

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
STATE ARCHIVES OF NORTH CAROLINA



OUTER BANKS HISTORY CENTER
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Updated March 2020

I. Statement of Purpose

The Outer Banks History Center (OBHC) is a regional archival facility administered by the State Archives of North Carolina. The mission of the OBHC is to collect, preserve, and provide public access to historical and documentary materials relating to coastal North Carolina, and to serve as an accessible, service-oriented center for historical research and inquiry.

The OBHC continually grows its collections in support of this mission. The OBHC aims to serve as a laboratory for members of the local, national, and global research community to engage with unique resources documenting coastal North Carolina history. We encourage the use of our collections by a variety of users, including (but not limited to) local community members, genealogists, students (including K-12, undergraduate, and graduate students), historians, authors, media representatives, government entities, organizations, and visitors to the Outer Banks. The OBHC collects materials on a wide range of topics in order to meet the needs of our diverse patron base. Particular efforts are made to acquire materials related to disadvantaged, marginalized, and underdocumented groups in eastern North Carolina.

II. Programs Supported by the Collections

Research and Education

Priority is given to ensuring that the history of coastal North Carolina is documented to the fullest extent possible. OBHC archivists assist researchers in using our materials to learn about the rich history of the region, conduct educational programming to encourage the region's residents to protect and preserve their family and organizational history, and regularly promote the OBHC's collections to the scholarly research community.

Preservation and Security

The preservation of materials is imperative to the ongoing operations of the OBHC. Collections are housed in protective enclosures in a secure environment that is continually monitored for environmental threats. The OBHC is a closed stack facility; all materials are non-circulating and must be consulted in the reading room. Use (including reproduction) of especially fragile materials is at the discretion of OBHC staff.

Outreach

Regular promotion of OBHC materials is vital to the continued use and development of our collections. Information about the collections can be found on the OBHC website (<http://archives.ncdcr.gov/Public/Outer-Banks-History-Center>) and in various discovery tools maintained by the State Archives of North Carolina. Digital facsimiles for selected images held at the OBHC are available on the OBHC Flickr site (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/obhc/>). Other forms of outreach include Facebook (<http://facebook.com/obxhistory>), brochures, tours, lectures and presentations, and contributions to the State Archives blog (<https://ncarchives.wordpress.com/>).

Exhibits

The OBHC mounts regular exhibits on a rotating basis in a dedicated exhibit space in the OBHC lobby and reading room. These exhibits are prepared by OBHC staff and feature a variety of original materials and surrogates. We also loan materials for exhibition outside our facility. Such loans are made at the discretion of the State Archives of North Carolina.

Acquisitions

The OBHC acquires materials primarily through donation. Donation of appropriate materials is essential in maintaining and developing the collection, and the support of donors is continually sought. With few exceptions, original materials are acquired only as gifts. Donations of additional funding to purchase materials, obtain general departmental supplies, or to assist in processing and cataloging is greatly appreciated.

III. Clientele

Materials are available to all researchers, subject to the agreement of each researcher to policies regarding the appropriate handling and use of the collections (some collections may be closed for research for a period of time due to confidentiality or other sensitive issues). The OBHC seeks to serve a broad population, with special emphasis on the historical research community; researchers include independent researchers, genealogists, students, faculty, media representatives, and the general public. Access to OBHC materials is governed by policies and procedures set by the State Archives of North Carolina and/or Administrative Code. Researchers who do not abide by these procedures may be denied access to the materials.

IV: Collecting Priorities

First Priority: Manuscripts

The term *manuscripts* is used here to describe unpublished materials that are created and/or collected throughout the life of an individual or organization. *Manuscripts* may be used to refer to *archives* and *archival materials*. The term *papers* refers to the archival materials of an individual; *records* refers to those materials created by an organization.

Because of the transitory nature of privately-owned manuscript collections, their unique ability to serve as documentary evidence of a distinct historical moment, and the extreme risk of loss of the information contained within them, the OBHC places primacy on the acquisition of manuscripts above published or printed materials. The OBHC actively seeks donations of original materials related to one of our established collecting areas (described below). We especially prioritize those collections created by members of marginalized, oppressed, or otherwise underdocumented communities.

The OBHC accepts a wide variety of formats for personal/family papers and organizational records. Personal/family papers might include correspondence, diaries, travel journals, daybooks, photographs, scrapbooks, financial records,

research files, notes, biographical/genealogical data, and other unique items. Organizational records, in addition to those items described in the preceding sentence, might include meeting minutes, by-laws, foundational documents (constitutions, charters), member records, subject files, and annual reports. While not totally unique, the OBHC acknowledges the importance and accepts donations of ephemeral items such as flyers, programs, posters, newsclippings, pamphlets, and brochures. The OBHC also accepts donations of sound and video recordings (including film, magnetic media, vinyl records, instantaneous discs, and CDs/DVDs) as well as born-digital materials (computer files, computer discs, hard drives, flash drives, and legacy media). We do not usually accept three-dimensional objects or artifacts.

Due to concerns of copyright, storage, usability, provenance, and access, the OBHC does not generally accept donations of surrogates of manuscript materials (surrogates include photocopies, Photostats, microfilm, published editions, transcriptions, and/or digital scans). Also, the OBHC does not collect government records, as these materials fall under the purview of the Government Records Section of the State Archives of North Carolina (located in Raleigh) or the National Archives and Records Administration.

Secondary Priority: Publications

Publications is used in this document to refer to items that have been printed and reproduced for either wide or limited distribution. These include books (monographs and serials), magazines, journals, pamphlets, and video and sound recordings.

In addition to serving as an archival repository, the OBHC also houses a substantial research library of published materials. Because published items are generally widely available and becoming increasingly accessible to a global audience via the Internet, the OBHC does not place priority on acquiring published materials. However, we do accept donations of relevant publications that are particularly unique, rare, or historically valuable, as well as those publications deemed to be of significant research value, provided that the acquisition of such items directly supports our mission. Publications must adhere to one of the defined collecting areas below in order to be accepted for addition to the OBHC's holdings.

V. Subject Areas Collected

Local Communities and Regional Organizations

One of the OBHC's primary collecting areas relates to the people, organizations, and other communities active in the coastal North Carolina region. This region includes the Outer Banks (Dare, Hyde, and Currituck counties), "Inner Banks" (Camden, Perquimans, Pasquotank, Chowan, Bertie, Washington, Tyrrell, Beaufort, Pamlico, and Carteret counties), southeastern coast (Onslow, Pender, New Hanover, and Brunswick counties), and the immediately surrounding counties (Gates, Hertford, Martin, Pitt, Greene, Lenoir, Craven, Jones, Duplin, Bladen, and Columbus). The OBHC actively seeks donations of materials relating to the lived experience of individuals, families, and organizations (including businesses, clubs, benevolent groups, societies, nonprofits, and associations) residing in this region. We place particular importance on materials related to communities of color, LGBTQ+ communities, religious minorities, disabled populations, women, and other marginalized groups.

Family History and Genealogy

The OBHC is frequently accessed by researchers in support of genealogy and family history research. Therefore, we encourage donations of genealogy and family history collections related to families primarily residing in the coastal North Carolina region. The OBHC also occasionally accepts donations of published family history resources (abstracts of deeds, censuses, indexes of vital records, and genealogy guides, and published family histories) provided that they support our mission and adhere to the scope of our collections.

Maritime History and Operations

The OBHC's holdings include a dynamic collection of materials related to maritime history and operations of the North Carolina coast and surrounding area. Specific subject areas covered include the U.S. Lifesaving Service and U.S. Coast Guard, shipwrecks, lighthouses and other aids to navigation, coastal military operations (particularly relating to the Civil War, World War I, and World War II), tourism, commerce, the fishing and seafood industries, boats and boatbuilding, and recreation.

Material and Non-Material Culture of Coastal North Carolina

The OBHC recognizes the high value of cultural influences on the history of the coastal North Carolina region and its people. Therefore, the OBHC actively seeks documentation of both material and non-material culture on the North Carolina coast. Material culture may include subjects such as regional cookery and foodways, vernacular architecture and landscapes, archaeology, domestic arts and crafts, commemorative landscapes, and medicine and homeopathy. Nonmaterial culture may include subjects such as folkways, language and dialects, traditions, social norms, and political/social activity.

Natural History and Coastal Ecology

The natural history and ecology of the North Carolina coast is a vital aspect of the region's history. To facilitate research in this area, the OBHC collects materials on the region's flora and fauna, air and water quality, physical and dynamic geology, and other ecological topics.

Early European Exploration and Discovery

North Carolina's colonial history is an intrinsic part of the larger history of the United States of America, Europe, and global colonization. The OBHC actively seeks documentation of coastal North Carolina's pre-Revolutionary residents, including indigenous populations, explorers, colonists, early governors, and the Lords Proprietors. Of particular local significance are interpretations and documentation of the Lost Colony on Roanoke Island and its predecessors in the late 16th century.

Inventions and Innovations

The North Carolina coast has long played an important role in invention and innovation, particularly in the field of aviation. The OBHC hopes to document this history by seeking donations of materials related to the region's notable inventors (such as the Wright Brothers, Francis Rogallo, and Reginald Fessenden) and regional activity in the areas of aviation, marine engineering, telecommunications, and technology.

Cartography and Geography

Maps and other cartographical documents are extremely valuable pieces of evidence when examining a region's history. As such, the OBHC seeks donations of any and all materials documenting coastal North Carolina's geography, including maps, atlases, charts, materials related to land use and conservation, and city directories.

VI. Procedures Affecting the Collection Development Policy

Deed of Gift

All donors must sign a contract in the form of a Deed of Gift transferring ownership to the State of North Carolina. A permanent record of all donations will be maintained by the State Archives of North Carolina. The OBHC will not accept donations without a signed Deed of Gift. When signing a Deed of Gift, donors will be asked to establish a procedure for handling materials that will not ultimately be retained by the OBHC, such as duplicates or out-of-scope items. Materials may be returned to the donor, transferred to a more appropriate institution, or discarded, according to the wishes of the donor.

Valuation

All appraisals and valuations are the responsibility of the donor. The OBHC is ethically and legally unable to provide this type of information. OBHC staff may be able to provide resources that may assist in determining an item's value.

Restricted Materials

The OBHC will not accept materials that are closed to researcher access in perpetuity. Reasonable restrictions may be placed on materials at the discretion of the donor and OBHC staff. These restrictions should be clearly outlined in the Deed of Gift.

VII. Deaccessioning Policy

Materials that have been accessioned into the OBHC's holdings and later determined to fall outside the scope of our collections may be deaccessioned at the discretion of the OBHC director, subject to the approval of the Archives Registrar, State Archivist, and North Carolina Historical Commission.