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## Workshop - Akaroa Museum Advisory Committee

### AGENDA

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#### Notice of Meeting:

Workshop - Akaroa Museum Advisory Committee will be held on:

**Date:** Wednesday 15 May 2024  
**Time:** 1.00 pm  
**Venue:** Akaroa Boardroom, 78 Rue Lavaud Akaroa

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#### Membership

Chairperson	Pam Richardson - Community Representative
Members	Graeme Curry - Friends of the Museum (FOAM)
	Nigel Harrison - Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula Community Board Representative
	Asif Hussain - Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula Community Board Representative
	Onuku Rūnanga
	Diana Stronach - Friends of the Museum (FOAM)

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3 May 2024

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#### Please Note:

**This forum has no decision-making powers and is purely for information sharing.**

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## 2. Akaroa Museum Acquisitions and Disposals Policy


Reference Te Tohutoro: 24/737002

Presenter(s) Te Kaipāhō: Daniel Smith, Collections Manager, Akaroa Museum

### 1. Detail Te Whakamahuki

<b>Timing</b>	This workshop is expected to last for 60 minutes.
<b>Purpose / Origin of the Workshop</b>	To assist AMAC members gain greater familiarity with the Museum's Acquisition and Disposals Policy and AMAC's role in its implementation.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	The workshop and any shared information are not confidential.
<b>Background</b>	At the centre of every museum is its collection. The Acquisitions and Disposals policy sets out the parameters for collecting and removing items from the collection, providing guidance for staff in their decision-making. The policy ensures the Museum's collection retains a focus; accessioning choices are consistent over time; and that Council resources are used wisely. The AMAC has a role in the implementation of the policy and needs to be familiar with the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy and its functions.
<b>Key Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of the policy and how it should function in the Museum</li> <li>• The role of AMAC in relation to the policy</li> <li>• Influences – bicultural considerations and legislative changes</li> <li>• Deaccessioning</li> <li>• AMAC decision-making process</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal review of policy 21 August 2024</li> </ul>

### Attachments Ngā Tāpirihanga

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### Signatories Ngā Kaiwaitohu

<b>Author</b>	Lynda Wallace - Museum Director – Akaroa
<b>Approved By</b>	Blair Jackson - Director Art Gallery

## Acquisitions and Disposals Policy Workshop, 15 May 2024

Daniel Smith, Collections Manager, Akaroa Museum

Aim: to gain greater familiarity with the Museum's Acquisition and Disposals Policy and AMAC's role in its implementation. The policy is due to be reviewed later this year.

### 1. Summary of the role of the policy and how it should function in the Museum

1.1 The policy provides guidance for staff in their decision-making. The policy sets out parameters for collecting (adding to the museum collection through accessioning) and "un-collecting" through deaccessioning and disposal (removing items from the collection). Because material culture – the stuff of social history museums – is such a broad category, the policy tends towards limiting collecting activity. Having the policy means: the Museum's collection retains a focus; accessioning choices have consistency over time; ultimately that Council resources are used/expended wisely.

Since the centre of the museum – indeed its *raison d'être* – is the collection, the AMAC should be familiar with the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy and its functions.

#### 1.2 Opportunity for responses, questions, discussion

### 2. The role of AMAC in relation to the policy

2.1 The collections of Akaroa Museum reflect the history of the Banks Peninsula's communities (within its collecting zone). AMAC has two specific roles: one is to represent those communities during policy reviews and revisions; the other arises when deaccessioning is proposed by staff – AMAC's role is to voice agreement or opposition or other points of view on behalf of the community.

#### 2.2 Opportunity for responses, questions, discussion

### 3. Some general observations

3.1 The policy is lacking in bi-cultural qualities: the considerations around taonga Māori have been made without the input of mana whenua. Akaroa Museum is within the mana whenua of Ōnuku Rūnanga, but the collecting area spreads out to Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata also. The role of the Ōnuku Rūnanga representative on AMAC is mentioned in the policy several times but that seat is usually empty at AMAC meetings.

3.2 Legislative change with respect to firearms has presented challenges to managing that part of the collection. We are effectively unable to display firearms any longer. Although there are important reasons why firearms have been collected in the past, retaining or disposing of some or all of this collection is a question that will need to be addressed in the future (and we will discuss further in 4), perhaps closing or suspending this area with regard to acquisitions is called for as part of this review.

#### 3.3 Opportunity for responses, questions, discussion

#### 4. Deaccessioning

4.1 When the museum acquires an object for its collection the presumption is that this is in perpetuity. Deaccessioning therefore is not a usual activity, but it may be triggered by:

- A repatriation request from a Rūnanga, iwi or other group
- a change in the law
- an object has suffered exceptional deterioration and is not a good candidate for conservation treatment
- an object poses a physical danger to staff, etc.
- the decision to collect was made without careful thought and an object is simply not relevant. That is, an object lacks any compelling quality that justifies retention
- Another reason might be that a different collecting institution is a more suitable home for some reason. E.g. the object is not from within the Akaroa Museum collecting area and another more suitable institution wants to collect that object.

If deaccessioning is deemed a suitable course of action, then it is approached by weighing the cases for and against retention.

Deaccessioning is one part of the process – the other is disposal. Particularly if an object is in good or fair condition, a responsibility of the museum is to find a new and appropriate home for the item. Before embarking on deaccessioning therefore, staff often need to feel out a likely future home for the object, and this can be an impediment to progress.

4.2 Discussion. A current situation that could trigger deaccessioning stems from the changes in legislation that has brought in new restrictions and increased existing ones with regard to firearms.

Below are some considerations for and against retention of the firearms collection. What course of action would the community expect from the Museum? How would the AMAC steer the Museum?

##### Con

Current license fees that must be paid by the individual and then paid back by Council, the burden of license applications on family/spouses who are not paid by Council but must respond to personal interview questions, upgraded storage requirements and limitations on display of firearms, have all contributed to raising the question of whether we should retain firearms as a collection category.

There are some parts of the collection that raise the level of firearms licensing to the higher “dealer” category – should we look at deaccessioning and disposal of those objects to reduce the burden? Is it worth retaining the collection if we can't display it?

##### Pro

On the other hand, firearms have had a significant role in local history since the Ngāi Tahu war with Ngāti Toa in the 1820s-30s. Firearms were part of colonisation. We know the French settlers had a stock of firearms, and there are French firearms in the collection that could date from then. Boys and men trained with firearms for military readiness into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Firearms were/are also used for shooting birds for food, for killing pests. They are also emblems of the South African (Boer), First and Second World Wars, which were significant on a local level as well as internationally.

So should the Museum give up collecting firearms given their significance? Is the current or a future Government likely to alter the new legislation and make it less restrictive and therefore any deaccessioning rash?

4.3 Opportunity for responses, questions, discussion.  
One specific question is: *how* will the AMAC arrive at a decision and give its direction to the Museum  
– by unanimity or majority? What if there is a split?