

ROTORUA MUSEUM COLLECTION POLICY

Date adopted: 18 April 2013

Officer responsible: Museum Director

Policy Purpose:

The purpose of this Collection Policy is to guide the collecting activities and collection development activities of the Rotorua Museum Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa

Purpose of the Collection:

The collection is at the heart of the Museum's identity and function. The collection reflects the unique nature of the Rotorua area and helps to document and tell the stories of the history and people of the Rotorua area.

By caring for, preserving, providing access to and displaying the collection the Rotorua Museum contributes to the community pride of Te Arawa and all people of Rotorua.

By providing access to and displaying the collection the Rotorua Museum provides a must-see attraction for locals and visitors to Rotorua.

By providing access to and displaying the collection the Rotorua Museum provides opportunities for the community to learn, engage and be inspired.

The collection covers seven broad areas and includes items of significant local, regional and national importance.

Collection Scope and Focus:

The geographical area of focus is the iwi rohe of Te Arawa and the Rotorua district as determined by the Rotorua District Council.

Te Arawa refer to their tribal area in the saying 'Mai i Maketū ki Tongariro ... Ko Te Arawa te waka', which places the prow of the Te Arawa canoe at Maketū on the Bay of Plenty coast, and the stern at Mt Tongariro.

1. Taonga Maori

Taonga (treasures) directly related to the whanau and hapu of the Te Arawa confederation of tribes.

The collection of taonga Maori relating to Te Arawa is of national significance. More than 2,000 taonga held in the museum's collection, many placed on deposit for safekeeping or on long term loan, reflect the mutual understanding and trust that has developed between the museum and local iwi, hapu and whanau.

The collection includes significant examples of Te Arawa whakairo rakau, raranga, pounamu, and tukutuku.

Collection strengths include:

- Pukaki - he kuwaha tawhito o Ngati Whakaue (from the Pukaki Trust)
- Significant parts of the whare whakairo Whakaue which stood originally at Awahou
- Significant parts of the whare whakairo Nuku Te Apiapi which stood at Whakarewarewa
- A collection of Te Arawa flags that were carried during the New Zealand Wars (1865 to 1872)

In caring for Te Arawa taonga the Rotorua Museum will liaise with Te Pukenga Koeke o Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa (see Pukenga Policy)

2. Ethnology

The Ethnology collection is made up of over 600 examples of material culture from various peoples around the world. Items include carving, textiles, tools, weapons, ceramics, personal adornment, and ceremonial/ritual objects.

Collecting areas include:

- Works from 19th to 21st century from the Pacific rim including Polynesia, Micronesia, Melanesia, Australia, East & South East Asia and the America's.
- Works from 19th to 21st century from other cultures including those in Africa, India, Asia and the Middle East.

Collection strengths include:

- 19th and early 20th century ceremonial and fighting weaponry from Melanesia
- A large collection of jewellery and personal adornment of Melanesian and Polynesian origin including a number of items incorporating animal material
- Aboriginal items collected from throughout Australia

The collection needs further work to assess its significance.

3. Art (formerly called Fine Arts)

The art collection is made up of more than 2000 original works. Artworks include paintings, works on paper, applied decorative art, mixed media, sculpture and art photography.

Collecting areas include:

- Works from 19th to 21st century featuring subjects related to the Rotorua district and Te Arawa
- Historical works related to Te Arawa and Rotorua geography including Tarawera, the Pink and White Terraces, Ohinemutu and Whakarewarewa
- Works by Rotorua artists or with a connection to Rotorua

Collection strengths include:

- Nationally significant collection of 19th century works featuring the Pink & White Terraces
- 19th & 20th century portraits of Maori
- Mid 20th century New Zealand painting including significant collection of works by Dennis Knight Turner.

- 20th century documentary/art photography particularly works by Theo Schoon and Ans Westra and the largest national institutional collection of Mark Adams photographs

The art collection includes two important collections on long term loan:

- Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust collection – This collection comprises over 130 works from the 19th to 21st century including significant historical works by Charles Frederick Goldie and Charles Blomfield.
- Friends of the Rotorua Museum collection – This collection comprises a relatively small collection of 48 artworks from the 20th and 21st centuries. It includes important works by Tony Fomison, Garth Tapper and Bing Dawe.

4. Photographic

The large photographic collection of more than 25,000 items is of national significance and documents the unique landscapes, social history and people of the Rotorua area. The collection includes glass plate negatives, original prints, panoramas, albums and other photographic material.

Collecting areas include:

- Photographic material from the 19th century to the present featuring subjects relating to the Rotorua district and Te Arawa
- Images relating to the development of the tourist industry in Rotorua in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Depictions of Te Arawa people both as studio portraits and at home in their environment
- Historic images reflecting the unique geography and geological environment of the wider Rotorua region including geothermal and volcanic features

Collection strengths include:

- Over 200 images of the iconic Pink & White Terraces of Rotomahana
- Photographic records of the devastation caused by the eruption of Mount Tarawera in 1886
- Nationally significant collection of photographic portraits of Maori dating back to the 1860s, which includes glass plate negatives by the Foy Brothers and a rare collection of original prints by Edward Payton
- Photographic material reflecting the social history of Rotorua in the 20th century from photographers such as Jack Lang and Ans Westra

5. Natural Environment

The focus of this collection is geological, botanical and zoological specimens from the Rotorua area with a primary focus on the Rotorua district.

This is not a major collection area for the Museum as research institutions in the Rotorua area e.g. SCION, are better equipped to fulfil this function and have the necessary staff research expertise

No human skeletal material will be collected or retained by the Rotorua Museum due to cultural considerations.

6. Social History

This is the largest and broadest collection area of the Museum and has over 15,400 items that reflect the history of settlement and social development in the Rotorua district.

The collection includes clothing, textiles, furniture, ceramics, glass, jewellery, household equipment, militaria, tools, and scientific equipment.

Collection areas include:

- Items relating to the early colonial settlement of the Rotorua area, including traders, missionaries and the interaction between Te Arawa and pakeha from the 19th century onwards
- Items relating to the development of the town of Rotorua and the Rotorua district, including the major period of post-World War Two farming settlement
- Items relating to the development of tourism in the Rotorua area, including the establishment of the Bath House in 1908 and its operation as a therapeutic spa up until the 1960s
- Items and archives relating to the Maori Battalion B Company
- Items relating to the Tudor Towers period of the history of the Bath House
- Items that reflect the people and history of the Rotorua district from the 1970s to present (note: this area of the collection needs to be developed)

Collection strengths include:

- Souvenir ware dating from the late 19th century to the present, providing a snapshot of tourism in Rotorua
- The Norma Evans collection: This section of the social history collection is of national significance. It includes more than 4,000 items of clothing and other items, with excellent supporting documentation, relating to the everyday lives of a farming family that settled in the Rotomahana area in 1955.

7. Archives and Library

The Archives and Library collection includes records, archival material and books relating to the history and people of the Rotorua area.

Items include rare books, historic maps and plans, local publications e.g. Photo News published between 1967 and 1974; records for local businesses and organisations; local church and school newsletters; diaries; manuscripts; and records for the Bath House. It also includes exhibition files for past exhibitions at the Museum, and exhibition catalogues.

The Library is a general reference collection available for research purposes by staff and visitors with a special focus on books and publications relating to the history and people of Te Arawa and the Rotorua district.

8. The Summers Sculptures

Of national importance is the Museum's collection of thirteen neoclassical marble sculptures from the mid nineteenth century, known as the Summers Sculptures. Eleven sculptures were made by Charles F Summers (1858-1945) an Australian sculptor who had a studio in Rome and one is by his father, also Charles F Summers. The sculptures are all reproductions of works, some of which are in the Vatican Museum. Charles Summers settled in Melbourne in 1905. The collection of 11 works by Charles Summers junior is the largest in the world.

The sculptures were purchased in 1908 to add to the ambience of the Rotorua Bath House by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. They had been brought to New Zealand for display as part of the Christchurch International Exhibition of 1906-07.

Ten of the sculptures are on view within the Bath House building. They have suffered damage over time and discolouration due to handling and the effects of hydrogen sulphide. A conservation project to clean and repair the sculptures is proposed for 2013.

9. The Bath House Building

The Bath House building, originally constructed in 1906-1908 by the newly created Department of Tourist and Health Resorts is a Historic Place Category 1.

Historic Places Registration covers the structure, its fixtures and finishes, and includes recent modifications.

The Bath House is of national and international significance for its association with the development of overseas tourism to New Zealand.

Responsibility for care and management as an historic building lies with Rotorua District Council.

10. Government Gardens Rotorua District Council Heritage Collection (carvings, artworks and sculptures)

A number of carvings by Te Arawa master carver Tene Waitere (1845-1931) are on display around the Government Gardens, including by the Princes Gate and as part of Te Runanga Tearooms. These are of considerable historical significance and form part of the Rotorua District Council Heritage Collection.

Other works in the RDC Heritage Collection include the Te Arawa Soldiers Memorial World War One and the "Waitukei" bronze sculpture by Te Arawa artist Lyonel Grant, 2001.

Rotorua Museum acts in an advisory capacity to Rotorua District Council regarding the Rotorua District Council Heritage Collection.

PROPOSED ADDITIONS TO ROTORUA MUSEUM COLLECTION POLICY:

DRAFT Policy on Human Remains/Koiwi Tangata

The Museum does not hold collections of human remains, Maori or non-Maori, due to the sensitive nature of these items.

The collection may include artefactual human remains, which means human remains that have undergone cultural modification. Such items will be cared for and managed with sensitivity and dignity.

The acquisition and display of artefactual human remains requires consultation with and approval of Te Pukenga Koeke o Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa.

DRAFT Repatriation Policy

Repatriation claims may involve the Rotorua Museum seeking the return of an object from another institution, or a request for the Museum to return an object from its collection.

All repatriation requests will be handled by the Director or Deputy Director and where appropriate, require approval from Te Pukenga Koeke o Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa. Where necessary, the Museum will get advice from the Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

The Museum will consider all requests for items to be repatriated to their communities of origin. Repatriation requests must be made in writing, with details of the repatriation claim to the Director, Rotorua Museum.

Careful research will be carried out by the Museum to establish and document the provenance of any items which are the subject of a repatriation claim.

When considering a repatriation request, the Museum will make all reasonable attempts to contact all interested parties and to consider any competing claims.

For items which are returned to the Rotorua Museum through repatriation, the Museum will act as the kaitiaki or guardian and consult with Te Pukenga Koeke o Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa and the communities of origin to determine long term custody and care.