

# Goshen County Homesteaders Museum

**MISSION STATEMENT: The Goshen County Homesteaders Museum is to be a repository of historical artifacts, historical information, and genealogical resources related to Goshen County from the first settlement in 1834 up to 1976 when Homesteading ended; we strive to collect, present, and interpret the history of Goshen County and its people.**

Along with our mission statement, we have six core values through which we guide the short and long-term goals of our museum:

Community: The Homesteaders Museum is committed to fostering the tradition of a strong and healthy community.

Inspiration: The Homesteaders Museum is committed to using its assets to foster an environment that nurtures history as a crucial component of a strong community—encouraging learning and interaction from our community and visitors.

Integrity: The Homesteaders Museum will earn and maintain the communities trust by demonstrating integrity in all that we do.

Remembrance: The Homesteaders Museum will facilitate public examination of the history of Goshen County to integrate the present with the past and how this development led to the common ground and shared future that bind us.

Stewardship: The Homesteaders Museum will reflect the professional visual and physical aspects of a museum in an effort to preserve museum grounds, collection items and Goshen County history—through conservation and preservation.

Aspiration: The Homesteaders Museum is constantly working to improve the museum and all of its facets through community, board, foundation and city support while safekeeping our history in an honest, interesting, and educational display that is widely accessible to the general public.

To help the museum focus our collections and displays, the history and homesteading items are guided by the following themes (falling in the time period designated in the mission statement):

- Agriculture
- Farming
- Ranching
- Irrigation
- Transportation
- Working Life and Trades
- Domestic Life
- Public Life and Institutions
- Social Life
- Childhood
- Information and Communication
- Migration and Immigration
- Pioneering
- Homesteading
- Economic and Cultural Development
- Education

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## Collection Management Policy

**Purpose:** To establish rules, guidelines, and procedures for the acquisition, care, preservation, public access and de-accessioning of items in the collections of the Torrington Homesteaders Museum.

### I. Acquisition

- a. Scope. The Torrington Homesteaders Museum is to be a repository of historical artifacts, historical information, and genealogical resources related to Goshen County from the first settlement in 1834 up to 1976 when Homesteading ended. In particular, the Museum seeks documentation regarding Goshen County's economic and cultural development, the process of homesteading, its education systems, various methods of transportation, its relationship with neighboring counties and the state of Wyoming as a whole.
- b. Guidelines. Acquisitions to the Museum collections must accord with the following rules:
  - i. The owner must have clear title and must sign the deed of gift transferring rights to the Museum
  - ii. The deed of gift file will be retained by the museum permanently, as well as record of the location of the item(s)
  - iii. The Torrington Homesteaders Museum does not do monetary appraisals
  - iv. The Museum must be capable of housing and caring for the proposed acquisition according to generally accepted professional standards
  - v. The Museum reserves the right to refuse gifts of portions of donations and the right to dispose of, or return to the donor, items inappropriate for collections
  - vi. Items in poor condition or not fulfilling the mission and goals of the museum will not be accepted

### II. Care and Preservation

The Museum realizes its obligation to protect its collections. Therefore, the museum shall act within the best of its ability according to the following guidelines:

- a. A stable environment for items in storage or on display shall be maintained by protecting them from excessive light, heat, humidity and dust. Needs of individual materials shall be considered
- b. All materials shall be protected against theft, fire, and other disasters by a security system and written disaster plan

- c. Records shall be kept using appropriate forms for documentation
- d. Inventories and location records shall be kept up to date to facilitate public access and prevent loss

III. Public Access

The Museum shall make research materials in its possession available to legitimate researchers with legitimate justification, but with the following stipulations:

- a. Inventories, relevant files and assistance of staff member or trained volunteer will be available to users
- b. Use of fragile or otherwise vulnerable items may be restricted
- c. Intended research will be scheduled according to staff availability

IV. De-accessioning

No accessioned object of collection shall be removed from the Museum's care without strict conformity to the following rules:

- a. A de-accession recommendation shall be prepared by the Museum and put before the staff and museum board
- b. The decision to de-accession will be cautious and deliberate and follow the generally accepted Museum standards. One of the following criteria must be met:
  - i. The material is not relevant to the mission of the Museum
  - ii. The material has failed to retain its identity, or has been lost or stolen and not recovered
  - iii. The material duplicates other material in the collection and is not necessary for research or educational purposes
  - iv. The Museum is unable to conserve the property in a responsible manner
- c. A complete record of de-accessions shall be kept and a copy will be retained permanently
- d. Proceeds derived from the de-accessioning of any property from the collections of the Museum will be used only for preservation, protection or care of the collections
- e. Disposal may be made by exchange, donation or public sale
- f. Materials de-accessioned shall not be privately sold, given or otherwise transferred to the Museum's staff or board members.

This policy was formally approved and adopted by the Museum Board and Staff of the Torrington Homesteaders Museum as well as the City of Torrington.