



Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum Collection Policy

POLICY OBJECTIVE

The Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum Collection Policy outlines the principles and practices that guide the decision-making process for the acquisition of collection objects and materials; collection management; public access; de-accession; and long-term preservation of the museum collection.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Local Government Act 1993

RELATED DOCUMENTS

National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries 2016

The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, The Burra Charter 2013

Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections 2009

Australian best practice guide to collecting cultural material 2015

Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Goulburn War Memorial and Museum Significance Assessment of the CEW Bean Collection 2015

POLICY STATEMENT

Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum was established in 1927 to house an extensive collection of WW1 war trophies allocated to the city of Goulburn by the Australian War Office throughout the 1920s. The Museum was originally located in the basement of the onsite war memorial tower constructed in 1925. In 1999 the onsite caretaker's cottage was refurbished as a museum and the entire collection was brought together and placed on display or in onsite storage.

A new state-of-the-art museum building opened alongside the cottage museum in 2020, more than doubling the exhibition space, the work area, and collection storage capacity. The museum and the collection are managed by Goulburn Mulwaree Council staff and volunteers.

The Museum values a close relationship with local community organisations including the RSL Goulburn Sub-Branch, Mulwaree High Remembrance Museum, Goulburn District Historical and Genealogical Society Inc. known as History Goulburn, and the Goulburn Mulwaree Library.

Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum collects and preserves the substantial military history of Goulburn and surrounding districts and interprets and exhibits the collection to expand knowledge and understanding of local stories and experiences of war. The museum also supports public programming and access to materials and objects for research purposes and engages in commemorative activities and events.

THE COLLECTION

The Collection consists of all objects held by the Museum as well as all objects contained within the memorial tower and the grounds. The collection has grown substantially in size and scope since the establishment of the museum in 1927 and now includes objects from every war in which Australia has served from the mid-1800s to the present day.

Key themes

Most significant collections held by the museum:

- CEW Bean collection – an extensive WW1 war trophy collection allocated to Goulburn following WW1 by the Australian War Records Office. The initial allocations arrived in 1920 and 1922 – additional items were sought by the Town Clerk in preparation for the opening of the museum and these arrived in 1927. This collection prompted the establishment of the museum.
- Changi Prison objects – in 2003 the museum sought Commonwealth Ministerial assistance to obtain artefacts from Changi Prison on the announcement it was to be demolished. The request was granted in 2004 when a prison cell door and lock, a brass cell number plate, a brass screen above the door, and a 1 x 1 metre section of the perimeter wall were donated and transported to Goulburn. Relics from Changi prison are only held in 3 museums outside of Singapore, the other 2 being the Australian War Memorial in Canberra (not on display) and the Imperial War Museums in London. The collection also includes objects and experiences from local service personnel interned as POWs at Changi during WW2.
- HMAS Goulburn – a collection of objects from the WW2 Australian Minesweeper (corvette) built by Cockatoo Docks and Engineering Co, Cockatoo Island Sydney in 1940. The collection includes the jackstaff, the brass ship's bell, the Coat of Arms plaque, several photographs from 1941, and a replica model of the ship presented to the museum by the Naval Association of Australia in 1962.

Other notable collections held by the museum:

- Weaponry – a substantial collection of weaponry from WW1 and WW2 including large artillery, firearms, bayonets, swords, and ammunition.
- Photographs – a wide-ranging collection primarily from WW1 and WW2 including many unique personal photographs taken by soldiers.
- Textiles – the majority are from WW2; the collection also includes uniforms from 1817 (British Army), WW1, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq.
- Letters and small personal objects – primarily WW2 with additional objects from all wars including the Crimean War 1853-1856; the Soudan War 1878; the Boer War 1899-1902; WW1, WW2, the Korean War; Vietnam; the Gulf War; Afghanistan and Iraq. Badges and Military Awards – from across all wars from the Crimean War through to Afghanistan and Iraq.
- Books – the museum holds a large collection of books, primarily non-fiction, that depict all wars and, in some cases, specific battles, people, and weaponry. Some books are extremely rare or unique.

Types of objects to be collected:

- Photographs
- Personal objects
- Weaponry
- Textiles
- Badges and Awards
- Books
- Ephemera
- Artworks
- Maps, plans, drawings
- Other objects that complement the existing collection and at the discretion of the Museums Coordinator

ACQUISITIONS

Method of acquisition

The Museum acquires objects in a range of ways, including direct allocations from Government agencies, donations, bequests, purchases, and transfers from other collecting institutions.

Criteria

The Museum will consider the following criteria in assessing the acquisition of objects into the Collection.

Relevance

Priority will be given to objects that align with the Museum's purpose, key themes and collecting areas.

Significance

Priority will be given to objects that are significant for their historic, aesthetic, research and/or social or spiritual value.

Provenance

Priority will be given to objects with a known history or known origins, for example, connection to a person or place or event.

Rarity and representativeness

Priority will be given to rare or excellent representative examples of objects.

Condition

Priority will be given to objects in good condition, however, objects that are particularly significant, rare and/or excellent representative examples will also be considered despite their condition. Live ammunition will not be considered under any circumstances.

Duplicates

Duplicates will be considered with particular attention paid to their relevance, significance, provenance and condition in determining their acquisition.

Replicas

Replicas will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Museums Coordinator.

Legal title

The donor or provider must have legal ownership of the object being donated or otherwise acquired. All donors must sign the Deed of Gift declaration on the Acquisition form prior to the donation being accepted.

The Museum will not accept conditional donations.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Documentation

All objects will have an accompanying file created to include acquisition documentation, provenance, receipts, correspondence, Collection title, object title, catalogue number and any and all other related documentation. All objects must have a corresponding record in the Museum Collection Management System.

All Acquisition and Donation forms are to be scanned and saved to the organisational records management system.

Storage

All objects will be stored appropriately in archival quality materials and/or containers and taking into account the materiality and condition of the object.

All objects in long-term storage will be allocated a shelf or drawer – no objects are to be stored on the floor or in any other inappropriate location.

The location of all objects will be recorded in the Museum Collection Management System and updated as required.

All firearms will comply with current NSW Police Firearms Registry requirements for safe storage, handling and exhibition.

Conservation

Minor conservation works will be determined by the Museums Coordinator and carried out under the supervision of the Museums Coordinator by suitably trained staff/volunteers.

Major conservation works will be referred to professional conservators. All conservation works, minor and major, will be photographed and documented and added to the object file. A record of any works will be entered into the Museum Collection Management System.

Preservation

The condition of all objects, on display or in storage, will be regularly checked and further assessment carried out as required. Paper, textiles and any and all other fragile objects will be handled appropriately and withheld from public display and/or public access as determined by the Museums Coordinator.

DE-ACCESSION AND DISPOSAL

Criteria for de-accession and disposal

The Museum will view de-accessioning and disposal of objects cautiously. All objects considered for de-accessioning will undergo a rigorous process of assessment by the Museums Coordinator based on the acquisition criteria. Detailed records will be kept in relation to any and all objects that are de-accessioned and these records will be entered into the Museum Collection Management System.

Methods of disposal

The method of disposal shall proceed in the following priority:

- Offer the object to the donor or their family – with the proviso that if the object/s were a donation made under the Cultural Gifts Program they will not be returned to the donor as the donor has already received the benefit of a tax deduction for the gift
- Offer to another collecting institution
- Use as an education tool
- Sale by auction
- Destruction if the object is found to be dangerous to human health or is damaged beyond repair.

No objects from the CEW Bean Collection will be de-accessioned for any reason.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Public access to the Collection is a key purpose of the Museum. General public access to the collection is by way of permanent displays, exhibitions, public programming and online access to digital versions of the collection.

Access beyond this for research purposes and so on is to be considered on a case by case basis and determined by the Museums Coordinator. Where appropriate, a digital representation of fragile or unique objects will be made available in lieu of the physical object.

Permanent displays

Permanent displays consist of:

- The CEW Bean collection situated in the cottage museum
- The weapons collection situated in the cottage museum.

Exhibitions

Exhibitions will:

- Be primarily based on the Collection held by Rocky Hill War Memorial Museum
- Prioritise local stories and experiences – and broader stories and experiences that represent or resonate with local stories and experiences
- Whenever possible, be widely promoted via social media and other online platforms, paper based materials such as posters and pamphlets, Goulburn Visitor Information Service, Goulburn Mulwaree Council and media such as radio and television.

Public programming

Public programming will be designed to do one or more of the following:

- Support current exhibitions
- Engage local community members in the military history of the region
- Expand knowledge and understanding of local stories and experiences of war
- Provide an avenue for local students and/or tertiary students to engage in and/or present their research
- Provide an enriched experience for local, State, National or International visitors.

Research

The Museum encourages research on collection objects and/or on local stories and experiences of war and supports research in the following ways:

- By providing onsite access to a substantial Library of war related books
- By providing online access to material via the Rocky Hill War Memorial website
- By providing onsite access to collection object/s on a case-by-case basis and as determined by the Museums Coordinator.

LOANS

The Museum will not loan any Collection object for any purpose.

The loan of items from other institutions or individuals for display by the Museum for a fixed term will be considered on a case by case basis by the Museums Coordinator.

Version	Council Meeting Date	Resolution	Adoption Date	Effective From
1	21 February 2023	2023/27	21 February 2023	28 March 2023
All policies can be reviewed or revoked by resolution of Council at anytime.				

DIRECTORATE: Corporate & Community Services

BUSINESS UNIT: Marketing, Events & Culture