

Local History Collection Development Policy

Local History Mission Statement

The mission of the Durham Public Library Local History Collection is to preserve documents of historical relevance to Durham, Connecticut and its residents and institutions. The Local History Collection promotes the understanding and exploration of Durham's history, culture, and architecture by current residents, students, and historians.

Local History Collection – Scope

The collection consists of books, pamphlets, brochures, diaries, letters, scrapbooks, notebooks, oral histories, photographs and other materials that constitute source material for local history research. Other geographical areas are added only if they include important information relevant to Durham's history.

Genealogical records and family histories pertaining to Durham residents may be collected. Research materials for use in genealogy searching are also included in the collection.

Local History Collection – Collecting Policy

The Local History collection may collect books, documents, maps, memorabilia, genealogical records, slides, newspapers, selected news clippings, and identified photographs. Three-dimensional objects and electronic and digital formats will be considered if they fit within the mission of our collection.

The Local History Collection does not contain modern government records, such as Board of Selectman or Board of Education meeting minutes, or day-to-day business records.

Selection Criteria:

The Durham Public Library Local History Collection will include:

- Materials that record the history and ancestry of Durham's founding families
- Materials that record the history and contributions of prominent individuals who have lived or served in Durham
- Materials that preserve the histories of local clubs, organizations, schools, churches, businesses, and institutions of Durham
- Materials that record the history of the community
- Artifacts or objects that support the history of the community, its people, and/or its institutions

Other criteria include:

- Relevance to the history of Durham
- Uniqueness and historical value of the item
- Physical condition of the item
- Space constraints for storage of the item
- Time needed to arrange the collection for use
- Signed "Deed of Gift"

Gifts:

The library welcomes donations to its Local History collection. All donated materials must be free of dirt, mold, moisture, and pests and should be in good condition. Scrapbooks/photo albums must be in archival quality albums or enclosures, and photographs must be identified. Three dimensional objects may be accepted if they fit the scope of the collection and do not require special storage and preservation needs.

Materials that do not fit within our collecting policy will be referred to local historical societies.

The library reserves the right to decline gift offers.

Donors must sign a “Deed of Gift” transferring ownership, and copyright, if applicable, to the Durham Public Library. The donor and the library each retain a copy of the deed of gift. Once a donation has been made, the library reserves the right to decide how the donated item will be displayed or stored, how the item may be used by the public, and how long the item will be retained. Materials in the Local History Collection may be scanned and placed on the Internet for viewing, may be moved to another location within the library, and may be withdrawn from the collection if deemed no longer appropriate to the collection.

Items that will not be accepted:

- Unidentified photographs
- Unidentified letters or documents
- Items unrelated, or only peripherally related, to the history of Durham
- Duplicate materials, unless in better condition than those currently in the collection
- Formats that are obsolete or that require transfer to up-to-date format to facilitate access. Examples include (but are not limited to) VHS tape, 8 mm film, floppy disks
- Government records, such as meeting minutes
- Items that have restrictions on use
- Items that are in poor physical condition, or that require conservation or storage that the Durham Public Library is unable to provide.

Preservation and Maintenance:

Local History materials, when appropriate, will be preserved in acid-free folders, enclosures, and containers. The collection will be maintained in a clean, safe, and secure environment.

Discarding Materials:

Durham Public Library reserves the right to withdraw materials that do not fit within the scope of the Local History Collection. Withdrawn items may be returned to donors, offered to other depositories, donated to the Durham Historical Society, or discarded.

Appendix 1: Temporary Custody Form

Appendix 2: Deed of Gift

Approved: April 2018