

Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library
17 Constitution Way P.O. Box 69
Rochester, MA 02770

Historical Collections Policy

Plumb Memorial Library
Rochester, Massachusetts

The Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library maintains a collection of historical materials available for use in local historic and genealogical research. This collection includes items that have been purchased by or donated to the library, copies of local church records, and materials belonging to the Rochester Historical Society. This collection represents a unique resource for users researching Rochester's history.

As part of the overall mission of the library, archival and research-significant materials have been collected, preserved, exhibited (when possible), and made available to users. The library maintains this collection in order to preserve the vital history of the Town of Rochester while considering the research value of the items. The collection pertains mainly to Rochester and the "daughter towns" of Marion, Mattapoisett, and Wareham, but also contains histories and genealogies from across Massachusetts and New England.

When adding items to the collection, emphasis is placed on printed materials about Rochester and its citizens, photographs or artwork depicting local scenes, and other materials or artifacts pertaining to life in town. Due to lack of physical space and archivally-appropriate storage options, the library will not collect oversized objects or those with special storage needs. Donated items will be acknowledged in writing by the Library Director and donor information will be kept on file.

When possible, materials in this collection will be cataloged, labeled, and stored to the best of the library's ability with regards to preservation. Cataloged items are searchable via the SAILS online library catalog.

The Library Director and Library Staff have administrative control over materials in the Historical Collections. The Library Director, or an appointed staff representative, will coordinate and document donations, additions to, or withdrawals from the collection. The Library Director and Library Staff also oversee any ongoing preservation measures.

Historical Collections Use

- Users are not allowed access to the Historical Collections without staff assistance or approval. Library Staff will make every attempt to ensure that materials are safe at all times by limiting unsupervised physical access to the collection.
- Identifying and requesting materials for use ahead of time is preferred. Users are limited to three (3) titles at a time. If/when able, Library Staff will assist with searching for or recommending materials. All items will be left at the Circulation Desk to be reshelved by staff.

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- Users must be seated within view of Circulation Desk staff while using items from the collection. If there is no risk of damage to the items, photos, scans, or photocopies may be made.
- Items from the Historical Collections cannot be taken out of the library except for preservation purposes or at the approval of the Library Director. This does not apply to items owned by the Rochester Historical Society, who may request return their items at any time.
- As part of ongoing preservation practices, some materials in the collection have been photocopies or have duplicated copies that can be circulated/loaned out.

Accession/Deaccession

- Materials will be added based on the overall criteria of the library's Collection Development & Materials Selection Policy. The Library Director can accept or decline donations to the collection as needed and at their discretion.
- Materials will be cataloged and processed in keeping with appropriate preservation practices.
- Items can be removed from the collection at the approval of the Library Director. Prior to deaccession, the item should be analyzed based on collection guidelines. If the item was donated, any stipulations made at the time of donation should be investigated.
- If a more appropriate facility can be found to house items in the collection, the library has the option to donate those items to another group or organization.
- If an item is deemed no longer appropriate for the collection, but has potential monetary value, the library may take steps to sell the item at the best price for its known value through appropriate channels. Any money received from these sales will be held by the library for future preservation needs.

The Board of Library Trustees reserves the right to amend this policy at any time.

Adopted by the Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library Board of Trustees on February 10, 2025

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