

# History Nebraska

## Collection Development Plan

Reviewed and Approved by History Nebraska's Collections Committee on July 1, 2021

The Executive Summary, Poetic Scope, Purpose and Vision of History Nebraska's Collection Development Plan have been reviewed and approved by History Nebraska's Board of Trustees on April 16, 2021

# Executive Summary

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This document provides an overview of the present collection at History Nebraska as well as recommendations for its improvement. The purpose of the plan is to guide the state's historical society in decisions relating to collection development and refinement, and to assure the public that History Nebraska is making thoughtful choices to serve them best with available resources.

The plan draws on History Nebraska's vision, mission and strategic goals, as well as an "active collections" approach which moves beyond the idea that something should be collected and preserved "just in case" to the idea that if something doesn't advance the agency's mission, it doesn't belong in the collection (Woods et. al, 2018:6-10).

This plan explores current challenges, collection strengths and shortfalls, focus areas through 2025, and deaccession priorities. The document calls for collection tiering, active (targeted) collecting, and aims to inspire critical thinking by the Collections Committee with a list of considerations for each potential acquisition. It also demands sustainable collecting and accessible collections; no longer will acquired items become part of an ever growing backlog of unprocessed materials.

The plan calls for enhanced collecting initiatives in the areas of:

- Nebraska's LGBTQ+ population
- Modern Native Americans living in Nebraska
- Current events as they impact the lives of Nebraskans
- Continued active collecting surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic
- Continued active collecting surrounding Racial Injustice

It calls for the cessation of acquiring items with limited historical value related to Nebraska (all Tier 4 and Tier 5 materials).

Finally, the plan lays the groundwork for the weeding and deaccessioning of items that:

- Do not support the agency's mission
- Are duplicates or are already sufficiently represented in the collection
- Are widely available elsewhere
- Are focus areas of other collecting institutions

# Poetic Collecting Scope

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Our collection tells the stories of the people (past and present) that have called Nebraska home. History Nebraska's collection tells stories of innovation, resilience, and community; but also challenges, hardship, and division. Stories that show that history is complex, messy, and sometimes ugly. Stories that are multifaceted, and represent the diverse voices and experiences of all Nebraskans, whether their families have resided here for generations or have recently made Nebraska home.

## Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that History Nebraska's facilities reside on the traditional lands of indigenous people. Nebraska is located on the homelands of the Apache, Arapaho, Arikara, Cheyenne, Dakota, Iowa, Kansa, Lakota, Missouriia, Omaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Ponca, Sac and Fox, Wichita, and Winnebago. We acknowledge the indigenous individuals and nations that continue to reside in Nebraska and enrich its history, including the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, the Santee Sioux Nation, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, and the Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska.

## We seek to build a Collection that:

- Evokes an emotional response
- Creates wonder and sparks curiosity
- Evokes empathy and helps Nebraskans understand our shared humanity
- Creates a deeper understanding of the present and how things came to be
- Asks new questions and offers new perspectives
- Inspires our audience to learn more, create, or take action
- Provides more nuance and complexity to the history of Nebraska
- Documents pivotal Nebraska stories
- Shows what is unique or fascinating about Nebraska and Nebraskans
- Connects Nebraskan's stories to national or global themes
- Serves multiple purposes at History Nebraska (research, exhibit, publication)

## Our Collection tells the stories of:

- Indigenous people, including Apache, Arapaho, Arikara, Cheyenne, Dakota, Iowa, Kansa, Lakota, Missouriia, Omaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Ponca, Sac and Fox, Wichita, and Winnebago.
- Migration to and through Nebraska, and how this created rich and evolving cultural diversity, both past and present.
- Power and the systems that shape daily life in our state, including Nebraska's unique unicameral legislature.
- How Nebraskans communicate with each other about the things that matter to them: through print and broadcast journalism, and written correspondence.
- How communities organize: for social reasons, religious purposes, charity, and activism.
- Creativity and artistry: through photography, studio art, quilting, etc.
- Innovation, including unique Nebraska products and ideas.
- How Nebraskans earn a living: from farms to flour mills, and businesses in towns and cities.
- How Nebraskans work to make life better for Nebraskans: through community organizations, public office, military service, and more.

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# Introduction

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## Purpose

History Nebraska (HN) acquires and makes accessible materials that illustrate the stories of Nebraska's vast and varied people. HN's collection is central to its mission. Selectively acquiring new materials, deaccessioning those no longer needed, and making the collection accessible to the public are essential institutional functions. That said, HN cannot collect anything and everything related to Nebraska. The purpose of this Collecting Plan is to assist HN staff in making choices about new acquisitions and collection refinement in a thoughtful and strategic way.

The plan draws on strength and weakness evaluations for each collection type completed by curators in 2016 and reviewed and updated in 2020; input from the Collections Committee; and recognition that the collection must support the agency's mission, have public value (tell meaningful stories, evoke emotion, be impactful), and represent as many facets of identity in Nebraska communities as possible – including marginalized groups that have been underrepresented or outright excluded in the past. The plan also draws on ideas laid out in *Active Collections* (Wood et al., 2018). An Active Collections approach moves beyond the idea that something should be collected and preserved now just in case, to the idea that if something doesn't advance the agency's mission, it doesn't belong in the collection (Woods et. al, 2018:6-10). Furthermore:

*In our concern to preserve everything because we don't know what people in the future will find useful, we are diverting attention and care from objects that are useful right now to the people right in front of us. Museum professionals must change the conversation with boards, donors and stakeholders about why and how artifacts help the institution meet its goals. Words matter, and we need new ones to talk about collections. **We believe we need to change the conversation from caring for artifacts to caring about people (Woods et. al, 2018:8).***

HN strives to take a much more active approach to the collection.

The Collecting Plan complements the agency's vision (to be the most engaging and relevant state historical society in the nation), mission (History Nebraska collects, preserves, and opens to all the histories we share), strategic goals, [Collections Policy](#) and Collections Policy Supplemental. The intent of this plan is to guide, not dictate, collecting and collection refinement decisions.

## Vision

A long-range vision for History Nebraska's collection is that all materials are of Tier 1, 2 or 3 ranking (see below), all materials are accessible (see below), and that materials within the collection are relevant to the needs of Nebraska communities.

# Explanation of Terms

## Tiered Collections

The idea of ranking collections comes from Trevor Jones' chapter in *Active Collections* (Wood et al., 2018:103-109). Materials within and being considered for HN's collection can be tiered in terms of significance. Tier 1 materials are the cream of the crop; Tier 5 materials should be deaccessioned. The following chart further defines the five collection tiers :

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
Significant to Nebraska & national/international historic themes	Significant historic value to Nebraska	Historic value to Nebraska	Limited historic value to Nebraska	Limited or no Nebraska historic value
Rare and likely irreplaceable	Rare, or few examples in this or other collections	Similar objects in this or other collections. Somewhat difficult to replace	Common in this or other collections, and can easily be replaced	Not applicable
Could be used to tell multiple powerful stories about Nebraska and its place in the nation	Tells a multifaceted or unique Nebraska story that is unlikely told with other objects	Tells a multifaceted or powerful Nebraska story	May support a Nebraska story	History may relate to another state or there is limited historic value in general
<i>Examples:</i> Wounded Knee photo coll., Engineer Cantonment archeological coll.	<i>Example:</i> Nathaniel Dewell photo collection; The Big Village Site archeological collection	<i>Example:</i> Family photo collection	<i>Example:</i> Copies of photos from other historical institutions	<i>Example:</i> Unidentified portraits or non-Nebraska images

Materials can and should be further assessed based on condition, storage concerns, and research/exhibition value. Based on these criteria, top tier collections should be prioritized for digitization, rehousing and conservation work. The criteria should also factor into decisions about potential acquisitions-- if a Tier 2 item is offered for donation but it is in terrible condition and HN has no space to store the item, the offer will very likely be declined.

Ranking rubrics have been developed for HN's photograph and archeological collections.

## Sustainable Collecting

At History Nebraska, sustainable collecting means that:



- Deeds of Gift for all new acquisitions will be sent within 2 months of receipt.
- All new acquisitions will be made [accessible](#) within 1 year of acquisition.
  - An exception will be made for large or complex collections, but a plan for accessibility will be laid out, shared with the Collections Committee, and work will begin within 1 year of acquisition. Curators will alert the Collections Committee that a collection needs exemption from the 1-year rule when presenting the collection for potential acquisition.
- Significant accessibility backlogs among the various collection types will be taken into consideration with respect to acquiring new materials.
- Collection growth rate will not outpace that of storage capacity.
- HN will reject more items than it accepts.
- As they are discovered, Tier 4 and Tier 5 collection materials will be considered for the Education & Use Collection or other disposition.

## Accessible Collections

Materials from HN's Collections are considered accessible if the following conditions are met:

- An artifact in the Objects collection is considered accessible if a catalog record (including object name, title and description) accompanied by a photograph is available on-line. Better accessibility includes additional standardized subject headings, people, and search terms. Best accessibility includes history of associated users and/or makers.
- An archeological collection is considered accessible if a collection-level catalog record including cultural affiliation, nature of site, and general description of objects is available online. Better accessibility links/relates that record to at least 10 individual artifact catalog records (w/ photos) representative of the collection. Best means the collection-level record is linked to catalog records for all artifacts in the collection as well as digital surrogates of the site's associated records.
- A photograph collection is considered accessible if a collection-level catalog record including keywords, subjects, and people is available online. Better accessibility means that key photos are digitized, individually cataloged and linked to the collection-level catalog record. Best accessibility means individual catalog records and digital surrogates for all photos from the collection are available online.
- A newspaper is considered accessible if it is discoverable by finding aid or the library catalog. Best accessibility means the newspaper is digitized and available online.
- A manuscript collection is considered accessible if an up-to-date collection-level finding aid detailing the collection's contents is available online. Better accessibility means that some key documents or sections are digitized and can be fully read online. Best accessibility means all documents are digitized and available online.

- A map is considered accessible if an item-level catalog record (including title, summary, subject and search terms) is available online. Best means the record is accompanied by a digitized surrogate of the map.
- A library title is considered accessible if a catalog record (including call number, title, author, and subjects) is available on HN's online library catalog. Better accessibility means that some key documents or sections are digitized and can be fully read online. Best accessibility means the entire title is digitized and available online.
- A public records collection is considered accessible if an up-to-date collection-level finding aid detailing the collection's contents is available online. Best accessibility means that key documents or sections of widely used (and unrestricted) record groups are digitized, discoverable and viewable online.
- A moving image is considered accessible if an individual or collection-level catalog record including keywords, subjects, and people is available online and, if necessary, links to an accompanying list or database. Best accessibility means all moving images that have been requested by patrons are digitized, discoverable, and viewable online.
- A sound recording is considered accessible if an individual or collection-level catalog record including keywords, subjects, and people is available online and, if necessary, links to an accompanying list or database. Best accessibility means all sound recordings that have been requested by patrons are digitized, discoverable, and viewable online.

## The Existing Collection

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### How Materials Are Acquired

#### ***Passive vs. Active Collecting***

Most items in the HN collection have been passively collected, meaning the donors/sellers of the items contacted HN to determine if the agency is interested. A smaller percentage of items were sought out to fill gaps in the collection, to meet exhibit needs, or to document stories as they unfold. HN is making attempts to do much more active collecting.

#### ***Donations***

Unsolicited donations represent the bulk of the growth in all but the Archeology and Government Records collections. Donors typically contact HN via email, telephone, mail, or in-person.

HN does actively seek donations when time allows and circumstances arise. Examples include contacting politicians for donations of campaign materials or papers, obtaining items related to current events/issues when items are readily available (e.g., Keystone XL, Occupy movement, COVID-19, protests sparked by the police killing of George Floyd, etc.), continued collecting from organizations/businesses with which we already

have a collecting relationship (e.g., Latino-American Commission, Lincoln Symphony Orchestra, Nebraskans for Peace, etc.).

Unsolicited donations to the archeology collection are rarely accepted because they generally lack provenance, and therefore research value, and are usually duplicate to what already exists in this vast collection. Information about where prospective donations were recovered or archeological features on the landscape is welcome and added to the site records.

Donations of Government Records are infrequent. They most often occur with materials pertaining to defunct rural school districts from estates of people who served on local, county, or state board/commissions.

### **Purchases**

Due to limited funds for acquisition, purchasing items for the collections is generally done on a limited, case-by-case basis. In most instances, items available for purchase are brought to a Curator's attention directly from auction houses/sellers, from staff, or by interested constituents. Decisions about purchases up to \$1,500 are discussed at Collections Committee meetings and a consensus is sought on whether to purchase. Items costing \$1,500 and above are discussed at Collections Committee meetings as well as with the Director/CEO. At or above this price, accounting procedures may dictate how the item is purchased.

Per our Code of Ethics, HN staff must inform the Collections Division about personal acquisitions in which HN might have an interest. HN reserves the option to purchase the items at the same price paid by the employee.

The Library has more actively purchased items than the other collections. Until a few years ago controlled purchasing (in which a list of desired books was established each year and purchased) was the norm, but this has ceased due a significant library cataloging backlog as well as a refined focus on what HN collects. At this time nothing beyond a moderate number of serials is being accepted for the library collection.

Archeology and Government Records rarely/never purchase items.

### **Loan for Copy**

The Photograph, Audiovisual, Manuscript, Library, and Object collections sometimes acquire loan-for-copy items. These occur when an item is desired for the collection but the donor is unwilling to donate outright. Lack of accompanying information, permission, and/or clear copyright makes these acquisitions challenging. Many times the copies are on impermanent media. Loan-for-Copy is discouraged unless there are exceptional circumstances. HN has started to acquire "copies" of born-digital material; these are not considered loans and it is understood that copies of the same exist elsewhere.

## **Created In-House**

Digital images and photographic prints created by HN staff for varying reasons have been added to the collection. Staff need to be mindful about when this type of material needs to be added to the permanent collection or treated as a working document.

## **Legislatively Mandated Collecting**

### *Archeology:*

In 2005, the Nebraska Archaeological Resources Preservation Act created the State Archeology Office as a division within History Nebraska. Pursuant to this act, HN maintains the master archaeological site file, maintains a permanent repository and electronic database of published and unpublished sources on the archaeological resources of the state, and ensures the long-term curation and management of collections and records resulting from undertakings within the state (see [Nebraska Revised Statutes Sections 82-501 to 82-510](#)).

Current collecting focuses on gathering information in preference to physical artifacts. This information comes in as: site forms, GIS data, photos and digital images, and data collected from archeological site investigations. The four basic sources for current collecting are: cultural resource management activities (CRM), State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) sponsored surveys, donations (outlined above), and other non-CRM research. HN is also a temporary repository for human remains and grave goods that are inadvertently discovered in Nebraska (see Nebraska's [Unmarked Human Burial Sites and Skeletal Remains Protection Act](#)).

CRM activities are guided by Section 106 of the [National Historic Preservation Act](#) and the [Nebraska Archaeological Resources Preservation Act](#). Section 106 requires that federal agencies (or those receiving federal dollars) take into account the effect of their activities on historic sites—including archeological—and seek ways to avoid or reduce adverse effects. Under the Nebraska Highway Archeology Program, HN works closely with the Nebraska Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to identify and protect important archeological sites that may be effected by road construction. This results in the collection of site records and sometimes artifacts. Other archeologists doing CRM work in Nebraska generate site records, generally in the form of GIS data and site forms, and HN serves as a clearinghouse for this information and stores digital and hard copies of the records. Federal agencies are responsible for the housing of their collections in an appropriate repository and, for a curation fee, HN houses collections for the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Resources Conservation Service (NCRS).

In partial fulfillment of duties outlined in the [National Historic Preservation Act](#), HN's SHPO has sponsored archeological surveys to identify unrecorded sites in Nebraska since

1988. The paper and digital site forms, GIS data, digital images, and associated records produced from this work are accessioned and housed in the archeology archives.

The inadvertent discovery of human remains and grave goods outside of federal or tribal lands in Nebraska results in HN taking temporary custody of these materials for identification purposes. Human remains deserve and require extra care and sensitivity and it is History Nebraska's duty to treat them as such. The materials are never accessioned or considered part of the HN collection. Federal NAGPRA law and Nebraska's Unmarked Human Burial Sites and Skeletal Remains Protection Act ([Nebraska Revised Statutes Chapter 12, Sections 12-1201 to 12-1212](#)) guide the repatriation of human remains and funerary objects.

### *Government Records/State Archives*

State Statute 82-104 expressly indicates that History Nebraska shall be the custodian of all public records, documents, relics, and other materials deemed to be of historic value found in any government offices that receive appropriations from the Legislature. Once records are physically transferred to the State Archives, HN retains custody, control, and supervision of those records pursuant to our statutory authority, Nebraska Rev. Statutes [82-105](#) & [82-106](#).

The primary method by which Government Records are collected is through transfer by local, county, and state entities per records management retention schedules. The State Records Management Division, Secretary of State, coordinates the development of these schedules and the State Archivist reviews them for records of historic significance that warrant inclusion in the State Archives. The records management schedules indicate the format (paper, security microfilm, or electronic) in which specific record series will be transferred. Records management retention schedules are available here: [http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/retention\\_schedules.html](http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/retention_schedules.html)

### *Library*

Revised Statute [51-413](#) requires the Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse (NPC, established in 1972) to forward one copy of each publication produced by state agencies to History Nebraska. Until very recently, HN had been accepting all NPC materials (which, until 2005, included copies of publications on microfiche) for either the Library or State Archives (if an agency had failed to provide a publication subject to their records retention schedule). Due to a significant cataloging backlog for library materials, the agency is not currently adding to its library holdings (beyond serials) and materials forwarded by the NPC shall from now on be evaluated for their archival value to the people of Nebraska rather than being automatically added to the Library.

### *Nebraska Statewide Cemetery Registry*

[Revised statute 12-1401](#) requires HN to maintain and make available to the public a [statewide cemetery registry](#). Those who own or maintain cemeteries, mausoleums or columbariums are asked to file with History Nebraska pertinent information including the location, contact information, and inception/abandonment dates of such places.

The registry has been maintained by HN's librarian; plans to transfer maintenance duties to one of HN's architectural historians are in the works.

### ***Archeology Research (Non – CRM Investigations)***

Occasional opportunities arise for non-CRM investigations by HN archeologists. Examples include excavations at Fort Atkinson and Fort Robinson to assist Game and Parks in reconstructing certain buildings in their parks. These projects often result in a large number of artifacts and associated records.

### **General Strengths/Weaknesses**

In 2015/2016 curators evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the various collection types. Results were shared with members of HN staff outside of the collections team; resulting comments and suggestions were incorporated into the analyses.

#### ***Strengths***

Pre-1950 Nebraska history is well-represented; areas of strength include:

- early immigrant groups
- Native American history up to and including the reservation era
- settlement and housing patterns
- visual and documentary evidence of early agriculture
- everyday life
- maps
- Nebraska newspapers, authors, and television
- genealogical materials
- local histories

Additional strengths include:

- political history
- Christianity
- industry (particularly the railroad and Nebraska-made products)
- the Depression era
- Nebraska forts
- military conflicts through WWII
- archeological materials from early Plains village farmers, the Pawnee Tribe, and military installations

#### ***Weaknesses***

Nebraska history post 1950 is underrepresented in HN collections; particular areas of weakness include:

- western Nebraska history
- City of Omaha history
- objects relating to agriculture
- objects relating to athletics
- objects relating to radio broadcasting

- the experiences of marginalized people
- civil rights
- non-Christian religions
- political and social change organizations/movements
- municipality and early state agency records
- arts, entertainment, and pop-culture history is weak except for distinct areas of strength (John Falter, Glenn Fleischmann, WPA art projects, T. B. Johnson, and sheet music)
- archeological materials relating to pre-village people, non-native ethnic groups, and post-contact Native village sites

Detailed strength/weakness analyses by collection type are available in [Appendix 1](#).

## Developing the Collection

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HN strives to build a collection that has public value and widely represents Nebraska History given the agency's available space and resources. These objectives can be met through 1) thoughtful collection development based on community needs, programmatic needs, and collection weaknesses, and 2) collections refinement defined by what is NOT needed (based on strengths, capabilities, and complimentary collections) and the setting of deaccession priorities.

### **Collections Committee Considerations**

HN's Collections Committee makes decisions that support sustainable collecting and accessible materials which document the stories important to Nebraska's varied communities. The Committee considers the following questions with regard to potential acquisitions and deaccessions.

- What is the best way to document a particular issue/community/event, etc.? Is it through objects, photos, archives, or a combination? Is this particular acquisition the best choice?
- Does this acquisition help us to better document the nuance and complexity of an important story?
- Does the object have accompanying photos, archival materials, or oral histories to better document the story?
- Is there sufficient provenance and information about its use?
- Will it be useful for exhibition?
- Will it be useful for research?
- How big is it? Will we be able to store it?
- What is the condition? If poor, would it be a priority for conservation?
- Is it a duplicate of other objects already in our collection?
- Is there a more appropriate repository for this item?
- Does it support a collection strength or fill a gap?

- Does it have short term use or long term use? Is it better suited in the Education and Use Collection rather than the permanent collection?
- Who holds copyright? Will copyright be transferred to HN, and if not, what are the consequences? Is it in the public domain?
- Who will care that we have it? Does it tell a meaningful story? Does it evoke emotion?
- Are we considering the acquisition just because it will be easy to add to the existing collection?
- Are we considering the acquisition mainly because of a curator's personal interest?
- How does it fit our poetic collecting scope?

## **Targeted Collecting**

Collecting efforts will concentrate on rectifying collection weaknesses, focusing on underrepresented communities, geographic areas, and time periods. HN will strive to collect the cultural diversity of Nebraska, taking into account ethnicity, race, religion, politics, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic class.

### ***Focus Areas through FY2025\****

- Nebraska's LGBTQ+ population
- Modern Native Americans living in Nebraska
- Current events as they impact the lives of Nebraskans
- Active collecting for Covid-19
- Active collecting for Racial Injustice

\*Specified focus areas will not preclude collecting for other underrepresented communities should the need arise

### ***Implementation Strategies***

Strategies for collecting targeted items are fluid and will be advised by the Collections Committee and ad hoc task force groups. The following is an outline of steps for each group HN identifies for targeted collecting.

#### ***Pre-meeting work***

- A. Choose a group or groups we want to work with
- B. Conduct a general survey of the history of that group in Nebraska. Identification of key events and topics, which will be expected to grow and change as partnership with the group develops
- C. General Survey of existing collections for that group
  - a. Create a list of search terms and historic events related to the identity in question to aid curators in their searches
  - b. Update collections records with relevant search terms to aid future searching by staff, researchers and community members



- D. Create a wish list for what we would love to actively collect, while keeping in mind that this list would grow and evolve as we develop partnerships and listen and learn about their history. Collections staff will learn more about the group's history
- E. Survey of other History Nebraska resources including previous and upcoming projects and programs
- F. Create list of potential outside partners
- G. Generate a list of possible services HN could provide to partners
- H. Evaluate staffing and financial resources and opportunities. What do we think we will need in terms of resources? Will we need to travel to different parts of the state? Are there funds to support? Grants? Do we need to fund a short-term position?
- I. Create a list of specific activities that relate to building partnerships with that group. It might be meeting(s) with partner organizations to share what resources we already have and the kinds of ways we traditionally help organizations. It might be asking them what kind of service we could provide to their constituents

#### *During/Post meeting work*

- A. Develop and foster working relationship with the community

### **Collection Refinement**

Per the Collections Policy, HN only collects materials that meet acquisition criteria and do not meet deaccession criteria. Additionally, items identified as sufficiently represented in the collection, items containing sensitive information that may now (or in the future) be restricted, and copies of materials available elsewhere or for which a more appropriate repository exists are generally not acquired.

### ***Complimentary Collections/Collecting Institutions***

Below is an incomplete list of collections/institutions that HN may consult/collaborate with on collecting issues.

- Legacy of the Plains Museum (Agricultural equipment)
- Museum of Nebraska Art (Nebraska Art)
- University of Nebraska State Museum (Natural History Collections, Nebraska archeological and ethnographic collections)
- The Durham Museum (City of Omaha history)
- The Stuhr Museum (Grand Island history)
- International Quilt Study Center (Non-Nebraska and some Nebraska quilts)
- University of Nebraska Archives (University History)
- Other Nebraska Universities (most have their own archives)
- State Capitol Archives (Capitol building history)
- Local Museums and Historical Organizations (history that is specific to communities/counties/regions without a larger statewide story)

- Out-of-State Museums and Historical Organizations when applicable

### **What We Won't Collect**

A list of specific items that HN generally won't collect can be found in [Appendix 3](#). Additionally, HN will not acquire materials that cannot be made accessible within one year of acquisition. Exceptions will be made for large or complex collections (see Sustainable Collecting section above) and for materials being kept confidential for a specified period of time as allowed for Nebraska Revised Statute [84-712.05](#) item 16. HN is currently not accepting acquisitions for the Library due to a significant processing backlog.

### **Deaccession Priorities**

Deaccession is the thoughtful, deliberate, and official removal of items that have been accessioned into the HN collections and is a useful tool in building a collection that represents Nebraska history in a well-rounded, meaningful, and sustainable manner. Deaccession criteria and procedures are specified in the HN Collections Policy. [Appendix 2](#) lists curator-identified deaccession priorities.

## Evaluation

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The Collecting Plan will be assessed yearly in July by the Collections Committee. Progress (or lack thereof) on building the collection in the past year will be noted. Goals and priorities will be determined during each assessment based on past success/failure, recent scholarship that affects our thinking about important Nebraska topics, and the programmatic needs of the agency. Appendices should also be assessed for potential revisions.

# Appendix 1: Collections Strength and Shortfall Analyses

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## General Summary of HN Collection Strengths

- Pre 1950 history including archeological materials of early Plains village farmers, the Pawnee Tribe, and military installations
- Early immigrant groups
- Native American history up to and including reservation era
- Artistic and photographic representation of the Depression Era
- Nebraska Forts and Nebraska(ns) involvement in military conflicts up through WWI & WWII
- Settlement/homesteading
- Visual and documentary evidence of early agriculture
- Political history especially state and territorial government and political campaigns
- Religion, primarily Christian churches
- Industry, particularly the Railroad in Nebraska and Nebraska made products
- Nebraska television broadcasting
- Everyday life
- Local histories for smaller communities (especially eastern Nebraska & Lincoln)
- Genealogical materials
- Newspapers
- Nebraska authors
- Maps

## General Summary of History Nebraska Collection Shortfalls

- History post 1950. Areas of strength do exist but overall there is weakness
- Western Nebraska and city of Omaha history
- Local municipality records and pre-1950 state agency records
- Archeological materials related to pre-village people, non-native ethnic groups, and post-contact Native villagers
- Three-dimensional documentation of agriculture (objects)
- Personal experience and community culture: minorities, civil rights, non-Christian religions, political and social change organizations/movements, etc.
- Athletics of any sort at any level (recreational to University)
- Arts/Entertainment/Pop Culture: except for distinct areas of strength (John Falter, Glenn Fleischmann, WPA art projects, T. B. Johnson, and sheet music)
- College and University history
- Radio broadcasting

## **Analysis of Collection Strengths and Shortfalls by Collection Type**

### **Archeological Collection Analysis**

#### *Strengths*

- Collections and records relating to:
  - Early village farmers
  - Pawnee villages
  - The historic fur trade and emigrant trail posts
  - Forts (particularly Fort Atkinson and Fort Robinson)
  - Territorial period towns
  - Certain sites left by early foragers (Logan Creek site and Barn Butte) and potters (Schultz, Loseke Creek, Kelso)
- Reconstructed vessel collection
- Comparative lithic collection which is accessible on HN's website
- Archives and GIS data
  - As the clearinghouse for information related to archeological sites & surveys within the State, HN's site files, survey reports, and GIS site and survey location layers provide a nearly one-stop-shop for researchers

#### *Shortfalls*

- Cultural remains from hunter gatherers at the end of the last ice age
- Cultural remains documenting non-native ethnic groups
- Fine-screen recovered materials from post-contact indigenous villages

### **Audiovisual Collection Analysis**

#### *Strengths*

- Moving images:
  - Daily news footage of four Nebraska TV stations: KOLN/KGIN (Lincoln/Grand Island, c.1956-2010), KMTV (city of Omaha, c. 1949-1989), KETV (city of Omaha, c.1958-1981) and KHAS (Hastings, c. 1961-1973). This is footage shot in the field to support stories on the broadcast and there are hundreds of thousands of individual clips in these combined resources
  - Local TV features (perhaps 20 minutes to ½ hour) on specific topics of interest to the local audience, especially in the KETV and KMTV station holdings
  - Home movies (or amateur-made films) dating from the beginning of that phenomenon: 1923. Collection is strong in materials from the 1920s and 1930s, and shows family and town life, travel destinations, transportation (automobile, aviation, railroad), Native peoples, and agriculture
  - Films sponsored by a government, company, or organization, and mostly of an educational nature. Particularly strong in relation to businesses and manufacturing from the 19-teens through the 1960s

- Town promotional films made to highlight the history and attributes of towns to promote settlement. We hold only a few from the 1920s-1980s but they are choice examples of the genre
- Films primarily made by political representatives to be broadcast or otherwise shown in home districts and campaign films for Nebraska candidates
- HN holds several rare silent films ranging from theatrical to promotional films, dating from the 19-teens through the 1920s
- The Nebraska Broadcasters Association collection. The NBA sponsors a yearly awards competition for television and radio broadcasters. This collection contains all the entries to the contest from 1979 through today. This collection represents the best of radio and television throughout the state
- Oral histories on audio tape with emphasis on pioneer life, local history, ethnic culture, and folk customs. One collection in particular is an extensive and valuable gathering of stories from Native American tribal elders

### *Shortfalls*

- Sound recordings:
  - HN has smatterings of Nebraska-made record albums and CDs but the holdings do not do justice to the rich culture of music production in the state.
  - Many radio broadcasts were live and therefore don't exist on recordings. It's unclear if there are caches of local programming available to be had, but it might be worth pursuing (beyond what we have in the Nebraska Broadcasters Association collection)
- Radio advertisements. HN holds many but the historic and geographic span is not impressive and their research value is minimal

## **Government Records Collection Analysis**

### *Strengths*

- State agency/department records created post 1950
- Governors' papers from territorial period through administration of Governor Dave Heineman
- Military History including Nebraska Military Department (state guard), the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), and the Grand Island Veterans Home (formerly Soldiers and Sailors Home) admission case files from 1887-2005
- Nebraska Dept. of Banking and Finance 1875-1940
- Territorial and Nebraska Supreme Court Records
- County records (paper and security microfilm formats) for county clerks, courts, district courts and register of deeds, from late 19<sup>th</sup> century through current year
- Federal records on film: Indian agency, U.S. Land office, War Dept., and Post Office documents

### *Shortfalls*

- Pre1950 records created and produced by state agencies

- Local municipalities. Many have not transferred records to State Archives in a consistent manner
- Electronic records. Acquisition has been spotty at best. Many government records in electronic format may already be lost

## **Library Collection Analysis**

### *Strengths*

- Books, Booklets, & Pamphlets:
  - State and Local Histories covering Nebraska and the histories of counties and their communities
  - Travel & Description material including gazetteers, phonebooks, city directories, statewide and county atlases, county plat books & farm directories, early immigrant guides to Nebraska and its counties (1860s to 1890s), and community and county description books and booklets from the 1900s to the present including photographic coffee table books
  - Published and unpublished biographical material and reminisces of pioneers, veterans, and everyday residents, oral history typescripts, and material on nationally known figures that influenced the history of Nebraska
  - Published and unpublished genealogical material of Nebraska families from pre-1900 to the present
  - Published and unpublished books and maps pertaining to Native Americans from the Nebraska territory and the Midwest
  - Published and unpublished histories of rural, community, town, city, and county schools (including school annuals), and Department of Education Annual Reports
  - Archeological publications pertaining to Nebraska and the Great Plains
  - Material regarding ethnic groups, railroads, ethnology, agriculture, and architecture pertaining to Nebraska and the Great Plains
  - Religious history including the history of early religious leaders who interacted with Native Americans to present day churches
  - Literature by Nebraska authors
  - Nineteenth-century military history and Indian Wars
- Maps (flat maps, not listed previously and in most cases not bound in book format):
  - Pre-Territorial and Territorial maps of the middle United States that eventually became the State of Nebraska
  - State maps from statehood to the 2000s
  - County, City, Town, and Village Maps from pre-1867 to 1980s
  - Original Nebraska Sanborn Maps
  - Donald Forke Map Collection (the world to Nebraska before 1900)
- Newspapers

- Nebraska newspapers from territorial days through 2008 (newspapers are technically part of the Nebraska History Library even though the bulk of the collection is on microfilm; HN has maintained original Nebraska Territorial Newspapers)
- Periodicals/Serials/Newsletters relating to Nebraska
- Information on state cemeteries in accordance with [Revised Statute 12-1401](#)

### Shortfalls

- 21<sup>st</sup> century books, booklets, pamphlets, and maps
- Newspapers
  - Current newspapers no longer collected after July 1, 2020
  - Only about 10% of HN's newspaper holdings from 2008-2020 were microfilmed and are currently in the newspaper collection; those not microfilmed are no longer held by HN
  - Some microfilmed newspapers are missing issues

## Manuscript Collection Analysis

### Strengths

- Railroad history
  - Corporate records of the Union Pacific Railroad dating from ca. 1860-1920s
  - Documents relating to CB&Q Lines West and the BMRR Land Department
  - Val Kuska (CB&Q) papers
  - Related materials such as the Lincoln Land Company records
- Military history
  - Collections documenting the military contributions of Nebraskans, especially relating to WWII
    - Butler B. Miltonberger papers documenting the 134th Infantry, 35th Division, during World War II
    - Records of the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant (Grand Island, Neb.)
    - Records of the Glenn L. Martin Company
    - Records of the Nebraska USO
    - Numerous collections containing diaries and/or correspondence of individuals who served during WWII
  - Diaries and/or correspondence of individuals who served in WWI and the Spanish-American War
  - Papers of Frank and Luther North and their service with the Pawnee Scouts
  - Tom Buecker's research files that are now part of the Fort Robinson Collection
- Homesteading/Pioneer Life
  - Oblinger family letters
  - Eli Ricker interviews

- Numerous other collections of letters, diaries and reminiscences that document pioneer life in Nebraska
- Native American history: Manuscript collections regarding Native American interactions with settlers and the U.S. military during the mid-late 19th Century into the early 20th Century. Much of this information is from the settlers' perspectives as shown in correspondence, diaries and reminiscences and the Fort Robinson research files, but there are also the Eli Ricker interviews and correspondence/diaries of various missionaries
- Diaries, letters, reminiscences, ledgers and financial accounts, etc. relating to farm life in Nebraska. Examples include the following collections:
  - Oblinger family
  - Luna Kellie
  - Benton Aldrich
  - Blaha family
  - Donald Hartwell
- Collections relating to the agriculture industry in Nebraska. Collections include the records of corporations as well as professional associations. Examples include the records of:
  - Union Stockyards (Omaha, Neb.)
  - Kilpatrick Brothers (Beatrice, Neb.)
  - Milldale Ranch Company
  - Norfolk Feed Mills Company
  - Neligh Mills
  - National Livestock Feeders Association
- Papers of politicians and political organizations including:
  - William Jennings Bryan
  - George Norris
  - Hugh Butler
  - J. Sterling Morton
  - Roman Hruska
  - Carl Curtis
  - Doug Bereuter
  - Nebraska Democratic Party
- Records of individual churches and religious organizations around the state, including:
  - Evangelical Lutheran Synod in the Central States
  - Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska
  - Lincoln Fellowship of Churches
  - Nebraska Church Women United
  - Religious Society of Friends
  - Woman's Christian Temperance Union



- Records of financial institutions and insurance companies/associations from around the state, including:
  - Bank of Commerce (Grand Island, Neb.)
  - Fidelity Trust Company (Fremont, Neb.)
  - First National Bank (Lincoln, Neb.)
  - Nebraska Central Building & Loan Association
  - Royal Highlanders
  - Springfield Fire and Marine Insurance Company (Red Cloud, Neb.)
- Records of various manufacturing companies around the state:
  - Arrow Aircraft and Motor Corporation (Lincoln, Neb.)
  - Behlen Manufacturing (Columbus, Neb.)
  - Fairmont Foods Company (Omaha, Neb.)
  - Kregel Windmill Company (Nebraska City, Neb.)
  - Lincoln Art Glass Works (Lincoln, Neb.)
  - Sheldon Manufacturing Company (Nehawka, Neb.)
  - Cushman Motors (Lincoln, Neb.)
- Architectural drawings from architects/architectural firms including:
  - Davis, Fenton, Stange & Darling (Davis Designs)
  - Lawrence Enersen
  - Burkett Graf
  - George Berlinghof
  - Albert Dyer
  - Thomas Kimball

### Shortfalls

- Post 1970s material: The manuscript collections do include limited materials from the 1970s and later, but the bulk of them are political papers and organizational records
  - The bulk of our military collections are WWII and before. One or two collections relate to Vietnam, but basically nothing for Korea or the period after Vietnam
  - Most of our church records date through the 1970s (when there was a concerted effort to gather and microfilm collections), but we have received few church records after the 1970s
  - We hold few post 1970s business records (with a few exceptions)
- Ethnic Minorities
  - The manuscript collections contain a fair representation of early ethnic groups in Nebraska (Czech, German, Scandinavian, etc.), but little for more recent groups
  - There is little in the collections relating to Hispanic, African, Asian groups, etc.
  - We do hold some Native American and African American materials, but again, not much post 1970s

- Athletics: The manuscript collections hold few athletic-related materials. We have little or no documentation of sports with the exception of a few random game programs/rosters scattered throughout personal/family papers
- Arts & Entertainment: Overall the manuscript collections are weak regarding the arts and entertainment. There are some examples scattered throughout personal/family collections. We also have a few collections of theater programs, music programs, etc., but overall, not a lot with the exception of Square Dancing
- Republican Party in Nebraska: We have a large collection of records relating to the Democratic Party in Nebraska, but little if anything from the Republican Party. We do have the papers of various Republican politicians, but very little directly from the Republican Party itself
- Colleges/Universities: Partly by choice, we are weak regarding colleges/universities in Nebraska. If these institutions have their own archives/historical collections we generally transfer or refer collections to them
- Conservation/Environmental Groups: Information regarding conservation and the environment, climate change, etc. is going to become more and more important to researchers. We have a few collections relating to conservation efforts in Nebraska, but not a lot, and not much from the last 20 years
- LGBTQ+: We are just starting to collect more materials in this area (Lincoln Legion of Lesbians; Lincoln Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights; etc.), but there is much more that could/should be done

## **Object Collection Analysis**

### *Strengths*

- Native American Objects (19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries): History Nebraska's rich Native American collections are one of the overall strengths. Most are associated with the Santee, Lakota, and Omaha tribes. There are smaller collections from the Winnebago, Ponca, Pawnee, Otoe, Cheyenne, and other Plains nations. Beadwork collections are extensive, including moccasins and other clothing items, accessories, and beaded bags. Other highlights include a small collection from the Genoa Indian School, two contemporary star quilts, and the Vietnam War collection of Hollis Stabler (Omaha nation)
- European Immigrant Groups (late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century): Strengths includes materials from Czech, German, and Scandinavian immigrants, especially those who came to Nebraska in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Collections include personal objects brought to Nebraska as well as objects that immigrants made or used in Nebraska. A large collection of materials from the Rosenberg and Speier families documents the story of a Jewish family fleeing Nazi Germany. Some objects celebrate the heritage of immigrants, such as buttons and badges from organizations and celebrations, mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century Czech folk costumes, and promotional items from the Czech festival in Wilber

- Nebraska Business and Industry: Collections include a wide variety of product packaging and products that were made in Nebraska. Strengths include late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century food containers from Nebraska businesses, bottles from early soda manufacturers and breweries, and sacks from Nebraska mills. Specific products include Vice Grips, Terri Lee dolls, a Patriot truck, an Arrow Sport Plane, Cushman scooters, a Kawasaki motorcycle, and Nebraska made poultry incubators and brooders. Additionally, the Objects Collection includes advertising materials, promotional items, and ephemera from a wide range of Nebraska manufacturers and businesses
- Nebraska Political History: The Objects Collection includes a wide range of campaign materials, particularly buttons and badges, signs, brochures, and other campaign souvenirs. Large components of the collection relate to three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan. Extensive collections from Nebraska Senators George W. Norris and Carl Curtis include many of their personal items. The George W. Norris State Historic Site is furnished with original objects from the Norris family. Many inaugural gowns of Nebraska gubernatorial first ladies are also in the collection
- Military History from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries: Collections strengths include military uniforms from Nebraskans who served in every war, although most are from the Civil War through Korean War. The largest subgroup of the military collection is from the World War II era. Of particular note are the significant collections from Fort Robinson, Nebraska. These include uniforms and objects related to the War dog program during WWII. Fort Robinson collections also include artwork made by German prisoners of war
- Everyday Life in Nebraska: Large subsets of the Objects Collection document everyday life in Nebraska, especially from the late 19<sup>th</sup> through mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Collections include clothing, decorative and household items, objects representing rites of passage (such as baptisms, weddings, graduations), youth organizations (scouting, Campfire, etc.), toys, etc.
- John P. Falter Artwork collection: This expansive collection includes the artwork and studio objects created and used by John P. Falter. The artist was nationally known for his *Saturday Evening Post* Covers and prolific illustration career. Additionally, Falter's extensive personal papers, photos, and research files are held in the History Nebraska Archives
- Nebraska Quilts: The collection's strengths are quilts from the 1880s to 1940s, with most from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are more than 400 quilts in the collection, making it one of the largest and well-documented Nebraska quilt collections in a museum. The collection not only documents the artistry and craftsmanship of Nebraska quiltmakers, but provides a window into fundraising efforts, commemoration, political views, community building, and more
- Social Movements/Social Activism: Although there are significant gaps in this collection, there are small, but strong collections related to various issues, including women's suffrage and temperance in Nebraska. Small collections related to 21<sup>st</sup> century issues include the Occupy movement, the Keystone Pipeline, peace movements, and recent

women's marches in Lincoln. Current collecting efforts are striving to build collections related to Black Lives Matter and social justice

- COVID-19: Collecting efforts are underway to extensively document and collect objects related to the COVID-19 pandemic in Nebraska. Collections include masks and personal protective equipment made in Nebraska, signs, product packaging from businesses, materials from modified/rescheduled sporting events, and artwork
- Objects from Lincoln and Southeast Nebraska: Although History Nebraska strives to collect materials from across the state of Nebraska, many of the collections are associated with Lincoln and Southeast Nebraska. Because History Nebraska's headquarters is in Lincoln and there is no Lancaster County Historical Society, objects from Lincoln and southeast Nebraska are often offered to HN and have been both passively and actively collected

### *Shortfalls*

- Native American Collections from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to Present: Although History Nebraska has extensive Native American collections from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the collection lacks materials from later periods. Collections to build could include (but are not limited to) contemporary art, objects related to social activism, and objects from veterans. Additional collecting areas need to be explored with tribal nation partners to reflect the diverse and rich histories of Native people in Nebraska throughout time
- Immigrant Groups and POC: There are few objects representing Latinx, African-Americans, and Japanese Americans in Nebraska from all time periods. The collection also lacks materials representing all immigrant groups from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and 21<sup>st</sup> century, including Latinx, Sudanese, Karen, and Vietnamese Nebraskans. Partnerships need to be formed to help develop future collecting efforts
- LGBTQ+: Few objects represent LGBTQ+ history in Nebraska. Partnerships need to be formed to help explore and develop future collecting efforts
- Civil Rights and Social Movements: The collection lacks objects related to 20<sup>th</sup> century Civil Rights movements. Although there are efforts underway to collect materials from contemporary movements like Black Lives Matter, more work needs to be done to develop partners, identify gaps in the collection, and develop goals for active collecting
- Music: Although the Objects Collection includes sheet music from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there is little to document music that was composed or produced in Nebraska post 1950. There are significant gaps related to local and nationally known Nebraska musicians
- Sports and Recreational Artifacts: Overall the collection is very weak in terms of documenting sports and outdoor life in Nebraska, and what these things mean to Nebraska identity. Although the collection includes a few high school sports uniforms and sports ephemera, there are no objects related to Nebraska professional leagues or

University of Nebraska sports programs, including football. Although many aspects of everyday life are documented in the collection, there are few objects representing recreational and outdoor activities

- Nebraska Agriculture and Food Production: Overall, agriculture and ranching are weaknesses in the Objects Collection. Storage and exhibit limitations make it impossible to currently collect large agricultural implements. Other Nebraska museums collect these materials and can make suitable partners. Instead of focusing on technology, concentrating on the human side of farming, ranching, meatpacking, etc. may be a more attainable and relevant goal. Areas to explore could include the farm crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, concerns about corporate farms, and the shift to factory hog farming. Although some collections document farm life in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, later periods are not as well documented. Future collecting efforts could focus on experiences of ranchers and farmers and their families, farm workers and their families, and many other jobs involving agriculture and food production in the state. Feedlots and meat packing industries, and the people working in these industries should also be explored
- Geographic Areas Outside Southeast Nebraska: Although there are pockets of strong collections from other parts of the state, many objects in the collection originate from Lincoln and southeast Nebraska. Future active collecting efforts must strive to collect materials reflecting all geographic regions of the state. But consideration must also be given to potential outside partners that collect similar materials and can provide adequate care. Partnerships rather than competition or duplication of efforts must also be considered

## **Photograph Collection Analysis**

### *Strengths*

- Native American: This is one of our most used and requested collections. Strengths include the Omaha, Pawnee, and Ponca tribal collections and the John Anderson collection.
- Large cities: Especially the city of Lincoln. Our collection representing Omaha is not as strong but still represents a significant portion of the collection. Strengths include the Macdonald Studio (Lincoln) and Nathaniel Dewell (Omaha) collections.
- Pre-1940s: The early growth and development of Nebraska is well documented. We have many large collections that feature images of the life, activity, and work of Nebraskans through the 1940s. Strengths include the Solomon Butcher, Bostock Studio, and George Condra collection.
- Portraits: The portrait collection contains large and small collections of commercial portraits. Strengths include the portrait, legislative portrait, and mug shot collections.
- Agriculture: Pre-1930s agriculture is well-represented. Strengths include collections of ranching operations like the Horse Shoe Bar Ranch, Hord Family, and Omaha Livestock Market and the Farming Operations collection.

- Famous Nebraskans: Strengths include Willa Cather, George Norris, J. Sterling Morton, and William Jennings Bryan.
- Railroads: Includes the Val Kaska/Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad; Burlington Railroad, and Union Pacific collections.
- Depression Era Programs: Collections represent the CCC (individual and personal albums and collections) and FERA.
- Commercial Photography: We maintain large significant collections from commercial photographers, including Macdonald, Nathaniel Dewell, James Denny, and Westland Studio.
- Forts: Our collection documents every fort or military camp in Nebraska including Forts Robinson, Atkinson, and Omaha
- Early military conflicts: Military conflicts from the Spanish-American war through World War II are well documented

### *Shortfalls*

- Agriculture: We have few images documenting the change or modern farming practices since 1960
- Modern Military Conflicts: We have little relating to conflicts/military experience post-WWII
- Post 1950s
- Small towns, especially in Western Nebraska
- Minorities and Ethnic Groups
- Woman and Minority Photographers
- LGBTQ+: Few photo collections represent LGBTQ+ history in Nebraska

## Appendix 2: Deaccession Priorities

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Deaccession criteria and procedures are outlined in the Collections Policy. Below are curator-identified deaccession priorities for specific collections.

### Archeology

- Much of the Lincoln Pottery Works (25LC42) collection: The Lincoln-Lancaster Railroad and Transportation and Safety District, with cooperative assistance from HN, contracted UNL to investigate this site in 1986/1987 to mitigate damage from the effects of Capitol Parkway West construction (Schoen and Bleed 1993). There are approximately 620 boxes of artifacts from this excavation. The collection is heavy, it takes up an entire row at 5050 and it is full of duplicate artifacts. Issues include:
  - Need to research project history to ensure that federal involvement does not require that we keep it all
  - Choosing examples of artifact types to keep or get rid of and why while considering future research potential
  - The collection is vast
  - The movers struggled to get many of these boxes up onto higher shelves. Strength and safety measures will be required to get boxes from shelves and moved to and from a work space.
  - What to do with such a large quantity of deaccessioned materials?
- Fossils & Minerals
  - 6 boxes of fossils & minerals containing items #'d as 12000-\_\_\_\_. 12000 was a temporary archeology number
  - 1 box "misc. fossils, BT\_\_\_\_, donation"
- 50+ Boxes Marked "DEA DB\_\_\_\_"
  - But only after re-inspecting to make sure there is nothing we should not deaccession (like artifacts collected from 25RH1 which is on BIA land) or anything covered by NAGPRA
- Additional collections from out of state or with limited or no provenance (each bullet below represents one box of artifacts)
  - 5LO1 (Flattop Butte quarry in CO; samples in lithic comparative collection should be kept), 5YM3 (Colorado)
  - 23CP1 (Missouri),
  - 48NO001 (Wyoming)
  - 5LO1, 14JW1, 14RP1, other KS, KAT1, 39AR201, 39BT003, 39LM26
  - Misc. southwestern pottery, figurine, large rectangular metate
  - No #s
  - No #s, Misc. name, county or site

- SS, US, VS #s, □, △ #s, no #s
- unknown collection
- Bricks, no label
- Woodland Sherds from SHS (SHS = state historical society; note within indicates found in Washington County Historical Society collection and returned to HN)
- no #s, SW bowls etc., 2 whetstones
- wood frags, no #
- Other collections/object types that might be weeded to create more space (after thoughtful consideration and consultation with staff archeologists):
  - Daub/burned earth from 25SY31 (the Patterson Site) and perhaps other sites. Although Linda Plock is developing some interesting research with daub and architecture. The distribution of daub can inform construction techniques etc. These are things no one has ever really considered much before.
  - Ash
  - Soil Samples
  - Bricks (many boxes and crates) and nails (several boxes) from 25WN9 (Ft. Atkinson)
  - 25DW51 = 7.5 shelving units plus whatever is still stored at Fort Robinson
  - Box & crate full of metal
  - Large rocks, stone samples
  - Bricks collected by HP
  - Misc. teaching collections that have been picked through and are not in use

## **Audiovisual Collection**

- Removal of local news footage that is not identified by date or subject. This is especially rampant in the KETV Collection, which came to HN with no daily logs; much of it is unidentified.

## **Government Records**

- Security Microfiche, Department of Administrative Services (RG75), Billing Invoice Distributions, May 1988 thru May 1995, 6 Microfilm Boxes. Past retention, 5 year records, Accounts Payable, 124-1  
<http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/pdf/124-state-agencies-general-records-20141230.pdf>
- Equal Opportunity Commission (RG85) , Hearings/Investigation Case Files, Confidential Records , 141 bankers boxes, ca 1974-1995. 5 year records for retention and cannot release any of these records to the general public



[http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/pdf/schedule\\_2.pdf](http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/pdf/schedule_2.pdf)

- Attorney General (RG3), Case Files, approximately 300+ bankers boxes. Misc. case files that are no longer permanent records under retention schedule
    - Focus on maintaining major case files for felonies (murder, environmental violations, anti-trust cases, special legislative investigations (oversight))
- [http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/pdf/27\\_website.pdf](http://www.sos.ne.gov/records-management/pdf/27_website.pdf)

## Library

- Criteria from the Collections Policy and *Deaccessioning of Library Materials* document (located in the Library Collections Management Manual) guide the weeding of HN's library materials; priorities include:
  - Non-Nebraska material
  - Historical Nebraska fiction by Non-Nebraska authors
  - Media use copies that fall out of our collecting scope

## Manuscripts

- Duplicates
- Non-Nebraska material
- Other tier 4 and 5 materials as they are encountered
- Collections better suited to, or more appropriate at, another repository such as papers of University faculty members
- Poorly documented real estate assessment records
- Union Stockyards collection needs significant weeding

## Objects

- Deteriorated objects stored at Neligh Mill
- Irrelevant artwork at NHM
- Furniture and large artifacts at NHM, especially in RM4 and on tops of cabinets that need evaluation for deaccessioning
- Paper and ethnographic items that were evaluated for deaccessioning in the 1990s, but never completed
- Tier 4 and 5 materials as they are encountered

## Photographs

- Non-photographic lantern slides
- Duplicate images
- Unidentified portraits not attached to a family collection
- Decomposed nitrate and acetate negatives
- Poor quality copies or copies without documentation
- Non-Nebraska images

- Images or collections with limited Nebraska historical value with ranking of 11 or lower

## Appendix 3: What We Won't Collect

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History Nebraska will not collect items that don't meet our Acquisition criteria or that do not meet our Deaccessioning criteria (see HN's [Collections Policy](#)). Additionally, HN will not collect human remains outside of activities required by Nebraska's Unmarked Human Burial Sites and Skeletal Remains Protection Act. Below are curator-identified areas for which additional collecting is not recommended (exceptions based on historical significance will be considered):

### **Archeology**

Late prehistoric unsystematic surface collections

Reason: sufficiently represented already/little research value

Unsystematic surface collections from Euramerican Farmsteads

Reason: lack of research value

Paleontological specimens

Reason: UNSM collects

### **Audiovisual Collection**

History Nebraska will no longer collect generic home movies showing family events and vacation trips; content must include community scenes and events.

Reason: lack of research value

### **Government Records**

Assessor's records after 1940

Reason: sufficiently represented already, not used, already in Treasurers' tax list record

Student records

Reason: contains sensitive information; prefer to receive school census records

### **Library**

Books that have no connection to Nebraska topics (i.e. state, county, community histories and genealogical material from other states)

Reason: mission inappropriate

Newspapers

Reason: Agency stopped microfilming newspapers in 2020

Encyclopedias, National Geographic and other general interest magazines

Reason: mission inappropriate

### **Manuscripts**

Copies of archival materials preserved elsewhere

Reason: can access these materials elsewhere

Senators case files

Reason: The majority of casework files contain sensitive information (social security numbers; detailed health information; birth dates, account numbers, etc.) that would need to be restricted for extended periods of time and/or redacted in order to make them accessible to the public. Even then, it's debatable how much research value they actually contain. Many archives have stopped accepting these types of files due to the amount of time and resources required to manage them

General genealogical research files:

Reason: usually contains copies of originals found elsewhere or information is provided in reports/self-published family histories housed in the library

Individual land documents (deeds, abstracts, homestead certificates, etc.) not associated with a larger existing collection:

Reason: limited research value; information duplicated elsewhere

## **Objects**

Objects without Nebraska history

Reason: No research value

Furniture

Reason: sufficiently represented already, little research value

Pianos and Organs

Reason: sufficiently represented already; little research value, limited space

Military uniforms and equipment from Spanish-American, WWI, and WWII

Reason: sufficiently represented already

War souvenirs from the Philippines, Japan, and Germany

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Swords and Sabers

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Doilies, dresser scarves, and other decorative needlework

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Campfire Girl's clothing from early 20<sup>th</sup> century

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Baby clothes, pre-1970s

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Christening gowns (unless from an underrepresented minority population)

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Wedding Gowns- Pre-1960

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Women's clothing, pre-1960

Reason: sufficiently represented already

Fur coats from Non-Nebraska makers

Reason: sufficiently represented already, little research value  
Dolls, pre-1950

Reason: sufficiently represented already  
Terri Lee dolls

Reason: sufficiently represented already  
China and tableware, cookware, clocks, lighting devices, rugs, and general household items

Reason: sufficiently represented already, little research value  
Stoves and appliances

Reason: sufficiently represented already, little research value  
Personal accessories such as canes, parasols, and purses

Reason: sufficiently represented already, little research value  
Travel trunks and suitcases

Reason: sufficiently represented already, little research value  
Quilt frames

Reason: sufficiently represented already  
Spinning wheels

Reason: sufficiently represented already  
Blacksmithing tools

Reason: sufficiently represented already  
Corn Husking hooks

Reason: sufficiently represented already  
Saddles (unless a Nebraska maker not represented)

Reason: sufficiently represented already  
Large vehicles and agricultural equipment

Reason: Insufficient space, other repositories  
Taxidermy

Reason: other repositories  
Planes and carpentry tools

Reason: sufficiently represented already, little research value  
Artwork from non-Nebraska artists unless it directly pertains to Nebraska

Reason: other repositories

## **Photographs**

WWI, WWII, and Spanish American war photos (primarily taken overseas)  
Reason: sufficiently represented already

Family portrait collections  
Reason: sufficiently represented already (we refer to local museums)

Donor scans or copies of photos  
Reason: can be title/use issues; quality is inconsistent; prefer to obtain originals

Unidentified portraits

Reason: Unidentified portraits contribute little to our understanding of Nebraska and we are not currently accepting them.

Appendix 4: Current Challenges (omitted for security reasons)

## References Cited

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Wood, Elizabeth, Rainey Tisdale and Trevor Jones, eds.

*Active Collections*. New York : Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018.