

OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OBJECT COLLECTIONS RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The Ohio Historical Society's Collections Management Policy states that

The collections of the Ohio Historical Society exist for the benefit of present and future generations. Therefore, the public shall be granted reasonable access, by appointment, to exhibited or stored collections, on a non-discriminatory basis for the purposes of research and other educational uses.

The public is encouraged to visit the Society's innovative online collection catalog (www.ohiohistory.org/occ) which provides integrated access to the Society's permanent and reference collections. Both textual descriptions and images of the collections are continually added to the online catalog.

The following procedures are designed to provide access to the collections, to coordinate research with other collections activities, to provide for an outcome for the research, and to safeguard the collections.

I. Initial Contacts:

Researchers are encouraged to use the Society's on-line collection catalog (www.ohiohistory.org/occ) for initial research into the collections, and contact relevant curators to discuss potential research projects, to assist in identifying relevant collections, and to confirm the availability of staff. A list of current curators is attached.

II. Consultations:

Consultations, brief physical reviews of holdings, and similar brief visits to the collections by outside researchers, may take place without formal proposals and review of the Collections Management Team at the discretion of the curator in charge of a particular collection. Such work might include a review of identifications, measurement of a small number of objects for research, gathering data not obvious from computerized records and other brief, non-invasive examinations of OHS materials. Visits that last a portion of one day might qualify as brief under this section. All reviews that require photography, destructive sampling, or greater utilization of staff time and space would be subject to the more formal procedures that follow.

III. Proposals:

A written proposal is required for every research project whether undertaken by OHS staff or outside researchers. The document can be in the form of a letter, an e-mail communication, or a formal research prospectus such as is required for a grant or for honors or graduate degrees. The proposal should include:

- Purpose of the research and background information on the topic
- A list of the OHS collections relevant to the topic
- The types of analyses to be used.

- Techniques regarded as destructive testing must be fully justified and the procedures dealing with destructive testing (see section VII) must be followed
- An estimate of the amount of space and equipment required and a time schedule for the work
- Provision for disseminating the results
- Researcher's resume or curriculum vitae
- Student researchers must submit a letter of endorsement from their faculty advisor

Researchers may request the loan of specific collections for study if it is not practical for them to examine the materials at the OHS collection facility. The Society's policy and procedures regarding outgoing loans are available from the Registrar's Office.

The staff curator will submit the research proposal Collections Management Team (CMT) for approval. If the proposal is approved, the Registrar's Office will inform the researcher in writing and confer with the relevant curator(s) to work out a mutually-satisfactory time schedule for the work. If the proposal is disapproved, the Registrar's Office will so inform the researcher in writing, indicating why the request has been rejected.

IV. Scheduling

The OHS collections facilities are generally open to researchers Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., contingent on staff schedules and holiday observances. Any deviation must have prior approval of the relevant curator and/or collections staff.

V. Access to collections and documentation files

Researchers are expected to follow established procedures for handling object collections and documentation files. Collections staff will provide copies of the written guidelines and rules.

VI. Photography

Researchers will follow the established photography procedures indicated at <http://www.ohiohistory.org/resource/audiovis/photodup.html> and summarized below. The contact for photoduplication is the Rights and Reproductions Team, images@ohiohistory.org; 614-297-2530.

Conditions of Reproduction:

- The right to reproduce materials held in the collections of the Ohio Historical Society is granted on a one-time basis only. Any subsequent reproduction of this material requires the separate express written permission of the Ohio Historical Society.
- Materials are reproduced for personal research use only and may not be used for publication, exhibition, or any other public purpose without the express written permission of the Ohio Historical Society.
- Any publication, exhibition, or other public use of material reproduced from the collections of the Society must credit the Ohio Historical Society.

- When photographs are taken of artifacts owned by the Ohio Historical Society, the Ohio Historical Society retains rights to those images. The images may be used for research, but any publication or public display is subject to the above conditions of reproduction. A new use agreement and appropriate fees must be submitted for each use. Copies of the images should be deposited with the Society within a month of the scheduled photography date.
- If a large amount of curatorial time will be required to assemble the objects being photographed or if professional quality photographs are required, the Society reserves the right to charge a set-up fee. The researcher will be fully informed before photography begins if a set-up fee is required.

Photography of Collections Objects for Personal Use:

Researchers or other individuals who wish to take record images (photographic or electronic) for their personal use may do so.

Personal use includes:

- non-commercial lecturing, as in teaching or at professional meetings;
- preparation of unpublished documents such as research funding proposals (this ordinarily does not include dissertations, which are considered publications);
- Preparation of a single computerized database for the individual's own use.

Individuals who wish to take record images are asked to sign an agreement stating that the images are for research and study only, to provide a list of objects by catalog number that were photographed, and to provide a set of these images to the staff curator.

VII. Equipment Availability

Researchers are expected to provide their own analytical tools—measuring devices, calculators, computers, magnifiers, etc.—and supplies. Researchers may have access to Society photocopying and fax machines, however, they will be billed for copies and faxes. Long-distance calls made on Society telephones will either be billed to the researcher's phone credit card or have the charges reversed.

VIII. Requests for Destructive Testing

The Society recognises its obligation to preserve its collections for future generations. At the same time, it also recognises the significant information that can be derived from various analyses that involve chemical and/or physical alteration or destruction of part or all of an object. In considering requests for destructive testing, the following criteria will be considered:

- The appropriateness of the proposed test as the least intrusive and most likely to yield the intended results
- The rarity and scientific importance of the object(s) to be tested
- The quantity of material required for the test
- The researcher's competence to remove and analyze the sample successfully
- If DNA sampling is involved, the DNA extraction will be either be returned to the Society or maintained by a suitable laboratory (under separate agreement with

Requests for destructive testing must be approved not only by the relevant curator but also the Collections Management Team and the Society's Chief Operating Officer. The only exception is a request for radiocarbon dating charcoal samples since those materials are generally collected specifically for that purpose. Researchers are encouraged to use accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) dating or other similar techniques that require very small amounts of material for a successful date so that a portion of a dated sample can be retained.

In order to address the researcher's proprietary interests in these data, public access to the data will be restricted for five years. After that time, the data will be available for reference by qualified researchers.

IX. Research Results

Researchers are expected to file copies of all research notes and other project documentation (electronic and paper records) with the Society at the conclusion of their research. These materials will become part of the permanent record of the collection(s) being examined. The Society reserves the right to publish the results if the researcher fails to do so within five years.

At the conclusion of their study, researchers will provide a copy of any publication (including hard copies of electronic presentations), thesis, or dissertation resulting from investigations of Society collections. These works will be maintained as part of the permanent records of the collections involved in the research

I have read this document and agree to abide by these procedures.

Researcher's Signature

Date

Researcher's Name and Address (Please print)

Current List of Curators of OHS Object Collections

Archaeology:

Bradley T. Lepper, blepper@ohiohistory.org; 614-297-2642

History:

Elizabeth Nelson, enelson@ohiohistory.org; 614-297-2512

Natural History:

Robert Glotzhober, bglotzhober@ohiohistory.org; 614-298-2054

Members of the OHS Collection Management Team

Currently 8 voting members representing Curatorial Services, Collection Management, State Archives, Museums Division, Institutional Advancement plus several non-voting members.

Procedures for Handling OHS Object Collections

1. Researchers will have limited access to objects. The number of objects available at one time is dependent upon the nature of the collection, the research project, and the discretion of the curatorial/collections staff
2. Collections staff will retrieve specified items from storage each day for the researcher, and then return them to the collections at the end of the day; researchers are not allowed in collections storage unless accompanied by staff
3. Researchers will follow the directions of collections staff regarding handling specific objects, including wearing cotton or latex gloves, keeping objects in protective boxes or foam-lined trays, and moving items on carts rather than hand carrying them.
4. Food or beverages are not allowed in storage areas or on tables where collections objects are laid out

Access to Documentation Files

1. Researchers will have access to OHS accession, field note, and photo files that are relevant to their particular research project
2. Collections staff will retrieve specified files for the researcher and will refile the materials
3. Copies of collection files and all other unpublished documents are provided to the researcher for their personal research only. They are not to be recopied or distributed in any form to any third party
4. Researchers will have access to OHS accession, field note, and photo files that are relevant to their particular research project
5. Collections staff will retrieve specified files for the researcher and will refile the materials
6. Copies of collection files and all other unpublished documents are provided to the researcher for their personal research only. They are not to be recopied or distributed in any form to any third party

Procedures for Handling Human Remains:

1. Researchers will maintain proper respect for the human remains to which they have been granted access
2. Researchers will always wear protective gloves when handling human remains, in part to lessen the introduction of modern DNA or other elements that might skew any future chemical analyses of the material
3. Remains, when removed from their storage box, will be placed in a padded tray or, in the case of skulls on a padded-fabric skull support; work areas will be covered with a layer of ethafoam (polyethylene) or microfoam (polypropylene) so that the bones do not rub against a hard surface
4. Researchers will use two hands to pick up most bones, especially skulls and long bones; they should also be very observant of fragile or broken bones and handle them accordingly
5. Researchers wishing to reconstruct a bone will consult with the curator of archaeology who will determine if reconstruction is reasonable and the particular method to be used.

6. The researcher will work closely with the archaeology staff to make sure that skeletal material is repacked with proper padding and support

I have read these procedures and agree to follow them during the course of my research project.

Signed

Date