

Section:	Operational	Chairperson's Signature:	
Board Motion Number:	2014-18	Date Approved:	October 20, 2014
Pages:	4	Revision Dates:	November 15, 2021; June 16, 2026

LOCAL HISTORY POLICY

BACKGROUND

Oxford County Library maintains a special collection of materials that help the public and researchers better understand the places, people and events of Oxford's past. The collection is intended to complement, not duplicate, that of the Oxford County Archives.

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the objectives and procedures of the Library's Local History services, including the management of local history collections, the provision of specialized research assistance, and the reproduction of materials within the collection.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Collections

- 1.1 Under the supervision of the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate, Library staff will be responsible for collecting and organizing materials for the local history collection.
- 1.2 Due to the greater availability of space and open hours, and because of the expertise required to assist the public in the use of local history materials, comprehensive local history resources will only be offered in Resource Branch locations. Regional and Village branches may offer secondary source materials about their specific areas of Oxford County.
- 1.3 Oxford County Library will collect materials pertaining to the history of Oxford County and its region, giving priority to items that reveal Oxford's social, civic, religious, economic and cultural past.

Items to be acquired include (but are not limited to):

- 1.3.1 Local research,
- 1.3.2 Oral histories,
- 1.3.3 Cemetery record publications,
- 1.3.4 Original and/or reproductions of photographs and negatives,
- 1.3.5 Monographs,

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1.3.6 School yearbooks,

1.3.7 Historical atlases and maps,

1.3.8 Church histories,

1.3.9 Voter's lists and directories/gazetteers.

- 1.4 The Library will consult with the Oxford County Archives and/or local museums to determine the most appropriate repository for original materials of a fragile nature and primary source materials. Museum objects and/or artifacts are generally not acquired, except in limited number for display or interpretation purposes.

Unpublished primary source materials of a fragile nature that are already part of the collection should be transferred to an archival facility for preservation and storage. Selected materials may be copied (print, photographic, microform, or digital) and made available for general use in the libraries.

- 1.5 Writings by local authors that are not about Oxford County or the surrounding region are subject to the Library's Collection Development Policy. Creative works and memoirs may be considered for the local history collection if they contain substantial information about the County's past.
- 1.6 The Library will subscribe to databases relevant to local history and genealogy research as budget resources allow.
- 1.7 Wherever copyright allows, the Library will work alone or in partnership with other organizations to digitize materials to provide greater access to local history information.
- 1.8 The Library acknowledges that the County of Oxford is governed by the Upper Canada Treaties, primarily the Between the Lakes Purchase (Treaty 3) and the Huron Tract Purchase (Treaty 29). The Library will work in alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and seek to collaborate with Indigenous partners around local history collections and artifacts.

2.0 Use of the Collection

- 2.1 Local history materials may be used in the Library only and will not circulate.

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2.1.1 When deemed appropriate, the Library will purchase multiple copies of materials so that duplicate copies may be made available in the circulating collection.

2.1.2 Local History material may be loaned for inter-library use, solely at the discretion of the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate.

2.1.3 In special situations, a short-term loan may be arranged with the approval of the CEO/Chief Librarian.

2.2 Some primary and secondary materials may be indexed individually by library staff or volunteers. Self-service research is facilitated where indices exist (print and/or online).

2.3 Library staff may refer requests for research assistance to other organizations, as deemed appropriate.

2.4 The Library may decline requests for assistance depending on anticipated time costs or access problems.

3.0 Donations

3.1 The Library welcomes donations of local history materials from the community and other sources. Those wishing to donate local history materials will be asked to fill out the Local History Donation Agreement Form, Appendix A.

3.2 Donated items will be reviewed in accordance with the Library's Collection Development Policy. All proposed donations will be assessed by designated Library staff to establish their suitability for the collection. Items may be declined for any reason, including their suitability for the collection, size or condition.

3.3 Donation Agreement Forms will be kept on file permanently to record the donated items' provenance and transfer of ownership to the Library.

3.4 Donations will be accepted in accordance with the Donations, Sponsorship and Fundraising Policy.

4.0 Local History and Genealogy Partnerships

4.1 The Library will maintain partnerships for cooperation and consultation with local genealogical and historical groups and institutions such as:

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4.1.1 Oxford County Archives

4.1.2 Museums throughout Oxford County

4.1.3 Oxford Branch of the Ontario Ancestors

4.1.4 Historical and Heritage Societies throughout Oxford County.

5.0 Research Fees

- 5.1 Individuals or organizations will be provided with up to 30 minutes of staff time per week free from charge for local history research and/or retrieval. The Library reserves the right to limit the frequency and number of research/retrieval requests per individual. Beyond the initial 30 minutes, research fees as outlined in the Oxford County Fees and Charges By-Law may apply.
- 5.2 If the research cannot be completed within the estimated research time, the patron will be notified of any additional fees. If they choose not to pay for additional research, the research completed up until that point will be provided to them.

6.0 References and Related Documents

6.1 Oxford County Library Policies and Forms

- 6.1.1 Oxford County Library. (2022, June). *Collection Development Policy*.
- 6.1.2 Oxford County Library. (2021, May). *Donations, Sponsorships and Fundraising Policy*.

6.2 Oxford County Policies and By-Laws

- 6.2.1 County of Oxford. *Fees and Charges By-Law No. 4889-2007, Schedule A*.
- 6.2.2 County of Oxford.(2023, September). *Donation Policy*.

6.3 Legislation

- 6.3.1 *Copyright Act*, R.S.C., 1985, c. C-42