**CBH Collection development policy.**

**Introduction**

The Center for Brooklyn History ("CBH") is a nationally recognized research library comprised of a library, special collections, archives and manuscripts, fine art, and artifacts, including image and oral history collections. It serves the larger mission of the Brooklyn Public Library ("BPL") to "inspire discovery, advance research, and preserve the history and cultural heritage of Brooklyn’s diverse communities" by supporting research into the history of Brooklyn and by collecting, preserving, and promoting access to our library and archival materials for the public and in support of the Center’s exhibitions, education programs, and public programming events. The Collections and Public Service department cares for, maintains, and makes accessible the Center’s collection, ensuring that it reflects the diversity of the Brooklyn community and providing an equitable and inviting space for all user and researcher needs.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the scope and rationale behind collecting at CBH, to:

- assist in furthering our mission and upholding the professional standards of the library and archival community.
- aid the CBH Collections Committee (defined below) in selection of materials in a way that is planned, realistic, cohesive, and tied to CBH’s resources and priorities; and
- inform the public of our selection priorities and encourage the donation of materials which support our mission and goals.

**How the policy was created**

This policy was updated in part because of the merger of the Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) and Brooklyn Public Library (BPL). The merger presented staff and BHS’s collections committee (the “BHS Collections Committee”) with the opportunity to reassess the combined collections of the Brooklyn Collection at BPL and BHS to identify the respective holdings and examine the collections' strengths and needs.
The original BHS policy was created in response to Strategic Planning initiatives set out by the Society and Board of Trustees in 2007, to “Manage our historic resources at the highest professional standards, providing protection and care for the collections while making them available and useful to the community.” In response to this initiative, staff and members of the BHS Collections Committee set out to create policies and documentation consistent with professional best practices in the archival and library communities, relying heavily on the original BHS policy.

The BHS Collections Committee also regularly reviewed drafts of the policy, and formally approved the policy on July 13, 2010. The full Board of Trustees approved the policy in September 2010. The BHS Collections Committee again reviewed the policy in 2015 and approved changes in May 2015.

CBH collections staff formed a successor committee (the “CBH Collections Committee”) to the BHS Collections Committee to, among other things, review and update the BHS policy in August 2021.

In 2023, the responsibilities of the CBH Collections Committee have been transferred to the CBH Committee of the board, which comprises of Brooklyn Public Library board members and select members of the former CBH collections committee.

This policy will be reviewed every five years.

**Audience**

The Center for Brooklyn History makes its materials available to all researchers on equal terms. CBH encourages anyone interested in the rich history of Brooklyn to conduct research in its holdings. CBH welcomes scholars, historians, teachers and students at all levels, curators, genealogists, amateur historians, artists, documentarians, and anyone else curious about the history of Brooklyn.

CBH and Brooklyn Public Library staff at large are important constituents of the Collections in developing and presenting exhibitions, education activities, building collections and programming.

**History of Collections**

Brooklyn Historical Society was founded in 1863 as the Long Island Historical Society, with a mission “to discover, procure, and preserve whatever may relate to general history, especially the natural, civil, literary, and ecclesiastical history of the United States, the State of New York, and more particularly of the counties, towns, and villages of Long Island.” (By-Laws of the Long Island Historical Society, 1863) Over time, the mission and collecting scope of BHS narrowed in focus, and the Society began to concentrate its activities and acquisitions more specifically on the history of Brooklyn and Long Island.

Much of the original late 19th and early 20th century collecting focused on Brooklyn and Long Island, but a significant portion of collections were national, and sometimes international, in
scope, including materials relating to genealogy, religion, and military history, as well as a significant book collection relating to the history of each of the original 13 American colonies.

In the mid-20th century, BHS began to narrow its collecting scope and deaccession materials from all its collections that were deemed out of scope. In the 1980s, BHS changed its name to Brooklyn Historical Society. Around this time, the institution’s programming and collecting focus also shifted toward the communities of Brooklyn, most notably with the beginning of a significant Oral History Program, in addition to building out archival, library, and photographic collections in a similar way.

In 2020, Brooklyn Historical Society signed an Affiliation Agreement with the Brooklyn Public Library, pursuant to which BPL became the sole member of BHS, and the parties formed the Center for Brooklyn History to join the collections of BHS with the Brooklyn Collection, BPL’s local history division. The Brooklyn Collection was started as a subdivision of the history department at the Central Library in 1957, around the same time as the BPL’s acquisition of the “Morgue” of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, the newspaper of note in Brooklyn from 1841-1955. In 2005, with a pledge from Brooklyn Borough president Howard Golden, the Brooklyn Collection was moved to a 4000 square feet space on the second-floor balcony at the Central Library.

In January 2022, the archival collections that are most frequently requested and books not represented in the Othmer library were moved to 128 Pierrepont Street from the Central Library at 10 Grand Army Plaza. The former Brooklyn Collection “Morgue” storage space is still maintained and used by the CBH collections team.

**Collecting Rationale**

Research value is the primary criterion for collecting materials; exhibition and educational value are also considered. Collecting foci are based upon:

- Our knowledge of researcher needs and interest;
- Current strengths as well as known gaps in the collection;
- Relation to the history of Brooklyn
- Extent of collection and size of objects;
- Condition, extent, and preservation or conservation needs of materials, as well as our ability to meet those needs.

CBH will not accept any object or materials that cannot be accessible, documented and stored under conditions that ensure availability for research and exhibition purposes and in keeping with accepted professional standards.

**Known Collection Gaps**

At CBH we acknowledge that there are topics that are not sufficiently covered in our collection. We will continue to strive to fill those gaps through outreach and partnerships with the communities these topics cover, to ethically add to the collection with the direct input of those who have that knowledge.
Gaps include:

- Documentation about Native American communities from Brooklyn
- Documentation about LGBTQIA groups
- Under documented Brooklyn neighborhoods (Sunset Park, Brownsville, New Lots, East Flatbush, Flatbush, Latinx neighborhoods in Williamsburg, Canarsie)
- Gentrification
- Documentation on Caribbean, Asian and Latinx communities
- Documentation on Non-Christian religious practices, in partnership with those groups.

**Scope of Collecting**

CBH collects materials of enduring historical and cultural value that document the rich history of the area now known as Brooklyn, including materials that predate its designation as such. Further detail within this broadly outlined scope, including current holdings, strengths, and collecting goals, is set out below.

**Geography**
The main geographic scope of collecting is Brooklyn, New York. Long Island, New York City and New York State are also included, given the deeply intertwined histories of these areas. Despite a collection focus on Brooklyn, CBH continues to collect Long Island materials dated or referring to the period prior to Brooklyn’s consolidation with New York City in 1898.

**Time Period**
Collections span the period from the mid-17th century to the present day. Currently, the bulk of the materials in the archives & manuscripts, works on paper, map, and book collections are from the late 19th and early 20th centuries; the materials in the photographic and oral history collections are primarily from the early to mid-20th century. CBH will continue to collect within the entirety of these time periods, both adding more contemporary materials, seeking to fill gaps in the existing collection.

**Language**
Currently, collections are primarily in English. Dutch, Spanish, Italian, French, Arabic, Mandarin, Hebrew, German and Yiddish documents are also represented. CBH continues to collect primarily in English but considers collections with materials in other languages as they represent the population and communities of Brooklyn.

**Format & Types of Materials**
CBH collects a variety of formats and types of published and printed materials including books, pamphlets, rare books, ephemera, newspapers and serials, maps and atlases, and original,
unpublished materials including manuscript and special collections, personal papers and organizational records, oral histories in both transcript, audio, and audio/visual formats, photographs and moving images in print, negative, and digital formats. In addition, but on a more limited basis, CBH collects works of art on paper, artifacts, and architectural records. At this time, based on current initiatives and its mission, CBH maintains specific criteria for the following formats:

**Artifacts**

CBH’s artifact collection consists of over 5,700 artifacts, ranging from the early Dutch Colonial period (seventeenth century) to the present. The earliest donations date to the 1860s. Artifacts include furniture, household goods, Civil War-era regimental banners and early American flags, weapons and ammunition, agricultural and early industrial equipment, costumes and personal gear, and building fragments from some of Brooklyn’s earliest farmsteads and homes. At this time, CBH is focused on collecting artifacts that align with CBH’s mission: that is, prioritizing social history themes and methods, the documentation of Brooklyn’s diverse communities; and objects that can tell powerful and accessible historical narratives. As of June 2018, CBH does not collect textiles and costumes, furniture and other oversized household items, large machinery and equipment, artifacts that contain or are composed of hazardous material, and oversized building materials and components.

**Maps**

Comprised of manuscript and printed street, political, topographical, nautical, property, survey, pictorial, demographic, and transit maps, CBH’s map collections cover the 17th century through the present. Notables are numerous versions of Bernard Ratzer’s map of New York from 1770 commissioned by King George III, Henry Pierrepont’s hand drawn maps of his garden plots on Columbia Heights, and land development maps of Prospect Park and Green-Wood Cemetery. CBH has been able to grow its collection of maps with the addition of the Map collection from the Brooklyn Collection at BPL. This collection contains maps of Brooklyn, New York City, and Long Island spanning the years 1666 to 2002. Acquired from various sources and at various times, they vary considerably in coverage and style. Some features to be found within this collection include topography, local landmarks, businesses, schools, demographic information, and transit information. CBH will continue to grow its collection of maps that complement the historic maps with contemporary documentation of Brooklyn and demonstrate Brooklyn as village, city, and borough that tracks the physical, ethnic, and institutional transformation of the borough and reveals the complex ways in which the borough became a deeply intertwined part of New York City, while still forging its own internationally recognized identity.

**Oral Histories**
Beginning in 1973 with the Puerto Rican Oral History Project and continuing through 1998, BHS undertook several oral history projects. These projects provide a wealth of historical evidence about the lives of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Brooklyn residents and reveal how diverse individuals and communities have sought to preserve vital social, political, religious, and cultural traditions as Brooklynites, New Yorkers, and Americans. The collections contain interviews conducted in English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Mandarin, with narrators born as early as 1880. The Oral History Program was re-invigorated in 2006 with the hiring of a full-time Oral Historian who conducted interviews and continued building this collection in audio and/or video born-digital media formats. BPL’s collection of oral histories, primarily from the Our Streets Our Stories program and other community based, limited oral history projects are hosted separately from the Oral History portal. These projects and others like it will remain separate until an Oral Historian is brought onboard to make key decisions regarding the future of oral histories and retaining the styles of both oral history programs. CBH will also continue to collect oral histories and oral history collections from outside donors in both physical and born-digital media formats.

Photographs

A substantial portion of the photography collection at CBH represents documentary images of the built environment and portraiture and reflects an increased commitment to building a collection that reflects the diverse communities and people who live and work in the Borough of Brooklyn. Amateur and Brooklyn-based photographers are well represented through a wide range of photographic formats that also exemplify the history of photography, including daguerreotypes, tintypes, ambrotypes, cabinet cards, glass plate negatives, acetate film, and born digital photographs. The collection of Cartes de Visite from the Civil War era, the documentary photographs of Eugene L. Armbruster and George B. Brainard, the street photography of Lucille Fornasieri Gold, and the fine art photography by James and Karla Murray are particularly notable. The most substantial change as a result of the combination with BPL’s Brooklyn Collection is the expansion of the photograph collections. It is the biggest area of growth for the collection and provides more contemporary photography content. The largest collection at CBH are photographs from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle Morgue, which comprises over 300,000 print and digitized images. There is also a large selection of works from individual Brooklyn photographers Jamel Shabazz, Irving Herzberg, Larry Racioppo, Anders Goldfarb, Ann Rosen and Patrick Pagnano. Images documenting Brooklyn Public Library history and branches are also represented.
**Fine Art at CBH**

The Center for Brooklyn History very selectively acquires artworks that document, expand, and deepen the history and understanding of Brooklyn and its inhabitants past and present. While CBH will continue to add to the collection as appropriate, fine art is no longer a collecting priority for CBH as of 2022. Unsolicited donations are discouraged and accepted only on rare occasions.

**Priorities for future collecting**

Though new acquisitions will remain limited, CBH will nevertheless embrace a more active and reparative collecting approach aimed at addressing long-standing gaps within the established holdings, as well as fostering connections across existing formats. Specifically, CBH is interested in visual works that reflect a more diverse and inclusive representation of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of individuals and communities who have historically been underrepresented, marginalized, and/or omitted from dominant historical narratives.

Other areas of interest include artworks depicting Brooklyn’s natural and urban landscape in neighborhoods that are currently underrepresented in the collection. Additionally, works that can be contextualized or enhanced by supporting archival material will also be prioritized.

In addition to the priorities and areas of interest listed, artwork must align with the following criteria:

- Work has an established, strong association with Brooklyn.
  - **A strong association is defined as a work of art created by a Brooklyn-born or Brooklyn-based artist that also depicts the borough.**
- The work must have aesthetic merit, a potential for research and scholarship, and/or be of historical or cultural significance.
- It is not a replica, facsimile, or other forms of copy.
- Material must support the broader research, teaching, and community engagement mission of CBH.

**Formats not acquired**

- Sculpture
- Time-based media art
- Large-scale art installations

**Formats acquired very selectively**

- Oil paintings
- Pastels
- Charcoal drawings

**Core formats acquired**
• Drawings (excluding certain mediums)  
• Original and limited-edition prints

Legacy Fine Art Collection

CBH will retain a legacy collection of core artworks that reflect the founding mission and collecting scope of the Long Island Historical Society (later the Brooklyn Historical Society). This includes, but is not limited to, a selection of 19th and 20th century paintings and works on paper that depict Brooklyn and greater Long Island. Candidates for deaccession must be brought to the CBH Collections Committee for approval.

Center for Brooklyn History has a significant collection of paintings and works on paper donated over its 150+ year history. CBH seeks to maintain and further acquire paintings and works on paper that offer a narrative, historic, aesthetic and art historical significance that furthers the curatorial mission for exhibitions and research. In addition, CBH seeks original art by non-Brooklyn and Brooklyn-based artists who depict subjects pertaining to Brooklyn’s culture, built environment, and residents.

Paintings

Of the approximately 400 oil paintings in the collection, most are 19th century portraits, with a smaller number in the categories of landscapes and genre paintings. Notable artists represented in the collection include Charles Wilson Peale, John Mackie Falconer, Abraham Tuthill, James and John Bard, Francis Guy, John Wesley Jarvis, and Miklos Suba.

Works on Paper

There are approximately 3,600 works of art on paper in the collection. These include drawings, watercolors, lithographs, etchings, and engravings. Notable works on paper include 17th century pen and ink drawings by Jaspar Danckaerts, Currier and Ives lithographs, Joseph Pennell etchings, original George Post architectural drawings, and Miklos Suba drawings, as well as a range of propaganda posters from World War I, World War II, and the AIDS crisis in the 1980s.

Lending & Borrowing of Materials

CBH strives to promote and support knowledge of the collections by providing suitable items for short- and long-term loans. Requests for loaned or borrowed material will be recommended to the CBH Collections Committee by collections staff for an initial decision and the CBH Collections Committee shall then present the request to the Board of Trustees for final approval. All loan agreement details, including the length of the loan and possible renewals, will be determined by the Board of Trustees, with recommendations by collections staff and the CBH Collections
Committee on an item-by-item basis. All loaned or borrowed items must be accompanied by a condition report, and will be insured by the borrowing institution, proof of insurance must be provided. No conservation or unauthorized reproduction should be done on a loaned or borrowed item without permission from the owner. Any damage that may happen during the loan period will be documented and noted to the loaning organization as soon as possible.

**Center for Brooklyn History, Collection Subject Areas**

The subject areas listed below are meant as a general guide to CBH’s collecting priorities, rather than an exhaustive list of all subjects covered in our collections. The list is in alphabetical order.

**Activism and Social Action**

CBH wishes to document a broad range of social and political movements in Brooklyn. Though given its own category here, evidence of community engagement and activism will be documented throughout many topical areas of the collection and will be taken into consideration in the acquisition of all materials, including those about organizations, individuals, real estate and land use, and religion.

**Agriculture**

CBH does not seek to collect in the agricultural sciences, but rather to document the farms and farmers in Brooklyn. The collections are currently strong in documenting 18th and 19th century farming; CBH would like to add holdings to reflect the current return to and interest in agriculture in the borough through such activities as roof-top farming, community gardens, farmers’ markets, and community-supported agriculture.

**Architecture & Civil Engineering**

CBH collects materials that document the built environment in Brooklyn, including residential and commercial structures, bridges, roadways, and docks. CBH wishes to document the city planning of the 19th century; the development of public housing, apartment housing, and other uniquely urban kinds of housing; architects and city planners; and iconic structures or buildings in the borough.

**Business & Industry**

CBH seeks out materials about the predominant industries in Brooklyn. These include national and international businesses based in Brooklyn; as well as small, family-owned, neighborhood businesses that have long been a vital part of the economy of the borough. CBH is also interested in acquiring collections related to unions and labor.
**Education**

CBH currently has a sizeable collection of school related materials such as yearbooks, autograph books and class photographs, as a result of combining the Brooklyn Collection and BHS collections, that document public and private schools and colleges in Brooklyn, as well as materials related to topics of educational access, equity, and civil rights. Many of these items are unprocessed, and further acquisition of these materials related to education will be paused until the existing collection has been processed. Exceptions in acquisitions will be made for yearbooks from schools not yet held in the collection.

**Educational and community-based collaboration projects**

Projects created by CBH and BPL staff with students and community members that produce bodies of work will not be considered for formal accessioning by CBH; items and collections that fall into this category may be added to the Institutional Archive on a discretionary basis.

**Genealogy**

Collecting concentrates on families with strong connections to Brooklyn, and on materials that capture the diversity of Brooklyn residents and communities.

**Geography**

The library holds an extensive collection of maps and atlases documenting Brooklyn, Long Island, and New York City, with a particular strength in 19th century maps of Brooklyn. Map collecting continues to be a priority, with particular focus on maps of Brooklyn up to the present day, and maps depicting any portion of Long Island in the 17th and 18th centuries.

**Immigration**

Immigration to Brooklyn and Long Island is currently predominantly documented through oral history interviews; CBH seeks to build collections in this subject, including materials documenting statistics and patterns of immigration and migration, immigrant communities, and individual immigrant experiences.

**Journalism**
The library holds a significant collection of early Brooklyn and Long Island newspapers, periodicals, and newsletters. CBH continues to collect Brooklyn-specific periodicals.

**Land Use & Real Estate**

CBH collects broadly in this topic, including areas such as urban planning, preservation, development of residential and commercial properties, development and use of the waterfront, and the business of real estate as it has been practiced in Brooklyn. Of high priority are materials documenting gentrification, neighborhood preservation and revitalization activities, and landlord/tenant relations. CBH currently holds a sizable collection of real estate advertising and marketing materials.

**Military History**

CBH collects material documenting the military service of Brooklyn residents, the service of soldiers based in Brooklyn and Long Island, and the experiences of wartime work by non-military personnel in Brooklyn. Strengths and continued priority collecting areas are materials relating to the roles of Brooklyn and Long Island residents in the American Revolution and Civil War; Civil War relief efforts in Brooklyn; and materials relating to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. CBH would like to build collections related to Kieft’s War, the French and Indian War, the War of 1812, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, and all other 20th and 21st century wars, conflicts, and military operations.

**Organizations**

CBH seeks to document advocacy, arts, civic, fraternal, philanthropic, professional, and social organizations in Brooklyn.

**People and Families**

CBH is dedicated to documenting the lives and experiences of a broad range of Brooklyn residents. CBH collects the papers of individuals and families who are long-time residents or have other strong connections to Brooklyn and prioritizes collections that document the full life span of an individual.

**Performing & Fine Arts**

Current holdings include several archival collections documenting the once-thriving theater and vaudeville circuit in Brooklyn; it will remain a priority to build on these collections. CBH also will collect artists’ visual interpretations and representations of Brooklyn and the work of Brooklyn-based artists.
Politics & Public Affairs

The current holdings in this category are mainly city publications and reports, including a large collection of 19th century City of Brooklyn annual reports and Brooklyn Common Council minutes. CBH also holds a small number of collections of individuals who held public office in city government and would like to continue collecting the papers of those involved in Brooklyn city politics and government.

Recreation, Sports, and Leisure

CBH collects in order to document the leisure time activities of Brooklyn residents, including resorts, amusement parks, yachting, cycling, baseball and other sports. CBH will also collect materials documenting professional sports teams based in Brooklyn and the business of sports here. CBH will no longer prioritize collecting material related to the Brooklyn Dodgers due to the increased amount of material in the newly combined BPL and BHS collections. That focus will be shifted to newer Brooklyn teams such as the Brooklyn Nets and Brooklyn Cyclones.

Religion

CBH holds some materials about Brooklyn churches, as well as the records of several large churches and papers of a few well-known members of the clergy. CBH has a smaller number of materials related to synagogues, and even fewer of other places of worship including mosques. CBH would like to build more diverse holdings representative of the many religions practiced in Brooklyn, including African, Latinx and Asian spiritual practices.

Transportation

CBH will document the history of water, surface road, and rail transportation in Brooklyn and on Long Island. Materials of specific technical detail related to the subway and bus systems, such as engineering drawings or large collections of photos of rolling stock, will be directed to The New York Transit Museum as a more appropriate repository.

Under-documented Communities

CBH will continue to develop relationships, programs, and opportunities to build out our collections to better represent the broad ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of the population of Brooklyn throughout history and particularly in the 21st century.
**Writing, Publishing & Printing**

The library holds a significant collection of Brooklyn and Long Island imprints and seeks to continue to collect works published in Brooklyn. In addition, CBH will collect material relating to the business of publishing and printing; published materials by local authors; fictional works set in Brooklyn; and critical or biographical works about the area’s literary figures.

Acquisitions may, on occasion, be considered that do not fall within the areas listed above, in anticipation of new initiatives, emerging research trends, and institutional exhibition and program planning.

**Collecting Methods**

Donation is the preferred method of acquisition of materials; gifts of materials are accepted from both individuals and organizations. Purchases of collection material will occur when funding exists. The same criteria for selection are applied to both gift and purchase acquisitions. Items to be accessioned into the collection require recommendation by library staff and approval by the CBH Committee of the Board.

**Acquisition Guidelines**

Materials acquired by CBH must have a clear title. Donors must agree to and sign a deed of gift transferring title to CBH. In the case of a bequest, the donor must also have a clear title. The deed of gift, and any other proof of CBH’s legal ownership shall be maintained. Purchased acquisitions may not exceed the annual budget that is allocated for a fiscal year, unless additional funding has been allocated. No acquisitions are to be appraised by a trustee, staff member, or any other person closely associated with the institution. Proposed acquisitions must be free of donor-imposed restrictions, unless agreed to by the CBH Committee of the Board of Trustees. Once a collection is presented to and approved by the CBH Committee, it will be accessioned when received and considered to be a part of the CBH collections. Donors and prospective donors may be asked by the CBH Committee about their willingness to provide funds for the maintenance of materials donated to CBH. A willingness or inability to provide funds will not be a determining factor in acquisition decisions.

**Care of Materials**

To ensure the longevity of all collections at CBH, consideration for housing and care of for proposed collections is factored into all acquisition decisions. CBH will act to the best of its ability to provide a stable environment for items in storage or on display, and they will be maintained by protecting them from excessive light, heat, humidity, and dust, according to the type of material. Materials will be housed in secure spaces and monitored to prevent theft, damage by physical means or by fire. CBH will maintain a written disaster plan that will outline necessary steps to be taken in case of disaster. Materials that are in fragile states shall be
reformatted or reproduced, and originals will be stored in a separate location. Conservation of
materials will be undertaken under the care of, or with the advice of a trained conservator.
Records of the collections shall be kept using appropriate forms for documentation. Inventories
and location records will be documented and kept up to date for intellectual control of the
collection, loss prevention and to provide access.

Retention

A maximum of three copies of any item will generally be retained; exceptions will be made
based upon popularity, rarity, age, and condition.

Duplicate, out of scope, and other unwanted items donated with archival and manuscript
collections will be disposed of in accordance with the stipulations of the Donation Agreement. In
the absence of a Donation Agreement, the library staff will exercise their best professional
judgment as to appropriate disposition method. Additionally, collection appraisal is a continuing
process and the scope of collecting at CBH may change over time. The acceptance of material
into the collection does not commit CBH to keep materials in perpetuity. Disposition usually
occurs via return to the original donor, transfer to another appropriate institution, sale, or
disposal. Any removal of accessioned materials from the collections will be done in accordance
with procedures set out in CBH’s deaccessioning policy.

Exclusions

Materials with restrictions on access or use will generally not be accepted; in some cases,
materials of great research value with clearly stated restrictions of limited duration will be
considered. Materials will not be accepted if the donor’s legal ownership of them is uncertain.
Photocopies of manuscripts or other original materials are generally not accepted. Within the
photography collections, obvious copies of original prints will not be collected. Exceptions will
be considered but will become part of a reference collection rather than formally accessioned
into the photographic archives.

Public Access

As a public library and research institution, access to the collections is of utmost importance.
CBH will provide relevant files and the assistance of library staff or trained volunteers to
researchers. Use of fragile or high value materials may be restricted or provided on a case-by-
case basis. Information regarding the use of collections including proper material handling will
be provided to each user, and an agreement by researchers, to acknowledge and abide by
those rules, will be documented. CBH encourages appointments but will strive to accommodate
every person who wants to visit for research during our scheduled opening hours, depending on
staff or volunteer availability. CBH reserves the right to refuse access to researchers who have
done harm or demonstrate carelessness that may endanger the materials. Requests for
reproductions will be accommodated for research, private study and scholarship and such
reproductions in no way transfer copyright or property rights. A notice regarding copyright
restrictions and terms of use will accompany all requests. Prices for copying shall be determined
in coordination with Brooklyn Public Library. We may refuse to allow copies because of the physical condition of materials, restrictions imposed by the donor, copyright law, or right-to-privacy statutes.

**Related Collections**

CBH works to have a strong relationship with other area repositories whose collecting missions complement and coincide with our own. These include but are not limited to: New York Public Library, Queens Public Library, New-York Historical Society, The New York Transit Museum, Brooklyn College Archives and Special Collections, Museum of the City of New York, Green-Wood Cemetery, the Brooklyn Museum, and Long Island repositories such as the East Hampton Library and the Suffolk County Historical Society. Staff will make referrals whenever possible when materials are offered to CBH that do not fall within our collection scope and may be appropriate for these or other repositories.

**Next Steps**

CBH recognizes that collecting focus may change over time in response to a variety of factors. In response to this, CBH will review this policy every five years.