DEACCESSIONING 201

REACHING THE “USE BY” DATE

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- SEPTEMBER 21, 2012
Museums And Their Collections Can Have Finite Life Spans. They May Be Long, But Eventually Museums Reach An Expiration Date. Every Museum Should Have An “End Of Life” Plan For Collections.
A Brief Recap from HNSA 2011...

- **DEACCESSION:**

  The process by which historical artifacts and materials are permanently removed from a museum organization’s collection.
WHY DO WE DEACCESSION?

- Excess to requirements
- Not mission related
- Can no longer care for
- Hazardous material
- Condition*

Museum Closure
DEACCESSIONING PROCESS FLOW

1. Curator staff identifies candidates for deaccessioning
2. Legal documentation
   - Justification
3. Deaccession committee review
   - Approve
   - Disapprove
4. After action
   - Proceed to disposition
   - Return to collection
AT THE COMPLETION...

- Always ensure that the accession records for the objects deaccessioned are updated. These records should be kept by the museum indefinitely.

- If a museum accepts an object into its collection that it later decides to deaccession, it must be able to account for the object.

- The updated record should include the justification, any notes from the deaccession committee and disposition.
AS Of 17 SEPTEMBER 2012

- The Naval History and Heritage Command Artifact Database listed 154,626 cataloged artifacts.

- 11,988 of those records are for items that have been deaccessioned.

For auditing purposes, I have to be able to account for the disposition of those items that have been deaccessioned.
CASE STUDY FROM AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM
CASE STUDY FROM THE U.S.A

THE PATE MUSEUM OF TRANSPORTATION
SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

- Clearly define your organization’s scope of collection.
- Don’t collect unnecessary material.
- Clearly define legal status of objects accepted.
- Be thorough in research!
- Have access to legal advice.
QUESTIONS?