

Local History Collection and Services

Introduction

The purpose of the Local History Collection is to acquire and preserve materials deemed of value that document the history and heritage of North Aurora, Illinois, and to make these materials available to patrons, the community, researchers, and the general public.

Items or resources collected must meet the vision of a public library as the library does not function in place of a museum, nor have specialized archival equipment or storage.

A. Collection Priorities

The emphasis of this Local History Collection is on significant local historical information as well as genealogical resources that document North Aurora, Illinois. Secondary emphasis includes material that documents other communities in Kane County, the Fox Valley area, and the State of Illinois, provided that the material helps set North Aurora within a historical context. The Messenger Public Library of North Aurora wishes to work cooperatively with historical societies and local community groups to gather and preserve the history of the region without duplication or competition.

- Subject areas in the Local History Collection include materials by and about the residents of North Aurora, Illinois relating to government, commerce, education, housing, religion, clubs, institutions, entertainment, and family life.
- The Local History Collection is not limited to any chronological period.
- Books and papers originally owned and used by local residents are not added to the collection unless the items contain local information that is otherwise unavailable or hold great historical significance to the community.

Certain factors may preclude the library from meeting collection priorities. These factors include, but are not limited to space considerations, the ability of the library to adequately preserve the materials, or the condition of the materials.

At the discretion of the Head of the Adult Services Department, duplicate copies of certain materials may be made available for reference or circulating collections.

B. Scope of Materials and Formats Collected

The Local History Collection includes, but is not limited to: books, manuscripts, photographs, diaries, magazines and news sources, clipping files, atlases, maps, postcards, pamphlets, brochures, yearbooks, audio and videotapes, and electronic files. The Head of the Adult Services Department or Library Director reserves the right to refer some fragile or large items to another museum or historical society that can adequately preserve or display the materials.

C. Acquisitions

Donations are accepted on the condition of a signed document of gift that legally transfers ownership to the library. Library staff cannot provide an appraisal of donated materials.

- Items for short-term storage will be accepted only in the case of temporary exhibits. Items donated with any restrictions will not be accepted.
- Authority to acquire items rests with the Head of the Adult Services Department in consultation with the Library Director, who can override collection guidelines. The library purchases material of historical or genealogical interest as funding is made available.

D. Digital Preservation

Digital preservation covers digitized and born-digital materials within the Local History Collection. Digital materials will be added to the collection in accordance with the purpose and scope of this policy. Preservation strategies will address evolving capabilities, standards, and best practices, and will ensure the authenticity and integrity of the content. To maintain and improve the quality of the digital collection, items may be periodically withdrawn.

E. Public and Staff Access

For preservation purposes, the Local History Collection will not circulate, and access may be moderated or limited depending upon the materials.

- Original or fragile materials are kept in closed storage and cannot be accessed directly without the permission of the Head of the Adult Services Department or the Library Director.

- Only designated librarians and staff are permitted to access, handle, or process items deemed to have significant historical value. The public may have access to duplicate or facsimile copies whenever available.
- Researchers may request appointments through the Adult Services Department to access select original collections in a staff-controlled area. Every attempt will be made by the Local History Collection and library staff to make materials available in facsimile formats. However, the preservation needs of delicate original items take priority over public access.

F. Copyright

Copies of the materials to which the library owns are permissible under the auspices of fair use (private study, research, scholarship). If a user obtains a photocopy or digital image under the auspices of fair use and later exceeds fair use, that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

Reproduction of materials does not constitute permission for publication or display. This permission must be sought in writing from the Head of the Adult Services Department or Library Director, who will indicate the conditions of use and methods for providing credit.

G. Discarding and Retention

Materials are discarded from the Local History Collection according to the same policy guidelines used for the library in general. To maintain the quality of the collection, materials may be deaccessioned due to irrelevance, space considerations, duplication (including digital duplication), or condition. Items may be returned to donors, sold, discarded, or offered to other institutions.

The Library Director is authorized to make final decisions with regard to the collection and retention of items in the collection.

Approved by BOT 4/25