

# **Collections Management Policy of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum 12/08/2017**

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum is responsible for the acquisition, preservation, and processing of materials related to Abraham Lincoln and Illinois history. The bulk of the Library's collections consist of items collected by the former Illinois State Historical Library, which in 2004 was renamed the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. The ISHL was created in 1889 by the Illinois General Assembly, which charged the new library with collecting and preserving "books, pamphlets, manuscripts, monographs, writings, and other materials of historical interest and useful to the historian, bearing upon the political, religious, or social history of the State of Illinois from the earliest known period of time."

To facilitate the acquisition of new items and to maintain a consistent collection, this collections policy has been written and agreed upon by the Executive Director, State Historian, and Chief of Acquisitions.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is to collect, preserve, and make available to researchers published and unpublished resources which document the diverse history of Illinois and its people, thereby increasing and enriching public knowledge.

## **Objective**

The objective of the collections policy is to increase the educational and research potential of the Library, primarily through the acquisition of historical materials related to all aspects of Illinois history with an emphasis on Abraham Lincoln, his administration, his family, and associates.

## **Collection History**

The Library's collections consists mainly of books, newspapers, manuscripts, broadsides, photographs and audio-visual materials, and artifacts related to the history of Illinois and Abraham Lincoln. The state began acquiring original historical items through the Illinois State Library. On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1889, The Illinois General Assembly created the Illinois State Historical Library, (IL. 36<sup>th</sup> Gen Assemb. 1889) declaring that: "It is important and desirable that all books, pamphlets and other printed matter, manuscripts, monographs and other writings illustrative and descriptive of the history of the State, be collected and preserved in some permanent form before it is too late to rescue from oblivion the memory of its earlier history, and those who founded it, as well as those who have been connected with its rise and progress in later days." In the years spanning 1889 through 2003, the Library amassed more than 141,000 bound volumes; over 600 manuscript collections totaling more than 13 million pages, over 5,000 newspapers held on over 100,000 reels of microfilm; and the world's largest collection of Lincolniana at more than 52,000 items. In 2004, with the opening of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, most of these collections were transferred from the Old State Capitol to the new ALPLM facility on Sixth Street in Springfield, Illinois. At the same time, the Illinois State Historical Library was renamed the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, while retaining the same mission.

## **Collections**

The Library's collections consist primarily of the following categories:

### **Published Materials**

Illinois history; regional; state; local; historically relevant families; as well as national histories involving the state or its citizens from the pre-Mississippian cultures to the modern era.

Publications on Illinois and Midwestern agriculture, agri-business, industries, and businesses.

Civil War and Civil War era, including both Illinois and out-of-state regimental histories.

Pre-1865 governmental publications, including military manuals, surveying manuals, land office reports, etc.

Presidential biographies and published materials.

United States and Illinois historiography including publications of national, regional, and state historical, archival, and library sources as well as select publications from Illinois governmental agencies.

Periodicals on Illinois history.

Maps, both territorial and selected state, county, and municipal maps.

## **Newspapers**

Illinois titles and out-of-state titles pertinent to Illinois, the Midwest, and the Civil War.

Pre-1865 (pre-1871 Chicago) single issues and bound volumes and other issues with significant historical context (in both original format and microfilm).

The Illinois Legislature requires that the Illinois State Historian “establish and supervise a program within the Lincoln Presidential Library designed to preserve as historical records selected past editions of newspapers of this State. Such editions shall be microphotographed. The negatives of such microphotographs shall be stored in a place provided by the Lincoln Presidential Library... [and that] upon payment to the Lincoln Presidential Library of the required fee, any person or organization shall be supplied with any prints requested to be made from the negatives of the microphotographs.” (20 ILCS 3475/45).

## **Audiovisual**

- I. Over 500,000 photographs and negatives dating from 1850-present; 7,000 broadsides and posters; and paintings and prints that relate to Illinois or Illinois history

- II. Over 10,000 reels of motion picture film, videotape, and audiotape; and significant quantities of other sound-recording formats, documenting Illinois politics and culture.

### **Manuscripts**

- III. Original unpublished and published manuscripts, diaries, correspondence, and other written materials of Illinois families or individuals.
- IV. The papers of select Illinois public officials.
- V. Records and other materials of selected Illinois businesses and other organizations.

Papers of national or international historical significance at the discretion of the Chief of Acquisitions.

### **Illinois Collections**

- VI. Both two-dimensional and three-dimensional items related to the history of Illinois including flags, clothing, personal effects, busts, statuary, etc.

### **Lincoln Collections**

- VII. Items owned by, created by, or pertaining to the Lincoln family or their contemporaries including manuscripts, three-dimensional artifacts, books, photos, artwork, textiles, and other materials.
- VIII. Newspapers, broadsides, and other print materials related to Lincoln and his era.
- IX. Paintings and sculptures of the Lincoln family.

Fiction and non-fiction books related to Lincoln and other ephemera including three-dimensional objects.

## **Oral History Program**

- X.** Interviews with individuals whose stories, as identified by the State Historian and the Director of Oral History, are consistent with the mission of the ALPLM and its collections policy.

## **Audiences and Users**

Researchers – The Library staff aids researchers through the reading room as well as remotely, through the Library website. Library staff review and process new materials on an ongoing basis to make them available for research.

Educators and Students – The education department plans and implements new educational initiatives and works with instructors both locally and nationally to provide tours and programs. The Library and Museum supports students from across the spectrum including: primary, secondary, undergraduate and graduate student research by providing access to both primary documents and supporting materials.

Museum Patrons – The Library collection supports the museum through exhibitions and research.

## **Collections Approvals**

Items submitted for donation will first be reviewed by the Chief of Acquisitions to ensure that they are within the scope of the ALPLM's collections policy. If they are within scope, they will then be reviewed with staff members who may include the Executive Director, the State Historian, the Director of Library Services, and the heads of respective departments. Once the decision has been made, the Chief of Acquisitions will either initiate deed of gift discussions with the donor or return the materials to the donor. Elements that will be considered when deciding will include historic value, rarity, material/format considerations, provenance, and sufficient information for metadata creation.

## **Collections Criteria**

With rare exceptions, no item may be added to the permanent collections that cannot be documented, stored, protected, and preserved under conditions that ensure its availability for research or exhibit purposes and in keeping with accepted professional standards.

Materials may be placed in a Library's non-holding collection that is scoped for reference (e.g. books, vertical files), display (e.g. props) or educational purposes with the prior permission of the donor, and with the understanding that these collections are subject to gradual deterioration due to use.

No item may be acquired with a commitment that it will be exhibited, or that any special manner of exhibit or other use will be followed unless prior approval is obtained from the Executive Director of ALPLM.

Unsolicited donations must be evaluated in the context of the collections policy and the relationship of the material(s) to other holdings in the Library. Unsuitable materials will be returned to the

donor with a suggestion of a suitable institution for deposit. Unsolicited donations sent to or left at the Library without contact information or authorization will be regarded as voluntarily abandoned property after a holding period of 30 days. Further disposition of such materials is at the Library's discretion. If materials inconsistent with the Library's collecting policy are received by the action of a will, the Library will work through legal counsel to return or dispose of the items.

Materials that have been acquired in the past by either IHSL or ALPLM, and that remain unprocessed and that do not meet the collections criteria, may be designated for deaccession, per state guidelines (Museum Disposition of Property Act, 765 ILCS 1033).

The Library in general does **NOT** collect the following: Illinois state, county and local government records; broad histories and geographies; college and high school newspapers, yearbooks, periodicals; materials or information that is conveniently maintained elsewhere. Items that fall within these categories, but which are of a unique historical nature, can be reviewed by the Chief of Acquisitions and the appropriate department head for inclusion.

## **Collection Areas of Interest and Priorities**

### **Materials to be acquired**

Published Materials – New scholarly titles on subjects such as agriculture, industry, state and national politics, Native American tribes, and general Illinois histories among others should be added to enhance student and researcher experience and to reflect the diversity of the state's cultural, economic and political heritage.

Newspapers – Representative examples of newspapers from all regions of the state, as well as materials that fill gaps within the existing collections.

Audiovisual – Expansion of existing collections with special emphasis on born-digital media.

Manuscripts – Of the over 600 collections in the Manuscripts department, nearly three centuries of Illinois history are represented (1700-2000) with the largest collections by far consisting of early Illinois history and Civil War collections. Special emphasis should be paid to expanding 20<sup>th</sup> century and modern manuscript collections.

Illinois Collection – Unique and specific items from all time periods to help tell the story of Illinois history.

Lincoln Collection – All textual, audiovisual, electronic, and three-dimensional items which have a subject matter or physical relationship to the President, his public or private life, his family, associates, and the American Civil War.

Oral History – Special emphasis on Illinois's politics, agriculture, religion, social history and veterans as well as other projects relevant to the history of Illinois and the United States. Encourage Illinois's communities to conduct their own oral history projects, to potentially be archived at the ALPL.