

City Of Kingston

Information Item To The Museums And Collections Advisory Committee

To: Chair and Committee Members, Museum and Collections Advisory Committee

From: Sarah Forsyth, Civic Collections Working Group

Date Of Meeting: 2nd November, 2015

Subject: Artefact donations to the Civic Collection

Summary Of The Discussion Item:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Museum and Collections Advisory Committee (MACAC) with the results of the artefact acquisition deliberations that took place in the recent meeting of the Civic Collections Working Group.

Mandate Considerations:

The Civic Collections Working Group fills the function of 'museum accessions committee' for the City of Kingston, fulfilling part of the mandate of the MACAC which is stated as 'Advise City staff on civic collections management and collections development and related policies, collections acquisitions and de-accessions, and other collections-based matters'.

Discussion:

The Civic Collections Working Group met at 5:00 pm on the 2nd of November, 2015. An introductory explanation of how acquisitions deliberations and museum 'accessions committees' operate was given for new members of the group.

Potential donations to the Civic Collection were then presented, one at a time, to the group. Conversation was held on the merits of each potential donation, pros and cons of accepting each donation into the collection and whether or not each fit the mandate of the Civic Collection. A vote was held, determining the resulting recommendation to either accept or reject the donation into the collection.

1st potential donation up was 2 Kingston bicycle license plates from 1936 & 1941, offered to Paul Robertson by Mr. Allen D. Crew. Both in good condition. Objects of this type are not currently represented in the civic collection. They will display well. They provide opportunities for research and exhibition on community leisure activities, sports and municipal function. These plates document Kingston municipal administration of bicycling in the City. They also relate to community leisure activities and the apparent popularity of this form of transportation.

Recommendation: Accept

2nd potential donation up was a handmade quilt assembled by the Kingston Italian Club's 'Mano D'oro' (Golden Hands) women's group, offered to Paul Robertson, City Curator, by Mrs. Susan Paloschi. The quilt depicts the provincial crests of Italy and was made about 2000. It is in excellent condition. The group formed as a community club and to help keep the traditional needle arts of Italy alive here in Kingston. Nearly all of the Mano D'oro members immigrated to Canada from Italy in the early 1950s. No items representing the Italian community in Kingston are currently represented in the civic collection. The civic collection does not currently have a wide range of textile items. This quilt documents the work and heritage of the Italian community in Kingston. It also documents traditional women's craft and design. Kingston's cultural communities are generally underrepresented in the collection.

Recommendation: Accept

3rd potential donation up was a collection of Tercentenary souvenirs, offered to Paul Robertson, City Curator, by Laura Bailey. Objects include 2 LPs; *Happy Days with the Gadabouts* (1973) and *the Fort Henry Retreat Ceremonial* (1963), Tercentenary cocktail napkins, 4 Tercentenary swizzle sticks, Tercentenary souvenir paper placemats, and 1 Tercentenary flag. The donor lived in Kingston in 1973. She was in the Tercentenary parade as a child (the donor has provided digital photos of her involvement dressed in period costume). Her parents owned the George Bailey Sporting Goods store, Princess Street (beside present-day Pan Chancho). Most of this collection documents an important community event in Kingston history, the Tercentenary (1673-1973) of European settlement. These pieces of ephemera are relatively rare survivals and are not currently found in the civic collection. They were collected by persons directly involved in the celebrations. The Fort Henry LP documents a period in the history of a significant site in Kingston and a vehicle for communicating Kingston to a wider audience. This collection builds on the current civic collection holdings related to the Tercentenary celebrations. None of these items are currently in the collection. They are excellent display pieces, particularly in potential anniversary exhibitions planned for 2023, the 350th anniversary of European settlement. These items may be used to balance changing interpretations of what is "Kingston" and how that's changed since 1973. These items can be used for research and exhibition.

Recommendation: Accept

4th potential donation up was a mixed lot of 5 Tercentenary flags, a framed print of MacLachlan Woodworking Museum given to Pittsburgh Township Citizens of the Year (1994), and several posters and programmes for Pittsburgh Township Bicentennial event (1988). Offered to Paul Robertson, City Curator, Mrs, Diane Luck. The Pittsburgh Township Bicentennial items were collected by the donor in 1988 – she was coordinator for the celebration events. The Tercentenary flags and Pittsburgh Township Citizen of the Year award belonged to the donor's late mother-in-law, Jo Luck. Jo received the Citizen of the Year award in 1994 for her role as a volunteer in the community – a founding member of the Pittsburgh Senior Citizen's Group, volunteer at the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum gift shop. The archival programmes and posters document celebrations connected to the bicentennial of Pittsburgh Township, now part of the City of Kingston. The award also supports this theme and includes an artist's image of the MacLachlan, a civic museum operated by Cultural Services. The flags document an important community event in Kingston history, the Tercentenary (1673-1973) of European settlement. All of these pieces of ephemera are relatively rare survivals and are not currently found in the civic

collection. They were collected by persons directly involved in the celebrations (One duplicate flag offered by Laura Bailey can be used in displays where multiple units may be shown or not accessioned into the civic collection and used as a prop for various purposes). The civic collection has little material connected with Pittsburgh Township, now part of the City of Kingston. The current collection does not include the artist's drawing of This Bicentennial archival collection builds on the current civic collection holdings related to the Tercentenary celebrations. None of these items are currently in the collection. The flags are excellent display pieces, particularly in potential anniversary exhibitions planned for 2023, the 350th anniversary of European settlement. These items may be used to balance changing interpretations of what is "Kingston" and how that's changed since 1973. These items can be used for research and exhibition.

Recommendation: Accept

5th potential donation up was a platen press, 'Craftsman' model, Chandler & Price Co., Cleveland, Ohio / Horton Mfg. Co. (c 1918), 2 trays of print letters, and a collection of archival Kingston newspapers, offered to Paul Robertson, City Curator, by Mr. Ken (Ozzy) Osborn. The donor is the former owner of 'Ozzy's Metal Magic', a Kingston bronzing company. His family has been in Kingston since 1904 and he believes his grandfather was the last horse & buggy trash man in Kingston. The Craftsman model printing press by Chandler & Price was formerly owned by the Jackson Press in Kingston and is believed to date to 1918. The Jackson Press was one of the main printing companies in Kingston. 175 Wellington Street is still named the 'Jackson Press Building', currently owned and leased by DTZ Ltd. The donor said he received the platen press from Rick Newman, the last owner of Jackson Press. The collection of archival papers relating to royalty and other themes was collected by Mr. Osborn over the years. These items document 20th-century communications, business and industrial history in Kingston, both underrepresented areas in the civic collection. The archival newspapers will be added to the civic collection research library and could be used for potential display. Objects of this nature are not well represented in the civic collection, particularly items directly related to identifiable Kingston businesses.

Recommendation: Accept

6th potential donation up was a mixed lot consisting of one red ensign flag (circa 1873-1896), 2 cigarette holders belonging to George Carson, one pair spats belonging to George Carson, and one Kingston City Directory (1851). Offered to Paul Robertson, City Curator, by Mrs. Nancy Pearce. The donor is a descendent of two former mayors of Kingston, Robert J Carson (1880) and John Carson (1887). (Their father Robert Carson first arrived in Kingston around 1840, married Sarah Campbell in 1844, lived at 72 Barrie St; cousin with Mary Sampson). The personal items (cigarette holders, spats belonged to the donor's father, George Carson in the 1920s (married in 1925). He received the cigarette holders from Sir Frederick Carson, a graduate of RMC and a member of the British Army in India – the holders are believed to have been purchased there. The "Unofficial" Red Ensign is a sewn woolen flag with seven provincial shields in fly (Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island) – the provinces in Confederation between 1873 and 1907 (but showing original BC shield used before 1896). The donor says it was used for many years at the family home at 45 King Street West facing City Park and may have been flown during the 1939 Royal Tour of Canada. The 1851 City Directory has likely been in the family since the mid-19th century

and may have been used as a reference tool in family businesses. An associated set of archival papers belonging to the Carson family is currently being offered to Queen's University Archives. These items document the lifestyle and interests of a long-standing Kingston family connected with municipal government. They also document early 20th-century dress in Kingston. The flag is a piece of Kingston history connecting citizens with patriotic Canadian themes and celebrations. The City Directory also documents citizens and businesses in Kingston during its years as a young city. Objects of this type are not currently represented in the civic collection, particularly those related to identified Kingston families. They will display well. They provide opportunities for research and exhibition on a range of community topics.

Recommendation: Accept

7th potential donation up was a Standard Gauge Lionel train consisting 6 cars, 52 pieces of track, 6 switches, and transformer. Offered to Paul Robertson, City Curator, by George Dillon. The donor is offering a Lionel Standard Gauge train to the Pump House Steam Museum for loan or donation. According to the donor, Standard Gauge is unique because of its scale, ratio 1/25, the fact that it is only made in tinplate, and it has unique couplings. Lionel Standard Gauge was manufactured between 1909 and approximately 1939 when it was discontinued. The Lionel train is being offered for the Train Room at the PHSM. The civic collection has an extensive collection of model trains, most of which are on active display at the museum, a popular and well-attended feature of the museum. The majority of the collection is of O scale (ratio 1/48) and HO scale (ratio 1/87), some of the most widely used sizes in Canada. There are no examples of Lionel Standard Gauge in the collection now – this scale was more commonly found in the United States. According to the donor, the museum has displayed a Standard Gauge set loan at some point the past. The civic collection focuses more on Canadian and European trains. At present, there is no designated place to use or display these Lionel Standard Gauge pieces in the current Train Room at the PHSM. There is no track space available to run them in the current layout. If collected the pieces would remain in storage for an extended period of time.

Recommendation: Reject

8th potential donation up was approximately 18 items, a collection of ceramics including pieces by Wedgwood and Moore Bros. (England) (circa 1820 to 2000), from the estate of Keith A. McLeod. Keith A. McLeod was a noted collector of Wedgwood ceramics in Toronto. After his death in 2014, parts of his collection were offered by the executors to the City of Kingston. The collection selected for the civic collection includes two plates, one commemorating the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959 (including an image of Kingston from the water) and another, the Loyalists in Ontario (1960s). The other pieces (circa 1820 to 2000) are fine quality Wedgwood design, stylistically appropriate as display items in City Hall. Of note is a pair of rare Greek-style white bodied stoneware crocus urns or incense burners dating from the 1820s. These pieces are particularly well suited to the classical elements within City Hall. A pair of Moore Bros. candelabra depicting stylized images of 'Industry' is also well-suited for general display in City Hall. The two commemorative plates document events and themes in Kingston history. These pieces are recommended for the civic collection. The remainder of the collection is recommended as high-quality props for display in various places within City Hall, including the new display cases being designed for the building's interior architectural niches. The two plates (St. Lawrence Seaway, Loyalists) are not currently represented in the civic collection. The

Wedgwood and Moore Bros. display pieces provide suitable alternatives for general display and decoration within historic City Hall, constructed in 1844.

Recommendation: Accept

9th potential donation up was a collection of 480 woodworking tools, offered to Tom Riddolls, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum Curator, by Fred Hostetter. Discussion was had regarding this collection. Due to information not being available to answer questions, the decision was made to defer the vote on whether or not to accept this donation to a later date after the information can be acquired.

Summary:

7 potential donations accepted, comprising some 74 pieces to be added to the Civic Collection.

Collection nodes Archival, City Hall, Pump House Steam Museum, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum, and Broader Kingston History will be augmented by these donations; and both primary (formally accessioned) and secondary (not formally accessioned) collection levels will be augmented by these donations.

1 potential donation rejected on basis of not fitting mandate, not supporting current collection, and not having immediate or future use as display, research or exhibit material.

1 potential donation deferred until more information gathered.