the FRRS and are held and curated on a permanent basis.

**REGISTRAR:** An individual with broad responsibilities in the development and implementation of policies and procedures pertaining to the acquisition, registration, and disposition of collections. The registrar maintains all records pertaining to the all objects for which the Library has assumed responsibility.

**REGISTRATION:** The process of developing and maintaining an immediate, brief, and permanent means of identifying an object for which the Library has assumed permanent or temporary responsibility.

**SPOT INVENTORY:** An organized location search for a random selection of items for which the Library is responsible, as opposed to accounting for all objects.

### **XIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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