

Collections Donation Fact Sheet
Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library

MISSION STATEMENT

The Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library preserves and presents to the public the artistic, cultural, literary and spiritual heritage of the people of Antioch (Syria), thereby seeking to increase awareness and understanding of Middle Eastern culture, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, and the unique contributions of Arabic-speaking people to American life and to the world at large.

GIFT POLICY SUMMARY

- The Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library (AHML) accepts gifts of books, journals, artifacts and other items which support its mission as stated above and are judged by its Collections Committee to be a potentially significant contribution to the overall collection.
- Potential donors will submit a list of items to be considered for donation, accompanied by a completed Collections Donation Information Form and photographs of their potential donation.
- The Collections Committee will determine the acceptance, classification, housing, exhibition and/or circulation policies of all gift items. If a donation is a collection or group of items, it may not be possible to keep such collections intact, as most will be integrated into existing collections.
- The AHML will handle duplicates or unwanted items as outlined in the Temporary Custody Receipt, which will be provided to donors when items are submitted for consideration.
- AHML staff is not authorized under IRS regulations to assign a monetary value to said gifts or donations for income tax purposes.

How can I donate objects to the Museum/Library collection?

If you think your donation supports the AHML's mission as stated above, please read this Fact Sheet in its entirety and complete the attached *Collections Donation Information Form*. This form provides information about the item(s) and will help us to determine suitability for inclusion in the collection. It is important for you to be as detailed as possible. Please include a photograph of the artifact or collection. If possible, take the photo alongside a ruler. Please mail or email the completed form to:

Collections Committee, c/o Julia Ritter, Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library, 140 Church Camp Tr., Bolivar, PA 15923; julia@antiochianvillage.org

All offers must be submitted in writing by completing the Collections Donation Information Form below. We are very sorry that we cannot consider a donation without a completed form.

What happens after I submit the Collections Donation Information Form?

After we receive your form and photograph(s), we will review the item(s) and assess the suitability to the AHML's mission. We will also consider our ability to properly care for the donation, as well as our ability to make it accessible to the public. A staff member may contact you for more information, but in most cases we will make a decision based on the information you have provided on the Collections Donation Information Form. If we are interested in your item(s), they will be accepted into *Temporary Custody* until we are able to make a final decision.

What is Temporary Custody?

Potential donations to the museum and/or library will first be placed into Temporary Custody, where they are held until the Collections Committee has considered whether to accept them into the collection. Potential donors will sign and submit a *Temporary Custody Receipt* when they leave or send their item(s). Our Collections Committee, which meets every six months to review proposed donations, is

made up of staff, scholars, and members of the clergy. You will be contacted within 180 days of receipt to let you know the outcome of our review. Potential donations will be considered for inclusion in the Permanent Collection, or one of four other collections which enhance research, educational or exhibition activities at the Antiochian Village: the Archdiocese Department Archives, the Education Collection, the Reference Collection, and the Decorative / Prop Collection.

What happens after the Collections Committee makes a decision?

If the Collections Committee has decided to accept items for donation, a *Deed of Gift* transferring ownership of the items will be sent with your acceptance letter, and the item(s) will be officially accessioned into the collection. An acceptance of a donation does not mean the item(s) will be immediately put on display. An item may be accepted if it compliments a future exhibit or display, or if it would be useful to scholarly or public research.

If we are unable to accept all or some of your proposed donation, we will follow the instructions you provided on the Temporary Custody Receipt, either returning them to you at your expense or disposing of the item(s) as the staff sees fit.

What will we do with unwanted materials?

Not every item in a potential donation will be of sufficient historical value to the library or museum. Because of our limited space and scope, the Collections Committee must review the contents of each potential donation to determine what material is of truly substantive nature and what other items are routine, duplicative, or may not fit the needs of our collection. Through the Temporary Custody Receipt, you will be asked to indicate whether you would like unwanted items returned to you at this time. Otherwise, according to standard museum & library procedures, unwanted materials will be transferred to a more appropriate repository, or disposed of as the staff sees fit.

What is a Deed of Gift?

A Deed of Gift is a legal document that transfers ownership to the Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library, under the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. It is considered irrevocable. Before offering an item, please be certain that all interested parties understand the implications of signing a Deed of Gift. Family members should be in agreement about the decision to make the donation, and who has the legal authority to sign the Deed.

After a Deed of Gift is issued, and as the content or focus of the collection evolves, the Collections Committee has the right to decide in the future to remove (deaccession) an item from the collection.

What about appraisals and tax deductions?

Under IRS regulations, our staff is not authorized to appraise gifts or to assign a monetary value to said gifts or donations for income tax purposes. The responsibility for appraising donations remains with the donor. IRS policy states that any tax deduction claim for a contribution of property to a charitable organization, *the total claimed value of which exceeds \$5,000*, must include a written appraisal of the donated property from a qualified appraiser. To find a licensed appraiser in your area, you can request a referral from the following organizations: the American Society of Appraisers (www.appraisers.org); the International Society of Appraisers (www.isa-appraisers.org); or the Appraisers Association of America (www.appraisersassoc.org).

Questions?

If you have any further questions about this process, please contact Julia Ritter at 724-238-3677 x 425 or julia@antiochianvillage.org. We appreciate your support, and your interest in our collection.

Collections Donation Information Form

Please return completed form to:
Collections Committee, c/o Julia Ritter, Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library,
140 Church Camp Tr., Bolivar, PA 15923

Donor Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

I have read the *Collections Donation Fact Sheet* and understand the general policies and procedures for donations to the Antiochian Heritage Museum & Library (AHML).

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A. Object Information

Please list the item(s) that you are interested in donating, with a detailed description and a photograph of each one (photo taken alongside a ruler, if possible). Use reverse side or attach separate pages as necessary, including the following information:

Name/Kind of Object(s): _____

Name of Owner (if different from above): _____

Date of Object: _____ Measurements (length x width x height): _____

Condition: ___ excellent ___ very good ___ good ___ fair ___ poor

Condition details: _____

B. Historical Background:

Please provide any historical information about the item(s). Use reverse side or attach additional pages as necessary.

1. How was the item used? (by whom? when? where?)
2. When and where was it made and/or purchased?
3. Is there cultural significance to the item(s) (i.e. ceremonial, traditional, etc.) or other information you'd like to share?

C. Family History Information:

Please answer as completely as possible. Use reverse side or attach additional pages as necessary.

1. When did your family (or item's owner) come to the U.S., and where did they come from? What year / country?
2. Where in the U.S. did the family settle, and how did they make their living?
3. Where do offspring, if any, currently reside, and what are their occupations?
4. Are there significant events in this immigration story, or other details which you believe are important to share?