

TENTERFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY STATEMENT

HEADING:

**School of Arts Collections Acquisition and
Deaccession Policy**

MEETING ADOPTED AND RESOLUTION NO.:

**23 August 2017
168/17**

HISTORY OF DOCUMENT PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED:

**28 February 2003 87/03
25 March 2015 61/15**

Background:

The Tenterfield School of Arts was restored in 2001 to celebrate the centenary of Federation. The building and the bulk of the collection are owned by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and leased to Tenterfield Shire Council. Council manages the Museum, through a Board of Management on which the National Trust is represented.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for use by staff of the School of Arts in the management of artefacts currently on display and in the acquisition/de-acquisition of material. It is also designed to reflect the joint perspective of those organisations which have or will in the future contribute material to the museum.

Each organisation has a responsibility to maintain accurate records of material on display and from time to time may seek to remove items for their own needs, for example, for travelling exhibitions.

Collections:

The museum has a small but eclectic collection of material mostly relating to Sir Henry Parkes. It includes items of considerable significance with high interpretative potential as well as more ephemeral material. The highlights are the full-length portrait of Parkes by Julian Ashton, a portrait bust by Theo Cowan, and memorabilia such as a ceremonial wheelbarrow used to turn the first sod of the North Shore railway, walking sticks, a birthday book signed by Parkes' contemporaries including Lord Tennyson and Arthur Streeton and the collar of Parkes' dog, a mastiff named Maori.

The collection also contains material provenanced to the School of Arts including books from the original Literary Institute library, artefacts from the original School of Arts Museum and furniture.

The School of Arts Museum exhibits material belonging to two separate collections, the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and the Tenterfield Historical Society. In addition there are a few items on loan from private individuals or outside institutions, for example, the Powerhouse Museum.

The Tenterfield Shire Council is an active collecting body although no council material is currently exhibited in the museum. Similarly the Tenterfield School of Arts Friends committee has a small collection of material which it is gradually documenting.

Themes explored by the Museum:

The themes explored by the Museum are:

1. The history and use of the School of Arts Complex
2. Sir Henry Parkes' Tenterfield Oration
3. The life of Sir Henry Parkes
4. The Federation Movement
5. The town of Tenterfield in the lead up to Federation
6. The consequences of Federation on Tenterfield

Exhibition Strategy:

The Museum comprises six (6) exhibition spaces. These are configured to explore different aspects of the themes listed above. The School of Arts buildings are the primary artefact of the museum. Therefore the choice of particular spaces to explore particular themes has, to a large extent, been determined by the historical use of the rooms. Thus, for example, the Original Hall is used to explore the Tenterfield Oration as it was in this room that Sir Henry Parkes' made his famous speech; the Games Room explores the theme of the School of Arts as a venue for recreational activities and the original Reading Room contains material relating to the early use of the complex for education.

The various exhibition spaces and the themes they explore are listed below:

Large Hall Foyer: The history of the School of Arts as a cultural centre for Tenterfield. Displays in this area focus on the use of the School of Arts for theatrical performances, exhibitions and pageants.

The Large Hall Foyer will also operate as an entry point and orientation space, requiring the introduction of a bookshop, ticketing facility and multi-media element.

Parkes' Gallery: The life and career of Sir Henry Parkes

Original Hall: The Tenterfield Oration and issues relating to Federation

Original Reading Room 1: The history of the School of Arts Literary Institute

Original Reading Room 2: The town of Tenterfield and the early School of Arts museum

Games Room: The history of the School of Arts as a recreational venue

Temporary Exhibitions and/or Displays:

It is further envisaged that the opportunity will become available for the installation of temporary exhibitions and/or displays in yet-to-be nominated sections of the buildings. This development would allow for closer community engagement with the institution as well as encourage repeat visitation. Themes can be drawn from such

publications as Writing Tenterfield, edited by J.S. Ryan (Armidale, University of New England, 2002) while the Tenterfield Historical Society Museum, University of New England Library and State Library of New South Wales are possible sources for loan works. Other historic and contemporary political themes of national importance that underpin the Federation theme include the following; Evolution of the Constitution, New State Movement, 1967 Referendum, Republican Debate and Immigration.

Exhibition proposals, showcases and lighting will be developed in association with Trust staff.

Acquisition Policy:

Collection development at the museum will be determined by two over-riding principles; the degree to which material relates to the five themes explored at the museum and the ability of the material to be used in the exhibitions exploring these themes. The criteria for assessing potential acquisitions are set out below.

The Broad Tests:

Material should only be acquired by the partner organisation for use in the museum if it relates to one of the five themes. To be considered for acquisition items must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. They must have a known association with the visit of Sir Henry Parkes to Tenterfield and his federation speech.
2. They must have a known association with Sir Henry Parkes and his immediate family.
3. They must have a known association with the Tenterfield School of Arts.
4. They must relate to the Federation movement.
5. They must relate to the history of the town of Tenterfield in the lead up to Federation.
6. They must relate to the history of the town of Tenterfield as a consequence of Federation.

Criteria 1 to 3 are provenance-based. Criteria 4 and 6 provide less stringent tests than criteria 1 to 3. In assessing material offered to the collection under criteria 4 and 6 particular consideration must be given as to how the artefacts will assist the development of the thematic exhibitions in the museum.

Additional Qualitative Tests:

The Broad Tests listed above provide an initial benchmark to be used to determine whether material should be considered for the permanent collection. Material which is eligible under the Broad Tests then needs to be subjected to a more rigorous process of assessment. Factors to be considered include:

1. Rarity
2. Ability to represent a theme explored at the museum
3. Condition
4. Display potential
5. Capacity to fill a gap in the collection
6. Capacity to strengthen an existing collecting area
7. Ability of the museum to maintain the item

8. Storage requirements

The Tommaso Sani bust of Parkes' second wife, Eleanor, currently held in a private collection, provides an example of how these tests would be applied. (See Appendix A.)

Relationship between the National Trust Collection and the Tenterfield Shire Local Studies Collection:

The Tenterfield Shire Council through the Tenterfield Shire Library Local Studies project collects material (photographs, publications, ephemera) associated with the history of the Shire. Collection Guidelines are attached (See Appendix B.).

Under normal circumstances, the Tenterfield Shire Council, through the Local Studies Collection program will not acquire major items directly associated with Sir Henry Parkes given the interest of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) in this area, with the exception of the following circumstances;

- A donor wishes material to be given to the Tenterfield Shire Council
- The National Trust lacks the funds but there exists local support

Ownership of new Accessions to the Museum Collection:

Museum staff, when approached by donors, should indicate that they can choose to donate to either the National Trust of Australia (NSW) or the Tenterfield Shire Council. Depending on the outcome, material will be processed according to the procedures of either organisation.

Co-operative Collecting:

The museum will adopt a co-operative approach to collecting. Material which is outside the collecting focus of the museum but within the scope of the Acquisition Policy of the Tenterfield Shire Library Local Studies Collection will be referred to the Senior Economic Development Officer, National Trust Representative and the Museum Advisor;

Prospective donors offering material which is outside both the acquisition policies of the Museum and the Tenterfield Shire Library's Local Studies Collection, or is not accepted into either collection, should be referred to the Tenterfield Historical Society (a copy of the Tenterfield Historical Society's Acquisition Policy is attached at Appendix C) or the Tenterfield Railway Museum (a copy of the Tenterfield Railway Museum's Acquisition Policy is attached at Appendix D) or the National Trust of Australia (NSW) for the item to be considered for the Trust's other collections (a copy of the National Trust's Acquisition Policy is attached at Appendix E).

General Standards:

Policy for the Acceptance of Objects

On a permanent and temporary basis, the Museum will only collect those objects, which are relevant and consistent with the purposes and objectives of the Museum as set out above.

Prior to items being acquired for the museum that are valued above \$2000, or items likely to create long-term management issues due to their size or condition, by either the

National Trust of Australia (NSW) or the Tenterfield Shire Council, ratification of the acquisition should be obtained from the Board of Management.

Ownership of accessioned material will be transferred to either the National Trust of Australia (NSW) or the Tenterfield Shire Council using a Deed of Gift, signed by the donor (see appendix F).



Collections Management:

Loans to the Museum

General

1. All objects entering or leaving the collection on a temporary basis (e.g. a loan) will be accompanied by appropriate documentation stating the responsibilities of both the lender and borrower concerning the use, care, maintenance and insurance of the objects (see Appendix G). Loan agreements will be prepared by Tenterfield Shire Council. The outward loan of material owned by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) must be approved by the Trust's Director of Museums and Properties.
2. When a condition report is prepared, any special requirements regarding environmental controls or travel should be stated.
3. A time limit for the period of the loan must always be nominated
4. The Trust and Tenterfield Shire Council will respect the conditions of loan agreements

Short-Term Loans

1. In general these loans will be associated with exhibitions or specific research projects. In an exceptional case a short-term loan may be accepted for other purposes.
2. Objects entering the collection on short-term loan will be listed in the Short-Term Loans Register (a report of the collection database) and a loan agreement will be prepared.

Long-Term Loans

1. In general, these will be objects to be displayed in permanent room settings or thematic exhibitions.
2. Long -term loans will only be accepted for a fixed term, which can be renegotiated on termination.
3. Objects entering the collection on long-term loan will be listed in the long-term loan register and photographed and fully catalogued in the same manner as items in the permanent collection

Permanent and Indefinite Loans

1. Permanent and indefinite loans are not permitted by this policy

Loans to Accredited Bodies and Institutions

1. The Trust will lend to accredited bodies and organisations on a stipulated short-term or long-term basis, provided that adequate care and conservation, insurance at current valuation and security are guaranteed and where it furthers the aims of the Trust and/or gains publicity for the Trust. Loan fees may be charged.
2. Objects lent by the Trust to other bodies and organisations are to be inspected regularly by the National Trust staff at regular intervals.
3. All loans from the Trust are to be recorded in the Outward Loans Register and Loan Agreements prepared.
4. A Condition Report, and photograph, will be prepared before any object leaves the Trust collection.
5. National Trust loan agreement forms are to be signed by the party borrowing the item

Standards for Acquisitions:

1. Objects will be acquired through gift, bequest, exchange, purchase, field collection or loan.
2. Gifts and bequests from individuals are to be encouraged. These will be considered as an outright gift unless otherwise stipulated.
3. The Trust will only acquire objects if it can provide adequate resources and procedures for their care.
4. The Trust will intend that the objects other than those on loan shall have permanency in the collection as long as they retain their physical integrity, their identity, their authenticity and their documentation and/or so long as they remain useful for the purposes of the Trust. The Trust cannot guarantee to exhibit any object, either now or in the future, which enters the permanent collection.
5. All objects entering the permanent collection will be accompanied by a legal document transferring full title of ownership to the Trust, without restriction as to use or future disposition.
6. If a sufficiently important case exists for some restrictions to be attached to an accession, a reasonable date will be set for their termination, and conditions under which their force may terminate will be set forth at the time of the acquisition. The Trust will strictly adhere to the provisions of any restrictions unless a court of competent jurisdiction authorises a change.
7. All objects entering the permanent collection will be listed in an Accession Register and the Register of the property, at which they are to be located. The Trust will document and retain records of accession for all objects acquired for the collection.
8. The Trust will encourage maximum utilisation of its collection provided that the preservation of the objects is not compromised and their use is consistent with the overall goals and ethics of the Trust. It is realised that the deterioration and destruction of some objects may occur within the course of normal museum use. In

this regard, the Trust will endeavour to obtain supplemental materials, such as models or replicas, to protect important and valuable items in the collection.

9. The Trust will cooperate with other museums, historic preservation organisations, libraries and agencies with similar overlapping interests and collecting policies in order to avoid duplication to achieve an integrated plan for preservation and interpretation.

Ethics:

1. The Trust will acquire collections in accordance with State and Federal law and international agreements between Australia and other countries.
2. The Trust will only acquire objects having a legal and ethical provenance.
3. The private collection of objects by members of staff of the Trust will always be conducted in accordance with the standards of the Code of Ethics of the Museums Association of Australia.
4. The Trust will actively promote the education of the general public regarding the ethical and legal responsibilities of natural and cultural heritage preservation.
5. The Trust will not provide appraisals for tax deductions or other external purposes, but will assist donors to obtain valuations for tax deduction purposes.
6. Identification and authentication will be given only for professional and educational purposes under the ethical and legal guidelines laid down by the Codes of Ethics of the Museums Association of Australia.

Deaccession Policy:

1. The Trust will adopt a conservative policy in this regard and will only deaccession objects if they meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - 1.1 The object is outside the Trust's Statement of purpose and its Acquisition Policy.
 - 1.2 The object lacks physical integrity.
 - 1.3 The object has failed to retain its identity or authenticity.
 - 1.4 The object is a duplicate.
 - 1.5 The Trust is unable to provide adequate care and conservation for the object
 - 1.6 The object has deteriorated beyond usefulness
2. The Trust Board will determine that disposal of the object is in the Trust's best interests.
3. The disposal of deaccessioned objects should firstly be by sale, donation or exchange with a recognised body or institution, or secondly by sale at public auction.

Implementation:

1. The Trust relies on the competence of its staff and the advice of its professional committees and outside experts to implement this policy.

2. Standard procedures will be followed for the implementation of the policy at each property, in accordance with guidelines laid down by the Museums and Collections Committee.
3. All acquisitions will be governed by the Acquisitions Policy in its general and particular form. Offers of donation are to be referred to the Director of Museums and Collections, Curatorial Officer or the appropriate committee and must be accompanied by the relevant documentation (e.g., photograph, temporary receipt, Accession Assessment Form).
4. This policy should be subject to review after five years.

APPENDICES:

- A. Example Demonstrating Additional Qualitative Tests
- B. Collection Guidelines, Tenterfield Shire Library Local Studies Project
- C. Acquisition Policy, Tenterfield Historical Society
- D. Acquisition Policy, Tenterfield Railway Museum
- E. Acquisition Policy, National Trust of Australia (NSW)
- F. Deed of Gift Form
- G. Loan Agreement Form

APPENDIX A

Example Demonstrating Additional Qualitative Tests

Rarity

The Sani bust of Eleanor, Lady Parkes, has a high degree of rarity.

Ability to Represent

The Parkes' Gallery explores the life and career of Sir Henry Parkes. The bust of his second wife provides a vivid evocation of Lady Parkes. In addition, Sir Henry Parkes was a patron of the arts in general and of the Italian sculptors Simonetti and Fontana who were working in Sydney in the 1870s and 1880s in particular. The bust of Lady Parkes represents Sir Henry Parkes' interest in fine arts, and patronage of artists.

Condition

The bust is in good condition.

Display Potential

The bust provides a vivid evocation of Eleanor Parkes. It would work well in the Parkes' Gallery.

Capacity to fill a gap in the Collection

The collection includes many images of Sir Henry, including portraits, a bust and photographs but fewer images of his wives.

Capacity to strengthen an existing collecting area

The bust strengthens the collection in two ways. Firstly by adding to material relating to Sir Henry Parkes' family and secondly by including another example of work by contemporary artists with whom Parkes was associated (the collection already includes a portrait by Julian Ashton).

Ability to Maintain

The bust is in good order. It is made of marble and can be placed on permanent, or semi permanent display.

Storage

It is envisaged that the bust will be permanently housed in the Parkes' Gallery. Safe, secure storage is available for when it is not on exhibition.