



Donations + Acquisitions

Thank you for your interest in donating an object, photograph, document, or other material to the Vancouver Police Museum and Archives (VPMA)! This is a brief guide to the VPMA's acquisition process. It is intended to give potential donors the information they need to determine if we are the right place for your donation and some further details on the process.

What do we collect?

- Objects and material that reflects the history of the Vancouver Police Department, the Vancouver City/Provincial Coroner's Service, and the City Analyst's Laboratory
- Objects from past events in Vancouver that have a connection to the above services
- Equipment used for either the pursuit of crime, crime prevention, and scientific development in related fields

What don't we collect?

Documenting, storing, and conserving collections is costly and requires considerable investment. Space for storing collections is limited. For this reason, the VPMA may decide not to acquire objects that are offered to us including:

- Donations that are not related to the Vancouver Police Department, the Vancouver City/Provincial Coroner's Service, or the City Analyst's Laboratory
 - This includes objects that are related to the RCMP or the former BC Provincial Police
- Items in poor condition (as determined by the archivist or curator) that require extensive conservation treatment to store
 - However, exceptional circumstances may allow for a truly unique object in poor condition to be accepted
- Duplicates of items already held in the collections
- Photocopies or scans of items
- Objects that fall under the mandate of other institutions and would be more relevant to their collections
- Materials with suspicious provenance or authenticity that cannot be verified by research

FAQ

How do I donate?

If you think you have something of interest and are looking to donate please contact us using the following information:

For object donations please email curator@vancouverpolicemuseum.ca

For archival donations (photos/documents) please email archives@vancouverpolicemuseum.ca

Please include photographs of the items and anything you know about its history and condition as this will help us determine if it's suitable for the collections. You will be contacted by our archivist or curator, who may ask for further details. They will compare the items with the VPMA's current holdings and consider our collecting priorities to see how it may fit into the collections.

If the object is of interest, the archivist or curator will wish to see the item and will invite you to the museum for an appointment.

Unsolicited drop-offs and mailed items will not be accepted.

What happens during an appointment?

Our archivist or curator will meet with you to go over the items and discuss more about them together. If accepted, donors of archival and museum items are then asked to sign a formal deed of gift. The deed of gift constitutes a legal transfer of ownership from the donor to the VPMA. An item cannot be returned once it has been formally accessioned into the collection. By donating, you are warranting that you are the legal owner of the item and have the right to transfer ownership to the VPMA. Please consult with family members before donating artifacts with sentimental value.

Can I loan materials instead of offering a donation?

The VPMA accepts short term loans of materials for planned exhibitions. Loaned materials are treated with the same care and subject to the same policies as the permanent collection.

Will you take everything I offer?

We appreciate all offers of donation. However, documenting, storing, and conserving collections is costly and requires considerable investment. For this reason, the VPMA may decide not to acquire some objects that are offered to us. Like all museum institutions, we have procedures in place to ensure we acquire only the material most relevant to our mandate. Our decision to acquire must account for limited storage space, duplication of objects in the collections, and the condition of the piece offered.