



<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Synod Artefacts Collections Policy</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	[tbc]
<b>Approval Date:</b>	Approved by Synod Standing Committee on 18/4/2015.
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Graham Hawtin (Synod Records Manager) / Jenny Bars (Synod Archivist)

## 1. Purpose

This Synod Artefacts Collections Policy (the 'Collections Policy') is intended to provide guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of historical artefacts and their subsequent permanent storage and ongoing management.

This Policy directly relates the Artefacts collection to the Synod Archives' mission statement (see s.3.2 below), and defines the scope, standards, and key interpretative themes of the collection.

Over time as the nature of the Uniting Church evolves (and the Victoria and Tasmania Synod in particular) it will need to reassess and adapt its collection of historical artefacts to best reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. The Policy should be periodically evaluated and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

## 2. Scope

### 2.1 Definitions and scope of application

The scope of the Synod Archive and Research Centre's services covers the needs of the Synod office, Presbyteries and Congregations throughout the area covered by the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. The Centre's scope encompasses archival materials generated / collected by Congregations, Presbyteries and departments of the Synod office relating to Uniting Church in Australia – Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

Note: Although the scope of this Policy covers the entire Synod area, it is important to note that existing arrangements will continue to apply and remain unchanged for Tasmania, and in particular the current specific scope/remit of the Wesley Hobart Museum (WHM).

### 2.2 Origination of Policy material

This Policy is based on the Collection Policy of the Wesley Hobart Museum (April 2013 version as published) and adapted with the full permission of the Museum's Committee.

## 3. Background

### 3.1 Preamble

We affirm:

That the loving Lord is not to be found embalmed in the creeds, rituals and memorials or museums of the church; but in

- the faith that is a living reality of Christian life;
- the hope which kindles faithful action;
- the love which creates and enriches every relationship we share.

It is within this context that we affirm the following Mission Statement of the Artefacts Collection Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia (Synod of Victoria and Tasmania).

### 3.2 Mission Statement

Through its artefacts collection (hence the 'Collection') which may include museum(s), displays and other forms or exhibition and/or storage as appropriate, the Uniting Church in Australia – Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (hence the 'Synod') is committed to conserving and interpreting elements of heritage received into the Synod. We will celebrate its impact on the community, its roots in the United Kingdom and its unique relationship with the Asia-Pacific region.

The Collection will actively collect, conserve, research, and interpret objects, stories and intangible cultural heritage relating to the history of the members of the Synod, as relating to its Key Interpretative Themes. These include in particular, but are not isolated to, the Synod's many buildings and congregations. The story is worth telling and the Synod will actively seek ways to encourage people to hear it.

This Collections Policy seeks to build on both the work of the Wesley Hobart Museum based in Tasmania together with the endeavours of successive Uniting Church Archivists based in Melbourne. One of the main ways to ensure this is by protecting, preserving and cherishing the Collection and through developing existing and new methods (or technologies) to aid better understanding through the recording and conveying reliable data and information on the nature of the Collection's assets.

The history of the people called members of the Uniting Church in Australia across the Synod's area and the heritage that its members have received into the Church is of significant importance to Victoria and Tasmania, and indeed nationally and across the Asia-Pacific region.

## 4. Key Interpretative Themes

Building on the pioneering work of the Wesley Hobart Museum, the key Interpretative Themes may include but are not necessarily limited to:

- History of members of the Uniting Church in Australia;
- The journey into Union – not seen as 'having ended' in 1977; (*Note: Most congregations of the Methodist Church of Australasia, the Presbyterian Church of Australia and the Congregational Union of Australia came together in 1977 under the Basis of Union.*)
- Mission outposts;
- The church's role in colonization, settlement & reconciliation;
- The key heritage sites and related examples of worship, witness & service;
- Sunday Schools & Mechanics Institutes;
- Music and choirs;
- Families and church connections;
- Trustees & trade unionists;
- Love feasts, tea meetings, class meetings, tea sets and crockery;
- Colonial era furnishings;
- Church buildings and architecture;
- Social mission and the Church at work.

## 5. Acquisition of Artefacts

The following will be collected by donation, purchase (if and as Synod budgets permit), bequest, loan and research:

- 5.1. Objects (including photographs, albums, books, costume etc.) relating to our aforementioned stated Key Interpretative Themes;
- 5.2. Objects peripheral to the above, which may be required from time to time for comparative displays, their acquisition being reliant on their condition and the availability of adequate storage space.



5.3. Oral histories relevant to our Key Interpretative Themes;

5.4. Intangible cultural heritage elements relevant to our Key Interpretative Themes will be identified, documented and added to the Collection.



## 6 Maintenance & Storage

- 6.1. The condition of each object will be assessed before it is accepted into the collection.
- 6.2. Storage and display restrictions will be carefully considered before an object is accepted.
- 6.3. Volunteers will be trained in the correct and safe operation and handling of objects in the collection, if/as applicable.
- 6.4. Monitoring, maintaining and upgrading display and storage facilities will be a priority, budgets and other Synod priorities permitting.
- 6.5. Volunteers will be trained in oral history practice and in the documentation and assessment of intangible cultural heritage elements, if/as applicable.

## 7. Processes and documentation

### Donations and bequests

- 7.1. An Acknowledgement/Receipt and/or Thank You – Donor Letter (as appropriate) will be completed for each new donation using Form 3, within Synod Policy and Procedures for Using Archival Material.
- 7.2. Each new acquisition will be assessed by the Synod Archivist with input from Archives' volunteers, where appropriate, and its formal acceptance into the collection recorded.
- 7.3. All objects – including oral histories and intangible cultural heritage documents – will be entered onto the appropriate database as dictated by the Synod Archivist.
- 7.4. All objects – including oral histories and intangible cultural heritage documents – will be appropriately numbered and/or tagged.
- 7.5. Object provenance details will be recorded.
- 7.6. The storage or display location of all objects – including oral histories and intangible cultural heritage documents – will be recorded, along with any subsequent object movements.

### Loans

#### ***Inward Loan***

- 7.7. The Collection will not act as a repository for private loan collections. (i.e. there is no such thing as a *permanent* loan.)
- 7.8. Occasional Inward Loans may be considered for temporary exhibition, as approved by the Synod Archivist.
- 7.9. All loan agreements will be recorded formally, using Form 2 contained within Synod Policy and Procedures for Using Archival Material.
- 7.10. All loans must have an agreed end date – for return or renewal.

#### ***Outward Loan***

- 7.11. Any request for outward loan must be considered by the Synod Archivist.
- 7.12. All loan agreements will be recorded formally using Form 2 contained Synod Policy and Procedures for Using Archival Material.
- 7.13. All loans must have an agreed end date for return or renewal.

#### ***Deaccession***

- 7.14. Formal deaccession can only occur where the object, oral history or intangible cultural heritage document is owned by the Collection (all other objects must be covered by this collections policy or related guidance contained within Synod Policy and Procedures for Using Archival Material).
- 7.15. All deaccessions must be formally approved by the Synod Archivist, with a designated 'cooling off period' before any final decision is made.
- 7.16. To be considered for deaccession the object, oral history or intangible cultural heritage document must be no longer relevant to the collection and outside the scope of this collection policy.
- 7.17. Deaccession will also be considered when the object is damaged beyond repair, or has been stolen.
- 7.18. Deaccession will also be considered if there is a reasonable request for return from the donor's family (especially in those cases where the status of the original acquisition is unclear).
- 7.19. Methods of deaccession to be considered by the Synod Archivist will be (in order of preference): return to donors or donors' heirs; transfer to another collecting institution; public sale; disposal by destruction or recycling.





## 8. Security

Heritage obtains vitality when it is accessible, celebrated and shared. It is therefore the intent of the Synod that, subject to adequate security as may be determined by the Synod Archivist, the collection should be accessible to the public and, where appropriate, available for liturgical use.

## 9. Privacy, Confidentiality and Intellectual Property

The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania will take appropriate measures to observe privacy rights, comply with confidentiality requirements and respect intellectual property of others.

## 10. Review and Governance

To ensure this Policy remains up to date, comprehensive and reflects both archival best practice and the needs of the Synod, it should be formally reviewed at least once every three years.

## 11. Policy Owner

<b>Policy Owner(s):</b>	Synod Property Board
<b>Contact Person: (Name and role)</b>	Graham Hawtin (Synod Records Manager) / Jenny Bars (Synod Archivist)

## 12. Document Control

Version No.	Issue Date	Summary status	Specific Nature of Document or Amendment
0.1D	15/11/2014	Draft 1 – For review and refinement First draft issued to Archives PCG for review.	Policy largely based on Collections Policy of UCA Wesley Hobart Museum (April 2013 version). Adapted by Graham Hawtin with permission of WHM.
0.2D	25/11/2014	Draft 2 – Amended draft for review	Mainly minor tweaks to wording including changing refs to forms in text.
1.0	18/4/2015	Approved/Final	Approved by Synod Standing Committee at its meeting on 18/4/2015.

