



Shire of West Arthur Council Policy – Betty Brown Historical Centre Management and Collection

Policy Number	C3.4 Community
Policy Title	Betty Brown Historical Centre Management and Collection Policy
Related Legislation	Local Government Act 1995 (WA) Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972. Weapons Act 1999 and the Weapons Regulations 1999. National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries 1.5 First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries Guidelines of Ethical Practice of the Oral History Association of Australia
Strategic Outcome Supported	Outcome 1.4 - pride in our community and a strong sense of identity is forged from our cultural heritage and past and present achievements.
Adopted by Council	20 May 2020
Review	On a three-yearly basis, with the next policy review due in 2023, Manager Community Services.

1. Objective

This Management and Collection Policy will be used to guide the funding, establishment and management structure of the Betty Brown Historical Centre. In addition, it will assist with the collection and inclusion of items into the Betty Brown Historical Centre, in accordance with the key theme and sub-themes of the Centre. The procedures developed to implement these policies will be outlined in a separate document, the Collection Procedures Manual.

2. Scope

This Policy will apply to the Betty Brown Historical Centre and those involved in the management and operations thereof.

3. Definitions

Deaccessioning: the administrative process of removing an item from the collection.

4. Policy Statement

The Betty Brown Historical Centre and its collection are owned by the Shire of West Arthur. The Centre is housed in the Road Board building in the Health and Resource Centre. Normal access to the Centre will be during the CRC opening hours of 8.30am to 4.30pm with after hours by prior arrangement.

4.1 Centre Management

4.1.1 Museum Reference Group

The Centre will be managed by a Museum Reference Group (MRG) which will consist of a maximum of six members of which, up to three will be Shire of

West Arthur Representatives (either staff or elected members) and up to three West Arthur Community Resource Centre (CRC) representatives (staff or nominated representatives). The MRG will be responsible for the operation of the Centre, the collection and cataloguing of items for inclusion in the Centre, and updating of policies and procedures associated with the Centre. The MRG will meet on an “as required” basis.

Specifically the MRG will be responsible for the following:

- setting procedures and guidelines associated with the management of the Centre;
- adopting and supporting the Collection Procedures Manual for the Centre;
- approving the Centre content (e.g. information for inclusion on panels, items to be included in the Centre);
- considering the annual budget needs and presenting to the Shire for budget consideration through the annual report;
- developing the long term vision for the Centre both financially and strategically through the Centre’s Forward Plan;
- overseeing short term planning and determining how new exhibits or programmes will be funded;
- approving significant changes to displays;
- recommending use of reserve/renewal funds to the Shire;
- approving who can open the Centre after hours/when it can be opened
- maintaining contact with relevant peak bodies and networks, in particular Museums Australia (WA); and
- identifying risks associated with the Centre and implementing strategies to manage these risks.

4.1.2 Role of Organisations in MRG

Each organisation within the MRG will have specifically allocated roles in the management of the Centre. The roles of each organisation are outlined below.

The Shire of West Arthur will be responsible for:

- managing Centre funds;
- meeting day to day operational and maintenance costs (power, cleaning materials, and consumables) excluding wages. All expenses are to be approved in advance by a Shire authorised officer;
- insuring the items contained within the collection and the display cases and panels in the Centre;
- cleaning the Centre a minimum of twice per week;
- payment of remuneration to the CRC for operating the Centre as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Shire and the CRC; and
- provision of staff to manage the Centre.

The CRC will be responsible for:

- ensuring the Centre is accessible to the public during opening hours;
- assisting visitors with enquiries;
- having a good understanding of the Centre and assisting patrons with electronic devices associated with the Centre (e.g. iPad and headphones) and managing the upkeep of the software on these devices; and
- ensuring the Centre is kept clean and tidy outside of normal Shire cleaning.

4.1.3 Centre Funding

The ongoing management of the Centre will be funded by the Shire of West Arthur. A portion of the money bequeathed to the Shire by Ms Betty Brown (\$50,000) plus funds remaining from the bequest following establishment has been annexed for future management. In addition to the bequeathed funds, the Shire will endeavour to allocate \$5,000 per annum, where possible, for the future upkeep and development of the Centre.

A donations box will be provided in the Centre and visitors will be encouraged to contribute to the donations box to assist with the Centre upkeep. Money from the donations tin will be managed by the Shire.

4.2 Collection Policy

The key theme for the Centre is to communicate the “Changing Role of Women in Agricultural Communities” with specific reference to the Shire of West Arthur. Subthemes of “Providing, Working, and Belonging” have been identified to assist with collection of items.

4.2.1 Method of Acquisition

The Centre will acquire objects for the permanent collection by donation, bequest, purchase or transfer. The Centre will consider conditional donations on a case by case basis. Loans will also be considered on a case by case basis. Decisions on items to acquire or loan will be made by the Museum Reference Group (MRG).

4.2.2 Acquisition Criteria

The MRG will consider the following criteria before approving acquisition of an object:

- **Relevance** - The Centre only collects objects that relate to the Centre’s purpose and key collecting areas and will not indiscriminately acquire objects that are not related to the themes described here.
- **Significance** - Priority is given to objects which are significant for their historic, aesthetic, scientific/research or social/spiritual value.
- **Provenance and Documentation** - Priority will be given to objects from the Shire of West Arthur and surrounding areas where the history of the object is known and associated documentation and support material can be provided. However, material may be obtained from other areas for comparative

purposes where this enhances understanding of the key themes within the collections.

- **Condition, intactness, integrity** - The condition of the object must be taken into consideration when acquiring material. Badly damaged material will not normally be accepted into the collection.
- **Interpretive Potential** - Objects that tell a story that adds to the interpretation of Centre themes will be prioritised.
- **Rarity** - Objects may be prioritised if they are rare examples of a particular kind of object.
- **Representativeness** - Objects may be prioritised if they are an excellent representative example of a particular kind of object
- **Duplications** - Objects that duplicate items already in the collection will not be accepted unless they are of superior condition and/or historic value. In such a case the duplicate may be considered for deaccessioning.
- **Legal Requirements** - The Centre only accept objects where the donor/vendor has legal title to the object.
- **Resource implications** - The Centre will considered its responsibility in relation to items that have highly specialised conservation, storage and display needs and the ability of the personnel to care for these items and the financial resources that maybe required to house such items.

4.3 Deaccessioning and Disposal

An object can be deaccessioned from the Centre's collection if:

- it does not comply with the current collection policy of the Centre;
- it is damaged beyond repair;
- the conservation and storage costs for it are beyond the means of the Centre;
- it is a lesser quality duplicate of an object the Centre already owns;
- it lacks any supporting information to enable proper identification or to establish its relevance to the collection; and
- a substantiated request for the return of the object to its original owner/donor is received. This could be the return of sacred material to Indigenous peoples.

Deaccessioning will be undertaken in accordance with Deaccession Procedures outlined in the Collection Procedures Manual.

In the event that the Centre needs to be closed, a resolution of council will be required.

5. Associated Documents

- Betty Brown Historical Centre Procedures Manual Rev 2 (draft)
- Betty Brown Historical Centre Annual Report (draft)
- Betty Brown Historical Centre Forward Plan (draft)