AUSTRALIAN RACING MUSEUM

COLLECTION POLICY

Reviewed 5 July 2018

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# 1. Mission Statement and Objectives

To stimulate awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the nation’s thoroughbred racing heritage and conserve, develop, research, interpret and promote the Australian Racing Museum Collection.

Objectives:

* To ensure that the history and culture of thoroughbred racing is recorded and preserved for future generations of Australians.
* To provide Australian communities with access to Australia’s racing history and culture.
* To engage and educate traditional, future and potential racing fans.
* To interpret and contextualise the impact of racing on Australian society.
* To take thoroughbred horseracing to the widest possible audience: allowing people to access the sport anywhere, anytime.
* To increase the understanding and appreciation of the thoroughbred horse.

# 2. Purpose and Scope of the Collection Policy

The Collection Policy will be the guiding document for the development and management of the collection.

# 3. The Collection

**3.1 Themes**

The history of Australian thoroughbred horse racing and associated activities.

Priority collecting areas

* Early racing in Australia ( colonisation - 1900)
* Early international racing (pre Australian settlement)
* Jumps racing (steeplechase and hurdles)
* Early fashion and race wear (1800s-1960s)
* Champions, past, present and future
* Items relating to Australian Racing Hall of Fame inductees
* Items of significance to other states (besides Victoria)
* Internationalisation of Racing (with links to Australian Racing)
* Items that mark significant technological developments in racing
* Contemporary Fashions on the Field winning fashions.

**3.2 Historic Period**

The Museum will collect material from the beginning of horse racing in Australia, from the time of colonisation to the present day, and items relating to the foundations of racing internationally (pre Australian Settlement)

**3.3 Geographical Area**

The Museum has a national focus, collecting from all areas in Australia which have an association with racing. Material of international origin will also be collected if it relates to the Australians racing overseas, or people and horses that have had an impact on racing in Australia.

**3.4 Physical items to be Collected**

The Museum may collect documents including: books, manuscripts, maps, newspapers, journals, newsletters, magazines, scrapbooks, tickets, posters, programmes, menus, certificates, letters and ephemera.

The Museum may collect paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, trophies and decorative arts.

The Museum may collect historical and contemporary photographs.

The Museum may collect three dimensional objects such as: saddles, boots, whips, bookies bags, scales, riding equipment and racing equipment.

The Museum may collect textiles such as clothing, hats, scarves, racing colours, saddle cloths and programmes.

The Museum may collect oral and aural history.

**3.5 Access**

The Museum will make the collection accessible through:

* its permanent exhibition at the National Sports Museum
* outwards loans to approved institutions and Australian race clubs
* the Museum website
* direct collection access where possible, by appointment
* the Museum library, by appointment

# 4. How the Museum will Collect

**4.1 Method of Acquisition**

The Museum may acquire objects for the permanent collection by donation, bequest, purchase or exchange. The Museum will only accept items to which the owner can demonstrate legal title, and after any relevant ethical considerations have been taken into account.

**4.2 Acquisition Procedure**

All donations and purchases will be approved by the Acquisitions Group. The Acquisitions Group will consist of Museum staff and management.

Major purchases, exceeding $20,000 (budgeted) or $2,000 (unbudgeted) will be referred to the Museum Board for approval.

All recommendations made by the Acquisitions Group will be documented and retained by the Museum.

**4.3 Collection Criteria**

The Acquisitions Group will assess purchases and donations against the following criteria:

**Relevance**

The Museum may collect objects that further the Museum’s Mission and collection themes.

**Significance**

Priority will be given to objects which are significant for their historic, aesthetic, scientific/research or social/spiritual value, particularly where they fill an existing gap in the collection.

**Provenance & Documentation**

The Museum will take into consideration the information known about an item, such as original owner, history of item, identity of people, horses and places pictured. Priority will be given to items with associated documentation and support material.

**Condition, intactness, integrity**

Conservation and storage requirements of an item will be taken into account when collecting.

**Interpretive Potential**

Objects that tell a story that adds interest to the interpretation of museum themes will be highly prioritised.

**Rarity**

Objects will be given high priority if they are rare examples of their kind.

**Representativeness**

High priority will be given to items that are excellent representative examples of a key collecting area, racing activity or historical theme.

**Duplication**

The Museum will not normally collect items which duplicate existing objects within the Collection unless they are of superior condition, historic value or have high display or research potential.

**Storage**

Acceptance of items is subject to the availability of space for storage, security from risk of theft or damage and protection from environmental damage.

**Display**

The Museum will not generally accept items with legal or conservation restrictions which prevent them from being displayed. The Museum will not accept items which are conditional upon permanent display.

**Legal Requirements**

The Museum will only accept objects where the donor/vendor has legal title to the object.

# 5. Collection Care: Documentation, Conservation & Storage

**5.1 Documentation & Record Keeping**

The Museum aims to maintain an effective documentation system. Donor forms, receipts, collection, loans, accession and stakeholder databases and supplementary catalogue information will be kept at the Museum.

The Museum will follow the following procedure when acquiring material:

* Owner or agent contacts the Museum with details/photographs of the object.
* A receipt is issued to the owner recording the object name, address of the owner and contact number and date if the object comes on-site. An identifying tag is attached to the object. This records that the museum is holding the object and does not mean or imply the object has been accepted as part of the permanent collection.
* Notes on the history and associations of the object will be taken, for the Acquisition Committee to consider when assessing the object.
* The Acquisitions Group will meet to assess the donation for inclusion in the Museum Collection. Their decision is documented.
* Owners are notified of Acquisitions Group decisions, and items returned if necessary.
* If the object is accepted, the donor signs two copies of the Gift Agreement, one for the Museum and one to keep. A letter of thanks is sent to the donor.
* The object will be recorded in the accessions database, and once the Gift Agreement is returned, is catalogued, numbered, photographed or scanned, and put into storage. Where documentation relating to the significance of the object is available, an object file will be kept.

**5.2 Storage & Conservation**

The Museum aims to achieve high standards of collection care and storage.

Storage areas will remain clean, secure and sealed against the weather.

Temperature and relative humidity will be kept as stable as possible, ideally within agreed museum standards of a temperature of 20 degrees +/- 2 degrees and relative humidity of 50% +/- 5%

Access to storage areas will be controlled and alarmed when museum personnel are not on the premises.

Ultra-violet light should be excluded from storage areas, and lights turned off in storage areas when staff are not working in the space.

Where possible archival quality storage materials are to be used for all objects.

Storage areas will be regularly checked for pests and other problems.

Only appropriately trained staff and contractors will handle, clean, treat or restore objects.

# 6. Deaccessioning and Disposal Procedures

**6.1 Criteria for Deaccessioning**

Items which no longer meet the Collection Criteria may be deaccessioned.

An item may be deaccessioned from the Museum’s Collection if:

* It does not comply with the current Collection Policy of the Museum;
* It is damaged beyond repair;
* The conservation and storage costs of preserving it are beyond the means of the Museum;
* It poses risk to human health;
* It is a duplicate of an item which the Museum already owns;
* It is impossible that supporting information can be gained to enable identification or establish its relevance to the collection;
* A substantial request for the return of the item to its original owner/donor is received.

**6.2 Deaccession Procedures**

* Items will be identified for removal from the Collection by the Acquisitions Group for consideration with close reference to the criteria stated above.
* Items identified for deaccession will be referred to the Board for approval and then held for a twelve month ‘cooling off’ period before final disposal.
* Museum staff, volunteers, Board Members and their families are prohibited from purchasing or otherwise obtaining a deaccessioned item other than at public auction.
Note: An exception to this will be made in the case of items being returned to their original donors. In this case, involved party will abstain from any discussion and/or vote concerning the item/s.

**6.3 Disposal Procedures**

With the exception of special categories (6.3.1 – 6.3.4), items identified for deaccession will be disposed of in the following order of priority:

Donated items:

* Donated items will be first offered to the donor or donor’s family.
* If a thorough search to locate donor family members proves impossible or an offer to return an item to the donor’s family is declined, the item will be disposed of as for items acquired by means other than donation.

Items acquired by means other than donation (including purchased, commissioned or collected items):

* Offered on a gift or exchange basis to another appropriate public institution.
* Sold by public auction where appropriate. Proceeds from public sale will be used expressly for the purchase and care of collection items. **Sale as anonymous vendor should be considered.**
* Used as an educative/interpretative tool.
* If none of these methods are successful, an item may be deaccessioned by disposal.
* If an item has deteriorated to the point where it is not possible to conserve it and it no longer has any historical value, it may be necessary to deaccession an item by disposal.
Note: in this circumstance it may also be necessary to waive the 12 month cooling off period. This decision must be approved by ARM Acquisitions Group and reported to the board.

6.3.1 Items donated under the Cultural Gifts Program

* Items for which donors have received income tax credits cannot be returned to their source.
* Any items donated under this or a similar scheme must be transferred to another organisation with similar aims and equivalent tax deductible status.

6.3.2 Bequeathed Items

* The terms of the bequest and/or Last Will and Testament must be examined for conditions concerning deaccession or disposal from the Museum’s collection.
* If no such conditions exist, bequeathed items will be deaccessioned according to standard disposal procedures

6.3.3 Items acquired in partnership or collaboration with another individual or organisation

* Deaccession of any items acquired in this way must be approved by the partners and/or collaborators.
* Deaccession method must comply with the Australian Racing Museum’s standard disposal procedures, and must also be approved by the partners or collaborators.

6.3.4 Items purchased with grant funding.

* The terms of the grant funding must be examined, and any conditions observed.
* If no such conditions exist, items purchased with grant funding will be deaccessioned according to the Australian Racing Museum’s standard disposal procedures.

The Museum will annotate collection records to include reasoning, date and method of disposal

# 7. Loans

The Museum will borrow items to help meet its Mission Statement, goals and objectives.

**7.1 Loan Procedures**

* Permanent and long term loans will generally not be accepted by the Museum.
* The Museum holds separate forms and conditions for inward and outward loans.

**7.2 Inward Loans**

Loans will only be accepted for specific exhibitions or research and for fixed periods of time.

All inward loans will be recorded in the Museum database, and clearly identified as such.

A representative of both the Museum and the lender will be required to sign an agreed Inward Loan Form. Each party will hold a copy of this agreement. This form will record the conditions and the period of the loan.

The Museum agrees to exercise the same care with respect to loans as it does for its own collection.

Unless otherwise negotiated, loans shall remain in the possession of the Museum for the time specified on the form.

The Museum can request to renew loans if required. Documentation recording renewal must be signed by a Museum Officer and the lender.

**7.3 Outward Loans**

The Museum will lend objects to approved institutions and Australian race clubs. It will generally not lend to private collectors or individuals.

Borrowers and an officer of the Museum will be required to sign two outward loan agreement forms. Each party will hold a copy of this agreement. This form will record the conditions and the period of the loan.

The borrower must exercise care consistent with the standard required for MAP accreditation in the handling, storage and display of the loan object and must be prepared to meet any special conditions outlined in the outward loan agreement.

The borrower will provide a secure display and/or storage area.

Loans will be negotiated for fixed terms.

Objects cannot be treated or altered in any way without the written permission of the Museum.

Loans will remain in the possession of the borrower until returned to the Museum.

All outward loans will be recorded in the Museum database, and clearly identified as such.

# 8. Museum Wind Up Policy

In the event of the Australian Racing Museum Ltd being wound up, the collection, consisting of acquired articles, documents, photographs and records, that have been formally catalogued, and those awaiting cataloguing in a collection management system shall be dealt with as follows:-

i) Any item that has been loaned shall be returned to the lender,

ii) The collection of the Museum and any associated asset records, files and electronic data shall be transferred to a similar institution to which tax deductible gifts can be made.

# 9. Oral History Policy

An oral history agreement is signed by the person interviewed, which clearly states the purpose and intended use of the interviews and what copyright provisions apply.

The Museum abides by the Guidelines of Ethical Practice of the Oral History Association of Australia.

# 10. Access

Highlights of the collection are exhibited at Champions – Thoroughbred Racing Gallery, at the National Sports Museum. This permanent exhibition is governed by the terms of the Champions Exhibition Agreement between the National Sports Museum and the Australian Racing Museum.

The collection and collection records (subject to privacy and/or confidentiality considerations) are accessible for research purposes by appointment. Images of collection items may be purchased, and reproduction uses negotiated with authorised museum staff. Images will not be provided of photographs or artworks protected by copyright law without appropriate approvals.

# 11. Review of Collection Policy

This Collection Policy will be reviewed by the Museum on a 3 yearly basis.

# 12. Date of Endorsement