



The Scout Association Heritage Service

Donating an item to the Heritage Collection

Updated May 2018

The Heritage Collection and Service

The Heritage Collection contains over 250,000 objects, photographs and records which have been kindly donated to us. The Collection is stored and managed from The Scout Association Headquarters at Gilwell Park, Chingford. There are two full time members of staff, the Heritage Service Manager and Heritage Collections Officer and a part-time Heritage Research Assistant. The Heritage Service's statement of purpose reads:

We have an active and innovative programme of collecting, interpretation and engagement. The Heritage Collection helps create connections between members of The Scout Association, both past and present, and the wider community.

If you think you may wish to make a donation to the Heritage Collection please read the following information.

What we collect

The Scout Association Heritage Service has a 'Collecting Policy' which outlines the types of material we are able to collect and can be referred to for further detail.

In summary the key themes are:

- The life and works of founder, Robert Baden-Powell
- The story of UK Scouting, from its conception to the present day
- The development of UK Scouting, from its conception to the present day
- The historical landscape of Gilwell Park and the people who have contributed to it

We don't just collect historic items, contemporary material is also welcome. The policy takes into account our resources to conserve, document and store items, so we can preserve them for the future. It is important that we don't duplicate material already held in the collection or accept items which may be better stored elsewhere or have more relevance to another collection.

What to do next

If you think you have an item which The Scout Association may be interested in please contact the Heritage Team. We will send you a Donation Information Form so you can tell us about your item. The more information you can give us the easier it will be for us to make a decision, for instance do you know who it belonged to, where it was used, do you have any stories about the item or person it belonged to that might be relevant. If you can send us photographs of the items or copies of photographs or records this will also help.

The Heritage Donations Team meet on a bi-monthly basis and assess all the donations on offer. Following the meeting we will get in touch with a decision regarding your offer.

If you have brought your items to Gilwell park

We would prefer it if items were not left at Gilwell Park without prior arrangement as we cannot guarantee that the items will be accepted into the Heritage Collection. However, we realise that some people won't be aware of the formal arrangements prior to their visit. If you have brought your items to Gilwell Park there are two options:

Option 1 - You can take your items away with you. The receptionist can give you a Donation Information Form for you to complete either during your visit (the receptionist will pass it on to the Heritage Team) or when you get home. Your donation will be accessed by the team and we will get in touch with our decision, we can then arrange delivery should the donation go ahead.

Option 2 - You can leave your items here and complete a Left Items form, you'll be given a receipt. Please ensure you have read the information on the back of the receipt. We will then get in touch and may ask you for more information about your donation to enable us to assess whether it meets the Collecting Policy criteria. We will let you know as soon as possible when a decision has been made. Please note the Heritage Service cannot return left items which aren't accepted into the Heritage Collection. If you would like the items back then they must be collected within 3 months of a decision being made.

What happens if we decide to accept your item/s?

If we decide we would like to accept your item/s into our Collection we will ask you to sign an "Object Entry Form" and return this form to us when we receive the items. This form permanently changes the ownership of the item from you to The Scout Association. This means you cannot reclaim the item at a future date. Due to limited budgets we are unable to pay for items to be sent or transported to Gilwell Park.

What will your donation be used for?

Currently the Heritage Collection doesn't have a permanent location for displays and exhibitions. The Heritage Service are actively looking for different ways to use the Collection including developing on-line exhibitions, social media, loans to other organisations and learning and engagement opportunities both within The Scouts and with the wider public. Your item/s may be used during this programme of activity but we can't guarantee when this may happen at the time the object is accepted into the Collection.

What happens if we don't accept your item?

If we aren't able to accept your item into the Collection please don't be offended, we are always grateful that you considered donating to us. We have limited resources to care for the Collection and have to make an objective decision on each item. If you are offering a group of items we may be able to accept some of them but not the entirety of the group, please consider whether you would be happy for the items to be separated when you complete the 'Donation Enquiry' form.

We will do our best to offer you advice on who else may be interested in the items, for instance; local archives and museums or amateur Scout collectors or historians.

Contact details

Telephone: 020 8433 7196.

Email: heritage@scouts.org.uk

Address: The Scouts Heritage Service, Gilwell Park, Chingford, E4 7QW

