

Mission Statement

The mission of the Branch District Library (BDL) Holbrook Heritage Research Center is to preserve the history of the communities of Branch County, Michigan.

BDL will preserve and maintain these materials for future generations by using accepted preservation methods, and by providing access to the materials under safe and secure conditions. The library will work in conjunction with other Local History entities, such as historical societies and libraries, to educate the public on the holdings of the collection and on the history of Branch County.

Scope of the Collection

The focus of the collection will include materials about the history of Branch County, Michigan, and, to a lesser extent, materials about the surrounding geographical areas of Branch County, to set Branch County within its historical context. Primary source materials concerning the Sauk Trail, Chicago Pike, and U.S. 12 are also of interest.

Genealogical records and family histories pertaining to founders and/or pioneer families of Branch County may be collected.

Selection Policy

The HHRC collection will include any format if able to be stored and accessed within space limitations. No three-dimensional objects will be acquired, except in unique and rare instances. Donors of artifacts will be referred to the Wing House Museum.

Selection Criteria

The BDL HHRC Collection will include:

- Materials that record the history and ancestry of Branch County founding and/or pioneer families
- Materials that record the history and contributions of prominent individuals who have lived in or served in Branch County
- Materials that preserve the histories of local clubs, organizations, schools, churches, businesses, and institutions of Branch County
- Materials that record the history of the community
- Other items that meet the scope of the collection

Other criteria include

- Relevance to the histories of Branch County, Michigan
- Uniqueness and historical value of the item
- Physical condition of the item
- Space constraints for storage of the item
- Time needed to arrange the collection for use

Donations

- The library welcomes donations to its HHRC collection, according to the BDL Policy on Donation of Materials.
- Materials that do not fit within our policy will be referred to local historical societies. The library reserves the right to decline gift offers.
- Once a donation has been made, the library reserves the right to decide how the item will be displayed or stored, how the item may be used, and how long the item will be retained.

Preservation and Maintenance

HHRC materials, when appropriate, will be preserved in acid-free folders, enclosures, and containers. The collection will be maintained in a clean, safe, and secure environment.

Deaccession of Materials

The BDL reserves the right to deaccession duplicates, materials deemed out-of-scope or not relevant to the HHRC mission, and items whose physical condition renders them impossible to preserve within the limits of institutional resources, or which causes them to be a danger to the rest of the collection in their original form (for example, mold or insect infestation). In some cases, HHRC staff may make preservation photocopies or digital reproductions of items determined to be unpreservable in their original condition, and discard the originals.

Options for disposal of deaccessioned items include returning the materials to donors, transfer to other appropriate non-profit institutions, and sale.

In case of disposition of HHRC items by sale, any funds generated must be used to benefit the collections. Proceeds from the sale of individual items or collections are to be used in a manner consistent with the established standards of the museum and archives disciplines. In no event shall they be used for anything other than acquisition or direct care of HHRC.

Access

- The HHRC, manned by BDL employees or by volunteers, is open to the public during library hours.
- Materials in the locked cabinets may be obtained from the room by staff.
- Staff may refuse to allow photocopying of rare or fragile materials, but may allow digital photographing.

- Copies must be paid for at the main desk.
- Materials should be left on the table after use for re-shelving by staff, including surname files, Coldwater files, Branch County files, and microfilm.
- No food or drink is allowed in the HHRC.
- No items in the HHRC collection may be circulated, unless authorized by the Library Director.
- Gloves must be worn when handling old books and papers.
- The HHRC is not responsible for unattended personal belongings.
- Computers in the HHRC are to be used for doing local research and genealogy.

Anyone not abiding by these or other rules and regulations of the library may be asked to leave the Library premises and may forfeit their library privileges. Library employees may call the local police if necessary.

Any person denied library privileges may appeal that decision to the BDL Board of Trustees either by contacting the Director or by submitting a written request for review to the Board.