

Local History Policy

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Policy Title: Local History	Policy Approval Date: February 2024
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Introduction:

The Norfolk County Public Library maintains a special collection in order to conserve local history and to provide access to unique materials that help researchers and the public better understand our past. The collection is available during library operating hours.

Purpose:

The Local History Policy will serve to outline the key criteria for the acquisition, access and removal of materials.

Section 1: Collections & Acquisitions

1. Staff under the supervision of the CEO or designate will be responsible for collecting and organizing materials for the local history collection that pertain directly to the establishment, growth and development of Norfolk County and its citizens.
2. The Norfolk County Public Library will acquire local history materials by donation, bequest, purchase and transfer. A list of acceptable collections is identified in point 4.
3. The Norfolk County Public Library will accept materials on a permanent basis, except when borrowing materials for short-term loans to digitize, reproduce or to include in displays or exhibits. Donations will be assessed for inclusion on a case by case basis.
4. The Norfolk County Public Library will collect materials pertaining to the history of Norfolk County. Materials include copies, reproduction, and originals. Emphasis is given to the acquisition of those items which will contribute to the knowledge of the social, civic, religious, economic and cultural life, both past and present. Items to be acquired include copies of:
 - a) Reproductions of works and primary source material documenting local history and genealogy
 - b) Local research
 - c) Cemetery & Church records
 - d) Monographs
 - e) Historical atlases and maps
 - f) Copies of Voters Lists (1871-1930)

- g) Newspapers on microfilm
 - h) Newspapers (waiting to be digitized)
 - i) High School Year books
 - j) Scrapbooks pertaining to library activities and functions
5. Writings of local authors that are not about Norfolk County are subject to the ***Collection Development Policy OP- 04.***

Section 2: Access

1. The Simcoe Branch will hold the majority of the collection in a designated space called “Simcoe Lions Norfolk County History Centre”. The public is invited to gain access to the collections during regular hours of operation. The designated space will be outfitted with:
 - a) equipment suitable for viewing microfilm
 - b) dedicated computers for accessing Ancestry and other genealogy and history database materials
 - c) scanners to digitize documents
 - d) a printer/photocopier
 - e) shelving to hold volumes of historical records and documents
 - f) tables and chairs for research activities
2. The library will subscribe to databases relevant to local history and genealogy research, which can be accessed in the library with a valid library card.
3. Local history materials may be used for reference and viewing within the Library only and will not circulate unless permission is given by the CEO or designate.
4. The library will facilitate projects, exhibitions, outreach and programming to increase public awareness of the Norfolk County history, its people and development.

Section 3: Digital Collections

1. Norfolk County Public Library has developed a Local History Digital Collection which is available on our website and includes:
 - a) Digitized copies of yearbooks
 - b) Various newspaper articles
 - c) Local family histories
 - d) Letters and miscellaneous Norfolk County documents such as sheriff’s papers
 - e) Church registries
 - f) Cemetery records
 - g) Ontario Genealogical Society Materials
2. When funding is available, the library will work alone or in partnership with others to undertake the digitization of local history materials in order to provide the public with greater access to local history information.

Section 4: Reference

1. The Norfolk County Public Library will provide reference services to individuals, organizations, municipal departments and groups interested in the local history collection. Requests requiring in depth research will be referred to the Norfolk County Archives.

Section 5: Donations

1. The library will solicit donations of local history materials from the community and from other sources and welcomes gifts. Appendix A: Donations/Gift of Local History Materials.
2. Donated materials are assessed in order to establish their suitability to the collection.
3. Some materials may be deemed to be too fragile or bulky to accept. Any problematic items will be discussed with the donor and then returned or redirected as is mutually agreed upon.
4. A record is kept on file for those items donated to the library; this clearly indicates that ownership resides with the library or is on indefinite loan from a donor.

Section 6: Removal of Materials

1. Materials added to the local history collection will be held until such time as it is deemed to no longer fit the acquisition criteria.
2. Norfolk County Archives will be consulted before the disposal of any materials that are removed from the library's collection to be considered for transfer to the County Archives.

Related Documents

Collection Development Policy (OP-03)

Norfolk County Archives By-Law – By-Law#2020-91

