

Lock, Stock and Barrel: Firearms Collecting for Museums

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Common Questions Related to Firearm Collecting

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The National WWII Museum

Is it illegal?

- Federal Law
 - National Firearms Act
- State Law
 - Varies by state so be sure to contact a local ATF agent



Japanese, water-cooled aircraft model machine gun

Is it legal?

- Does the National Firearms Act Regulate...
 - Machine Guns? YES
 - Rifles? NO
 - Pistols? NO
 - Shotguns? NO (unless short-barreled)
 - Mortars and other destructive devices? YES
 - Silencers? YES



Japanese Knee Mortar

Is it legal?

- Regulated does not mean illegal!
 - Machine Guns, must be registered
 - Form 4
 - Non-registered machine guns, can be transferred to government entities (including museums)
 - Form 10



1928 Thompson
Sub-Machine Gun

Is it legal?

- Antique Firearms
 - Those made before 1898 are not regulated
 - Examples: musket or flintlock rifles
- Curio and Relics
 - Firearms more than 50 years old, or of special interest



Japanese Type 14 Nambu pistol of Kamikaze pilot which struck the USS Saratoga

Am I legal?

- Curio and Relics (C&R) License
 - Is a form of an Federal Firearms License (FFL)
 - Allows for easier transfer and shipping



"Broomhandle" C-96 Mauser Pistol

Physical Acceptance—In Person

- Require an appointment
- No live ammunition
- No loaded guns
- Be conscientious of those around you
- Be aware of your surroundings



Physical Acceptance—By Mail

- Four Factors (part 1)
 - Who is sending the gun
 - Usually a private individual to a licensed collector (this
 is where having the C&R is very helpful)
 - Who is receiving the gun
 - As a museum you can use a local licensed FFL dealer
 - Or use your C&R

Physical Acceptance—By Mail

- Four Factors (part 2)
 - What kind of gun it is
 - Antique
 - Handgun (in state vs. out of state)
 - Modern Gun (in state vs. out of state)
 - Method of shipment
 - USPS
 - Common Carriers



Physical Acceptance—By Mail

General Guidelines

- Insure packages for the full insurance value of the firearm(s)
- Declare the contents (this is where knowing the law becomes helpful since many employees at shipping places may not)
- Require Signatures
- Pack like you would any artifact



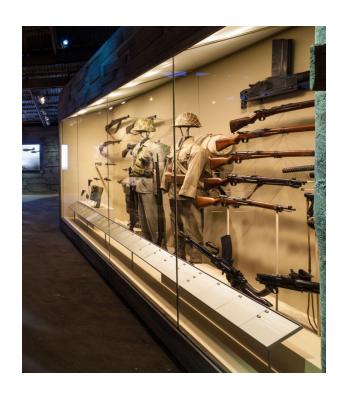
German, STG-44

Helpful Links

Shipping

- http://www.nramuseum.org/gun-info-research/ how-to-ship-guns-and-ammo.aspx
- https://www.ups.com/content/us/en/resources/ ship/packaging/guidelines/firearms.html
- http://pe.usps.com/text/pub52/ pub52c4 009.htm
- http://www.wikihow.com/Mail-a-Firearm
- http://www.thegunzone.com/ship-guns.html

- In Storage
 - Specialized StorageCabinets
 - Controlled space within storage
 - Access
- On Display
 - Mounts
 - Cases
 - Firing Pins



Handling

- Always treat firearms as if they are loaded
- Wear gloves
- Be careful of working the actions on firearms

Security

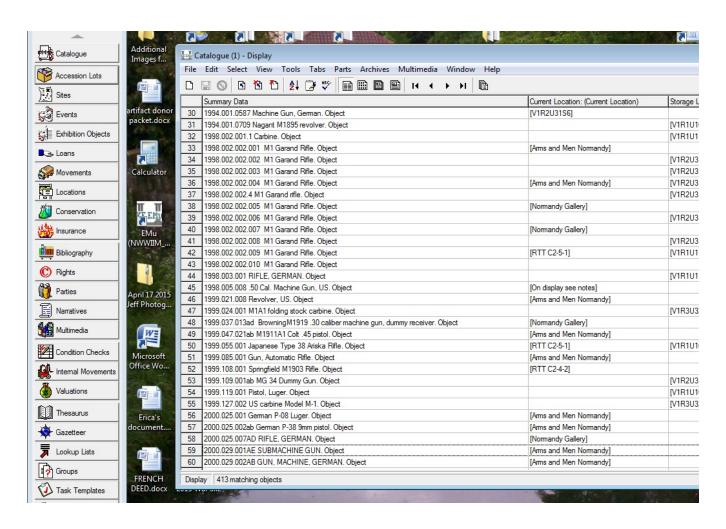
- Where are firearms stored?
- How are they stored?
- Who has access?
- How are movements monitored?

Access

- Designate who does (and does not) have access to firearms
- Designate times when firearms ARE NOT to be accessed
- Designate what happens in an emergency

Inventory

- Establish a firearms register
- Establish a regular inventory of firearms
- Do random spot checks
- Have a witness



Preservation of Firearm Collections

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How do you manage the preservation of a firearms collection in your museum?

CONCEPTS

- •Firearms are composite objects
- Preventative conservation
- Restoration
- Conservation
- Retreatability/reversibility
- Compatibility/stability
- Working order
- Firing order

- Patina
- Tarnish/corrosion
- Organic/inorganic

Handling and Assessment

First level of preservation- preserving information

- Catalog/accession information is completed
- Object is labeled/tagged

Recommendations for Handling:

- Check for load in new firearms using a dowel or cleaning rod for muzzle-loaders
- If breech loading, open the breech or chamber and check for loads
- If loaded: remove cartridges and dispose of properly black powder/ball found- contact gunsmith and set object aside, clearly marked

Systematic Survey:

- Assess the overall condition of each firearm
 - Catalog number/ correct name/ manufacturer/ serial number and any other markings
 - exterior examination: metal parts for corrosion, residues

wood parts for cracks, surface finish condition, mold, insect damage

- interior of barrel: corrosion, residues
- partial disassembly

Example of Survey Ranking Scheme

TABLE 1. Suggestions for Conditions Ratings used to Survey Objects				
Rating	Condition	Priority/Treatment Recommendation		
1.	Stable, no observed corrosion, breakage or structural problems	Low priority; surface cleaning only		
2.	Stable, some previous corrosion observed, possible active corrosion	Low priority;surface cleaning; check on regular basis		
3.	Stable, with active corrosion in several areas; wood fair to good	Medium priority; surface cleaning required; treat corroded areas		
4.	Unstable; active corrosion observed; structure unstable; loose/broken parts.	High priority; stabilization treat-ment required; restoration may be part of overall treatment		

Sample Condition Survey Worksheet

CONSERVATION CONDITION SUMMARY FORM

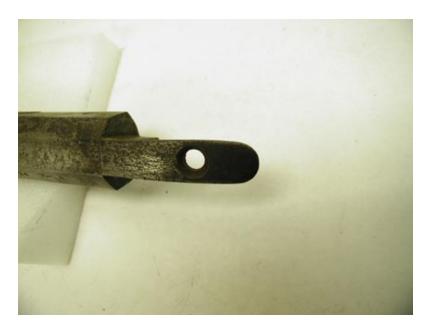
Accession number #:	Objec	t :
Condition Assessor(s):		
Date(s):		
Conservation Assessment Su	mmary:	
Overall Condition Ranking (1	Poor/ 4= Excellent): 1	2 3 4
Treatment Priority (1-3): 1 2	3 4	
Est. Hrs.: 0 1-2 2-3 3-4	5-6 6-8 10-12 12+	
Condition Ratings:		
Metal: Barrel: Corrosion: Tarnish:_	Scratches:	Residues:
Lock: Corrosion: Tarnish:_	Scratches:	Residues:
Stock furniture: Corrosion: Tarnish_	Scratches:	Residues:
Wood: Cracks: Scratches	s: Finish problems	: Mold:
Insect damage:		
Other Materials: Cracks: Scratche	s: Residues:	_
Condition Notes: (short narra	_	orrosion is stable or unstable,

Examples of conditions









Examples of conditions













Handling, Storage, and Display

- Handling long-arms: always use both hands; lay external lock weapons with lock side up or use blocks. Be aware of length.
- Upright storage is best for long-arms- support at several point; affords best view without handling, space efficient.
- Labeling: attach laser printed labels with acrylic resin.
- Handguns- organize in padded drawers; store out of holsters and belts;
 store leather out of contact with metal.
- Storage Conditions: Avoid extreme fluctuations on high and low ends, allowing for annual fluctuations, e.g. Temp: 65-72, RH: 30%-55%; avoid basement storage if possible. Dehumidifiers can be installed; monitor.
- Light: Eliminate UV, Vis <150 Lux (<150,000 Lux hrs.) on exhibit; rotate collections.
- Avoid mounts that go into the barrel, or wrap around trigger guards.
 Mounts should be padded, afford support, but are easy to remove.



















Cleaning and Treatment

- Cleaning w/o disassembly: wipe with dry, lint free cloth
- Do Not Use:
 - Metal polishes or cleaners
 - Wood polishes
 - "gun cleaners"
 - Oils
 - Varnishes
 - Spray or brushed

Disassembly

- Assistance from firearms collectors, if possible
- Refer to Tech Talk Part II
- Have proper ventilation for solvents and/or PPE
- Use exploded gun diagrams
- Assemble basic tools
 - Gun rods: long gun and pistol lengths
 - Brush and patch attachments
 - Gunsmith screwdriver set
 - Gun punches
 - Rawhide mallets
 - Dowels
 - Mainspring vise
 - Padded "Panavise" or equivalent

Basic Treatments

- Corrosion reduction
- Degreasing
- Cleaning of metal and wood components
- Barrel interior stabilization
- Coating/waxing
- Documentation of interior parts and conditions for further intervention

Disassembly







Resources

- CCI Bulletin No. 16: Care and Preservation of Firearms: http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2016/pch/NM95-55-16-1995-eng.pdf
- Gun Digest Exploded Gun Drawings- Free Download link: https://freedownloadxgundigestbookofexplodedgundrawings.wordpress.com/ 2014/03/20/gun-digest-book-of-exploded-gun-drawings-free-download/
- Link to MNHS "Tech Talk" Series: http://www.mnhs.org/shpo/lhs/techtalk.php
- Current Link to the "Track of the Wolf" website- resource for black powder supplies, parts, and books: https://www.trackofthewolf.com/
- Image Permanence Institute website- provides valuable information for understanding storage climates and materials: https:// www.eclimatenotebook.com/fundamentals_nl.php

QUESTIONS?