

Collection Plan



Witte Museum
San Antonio, Texas

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of the Plan:

The purpose of the Witte Museum's Collection Plan is to align the acquisitions with the Museum's mission of promoting lifelong learning through innovative exhibitions, programs, and collections in natural history, science, and South Texas Heritage.

The plan includes *an assessment* of the existing collection examining the *history*, the *size* and the *type* of materials acquired and most importantly describing the collection *guidelines* for future acquisition and/or deaccessioning. The intellectual framework for the Collection is based on the key initiatives of the Witte Museum: Nature, Science, and Culture.

Vision:

Through innovative programs in history, science, and culture the Witte Museum enriches lives, promotes a quality of life for all South Texas people and generates a legacy of knowledge.

Values:

Learning organization
Collection Stewardship
Quality programs and exhibitions
Fiscal stability
Environmental stewardship
Professional ethic
Welcoming environment

INTRODUCTION

The Witte Museum opened in 1926 as a history, natural history and art museum. Between 1923 and 2016 the museum amassed more than 300,000 artifacts.

In 2002, the Witte Museum participated with the Smithsonian and the American Alliance of Museums in a collections conference where we decided that a Strategic Plan for the collections was needed. The Witte Museum embarked on developing such a plan soon after an institution-wide Strategic Plan, including a master plan incorporating new housing for its large and diverse collection was adopted in 2003.

The Witte Museum adopted the first Collection Plan in 2007. The result of two years of collaboration between museum staff and trustees, the first collection plan was a successful tool for guiding decisions related to acquisitions and deaccessions. In 2012 the museum worked with LORD Cultural Resources to develop a conceptual design for visible storage in the B. Naylor Morton Research and Collections Center. Work on the visible storage project encouraged Witte professionals to look at the categorization of the collection from the visitor's perspective rather than arbitrary divisions determined by storage space or curatorial specialty. The categorization of the collection as outlined in this plan takes into account the common threads that unite groups of objects in a way that helps us understand the world around us.

This shift in categorization was further influenced by a transformation of the Witte Museum campus beginning in 2012 with the launch of a three-phase capital campaign and campus expansion. The expansion included the Robert J. and Helen C. Kleberg South Texas Heritage Center (2012), the purchase of a 33,000 square-foot offsite Storage Facility (2013), the B. Naylor Morton Research and Collection Center (2014), the H-E-B Body Adventure (2014), and the completion of the Susan Naylor Center (2017).

The Collection Plan is designed to be a road map providing guidance to the Witte Museum team: collection and curatorial professionals, trustees and the Collections Committee, to make decisions. While the Collection Plan provides guidance, there may be reasons for exceptions, and each item or Collection considered for accessioning or deaccessioning is considered on an individual basis.

Considerations for Acquisitions for the Accessioned Collection

If the Witte Museum is offered or becomes interested in acquiring certain items for its accessioned collection, the following should be considered:

- Is the item consistent with the mission and goals of the Witte Museum?
- Does the item fit within the museum's Collection Plan?
- Can proper care be given to the item or will it require additional expense for conservation and maintenance?
- Is it intended that this item become a part of the collection for as long as it remains useful for the purposes of the museum?
- Is the item encumbered with restrictions imposed by the donor?

- If the item is being offered for sale, might it or a comparable item be obtained as a gift or bequest?
- Can valid title to the item be conveyed to the museum?
- Is acquisition of the item consistent with all applicable state, national, or international laws (e.g. NAGPRA, CITES) or conventions protecting the rights of artists, cultural patrimony, or endangered species?
- Has the Senior Management Team reviewed the acquisition for presentation to the Collections Committee?

Considerations for Deaccessioning

Objects or specimens considered for deaccessioning must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- It is not in keeping with the mission, goals, and Collection Plan of the Witte Museum.
- It is not useful for research, exhibition, or educational programs in the foreseeable future.
- Its condition prevents its use or poses a threat to other items in the collection or the people who care for them.
- It cannot be adequately stored or cared for.
- It is a duplicate or there are better examples of identical or similar items in the collection.
- It lacks authenticity or is so lacking in documentation that its value for scholarship or public education is compromised.
- Deaccessioning and repatriation are required in fulfillment of the requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and any other relevant governmental laws or acts.

The Collection Plan is a vital tool in the stewardship of the collection now and in the future. The museum staff and trustees recognize each item or Collection acquired by the museum requires an ongoing commitment to provide proper storage, maintenance, and curatorial work. The Collection Plan will be reviewed at least every ten years to ensure that the plan accurately reflects the ongoing goals of the Witte Museum.

NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: approximately 40,000 specimens

History of Collection:

In 1923 Ellen Schulz Quillin met with H.P. Attwater regarding his collection documenting the flora and fauna of Texas. Through tag days, bluebonnet sales, plays and concerts, Quillin and the teachers and students of Main Avenue High School raised \$5,000 for the purchase of the collection along with \$1,200 for display cases. It is from this collection and the displays at Main Avenue High School that the dream of what would become the Witte Museum was born.

Shortly after acquiring the Attwater Collection, Ellen Schulz Quillin hired taxidermist, A. K. Boyles, to do mounts of mammals, birds, and reptiles of Texas. Display cases were made by local high school shop students to house and display many of the mounts. As the Natural History Collection grew beyond the space available at the high school, it served as a driving force behind Ellen Schulz Quillin's campaign to have a museum for the City of San Antonio which was realized in 1926 with the opening of the Witte Museum.

In 1933 the Reptile Garden opened and provided a needed source of revenue for the museum from admissions. It also provided income to South Texas ranchers and laborers who sold their rattlesnakes to the museum for \$0.15 per pound and rat snakes for \$0.10 per pound. Visitors were attracted to the reptile garden with sensational shows of snake handling and rattlesnake fries, but it was also a center for serious scientific research. Local researchers affiliated with the garden were Dr. Dudley Jackson, Sr. of San Antonio who developed the "Dudley Kit" for the treatment of snake bites and Col. M.L. Crimmins. Early research into antivenin also brought national and international researchers to San Antonio including Dr. Alfroni de Amaral of Brazil, Dr. Howard K. Gloyd of Chicago and Dr. Albert Wright of New York.

As the museum collection continued to grow, a larger Natural History Hall was opened in the 1950s. The mounts were placed in display cases designed to resemble the animal's natural habitat. Many of the backgrounds were painted by Gibbs Milliken, a young volunteer who became a well-known Texas artist.

In 1971 the Lone Star Beer Hall of Wildlife and Ecology opened at the Witte Museum. Its dioramas of the Edwards Plateau, East Texas, Trans-Pecos, and Gulf Coast would form the basis of all future natural history exhibitions. The dioramas were built under the direction of Curator Stuart Fullerton who began actively collecting specimens with R. Earl Olson for the new hall in the late 1960s. Assisting with the construction of the dioramas was James Wogstad, museum preparator and art instructor at San Antonio College. Porfirio Salinas painted a backdrop for a small diorama depicting Scharnhorst,

the Lyndon B. Johnson Ranch. Matthew Kalmenoff of the American Museum of Natural History painted the backdrop for the bison diorama.

In the mid-1980s, the exhibit was updated and opened again as Texas Wild. The Eco-Lab featuring live animals opened as a part of Texas Wild. Curator Sara Kerr, Ph.D. expanded the collection with the goal of creating a research collection. After her departure in 1993, the collection remained virtually dormant with only one other short-term curator overseeing the collection and updating the Eco-Lab into Texas Animals Alive in the late 1990s.

In 2006 and 2007 a renovation of the *Texas Wild* exhibition was initiated. The dioramas were refreshed with representations of the appropriate flora and fauna and the taxidermy mounts were cleaned and touched up after more than 20 years on display.

In 2014, the *Texas Wild* exhibit was dismantled for museum renovation. Large thematic dioramas of the Gulf Coast, East Texas, West Texas Mountains, and the Hill Country were preserved as artifacts. The painted diorama backdrops were removed by conservator Anne Zanicos and the bases of the Gulf Coast diorama and the West Texas Mountains diorama were saved for use in the new *McLean Family Texas Wild* exhibit under Curator Helen Holdsworth. This also marked a period of growth for the collection as new specimens were acquired to meet exhibit and program needs in the 10,000 square foot *McLean Family Texas Wild Gallery*, *SWBC Live Lab*, and *East Foundation Land Stewardship Lab*, in addition to the rehousing of the natural history collection in storage.

Throughout the current exhibitions at the Witte Museum, Texas Deep Time is a unifying narrative as well as the theme of how the land, water and sky have shaped our relationship to the State.

Types of Material:

- Botanical specimens
- Zoological specimens
 - Mammals
 - Birds
 - Eggs
 - Fish
 - Reptiles and amphibians
 - Insects
 - Mollusks
 - Live animals
- Library
- Archives

The strengths of the collection include the zoological specimens of Texas fauna which support the *McLean Family Texas Wild* exhibition, *SWBC Live Lab*, and research. The

collection includes zoological specimens not native to Texas such as birds, shells and the Walter and Lenora Brown collection of butterflies and moths. Botanical specimens, from the 19th and 20th centuries, are closely associated with founding Director, Ellen Schulz Quillin, and her study and publication of native plants. More than 700 wet specimens of fish, reptiles, and amphibians are currently on loan to the Wildlife and Fisheries Department of Texas A & M University for long-term storage and research.

Required Permits:

Educational Display Permit, Texas Parks and Wildlife
Migratory Bird Special Purpose Possession - Education (Dead) with Salvage, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
Eagle - Education (Dead), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
Certificate of Scientific Exchange - CiTES

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

Botanical and zoological specimens should only be collected if the acquisition meets the strategic goals of the museum by telling the story of the flora, fauna, ecology, and environment of Texas and its change over time.

The museum should retain existing collections that have no provenance for research and educational purposes, but the museum should not collect any additional material that has no provenance unless it is decided that the material has intrinsic value beyond provenance.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Curator of Texas Wild, Helen Holdsworth
Alana Kardon, Nature and Science Educator

PALEONTOLOGY & GEOLOGY COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: Paleontology approximately 1,500 specimens
Geology approximately 2,000 specimens

History of Collection:

The Paleontology and Geology Collection is relatively small compared to other collection areas. Previously, this collection had been considered a sub-section of the Natural History Collection. In 2013 Dr. Thomas Adams was hired as Curator of Paleontology and Geology and the collection was evaluated and defined as a separate collection category. The collection of vertebrate, invertebrate, plant, and trace fossils is small but has the potential to grow through curatorial fieldwork. Specimens that were in poor condition or hazardous were deaccessioned before the collection was moved to storage in 2014.

One of the most outstanding specimens in the Paleontology Collection is the 77-foot fossil tree donated in 1928 by Albert Steves, Sr. The tree was originally exposed on a hillside about four miles north of Eagle Pass, Texas on the east side of Elm Creek, probably a couple hundred yards from the Main Creek where it was discovered by Captain W.W. Townsend in 1887. The log was moved by W.A. Bonnet to his family home sometime after 1893. It was later purchased from Mrs. W.A. Bonnet by Albert Steves who had the sections numbered end to end and shipped by train on flat cars. This specimen may be the largest fossil tree specimen found in Texas.

Albert Steves, Sr. is also the donor of one of the most popular and largest specimens in the Geology Collection. In 1934, he donated a 650-pound amethyst from Brazil.

Ellen Schulz Quillin, founder and first director of the Witte Museum, arranged the first rocks, minerals and gems exhibit in the late 1930s. Inspired by the exhibit, many rock collectors presented their finds to the museum. In the 1950s, a larger exhibit was installed featuring the fine crystals and minerals donated by Col. E.M. Barron of El Paso, president of the Southern Gem Mining Company. In 1963, San Antonio jeweler, William N. Capurro donated his collection of precious and semi-precious stones.

The Naylor Family *Dinosaur Gallery* is the first permanent dinosaur gallery at the Witte Museum. Under Curator Dr. Thomas Adams, the gallery illustrates how changing environments influenced what animals and plants lived in Texas during the *Cretaceous* period. The rocks of this time record a shifting landscape of rising and falling sea levels, deep seas, changing shorelines, river valleys and floodplains. These environments were populated by a variety of Texas dinosaurs, flying pterosaurs, ancient crocodiles, marine reptiles, and fish.

Types of Material:

- Paleontological
 - Plant
 - Invertebrate
 - Vertebrate
 - Trace fossils
- Geological
 - Rocks
 - Sediment samples
 - Minerals
 - Precious and semi-precious gems
- Library
- Archives

The paleontology specimens represent a wide variety of plant, invertebrate, vertebrate, and trace fossils nationwide in scope and from all geologic ages. The gems and mineral collection encompasses a large assortment of rocks, mineral, and gems, including the Barron Collection and McFarlin gems.

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

Paleontological and geological material should illustrate Texas' past through specimens that are related to Texas and surrounding regions or strengthen the connection of Texas to the world.

To further its collecting and educational mission, the Witte Museum will participate in and sponsor paleontological excavations. The Witte Museum will seek state and federal certification as a curatorial facility which will allow the museum to serve as a principal repository for vertebrate fossils collected from state and federal lands in Texas and contiguous areas, as well as for specimens collected elsewhere using state and federal funds.

The museum should retain existing collections that have no provenance for research and educational purposes, but the museum should not collect any additional material that has no provenance unless it is decided that the material has intrinsic value beyond provenance.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Curator of Paleontology and Geology, Thomas Adams, Ph.D.

TEXAS HISTORY COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: Approximately 212,000 items

History of Collection:

The Texas History Collection consists of objects relating to all aspects of Texas History from historic events to family life. Before the Witte Museum ever opened its doors in 1926, items were being donated. As the 1936 Texas Centennial approached, Founding Director Ellen Schulz Quillin reached out to South Texas ranchers, cowboys, trail drivers, and pioneers, and they donated items that represent the history of the state.

The museum began accepting historic clothing and textiles immediately after the museum opened to the public in 1926. When Cecilia Steinfeldt became History Curator in 1976, she invited Christa Thurman, Curator of Textiles at the Art Institute of Chicago, to assess the collection and give advice to staff on care and storage. Thurman strongly suggested the collection could become the nucleus of a Textile and Costume Center open for research to a variety of groups from university costume history classes to needlework guilds. Cecilia Steinfeldt began working to create a fashion-based collection, collecting clothing chronologically from each decade. In 1995, Michael Haynes, Ph.D. became curator. Her background in anthropology brought a new perspective to the clothing and textiles in the collection by adding emphasis to the everyday artifacts and their social context. In 1998 her dissertation, *Dressing Up Debutantes: Pageantry and Glitz in Texas* was published by Oxford International Publishers, Ltd., London.

In the 1970s Texas furniture and decorative arts became the focus of collecting. In 1973, Cecilia Steinfeldt organized a major exhibition of furniture. The items filled the changing galleries, the historic houses and even appeared on the grounds. The catalogue for that exhibition, *Early Texas Furniture and Decorative Arts* is now a collector's item. In 1977, an exhibition and publication explored the work of Texas cabinetmaker Johan Jahn, *Tischlermeister Jahn* published by the San Antonio Museum Association.

In 1993, the museum purchased the Donald and Louise Yena Collection, the largest acquisition of western artifacts in the museum's history. Bruce Shackelford incorporated items from this collection into the exhibition *Thundering Hooves: 500 Years of Horse Power*. Artifacts from the collection have been important elements of subsequent exhibitions focusing on South Texas history such as *Texas Originals* and *A Wild and Vivid Land: Stories of South Texas*.

In 2003, the Witte Museum acquired the Hertzberg Circus Collection consisting of artifacts, library and archival material. Former State Senator and local lawyer Harry Hertzberg, a founding member of the Circus Fans of America, assembled the collection in the early 20th century.

In 2007, Bruce Shackelford wrote *Photography on the South Texas Frontier: Images from the Witte Museum Collection* and curated the exhibition *Lens on South Texas*. These two projects featured numerous images from the archives, some of which have never been published or displayed before.

In 2011, the Old Trail Drivers Association of Texas donated its collection to the Witte Museum. This collection is featured in the George West Trail Drivers Gallery in the Robert J. and Helen C. Kleberg South Texas Heritage Center.

Types of Material:

- Personal Artifacts
 - Clothing and accessories
 - Beauty supplies, haircare and hygiene
- Home Furnishings
 - Furniture
 - Ceramics
 - Decorative arts
 - Glassware
 - Lamps
- Recreational Items
 - Festivals, fairs & expositions
 - Toys and dolls
 - Sports equipment
 - Musical instruments
 - Phonographs, victrolas, etc.
 - Circuses
 - Entertainment
- Commercial Products
 - Food tins and other commercial packaging
- Tools and Equipment for
 - Farms & ranches
 - Business Ceremonial
 - Food
 - Woodworking
 - Metalworking
 - Scientific
 - Education
 - Textiles
 - Armaments
 - Transportation

- Architecture
 - Buildings
 - Architectural elements
- Textiles
- Library
 - Published texts relating the history and culture of Texas
 - Published texts that provide context for the history and culture of Texas
- Archives
 - Primary and secondary source material relating to the history and culture of Texas

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

Items in the Texas History Collection should reflect how people have lived, worked and played in one of the largest and most ecologically and culturally diverse states in the nation.

When considering Order of the Alamo Coronation Robes for the collection, the museum seeks to represent each court with the Queen, the Princess, and three Duchess robes which are representative of the theme for the court. (The) robes worn by the President of the Order of the Alamo, Lord High Chamberlain, and pages are also collected. The following criteria will be used to determine whether or not the Coronation Robes are appropriate for the collection:

- Condition
- Multigenerational participant
- Illustration of the court theme
- Historic significance
- Relationship to existing collection
- Style and workmanship

A donation of \$1,000 will be requested with all donations of coronation robes. This will be used to purchase supplies such as custom boxes and acid free tissue for the archival storage of these items.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Chief Curator, Amy Fulkerson
 Curator of South Texas Heritage, Bruce Shackelford
 Curator of Anthropology and Health, Dr. Bryan Bayles

AMERICAN HISTORY COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: Approximately 6,400 items

History of Collection:

The American History Collection includes a wide variety of artifacts ranging from everyday life to historic events. Though the museum has had a strong focus on Texas history, through the years, many items were collected that represent history and culture from other regions of America. The Witte will retain these items that represent the American experience and impact on Texas and particularly South Texas. For example, clothing and textiles are an important part of the American story, such as the cape worn by Sibbillah Moseley when she escaped from pursuit by General Burgoyne during the American Revolution. Needlework samplers and quilts were collected for their unique patterns that complement examples in the Texas History Collection.

The collection also includes home furnishings, commercial products, tools, equipment and commemorative items that are often found throughout the United States.

Types of Material:

- Personal Artifacts
 - Clothing and accessories
 - Beauty supplies, haircare and hygiene
- Home Furnishings
 - Furniture
 - Ceramics
 - Decorative arts
 - Kitchen ware
 - Glass ware
 - Lamps
- Recreational Items
 - Festivals, fairs & expositions
 - Toys and dolls
 - Sports equipment
 - Musical instruments
 - Phonographs, victrolas, etc.
 - Circuses
 - Entertainment
- Commercial Products
 - Food tins and other commercial packaging

- Tools and Equipment for
 - Farms & ranches
 - Business
 - Ceremonial
 - Food
 - Woodworking
 - Metalworking
 - Scientific
 - Education
 - Textiles
 - Armaments
 - Transportation

- Textiles

- Library
 - Published texts relating the history and culture the United States
 - Published texts that provide context for the history and culture of the United States

- Archives
 - Primary and secondary source material relating to the history and culture of the United States

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

The existing American History Collection is a legacy collection. Additional items may be considered if they strengthen the historical connection of San Antonio and South Texas to American history and culture.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Chief Curator, Amy Fulkerson
 Curator of South Texas Heritage, Bruce Shackelford
 Curator of Anthropology and Health, Dr. Bryan Bayles

WORLD HISTORY COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: Approximately 5,400 items

History of Collection:

The World History Collection consists of home furnishings, tools, clothing, and items representing cultural traditions around the world. Some of these artifacts were brought to Texas by immigrants. Others were collected by people who traveled around the world, many of whom were in the military. The collection reflects South Texas's connection to the larger world.

In 1928, Col. Joseph Choate King donated his collection of spears, shields, and edged weapons from the Philippine Islands. Col. Tobin Rote, Maj. Fletcher Gardner, and Gen. Halstead Dorey also contributed to the museum's significant collection of tribal material from the Philippine Islands.

Rev. Father Guido Nuereberger gave his collection of more than 300 items in 1954. The gift included beadwork, carvings, shields, spears, and drums collected during his 25 years as a Catholic Missionary in Southern Africa.

When the Navarro House was relocated to the museum in 1948 it opened as the Doll House featuring 583 dolls collected by sisters Mabel Barbour and Mrs. Joseph Callan representing 80 countries. There are now more than 1,000 dolls in the collection.

In 1968, San Antonio hosted a World's Fair, "HemisFair: Confluence of Civilizations in the Americas." Spain and Canada donated costumes and artifacts representing their nations when the fair closed.

Types of Material:

- Personal Artifacts
 - Clothing and accessories
- Home Furnishings
 - Furniture
 - Ceramics
 - Decorative arts
- Recreational Items
 - Festivals, fairs & expositions
 - Toys and dolls
 - Sports equipment
 - Musical instruments

- Circuses
- Entertainment
- Tools and Equipment
 - Farms & ranches
 - Business
 - Ceremonial
 - Food
 - Scientific
 - Education
 - Textiles
- Textiles
- Library
 - Published texts relating to the history and culture of various countries and regions represented by artifacts in the World History Collection
- Archives
 - Primary and secondary source material relating to the history and culture of various countries and regions represented by artifacts in the World History Collection

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

The World History Collection is a legacy collection. Items may be considered if they strengthen the historical connection of San Antonio and South Texas to the world.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Chief Curator, Amy Fulkerson
 Curator of South Texas Heritage, Bruce Shackelford
 Curator of Anthropology and Health, Dr. Bryan Bayles

MILITARY HISTORY COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: Approximately 2,600 items

The Military History Collection consists of uniforms, weapons and accoutrements from all branches of the United States military. Also represented in the collection are uniforms and artifacts from military academies, non-United States military, and militias. Many of the artifacts currently in the collection are grouped around major conflicts or wars, but peace time military service is also represented. The majority of the collection has a Texas or U.S. provenance, and includes material from Europe and Asia.

History of Collection:

South Texas and San Antonio in particular, have a long standing connection to the military, from the early Spanish presidios to the modern military bases of today. This collection was shaped by members of the military, and their families. Many of the donors were stationed in South Texas or were from South Texas. The collection includes artifacts from Generals John Lapham Bullis, Halstead Dorey, Walter Krueger, Jonathon Wainwright, and William Jenkins Worth.

Types of Material:

Uniforms

Firearms

- Handguns
- Long guns
- Machine Guns

Artillery

- Cannons
- Grenade launchers

Edged Weapons

- Swords
- Knives
- Daggers
- Pikes
- Spears
- Machetes
- Bayonets
- Axes

Armor

- Suits of armor
- Chain mail
- Gauntlets
- Helmets

Medals

- Texas Revolution
- Mexican War
- Civil War
- World War I
- World War II
- Korean War

Insignia

- Patches
- Ribbons
- Badges
- Epaulets
- Banners
- Buttons
- Dog tags

Equipment

- Gas masks
- Goggles
- Canteens
- Spurs
- First aid kits
- Mess kits
- Bugles
- Medical equipment

Souvenirs and Commemorative Items

- Shrapnel
- Items made by prisoners of war
- Plaques

Library

- Published texts relating the history and culture of material represented in the Military History Collection

Archives

- Primary and secondary source material relating to the history and culture of material in the Military History Collection

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

The Military Collection of the Witte Museum will illustrate how the military shapes the history and culture of Texas, in particular San Antonio, and reflects the diversity of the community.

The collection is an active collection that strengthens the historical connection among the military, San Antonio, and South Texas. Additions to the collection should have a South Texas provenance and should represent the history of San Antonio and Texas. Artifacts should reflect the service person's story, not the service person as collector.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Curator of South Texas Heritage, Bruce Shackelford

ANTHROPOLOGY COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: Approximately 47,500 archeological items
Approximately 2,100 ethnographic items

Anthropology is the study of humans both past and present. Its major subfields are archaeology, physical anthropology, linguistic anthropology, and cultural anthropology. The Anthropology Collection of the Witte Museum is comprised of items representing the indigenous people of North America.

History of Collection:

The Witte Museum was among the first institutions to sponsor and conduct organized excavations of the Lower Pecos in the 1930s. Ellen Schulz Quillin pushed for the excavations by raising funds and donations. The northern Chihuahuan desert of the lower Pecos River region of Texas and Coahuila Mexico contains a unique archaeological record. The sheltered overhangs preserved a remarkable array of perishable artifacts and rock art that span 12,000 years. The archeological material collected during these excavations was displayed in the museum.

In the 1980s, this collection formed the basis for the *Ancient Texans* exhibition and book. In 2013 *Painters in Prehistory: Art and Archeology in the Lower Pecos Canyonlands* was published as an update to *Ancient Texans*. The book is the foundation for the current *People of the Pecos* exhibition.

The archeological collection includes material from Central Texas, the Texas coast, and Bexar County. In the late 1920s, George C. Martin, an archeologist who worked along the Texas coast, donated his finds to the Witte Museum. Material recovered from his excavations includes artifacts, field notes, and photo albums documenting the collection and excavation. Materials collected by the Texas Archeological Society at the Eagle Bluff Site were donated to the museum in 2015. Bexar County is represented with archeological materials from sites including the Olmos

Basin, the San Antonio Missions, Martinez Creek, the Granburg Site, Brackenridge Park, and the Witte Museum grounds.

The museum also has archeological collections which include the Pickens, Strickland, Pohl, McReynolds, and Redden Collections. These collections contains primarily stone artifacts and perishable items grouped by counties.

In recent years new studies have been conducted involving DNA, dental morphology, and evidence of disease, from specimens excavated by the Witte in the Lower Pecos and Brewster County in the 1930s.

Ethnographic materials relating North American Indian Tribes are a key component of the Anthropology collection. Many of these items were donated by military personnel who had served at 19th century frontier forts or their families including Col. Sterling Price Adams, Gen. John Lapham Bullis, Gen. James Grafton Carleton Lee, Brig. Gen. Simon Synder and Col. James Ronayne are included. In the late 1990s, Carol Canty and Roberta McGregor, Curator of Anthropology, wrote an unpublished manuscript on the basketry collected by military personnel. These materials were used extensively in the exhibitions *A Wild and Vivid Land: Stories of South Texas* and *Splendor on the Range: American Indians and the Horse* curated by Bruce Shackelford.

Types of Material:

Archeology

The archeology collection is made up primarily of stone artifacts including projectile points, wooden and bone tools, and woven mats, netting and sandals.

Physical Anthropology

Specimens from excavation sites

Ethnographic Materials

The following subgroups help to define this broad category. There is some overlap between the subcategories.

Homes & Furnishings

- Furniture
- Ceramics
- Basketry
- Cooking items

Clothing and dress

Recreational Items

- Festivals & fairs
- Toys and dolls
- Sports equipment
- Musical instruments

Commercial Products (objects made for non-tribal commercial trade)

Tools and Equipment for

- Farms & hunting
- Medicine & veterinary care
- education
- Textiles
- Religion or spirituality
- Transportation
- Weapons

Library

Archives

COLLECTION GUIDELINE:

Archeological material should be related to the Texas cultural region.

To further its collecting and educational mission, the Witte Museum should participate in and sponsor archaeological excavations. The Witte Museum will seek state and federal certification as a curatorial facility that will allow the museum to serve as a principal repository for archeological material collected from state and federal lands in Texas using state and federal funds.

The Witte will retain existing collections that have no known provenance. The museum has no plans to collect additional material that has no known provenance.

The museum manages the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony in the collection in accordance

with the provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). For more information regarding NAGPRA, visit <https://www.nps.gov/nagpra/INDEX.HTM>.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Curator of Archeology, Dr. Harry Shafer
Curator of Anthropology and Health, Dr.
Bryan Bayles Curator of South Texas
Heritage, Bruce Shackelford

TEXAS ART COLLECTION

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: Approximately 4,100 items

History of Collection:

The Texas Art Collection was shaped by curators Eleanor Onderdonk, Martha Utterback, and Cecilia Steinfeldt. Eleanor Onderdonk was Curator of Art from 1927-1958. She was the daughter of Robert Jenkins Onderdonk and the sister of Julian Onderdonk, both noted Texas artists. During her tenure at the museum she encouraged local artists and offered them a venue. She also brought exhibitions of world renowned artists to San Antonio. Under her leadership the museum began to acquire Texas Art. Onderdonk also collected exhibition catalogs, newspaper clippings, auction notices, and any other information that would help document an artist's life and work. This archival material provided the core research for later publications such as *Art for History's Sake: The Texas Collection of the Witte Museum* by Cecilia Steinfeldt, *Dictionary of Texas Artists, 1800-1945* by Michael Grauer, and *Texas Painters, Sculptors & Graphic Artists: A Biographical Dictionary of Artists in Texas Before 1942* by John and Deborah Powers.

Martha Utterback succeeded Onderdonk as Curator of Art. In 1964 she organized an exhibition of over 200 works by early Texas artists, one of the most comprehensive exhibitions of Texas Art. She used her research from the exhibition to publish the first book on the Witte's art collection, *Early Texas Art in the Witte Museum*.

In 1973, Cecilia Steinfeldt began her work with the Texas Art Collection. Already the Curator of History, Cecilia stepped in to fill the gap when Utterback left. Like Eleanor Onderdonk, Cecilia Steinfeldt was an artist. She began working at the museum in 1936 and started teaching art classes in 1947. Her love for Texas art made her a natural successor to Eleanor Onderdonk and Martha Utterback and led her to become one of the most prolific authors on the subject. Cecilia Steinfeldt authored *The Onderdonks: A Family of Painters*, *Texas Folk Art: One Hundred Fifty Years of the Southwest Tradition*, *Art for History's Sake: The Texas Collection of the Witte Museum*, and *S. Seymour Thomas: A Texas Genius Rediscovered*.

Types of Material:

- Paintings
- Drawings
- Prints
- Sculptures
- Mixed Media

- Library
- Archives

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

The Texas Art Collection of the Witte Museum should consist of works that capture the Texas landscape or represent the diverse cultures that lived, worked and played in the state. The collection should also include works created by artists who were born in or lived in Texas. Artwork without a Texas connection may be considered if it enhances the Texas Art Collection.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Chief Curator, Amy Fulkerson
Curator of South Texas Heritage, Bruce Shackelford

INSTITUTIONAL ARCHIVES

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

Size: 5,000 linear feet

History of Collection:

Ellen Schulz Quillin started documenting the museum's history during her tenure as director through notes, correspondence, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, departmental reports, annual reports, and photographs. This material became the foundation of the Institutional Archives. In 1966, Bess Carroll Woolford and Ellen Schulz Quillin published *The Story of the Witte Memorial Museum 1922-1960: The Story of an Institution and the People Who Made It*.

After Ellen Quillin retired in 1960, individual museum departments maintained records of their activities documenting the museum's history. In 1998, Rebecca Huffstutler became the first Curator of Archives. She was instrumental in bringing together the museum's archival holdings and also establishing guidelines for documenting the institutional history of the museum.

In 2014, the museum hired its first certified archivist, Melissa Gonzales. Gonzales further refined the guidelines for documenting the museum's institutional history. Between 2013 and 2017 the Institutional Archives were physically brought together in the B. Naylor Morton Research and Collections Center.

Types of Material:

Witte Museum Institutional Records¹

The Witte Museum Archives ensures the preservation and access of the permanent, official records of the Witte Museum. However, the Witte Museum Archives will not serve as a records center in that it will not maintain those institutional records that are limited or have short-term value. The Witte Museum Institutional Records will consist of those materials that are of enduring value because they reflect significant historical events, document the history and development of the museum, or provide valuable research data.

Institutional records are those that Witte Museum employees create or receive in any format through the course of museum business, and as such, museum records are property of the Witte Museum. These records exist in many formats, including but not limited to, paper and electronic documents, photographs, databases, microforms, audiovisual materials, and electronic mail messages.

¹ Based on Tufts University's *Guidelines for Managing University Records, 2007* for use by the Witte Museum Archives.

The type of records usually maintained in the Witte Museum Archives includes, but are not limited to:

- Artifacts
 - Banners, medals, etc.
- Biographical data
 - Resumes, memoirs, organization charts, etc.
- By-laws
- Meeting minutes and agendas
 - Board and any committees
- Correspondence
- Memoranda
- Financial records (especially if pertinent to accreditation or the history of the museum)
 - Journals, ledgers, marketing/sales subject files, statistical summaries, audit reports, etc.
- Grant documentation
- Published materials
 - Reports (annual, accreditation, etc.), newsletters, museum-produced booklets, etc.
- Unpublished materials
 - Plans (strategic, marketing, business development, etc.)
 - Policies, procedures, and manuals
 - Speeches and presentations
 - Marketing materials (flyers, posters, invitations, etc.)
- Moving images and photographs
- Sound recordings
- Architectural drawings and maps
- Computer data and/or other machine readable electronic records
 - Email, databases, etc.
- Archeological records
 - Administrative materials pertaining to those archeological excavations sponsored by the Witte Museum will be considered as institutional records.

The following documents are not considered Witte Museum Institutional Records:

- Extra copies of publications kept for distribution.
- Staff members' records and work that was created or received in the course of their non-Witte Museum professional activities.
- Personal or private documents not generated or received during the course of museum business.
- Working papers, appointment logs, printed material meant for personal reference, rough notes, calculations, drafts, items with personal information (such as social security numbers), etc.

COLLECTION GUIDELINES:

The Institutional Archives should include visual and textual materials documenting the history of the museum. They are arranged by department, each of which will have their own records series number. Offices under each department will then be given a subseries code that identifies them with their governing department.

Formats within the collections include printed and/or published materials such as broadsides, posters, newsletters, newspapers/clippings, San Antonio city directories, works on paper, and maps, in addition to other archival materials such as journals, correspondence, photographs, negatives, and audiovisual items.

ASSOCIATED STAFF:

Archivist
Reference Librarian

Approved by the Board of Trustees on the 20th day of September, 2017.

Collections Committee

Mary Arno, Chair
Jerri Abrams
John Banks, Jr.
Carol Canty
Mamie Carter
Susan Frost
Jim Halff
Agnes Harwood
Pruyn Hildebrand
Dan Judson
Edward Steves
Mary West Traylor
Elizabeth West

Staff

Marise McDermott, President and CEO
Amy Fulkerson, Chief Curator
Dr. Thomas Adams, Curator of Paleontology and Geology
Dr. Bryan Bayles, Curator of Anthropology and Health
Helen Holdsworth, Curator of Texas Wild
Bruce Shackelford, Curator of South Texas Heritage
Dr. Harry Shafer, Curator of Archeology
Leslie Ochoa, Collections Manager
Stephanie Prichard, Registrar