



Collections Access Policy¹

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I. Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide prospective research visitors the information and guidelines needed to access BHS collections for personal or scholarly study or for commercial use. The policy provides information about how to request access, access guidelines, copyright restrictions, and fees and services.

The Beloit Historical Society (BHS) owns, curates, and provides access to collections and records related to the history of the City of Beloit and its surrounding area. This policy covers access to and use of collections and records owned by BHS. BHS endeavors to provide public access unless there is a federal law, a state statute, a BHS need, or a privacy concern that would restrict access. Access to and use of collections and/or information may be restricted as a result of copyright, donor restrictions, or condition (some items may be too fragile to handle).

BHS members and members of the public are allowed access to collections and primary and secondary records. However, fees apply for non-members access to the Luebke Library and for duplication requests of photographs, documents, or records. Commercial use of photographs or documents require additional fees and contractual agreements. If a user is unable to visit BHS, historical research assistance is available for a fee.

II. Collections Overview

The Beloit Historical Society collects items that relate to local history, specifically the history of Rock County and Beloit. The following collections include items that were created in Beloit, reflect the history of Beloit's diverse residents over time, or have a direct and important connection to an event in Beloit history or a prominent Beloit.

Artifact Collection

The artifact collection includes approximately 11,000 three-dimensional historic objects, including but not limited to furniture, ceramics and glass, industrial machinery, transportation vehicles, paintings and works of art on paper, and textiles and costumes. Access is by request and will be supervised by BHS staff or volunteers.

¹ Approved by the BHS Board of Directors on October 20, 2016 (Resolution 2016-05).

Photograph Collection

The photograph collection includes over 10,000 print, negative, and glass plate images, and film and sound recordings and is organized by subject. Access is by request and will be supervised by BHS staff or volunteers.

Manuscript Collection

The manuscript collection includes approximately 500 ledgers, scrapbooks, maps, and other archival documents. The manuscript collection contains primary source, non-published material. Access is by request and will be supervised by BHS staff or volunteers.

Library Collection

The Luebke Library consists of nearly 1,000 bound volumes accessible during regular business hours². Library items are non-circulating and may not be removed from the building. Library resources include a complete collection of Beloit High School yearbooks and extensive collections of yearbooks from other public and private schools in the area, city directories and phone books, published histories of local organizations, and some general histories of Wisconsin and Rock County. Additional resources include atlases, plat books, and individual unbound maps including copies of the Sanborn-Perris insurance maps for Beloit.

Reference Collection

The reference collection is organized by subject (individuals, organizations, buildings, businesses, churches, etc.). These files are a research resource used by BHS staff and volunteers to conduct research at the request of members of the public. These files are accessible to the public through BHS staff and volunteers. The reference collection is not a cataloged collection.

Please note that unprocessed collections are not accessible for research or access until they are fully cataloged. The BHS currently has no public catalogues, finding aids or indexes to the photographic, library, or archives/manuscript collections. The creation of documents to assist in accessing these collections is underway.

III. Records Overview

Collections Records

BHS maintains collections records that document the acquisition, collection history, and use of BHS collections. BHS maintains a catalog card for each artifact, photograph, manuscript, and library item in its collection. Accession records may include correspondence, deeds of gift, photographs, appraisals, or other related documentation. Access to and use of accession records may be restricted as a result of donor restrictions, the inclusion of personal information, or appraisals. Restrictions are determined by BHS.

Unrestricted collections records may be accessed by members of the public by request. Access will be supervised by BHS staff or volunteers.

IV. Research Requests

² BHS is currently removing rare, unique, and fragile items intermixed with general reference materials from the Luebke Library. The library will be closed for public use until this task is complete. In the interim, staff and volunteers will retrieve materials from the library on request.

Research requests can be made to the BHS in person, online, or by mail. All research requests require the completion of a [Research Request Form](#). The BHS uses the form to track research questions and answers, time spent handling research requests, and the number of individuals served. The form is available onsite or may be downloaded from the website and mailed to or delivered to the BHS in person. The form may also be completed online. Once submitted, the form is automatically emailed to the BHS Access Manager.

To request a Research Request Form or the Collection Access Policy please email info@beloithistoricalsociety.com. You may also call (608) 365-7835. To facilitate a timely and accurate response, please complete the entire Research Request Form and provide as much detail about your research question as possible. Written requests must include the Research Request Form and should be mailed to the address on the first page of this policy. Research requests will be addressed in the order in which they are received. Please allow three to four weeks for a response to any written research inquiry.

Since we rely on volunteers to assist researchers, we may not be able to help you immediately if you walk in without prior notice. It is best to call or email us in advance and let us know when you plan to visit. If you complete the Research Request Form in advance we will make every effort to have relevant materials ready for you at the time of your planned arrival.

V. Access Guidelines

Because collections are frequently fragile, irreplaceable, and often require special handling, access guidelines are necessary to ensure the preservation and safety of all BHS collections. Please keep these guidelines in mind as you prepare for your visit:

- Researchers must read and sign the Research Request Form.
- Pencils only.
- Food and drink are not allowed in research spaces, Adams Collection Room, textile storage room, or the Luebke Library.³
- Gloves are required for handling artifacts and photographs. Handling of paper based materials without gloves is appropriate if hands are clean. Gloves will be provided as needed.
- Paper or writing tablet and laptop computers are allowed.
- Photographing BHS three-dimensional objects via camera or cell phone is allowed. Flash photography and photographing collections storage areas is not permitted.
- All coats, book bags, and backpacks, must be placed in the coatroom before entering the research room or library. The BHS is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.
- Photocopying and scanning services will be conducted by BHS staff or volunteers; please see the Fees and Services and Copyright Restrictions sections for details.
- Materials may not be removed from the research space.
- Library materials are non-circulating. You may not check out books or other items.
- Children under 15 must be accompanied by an adult.

VI. Copyright Restrictions

³ Food and drink are not allowed on the table of the main office of the Lincoln Center in the presence of collection items.

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, U.S. Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish photocopies or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a researcher makes a request for, or later uses a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of this “fair use” that researcher may be liable for copyright infringement and will hold BHS harmless.

The BHS does not claim exclusive ownership of copyrights and has not determined copyright status for many materials in its collections. The Beloit Historical Society is not responsible for determining copyright status or securing copyright permission.

VII. Fees and Services

Because the BHS is a largely volunteer-run non-profit organization, earned income from photocopy, scanning, and research services help sustain operations. Fees are based on cost recovery with a modest increase to support the preservation and maintenance of BHS collections.

BHS reserves the right to refuse a request for copies or scans if these activities would risk damage to the item(s). In addition, BHS reserves the right to refuse a duplication order if the order may involve violation of copyright law.

Images on the BHS website may be printed or downloaded by individuals, schools or libraries for personal use, study, research and classroom teaching without permission.

Fees and Services

Service	Member rate	Non-member rate
Access to library and reference collection	Free	\$10 per visit
Student access to library and reference collection (student ID required)	Free	Free
B/W photocopy; 8 ½ x 11” ⁴	\$.50 (per page)	\$1.00
Color photocopy; 8 ½ x 11”	\$1.00 (per page)	\$1.50
Photocopy scan; 8 ½ x 11” or smaller	\$1.00 (per scan)	\$1.50
Photograph scan ⁵ ; 8 ½ x 11 or smaller; up to 300dpi for personal or scholarly non-profit use ⁶	\$2.00 (per scan)	\$3.00
Previously scanned and readily available digital image	Free (up to 5 per order); \$3.00/each (6+)	\$3.00/each
Hourly rate for research services ⁷	\$20	\$30 (\$40 for for-profit organizations)
Commercial fee is per image, per medium, and per use ⁸ ; fee does not include scanning services.	\$50	\$75
Shipping and handling; international requests will incur additional fees.	\$5.00	\$5.00

⁴ Additional sizes may be available upon request. Contact BHS for pricing.

⁵ BHS is not able to generate duplicate photograph prints in any size.

⁶ Digital images are provided via an online file sharing service or copied onto a removable media format. Removal media must be provided by the researcher.

⁷ Applies to any assistance provided by BHS that requires more than 30 minutes. Charges will be made in 15 minute increments.

⁸ Commercial use requires an Image Use Contract. Contact BHS for more information.