

Community Education Committee  
Exhibition Policy

POLICY NUMBER CE.02

SHASTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Exhibition Policy

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CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that we are the duly elected and acting President and Community Education Committee Chair of the Shasta Historical Society, a 501(c)3 Corporation, and that the proceeding Exhibition Policy is duly adopted by the Board of Directors by a two-thirds majority as of March 10, 2016.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have signed our name on March 10, 2016.

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Gary A. Lewis  
President of the Board

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Charley Williams  
Community Education Committee Chair

RETENTION

This policy will be in effect indefinitely, unless changed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors. In accordance with AASLH STePs Standards and good practices, all policies will be reviewed by the responsible Committee yearly and by the Board of Directors at least once every three years.

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I. EXHIBITIONS

DEFINITION: The process of presenting one or more objects with accompanying interpretive and educational materials for the purpose of informing, inspiring, and enlightening a defined audience. This kind of presentation is an appropriate use of Society collections and an integral part of the Society's Mission.

A. PURPOSE

Exhibits play an important role between linking the community and its heritage. The Society will strive for accuracy of information, relevance to the community, effective communication, opportunities for learning, and safe display of artifacts. Exhibits must reflect the Society's mission, demonstrate its commitment to the highest possible standards of exhibition, and address the needs and interests of the community it serves.

B. TYPES OF EXHIBITIONS

1. Long Term Exhibits

a. Long term exhibits form the core of the Society's exhibitions, and introduce the visiting public to the region's cultural and natural heritage, outlining the local, regional, provincial, and national importance. Although the themes of these exhibits may remain constant, their content (i.e. information, stories, artifacts, and photographs) will be changed or updated regularly.

b. Long-term exhibitions include:

i. Objects from the Society's collections.

ii. Interpreted context with accurate information.

iii. Presentation of aesthetic and conservation standards within the Society building.

iv. Exhibition period longer than one year (12 months).

2. Special Exhibits use:

a. The Society will utilize special exhibits in order to provide visitors with varied learning opportunities and to provide an experience which will inspire people to return to the Society to see "something new." This will be accomplished by utilizing special exhibits produced by both other institutions and agencies and in-house staff and volunteers.

b. Objects from the Society and/or borrowed from lenders.

i. Before accepting incoming material as part of a temporary exhibit, the Society will complete an *Incoming Loan Agreement* with the lender and

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*Condition Report* on each object within the exhibit.

Loaned objects used in temporary exhibits will only remain in the Society for the duration of the exhibit after which they will be returned to the lender.

- ii. The Society reserves the right to decline the use of any objects or materials offered for use in exhibits.
  - c. Interpreted context with accurate information and multiple perspectives.
  - d. Presentation of aesthetic and conservation standards within the Society building and/or loaned to qualified institutions or borrowers.
3. Exhibition period less than one year (12 months).
  4. Other Formats:
    - a. Objects or other resources/assets from the Society or borrowed from lenders.
    - b. Organized and interpreted with accurate information and context.
    - c. Presentation through different technology and available within or out of the Society building.

C. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

1. LONG-TERM EXHIBITIONS

- a. The Historic Resources Committee and Registrar is responsible for preparing lists of proposed objects and preparing objects for exhibition; identification, preservation, safety, and security needs of objects; managing collections activities; act as liaison with the Curator; preparing object information for exhibit labels; providing information and assisting with installation/de-installation and associated activities as needed.
- b. The Community Education Committee is responsible for providing leadership for content and interpretation development; for maintaining intellectual integrity as the basis of ideas; proposing resources (such as a guest curators, advisors, consultants, etc.), and references; writing or reviewing labels; and to review, advise, and give final approval of objects and labels.
- c. The Historic Resources Committee is responsible for approving all proposals and use of Society resources in

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exhibition development and presentation. Also provides leadership and facilitates the exhibition as needed.

- d. The Community Education Committee and Curator is responsible for advice and information to develop exhibition and interpretation for targeted audiences; to advise and review labels and suggested presentation methods; coordinate and/or liaise with community and/or affiliate members or groups; develop associated interpretive materials; and to provide for leadership to use best practices of Society education and program planning.
- e. Curator and volunteers are responsible for the design, construction, and implementation of the physical system of exhibits and Society facilities along with the associated investigation and implementation of exhibition standards for the care, preservation, safety, and security (including lighting, display case design or housing, mount design, monitoring environmental conditions, etc.); coordination and/or specification of work with specialists, consultants, vendors, and others; supervisor of the installation and de-installation of exhibits, objects, and others.

2. SPECIAL EXHIBITS:

- a. The Historic Resources Committee provides leadership for the development of special exhibits, use of partners and resources; reviews and gives the final approval to the special exhibits schedule.
- b. Special exhibits follow all of the same requirements of Long-Term Exhibits.

D. CRITERIA FOR EXHIBITS

All exhibitions, including objects and support materials, will be consistent with the following qualifications.

1. Exhibits will have a clear connection to the Society's Mission.
2. Exhibits will have intellectual and/or academic/scholarly merit with accurate content and interpretive context. This information will be consistent with the intellectual integrity of the exhibit.
  - a. The Society will maintain institutional control and intellectual integrity of all exhibitions.
  - b. The Society will maintain the intellectual integrity of borrowed exhibitions.
3. Exhibits will subscribe to concepts of public service and education.

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4. Exhibits will be consistent with professional standards and best practices in society design and exhibition.
5. Exhibits will subscribe to standards and practices of conservation, safety, and security.
6. Exhibits will not:
  - a. publicize or promote commercial products or services;
  - b. willfully, with malice aforethought, impugn the reputation of any person;
  - c. threaten the health and safety of Curator or visitors;
  - d. promote and/or enhance a particular religious belief, attitude, or dogma;
  - e. intentionally or unintentionally promote an attitude of prejudice against any person or persons;
  - f. perpetuate myths or stereotypes viewed as negative or demeaning to a people, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnic group; or
  - g. compromise the artists' or scholars' rights.

E. Developing Exhibits

In order to present effective exhibits that are relevant and accurate, the Society will ensure that exhibits are presented in an ethical and professional manner.

1. Staff and volunteers will follow the Society's *Code of Ethics* in the development and presentation of Society exhibits.
2. Research for exhibition will follow scholarly standards.
  - a. All interpretation must be based upon sound scholarship and thorough research with a focus on primary sources.
  - b. Intellectually and scholarly honest interpretation reflects the cultural and temporal context of the subject matter and recognizes the potential for multiple interpretations.
  - c. Interpretation must use a method of delivery that takes into consideration both the intended audience and the results of sound scholarship and thorough research.
  - d. Historical organizations and agencies shall act to ensure that the breadth of American cultural experiences and perspectives is represented accurately in all interpretations.
  - e. The Society shall work towards inclusiveness with the goals of social responsibility and respect for different cultures and peoples.

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3. Resources are allocated in support of planning, preparation, and installation of exhibits.
4. The Society will adhere to municipal, provincial, and federal legislation requirements that impacts exhibit content (i.e. the *Copy Right Act of 1976* and firearms legislation).
5. All staff and volunteers involved in the planning, preparation, and installation of exhibits have the necessary skills and training to complete exhibits that meet the expectations of visitors and needs of the collection.
6. Any commercial support or sponsorship of exhibits will not compromise the Society's standards and objectives.

F. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Society will ensure that exhibits effectively promote learning and enjoyment by using a variety of interpretation methods to meet the needs and interests of all visitors.

1. New artifacts will be regularly rotated in and introduced to permanent exhibits
2. Schedules will be developed to effectively blend long term and special exhibits.
3. When possible, the Society will partner with schools and other organizations to align exhibitions with school curriculum, community events, commemorations, etc.

G. INTERPRETATION

Exhibits will "provoke", "relate", and "reveal" their messages, and illustrate a common interpretive theme and complement the Society as a whole. The Society will remain up-to-date on new interpretive techniques and principles, and will utilize these methods in conveying the exhibits' messages to visitors.

1. Text panels will have a professional appearance (i.e. be consistent in a size and font that can be easily read by all visitors) and will be installed in a position that can easily be seen without obscuring the view of artifacts. In general, labels will not be applied directly to artifacts.

H. CONSERVATION

Staff and volunteers will respect the integrity of the artifacts to be exhibited, avoiding any situation which might put the artifacts at risk. This will be accomplished by providing staff and volunteers within the Society

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the proper care and handling of artifacts and ensuring these methods are put in practice.

1. No artifacts will be displayed on a permanent basis. Artifacts on exhibit will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are in good condition. Any artifacts found in poor condition (i.e. exhibit fatigue) will be immediately removed from display, and appropriate Society personnel will be notified.
2. Any artifact used in an exhibit must be in stable condition and be fully catalogued. A condition report will be completed whenever possible before placing an artifact on display.
3. The Society will follow American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) guidelines for materials used in the construction of exhibits and mounts.
4. Exhibition and storage areas will not be used for construction of exhibits. Any work or activities performed that may be harmful to artifacts will be carried out in an area that is isolated from exhibit and storage spaces. This can include activities that produce excessive amounts of heat, particulate, vibration, or contaminants.
5. Conservation treatments on loaned material will follow guidelines established in the *Collections Management Policy*.
6. Lighting and environmental conditions within the exhibit area will be controlled in accordance with current conservation standards as much as possible.
7. Exhibit areas will be cleaned and inspected regularly by trained staff or volunteers.

I. SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

The Society will ensure that all exhibits are kept safe for visitors, staff, and volunteers.

1. The Society will adhere to municipal, provincial, and federal legislation requirements that impact exhibits (i.e. safety codes and accessibility legislation).
2. The Society will avoid using hazardous materials in exhibits.
3. The Society will provide staff and volunteers training in proper handling and operation of artifacts (i.e. machinery) used in exhibits.
4. The Society will strive to ensure exhibits can be enjoyed by visitors of all ages and abilities.

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J. EVALUATION

Each exhibit will have clearly defined objectives and will be evaluated against these objectives on a yearly basis to help ensure that visitors understand and relate to the exhibits. Exhibits that do not demonstrate continued success in communicating with visitors will be changed or upgraded to make them more engaging and visitor friendly.

K. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. All exhibitions will be executed in compliance with relevant federal, state, and local laws and regulations (including but not limited to those dealing with copyright, research, endangered species, etc.).
2. The exhibition of culturally sensitive materials or human remains will be done with tact and respect for human dignity and in consultation with any appropriate Native groups.
3. The Shasta Historical Society is protected by the constitutional right to free speech.
4. Individuals, institutions, and other entities involved with exhibition will abide by the Society's Institutional Code of Ethics.
5. Lenders, donors, and business support will be made known. Requests for anonymity will be honored unless there is a perceived and/or real conflict of interest. Such situations will be resolved under the advisement of outside counsel.
6. All exhibitions will be consistent with the Society's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy and Procedures.
7. The rotation/removal of objects will be honored on the basis of preservation, safety and security, and/or research needs.