

# Archive Policy

## **Purpose and Mission**

The Cordova Historical Society Archive was established in 1967 as a permanent repository for historical and contemporary material representing the history and cultural background of Cordova, Copper River, Kennecott, Katalla, Prince William Sound and adjacent areas in order to educate, to promote historic knowledge, and to make that material available for public inspection and use in research and learning.

To preserve and protect records of the area's heritage and to make them freely available to the public. The Society does:

- seek and acquire historical and contemporary records relating to the mission.
- store, care for and keep together collections placed in the Society's care.
- encourage research into the area's heritage.
- make as much material as possible available for public inspection.
- provide facilities for research and education at the Archive and on the internet.

## **Collecting Focus and Limitations**

Appropriate storage and access facilities will be provided to allow the Cordova Historical Society Archive to collect, preserve, and permit inspection of:

- photographs, slides, and negatives.
- documents (including field notes, drawings, plans etc.)
- published material.
- computerized databases.
- digital images and other relevant files.
- audio and video recordings.
- ephemera of relevance to local history.

Wherever possible material will be scanned, and appropriate computer facilities provided to permit detailed examination of records without disturbing the originals.

Protocols will be introduced to ensure that machine-readable information can continue to be accessed as technology advances.

## **Acquisition of Materials**

The Cordova Historical Society Archive follows the Collection Management Policy for the acquisition and disposal of materials.

## **Loan of Materials**

Archive records are not loaned but used onsite in the Research room.

## **Access and Use of Materials**

The Cordova Historical Society has a responsibility to maintain all material entrusted to its care in good condition. Researchers are asked to exercise the greatest care in handling documents and books and not mark them in any way. The Archives reserves the right to limit the use of restricted records as well as collections that are unprocessed or fragile. The following policies are intended to help preserve the society's collections.

1. Researchers are required to make appointments with at least 24 hours' notice. Access to the Archives is always at the decision of the Curator of Collections and/or Director.

*Explanation: Archives are often in use by staff of the museum or CHS volunteers working to process archival materials.*

2. Researchers are required to register on their first visit to the CHS Archives. Please sign in on each subsequent visit. Registration forms will become a permanent record of the department.

*Explanation: This is for security reasons, to document the identity of researchers and specific days when they used records.*

3. Collections are available to the public for the purpose of research. Persons under the age of sixteen, however, will not be permitted to use materials unless they are accompanied by adults who will take responsibility for the safe use of the materials.

*Explanation: Children may be unaware of the potential for permanent damage through careless handling.*

4. All packages, bags, and briefcases must be stored outside of the Archives Room. The museum staff reserves the right to inspect all notebooks, laptops, and personal belongings prior to a researcher's departure from the Archives Room.

*Explanation: This is for security and preservation reasons. It minimizes opportunities to steal material. It also removes potentially wet coats and bundles that crowd the workspace, might be put on top of archival materials, or otherwise cause physical damage to records.*

5. No food or beverages are allowed in the Archives Room.

*Explanation: They can attract bugs that would eat the records. Sticky substances can cause records to stick against one another and tear. Grease can transfer to the records themselves, thus damaging them. These are all preservation concerns.*

6. In order not to disturb others, please silence all cell phones. Step outside the Archives Room to make or answer calls.

*Explanation: This is a courtesy to other researchers and department personnel.*

7. All material must be used in the Archives Reading Room.

*Explanation: If records leave the Archives Room, they may be handled improperly, causing physical damage, a preservation concern. If records leave, they may not return. Most are irreplaceable, causing a permanent loss of information/history. This is a security concern.*

8. Researchers must use pencil or laptop computer for taking notes. Pens, markers, and scanners may not be used in the Archives Room.

*Explanation: This is for preservation purposes. Pens and markers are not reversible and cause permanent damage. Many researchers do not know how to use scanners without causing physical damage, or when something can physically undergo scanning. Almost none are knowledgeable enough to apply copyright or other restrictions. This is a legal concern.*

9. Care must be taken in handling all Special Collections and Cordova Historical Society archives material. All items must lie flat on the tables. Nothing is to be placed on top of the material excepting book snakes.

*Explanation: This is for preservation purposes. Some items are brittle and break easily. Bundles and other materials are placed in archival containers to prevent possibly permanent damage.*

10. The original order of all collections must be maintained. Do not rearrange material. Please report any disarrangement to museum staff.

*Explanation: During accession, records are either left according to their original order, or intentionally put in a particular sequence. Misfiling makes it difficult for others to locate information using the files and can create extra work for staff.*

11. Limited photocopy services are available. Refer to the fee schedule for pricing. The Archives reserves the right to limit the number of copies made and to refuse to copy any item if such copying might damage the material. Copies of entire books, manuscript collections, or archival record groups will not be made. We reserve the right to refuse to copy material that in our judgment would violate copyright law.

*Explanation: This addresses concerns for the preservation of the records and copyright/legal issues.*

12. Researchers who wish to publish, reprint, or reproduce materials in the collection must request permission in writing from the museum curator of collections.

*Explanation: This would also be a copyright concern.*