

Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home Donations Policy and Procedures

Over the years, Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home has acquired a large collection through public donations. If you own an object that is part of the Ridge family history or Cherokee history in North Georgia and you would be interested in sharing it – not only at the present time, but for generations to come – the museum would like to hear from you.

So, how do you donate an artifact to the museum?

First, call 762-327-6124 or email director@chieftainmuseum.org to make an appointment with the Executive Director. By making an appointment, you can be sure that the museum staff will be able to take time to thoroughly examine your possible donation. If you can't bring your object(s) in, you can always bring a photograph.

When you meet with the Executive Director, you will be asked to provide:

1. The age and origin of the object
2. Any information about the history of the object
3. The name, address, and phone number of the potential donor. The Executive Director will then take this information to the advisory committee. This committee decides if an object meets with the museum's collecting criteria.

Questions considered by the advisory committee:

1. Does the object relate in a significant way to the history of the Ridge family or the Cherokee in North Georgia?
2. How much information is known about the object?
3. Does the museum already have a similar item in the collection?
4. Can the object be acquired without any restrictions (such as requirements for a long-term loan, permanent display, or exhibition of an entire collection)?
5. Is the object in reasonable condition, does it have no extraordinary conservation needs, and can be adequately stored and cared for by the museum?

After examining the object, the advisory committee will vote on accepting it, and the Executive Director will notify you of the committee's decision. Because of the museum's specific mission and limited resources, the museum can only accept those artifacts that meet the above-listed criteria. If accepted, the object will be documented and inventoried in the museum's computer database, then put on display or archived. Upon receipt, you will receive a letter of acknowledgment for your records because your donation is tax deductible according to current IRS regulations.

Sometimes an artifact is not immediately put on display. As the collection grows, we are unable to display every item in the collection at one time. Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home's goal, however, is to change exhibits frequently, providing the opportunity for different artifacts to rotate in and out of displays. Our artifacts are enormously important in helping to bring history to life, and Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home welcomes your donation.

The museum staff is forbidden by federal law from providing any information on the value of any object donated or potentially donated to Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home as the IRS considers such activity by a 501(c)3 a conflict of interest, so you may want to find a qualified appraiser to examine your object before donation.

For questions or to schedule an appointment, contact the museum at 762-327-6124 or director@chieftainmuseum.org.