

“THAT BELONGS IN A MUSEUM!”

Or...

A Crash Course in Collections Care



What is a Museum?

- “A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.”
 - Extraordinary General Assembly of ICOM

What is Collections Management?

- The care, storage and display of a museum's collection – The British Museum
 - Meaghan would add 'organization'
- Involves caring for the objects properly as soon as they enter our space until the end of time
 - These objects mean something to the families they came from
 - Donors have entrusted these items to the Museum

Collections Volunteer Positions

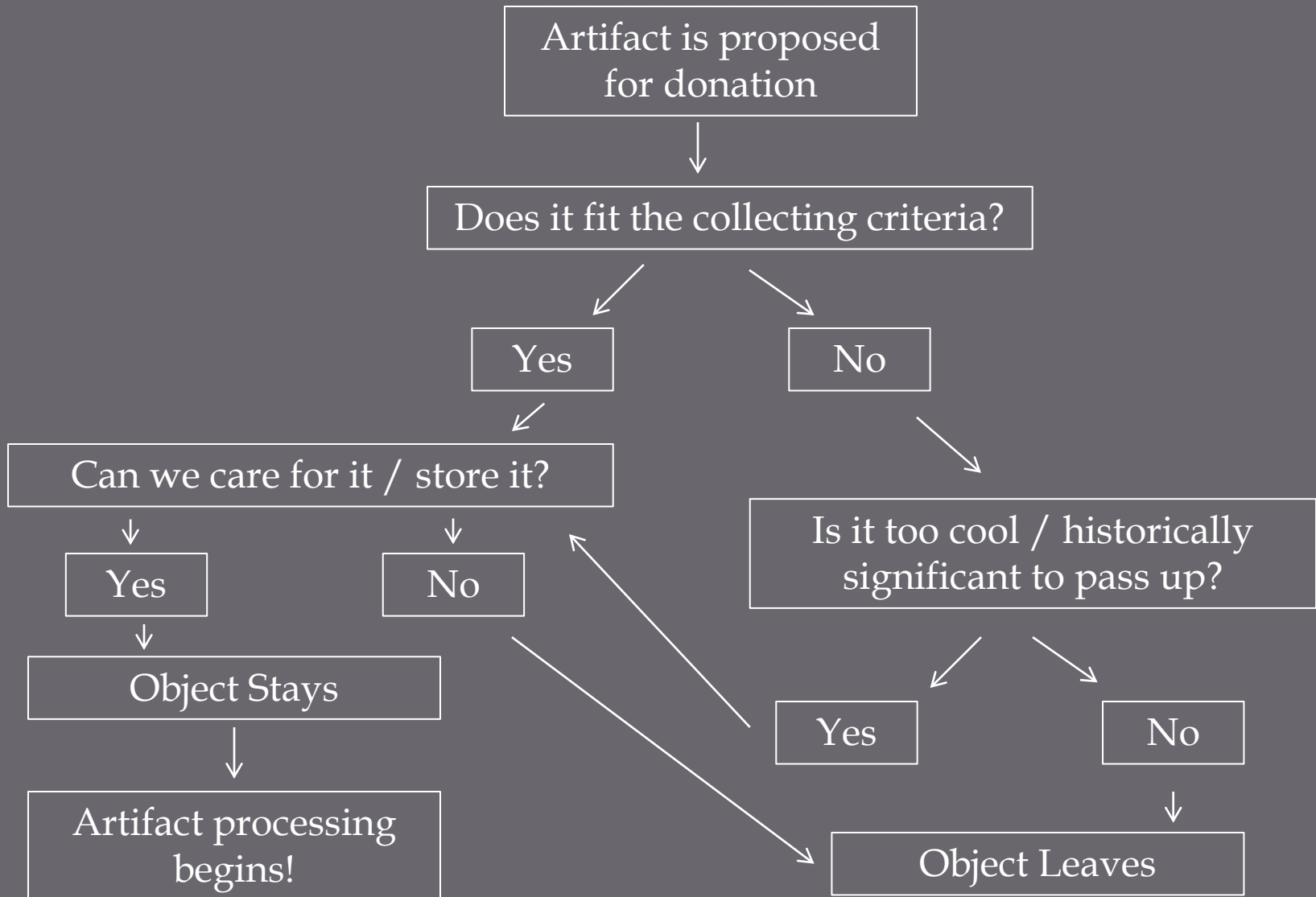
- Cataloguing – documenting the artifacts that arrive on site
- Data entry – putting catalogued objects into the PastPerfect database



Do We Still Collect?

- Yes! Glanmore also functions as Belleville's Civic Museum
- We would love to accept everything...but we can't
- Items need to meet certain criteria before they are accepted into the Collection
 - Original to Glanmore?
 - Local?
 - Victorian or Victorian-ish?
 - Condition – must be good
 - Fill a gap in the current collection?
 - Better example?

The Journey of an Artifact...a flowchart



The Journey of an Artifact...

Cataloguing!

1. All paperwork needs to be complete
 - Need to ensure ownership before objects can be processed – donor forms are signed and Accessions Register is updated
2. Object gets an accession number
 - 023001001
3. Object is catalogued – measured / described / condition reported/ researched and entered into PastPerfect Database
4. Taken upstairs, photographed and stored / put on exhibit
5. These processes are *essential* to Collections Management so we can find the items for display, research, education or public interest.

Collections at Glanmore

- The Photographs

- Includes
residence
- The house
- Furniture
textile
photographs
- Not a
significant



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ut very

Collections at Glanmore

- The Couldery Collection
- Original and Bertram and Cecil
- Bertram and Cecil and lived in England
- Ann Docton lived out the rest of her life upon the estate
- Ann donated
- Over six thousand
- Collection of Bertram and Cecil
- Also contributed to Horatio Couldery (Bertram's



largely belonging to

leville in the 1880's
they returned to

and lived out the rest
on of their estate
ive items and art
ville in the 1950's

attributed to Bertram
rative items and silver
d to Horatio Couldery

Collections at Glanmore

- The Regional Collection
 - Consists of artifacts primarily from the Belleville-ish area from the late 1700's – present day
 - Many objects were produced or used locally
 - Displayed throughout the Museum or used for in-house or seasonal exhibitions
 - Personal items (eyeglasses, shoes, toiletry items), textiles and clothing, domestic and recreational items (decorative items, housewares including a lighting collection, toys, firefighting and police equipment, medical items (collection is small but about to get a lot bigger...), art and archival material

Types of Objects at Glanmore

- Art – framed and unframed oil and watercolour paintings, sketches, line drawings
- Ceramics – cloisonné, dishware, statuettes, crocks
- Metals – silver and silver plate, copper, alloys
- Glassware
- Textiles
 - Carpets, rugs, quilts, throws, blankets
 - Clothing (indoor and outdoor), personal accessories (gloves, hats, umbrellas), baby and children's fashions – items span many decades
- Archaeological material
- Original architectural features from the house / the house

General Care Guidelines

- Follow guidelines and best practices set by professional institutions/Agencies
 - the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Canadian Museum Association (CMA), Ontario Museums Association (OMA), International Council of Museums (ICOM), International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)
- Always err on the side of caution

General Care Guidelines

- Our goal is to preserve the items for as long as we can
- Handle the items as little as possible and wear gloves when appropriate
 - This protects both you and the object
 - Many items are very old and have treatments/materials that are now considered unsafe – eg. natural history collections
 - Mould on books and toxic metals (lead, zinc) on toys
- Clean and store artifacts properly
 - Use acid-free materials
 - Box when we can and provide mounts and supports when required
 - Keep the items as dust-free as possible

How to Handle an Artifact

- Very Carefully!
- Use two hands and handle objects over a padded surface
- If the item is to be moved, plan your route!
 - Open any doors and make sure the way is clear of obstacles, people, ghosts etc...
- Wear gloves (cotton or nitrile) when appropriate
- Before we move something, we assess for overall stability and weak points
 - Handles and chair backs = weak points
 - Use a box or acid-free cardboard sleeve for transport
 - You will not be asked to assess artifacts on your own
- Hold by the most stable part of the artifact
- Make many trips if necessary
 - These are not our groceries!

Touchometer at the Ashmolean Museum





Metal Objects



- Metals – Always wear gloves – can be cotton or nitrile
- Watch
- Be aware of the metals
- Yes...
 - We
 - Most of the elements
 - that
 - We balance preservation with presentation





Ceramics and Glass

- Clean hands are ok

- If you can't wear gloves, clean and free of food

clean and
wear gloves

- If you do

- Do not wear

- Do not pick

decorative elements (stands, rim of vase or exterior decorations)



Artwork and Archival Material

- Art – f
- Wea
- Don't
- Be ca
- Can
- there
- Grab
- Archiv
- Wea
- Be a
- Hand



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spotter

Textiles

- Do not wear historic clothing
- Wear gloves when handling
- Handle as little as possible
- Use a box or tray for transport
- Many textiles require interior supports to keep the shape such as hats or shoes and slippers
- Look for weak seams or attachment points before the item is to be moved




Archaeological Material

- Always wear gloves
 - Artifacts may still be dirty
 - Nitrile is best
- Handle very carefully – many of these items are already broken
- Wash your hands when you are done

Wooden Objects / Basketry

- Gloves are a good idea
- Trying to preserve the original finish and features
- Always assess for structural integrity before moving
- Grip by the strongest / safest point
- Use the buddy system if it is a large object or furniture
- If the wood is unfinished, watch for pointy bits

Weird Artifact Rules at Glanmore

- No food or drinks in the exhibit rooms or collections areas
 - Water in a bottle with a lid is ok but not in exhibit rooms
 - Please keep food in the kitchen and take a snack break if you're hungry
- No aerosols or mists in the museum
- No fresh flowers from your garden or ours
 - Florists = 
- No large bags / backpacks
 - Can be left at the front desk
- No selfie sticks

When Selfies Attack!



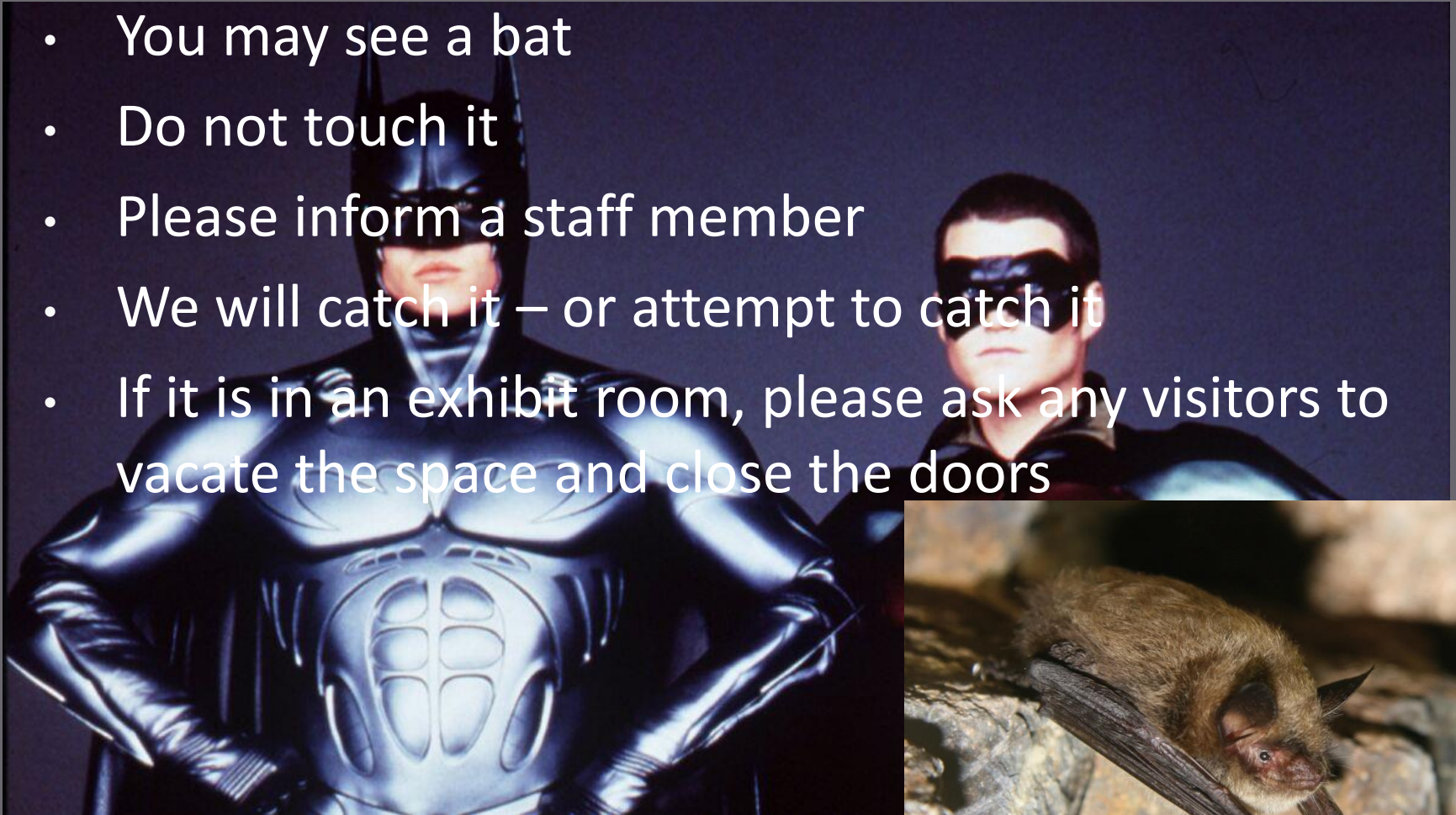
Bugs are Bad

- Good outside...bad in museums
- Common museum pests
- If you see a bug (or lots of bugs) please let us know
- Bug traps give us an idea of what's around and if we have to be concerned
- You may also see...



Bats

- You may see a bat
- Do not touch it
- Please inform a staff member
- We will catch it – or attempt to catch it
- If it is in an exhibit room, please ask any visitors to vacate the space and close the doors



Guidelines / Rules for Volunteers

- Please don't go beyond / lean on the ropes or pick up an object unless directed by staff
- Ask for help if you are unsure about something
- Use the buddy system
- Watch your step!
 - Uneven surfaces, room transitions, stairs – can complicate artifact transport
- Be aware of your surroundings
- When cataloguing, please use a pencil
- Please don't point at an artifact with a pen/marker

Uh Oh...

- If something bad happens, please let us know
 - We are here to help 😊
 - We won't be mad at you ❌
 - You can still come back
- If you see a visitor about to do something bad
 - Tell a staff member who will handle the situation
 - If it's really bad...tell a staff member who will call Jen 😊

Questions?

