



DATE: August 25, 2025
TO: Sarah Knizhnik, Chair
Operations Committee
FROM: Alyssa Firkus
Director of Education

RECOMMENDATION: Approve and Accept New Acquisitions and Donations to the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County’s Collections.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Communication, Education, and Outreach

FINANCIAL DATA: The Education Department’s FY2025 approved budget includes funding for the acquisition of items for the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County’s (“Dunn Museum”) collections when deemed appropriate. One set of items recommended for acquisition would be purchased for less than \$250 and charged to an appropriate line item in the Education Department’s collections budget (76413800-643000). The other items are being donated to the Dunn Museum.

BACKGROUND: The Dunn Museum “collects material culture representing the people, places, and events of Lake County, Illinois” (Collection Policies, Scope of Collections, p. 5). The majority of the Dunn Museum’s historic collections were acquired by the County of Lake from the privately run Lake County Museum of History in 1965 for the purpose of “preserve(ing) and maintain(ing) for future generations the cultural history of Lake County” (Resolution No. 24, dated October 12, 1965). These collections were officially transferred to the District in 1989.

The Dunn Museum is frequently offered donations by members of the general public. Each donation offer is considered against criteria established in the Dunn Museum’s approved Collection Policies. Donations that do not meet these criteria are declined. Since March 2025, the Dunn Museum has received offers for 38 donations, 15 of which were declined by the Dunn Museum’s Collection Committee. Additionally, staff has identified one set of items that it recommends be purchased to add to the collection.

The acquisitions and donations listed on the attached Exhibit A meet the criteria established in the Dunn Museum’s approved Collection Policies and have been reviewed, and are being recommended, by the Dunn Museum’s Committee for acceptance into the Dunn Museum’s historic collections. There is adequate space to properly store and care for these items. Under the Collection Policies, the Operations Committee is authorized to approve and accept these acquisitions and donations, because they do not require a purchase of more than \$30,000.00.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Exhibitions and Collections Manager, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Manager of Board Operations and Corporate Counsel

MOTION: Motion to approve and accept new acquisitions into the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County’s Collections as provided in Exhibit A to staff’s August 25, 2025, memorandum.

APPROVED:

Date: _____ Roll Call Vote: Ayes: _____ Nays: _____
 Voice Vote Majority Ayes; Nays: _____

New Acquisitions Inventory

August 25, 2025

Donations:

1. Betty Lou Reed political piece
2. Scrapbook page with eight photos related to Shurhit Products, Inc. of Waukegan- 1948
3. Blue books and pamphlets used by John Rasmussen for a correspondence school course. (5 of 43 accepted)
4. Two handmade Jack-in-the-Box toys made by Herman Christensen for his daughter in 1940-1950.
5. Jumping Jack toy by Herman Christensen, 1944
6. WWII "Wings" pin belonging to Janice Christensen, W.A.S.P.
7. Copy of "Special Orders" for Janice Christensen, 1944
8. 1988 Fair Trophy with winning hardanger lace piece made by June Christensen Holland
9. Stained Glass window from Catholic Chapel of Fort Sheridan built in 1941
10. Group photo of American Steel and Wire Company Waukegan Works building workers, 1900
11. Wedding photo sent from Mexico City, 1947 to uncle living in Mundelein.
12. Color slides of Hough/International Harvester factory in Libertyville, 1979
13. Memorial banner featuring Jim Bateman a soldier killed in Vietnam in 1969
14. Chicago Sunday Tribune from July 13, 1941, featuring Fort Sheridan in color.
15. Postcards of Lake County
16. Tax receipts for Levi Stafford from 1850s-1888
17. Tax receipts from Prairie View area, Wells- Ladd family, 1920s
18. Reading Circle certificate 1935
19. Photo of Millburn School Children, 1950s
20. Articles and information related to housing at Great Lakes military housing 1990s-2000s
21. Fort Sheridan Tower newspaper, August 8, 1947
22. Zion Nuclear Power Station brochure, 1975
23. Arden Shores Photo Album from 1950s and 1960s.

Purchases:

1. Original photos of Adlai E. Stevenson II from various newspaper and news service archives – to be purchased for not to exceed \$250.