

Collections Management Process at Paimio's Museums

1. Initial contact

A donor contacts the museum to offer an object for the museum's collection. The donor is briefly interviewed, and basic information about the object, its history and its condition is recorded. The museum may request photographs of the object or, if necessary, arrange a meeting with the donor.

2. Collection assessment and acquisition decision

Before an acquisition decision is made, the museum assesses its existing collections to determine whether the object fits within its collections policy. If the object is considered suitable, the museum accepts it into the collection. If the donation is not accepted, the donor may be referred to another museum. Through the shared collections policy of the museums of Southwest Finland, each proposed donation can be directed to the institution best suited to preserve it.

3. Acceptance of the object

The object is formally accepted by the member of staff responsible for collections development or another authorised museum professional. The donor is interviewed again to ensure that as much information as possible about the object's history, provenance and use is recorded. Two identical Deeds of Gift are prepared, one for the donor and one for the museum. The Deed of Gift is signed by the donor (or an authorised representative) and by the museum representative accepting the donation.

4. Accession registration

The object is formally recorded as having been received by the museum through the accession register. The register may consist of an accession book or another permanent record of donations. The Deed of Gift and all related documentation must remain permanently linked to the donated object. For example, the donation may be accompanied by a document recording the donor's name, the date of donation and the Deed of Gift number. The accession information is entered into the museum's collections management system during the cataloguing process.

5. Quarantine, condition assessment and cleaning

After being accepted, the object is transferred to a quarantine area, where its condition is carefully examined. The object is thoroughly cleaned and photographed to document its condition and to support any future conservation work. Cleaning is generally carried out using a museum vacuum cleaner. If pests are suspected, the object is treated by freezing, heat treatment or, where necessary, appropriate pest-control methods.

6. Cataloguing and research

Cataloguing is carried out by professional museum staff. Every effort is made to document all available information relating to the object. In addition to information provided by the donor, museum staff use published research, archival sources and other reference materials to complete the catalogue record.