



Sydney Cricket Ground Museum **Acquisition Policy**

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1. Policy Objective

The objective of the Acquisition Policy is to provide a general direction for acquisitions in accordance with the Mission Statement and the Collection Management Policy, and to set out guidelines for the assessment of potential collection items and their method of acquisition.

2. Collection Themes

The SCG and its associated sports grounds (hereafter the grounds) have a long and rich history as the major sporting precinct in Sydney. They have played a central role in international sporting landscapes and importantly the social, political and cultural life of Sydney. The Museum will differentiate its collection from other collecting institutions by focussing on material that reflects the development of the grounds and the activities hosted at the grounds since its time as a military recreation ground in the 1850s.

The Museum will collect items with a significant connection to the following subjects:

- objects used by groups and individuals from any event, sporting and non-sporting, hosted at the grounds. Preference will be given to objects that represent significant novel events¹;
- technical aspects of the ground;
- material associated with membership of the ground;
- the public and the visitor experience;
- local history associated with the grounds²;
- cricket³

The Museum welcomes information and oral histories relating to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples relationships with the land upon which the grounds reside.

3. Structure of the Collection

The Museum is responsible for caring for a number of collection types. The Museum collection comprises the:

a. Artefact Collection

This collection consists of all the historical, three-dimensional objects housed in the museum or storage areas. It includes clothing, cricket equipment, ceramics, trophies and badges.

b. Photographic Collection

Nearly half the current collection consists of historical photographs and prints.

c. Archival Collection

The archival collection comprises documents and paper-based material from 1877 to the present relating to the management and

¹ In addition to cricket the grounds have hosted athletics, cycling, rugby league, rugby union, Australian rules football, soccer, baseball, the 1938 Empire Games, concerts, opera performances, and school displays for visiting dignitaries such as the Pope and the English royal family. At the time of writing a low percentage of the collection related to these respective themes.

² The history of the grounds has not occurred in isolation to the surrounding lands and communities, items relating to these unique relationships will be collected.

³ The prime focus of the SCG Museum at the time of its opening in January 1977 was cricket, and this subject-area forms the bulk of the collection. Today SCG Members and visitors have an expectation that the Museum will showcase historical aspects of the game; the collection will aim to meet this expectation. However, the Museum is not a museum of cricket history and will only select items of special significance to the SCG.

operations of the Trust and includes letter books, minute books, correspondence, financial ledgers, cash and receipt books, staff wages books, bar records, magazines and programmes.⁴

Reference books will not be accessioned as part of the formal Museum collection. However, reference books of a rare or high financial value, or significant to the research needs of the Trust may be catalogued separately to the Museum collection. These books will be stored in a secure location and cared for to Museum standards; they will not be made available in the Members' Pavilion reading space.

4. Methods of Acquisition

The Museum's main method of acquisition will be through donation. The Museum will generally rely on members of the public approaching the Museum with offers of donation, but may actively contact potential donors with requests for objects.

Bequests may be accepted by prior arrangement.

The Museum will also acquire material from departments within the Sydney Cricket & Sports Ground Trust.

5. Acquisition Principles

The Museum will not acquire material on a conditional basis, such as the condition that the material be displayed. An object may be significant for its research value but may not be able to be accommodated in an exhibition program.

Donations can only be made by individuals or their agent with legal title to the object. The Museum will take all reasonable steps to ascertain that the donor is *bona fide* prior to acquisition thereby confirming their right to offer the material to the Museum.

The Museum will at all times uphold the laws of Australia in its acquisition program by not acquiring illegal items for example, where it is reasonably suspected that they have been looted, stolen or otherwise improperly gained. The Museum may collect and interpret objects that might be represented in other collections if the object has significance to its stated policies.

Where material offered to the Museum would be more appropriately located in other collecting institutions, potential donors or vendors will be referred to those organisations.

The Museum will collect material for both exhibition and research, and will establish a collection that contains levels of information relevant to the researcher and casual Museum visitor alike.

The general operations and events of the grounds generate material relevant to the Collection Policy; such material may be absorbed into the Museum collection.

6. Selection Criteria

The following guidelines are to be applied to prospective donations and loans where applicable. In some circumstances the Museum may deviate from the

⁴ At the time of writing the Archival Collection has not been formally accessioned into the Museum collection.

selection criteria, for example where the significance or uniqueness of an item offsets difficulties with storage or poor condition.

The ability of the Museum to store and display an item adequately must be considered before the selection criteria is applied.

Objects will be considered for collection only when they adequately satisfy any of the following criteria for significance:

- **Historic**
The object must have a proven historical association with an individual, event, period or place associated with the grounds.
- **Documentation**
Objects must be supported by documentation which confirms their historical significance or association. Verbal information provided by the donor (detailing the origin of the object, how it was used and who it was used by, along with a chronology of its history) is acceptable, but should be independently confirmed.
- **Provenance**
It is important that the origin and/or subsequent history and ownership of the object can be thoroughly documented and authenticated.
- **Aesthetic**
Items with aesthetic appeal, such as artworks or other examples of craft or design, will be considered in conjunction with other selection criteria.
- **Scientific, research or technical**
Items that explain, or are examples of the technical aspects of the grounds, or events as they transpired at the grounds, will be accepted. This may include items relating to ground preparation, scoreboards, umpire's tools, media coverage or sport equipment.
- **Social or spiritual value**
Objects have social significance if they are held in community esteem. Items reflecting the social significance of the grounds or events as they transpired at the grounds may be included in the Museum.

The below qualitative measures will be considered alongside the above criteria

- **Representativeness**
An object may be significant because it represents a particular category of object, or activity, way of life or historical theme.
- **Rarity**
An object may be significant as a rare, unusual or particularly fine example of its type.
- **Condition**
The condition of an item being considered for accession must be such that difficult or expensive conservation work is not required. Items needing minor work and not in imminent danger of rapid deterioration may be accepted.

- **Completeness, intactness and integrity**
Objects which are unusually complete, or in sound, original condition are said to have integrity, and are therefore desirable.
- **Interpretive Potential**
Material which can interpret and demonstrate aspects of experience, historical themes, people and activities will be collected.

7. **Type of Material Collected**

- Historic and contemporary material of any medium (object, image, audiovisual material) may be included in the collection.
- Objects generated by the Trust's activities, such as pamphlets, badges, photographs or selected archival material.
- Technical, mechanical or architectural items relevant to the site where reasonable.
- Ephemera (badges, tickets, cards, letters), stamps, medals and coins relating to the grounds or events hosted at the grounds may also be collected.
- Some material (such as newspapers and reference books) will be accepted and held in parallel with the Museum's collections for research purposes.

In rare instances items may be accepted but not accessioned or catalogued.

Items that fall into this category include those that are duplicates of collection objects, incomplete, or not in line with the collection policy but are of interest as exhibition props.

Contemporary commercial or souvenir items, such as framed equipment or photographs sold at retail outlets will not be collected except in exceptional circumstances. These items are mass-produced for commercial purposes, they are not unique and do not meet internationally accepted museum selection criteria.

The Museum will not build up a comprehensive collection of cricket ties, as this area is covered well by other institutions.

The Museum will not collect botanical or biological specimens.

The Museum has a responsibility to work with other departments to preserve, interpret and share the fixed heritage of the grounds. However, the Museum will not accession items that it cannot preserve to standards considered acceptable for small museums.