

Collection Guidelines

Mission

The mission of the NAHA Archives is to identify, collect, preserve, and make available historical records of Norwegian North Americans, both immigrants and their descendants, and to serve as a resource for scholarly research on migration and an educational archive for a broad range of students.

General Scope

The sections below represent the main collecting areas of NAHA. We collect a broad variety of formats which include (but are not limited to) paper documents, photographic media, audio, and moving images. In addition, we also consider long-term preservation needs and capabilities, as well as duplicate copies when adding materials to our holdings. Like all archives, we must make choices about what to collect. The cost of storage and preservation is high – for digital as well as hard-copy collections -- because we commit to making the collections available in perpetuity. Decisions about the appropriateness of any materials offered for the collection will be made by the NAHA Archivist. To this end, the NAHA Archives actively collects:

- Manuscripts, diaries, journals, letters, and other personal documents written by Norwegian-Americans in the US and Canada or bearing on the experiences of Norwegian-American immigrants in the US and Canada.
- Records of Norwegian-American organizations, societies, schools, and churches.
- Original photographs documenting the Norwegian-American experience.
- Pamphlets and article reprints (a customized version of a single article, unbundled from the original publication) by and about Norwegian-Americans.
- Norwegian-American religious tracts.
- Music written by Norwegian Americans or associated with Norwegian-American culture.
- Some Norwegian materials that bear strongly on the Norwegian-American experience. These materials include *bygdebøker*, postcards, and material about Norwegian folk customs. (*Bygdebøker* are generally transferred to Rolvaag Library of St. Olaf College.)
- Material matching these descriptions in audio formats (CDs, audio cassettes, audio reels, phonographs, etc.) and in moving image formats (DVDs, films, videos, etc.).

Materials that fall outside the NAHA Archives collection guidelines include:

- Norwegian or Norwegian-American Bibles, psalm books, or lectionaries, except for family history records that may be written in or included in them.
- Artifacts and three-dimensional objects.
- Norwegian genealogical materials other than *bygdebøker*.
- Genealogies, family histories, and historical information about Norwegian Americans. **Items accompanied by original materials (correspondence, photographs, diaries, etc.) will be accepted.**
- Donations with access restricted to the archivist.
- Most other Norwegian printed material. Donors with rare Norwegian language books, Scandinavian-American imprints, and Norwegian-American newspapers should contact the Rolvaag Library Special Collections.
- Photocopies of original materials.

Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning is an essential function and tool of collection development and curation. Material selected to be deaccessioned may be returned to the donor (based on donor agreements), gifted/transferred to a more appropriate repository, or discarded. In identifying materials for deaccessioning (whether organized and described or not) the Archives staff considers the following:

- Does the material in question fall within the scope of our collection development policy and collecting practices?
- Has the material deteriorated in such a way that it cannot be reproduced or is beyond being useful due to its condition?
- Have the materials been subjected to poor environmental conditions, resulting in mold, water damage, fire damage, or show evidence of being exposed to rodents/pests?
- Do any established externally imposed restrictions such as records retention schedules, disposition authorizations, or donor agreements apply to the material?