**Policy Statement: Artwork in Town Libraries**

**Mission Statement**

The Jones Library will be a community hub to a diverse population of Amherst residents, where books are celebrated and all members of the community can enhance their educational, cultural, and lifelong learning pursuits.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Fine Arts Collection is to develop and maintain a distinctive collection of fine art; to enhance the environment for library patrons, staff, and visitors; and to expose this audience to an aspect of the cultural life of Amherst with which they may not be familiar.

**Collection Policy**

As part of its Special Collections, the Jones Library contains a collection of original artwork, including oil paintings, drawings, watercolors, sculpture, and antique furnishings. Most of the pieces came from the thousands of items collected by Amherst businessman William A. Burnett from 1900-1926. At the time of Mr. Burnett’s death in 1926, the Burnett family donated over 100 pieces of art for display and for interior decoration in the Jones Library, thereby partially fulfilling Burnett’s hope to establish a public art gallery for residents of the town. Over time the Burnett collection has increased in monetary and educational value.

John W. Burgess and Ruth Payne Burgess also hoped to sponsor a fine arts wing for the Jones Library; however, their actual bequest was insufficient to carry out their plans. Artwork by Ruth Payne Burgess, a cousin of the library’s benefactor Samuel Minot Jones, forms part of the library’s art collection.

In addition, a large canvas and eight original children’s book illustrations by local artists were added in the 1990’s during the expansion of the library. In 2004, the Library Trustees adopted a policy on Artwork in Town Libraries, to be implemented over time as funding permits.

**Acquisition Policy**

Gifts and bequests of fine arts may be accepted at the discretion of the Director only when the object would be worthwhile for library purposes and exhibit under the terms listed below, or when the donor agrees that the materials eventually may be sold in fund-raising to benefit the library’s programs. The library does not provide art appraisals for tax deduction purposes. Gifts of artifacts and fine arts that are not accepted will be referred to appropriate museums and historical associations. Fine artwork and photographs will not be purchased, unless there is a strong documentary link to the literary or local history collections.

The acquisition of a work of art should be made without conditions or restrictions. There can be no commitment to permanent display, nor can the library be committed to retain ownership in perpetuity. The gift of objects or works of art needs to be formalized in a deed of gift agreement, which includes statement of transfer of legal title and where applicable, copyright and literary rights and signature of the donor. The deed of gift or a copy of the deed of gift will be kept on file in Special Collections, even if the artwork will be housed in another department or branch library.

*Approved by the Jones Library Board of Trustees August 19, 2004; Revision Approved 4-27-22*
Criteria for Acceptance: All potential art acquisitions will be evaluated by the Curator whose recommendation will be forwarded to the Director, using the following criteria:

A. The quality and condition of the object, aesthetic value and appropriateness to the library department where it will be housed. The value of the object for scholarly purposes also should be considered.

B. The library's ability to properly care for and maintain the object to acceptable professional standards.

C. The object's relationship to Western Massachusetts and, especially, to Amherst.

D. The security and physical appropriateness of the location for installation of the object. Considerations for protection of the object through security systems and insurance restrictions should also be considered.

Management of the Collection
The Curator of Special Collections oversees the management of the art collection and maintains an inventory of objects valued over $1,000 for insurance purposes.

Display: Fine artwork will be on public display as space permits at the Jones Library and branch libraries. Stored items may be examined with prior notice in the Special Collections Reading Room. Fragile condition or rarity may limit access to individual pieces of artwork. Due to the lack of adequate security systems, works of art over $50,000 in value may not be suitable for public display, but may be displayed in more secure office areas.

Storage: The library has limited storage for works of art in the climate-controlled Special Collections area. Pieces that are extremely large cannot be stored with adequate protection in a professional manner.

Care of Collection: Art appraisals are conducted every five years to ensure adequate insurance coverage for the art collections and antique furnishings. The Curator reviews each piece for general condition every two years. The Curator will recommend consultation with professional conservators to analyze specific preservation needs. Cleaning and conservation work is conducted, as funds permit.

Copyright: The Jones Library seeks, whenever possible, to acquire copyright with the gift or purchase of material. In all cases, the library reserves the right to charge a fee for publication or reproduction of items in the collection. Special Collections staff will determine status of copyright, set terms of use, and monitor the compliance process.

Lending Policy
Loans are made only to professionally run galleries and museum spaces for public exhibition and/or research purposes. The borrowing institution will be responsible for wall-to-wall insurance coverage and any damage up to the appraised value of the item. All shipping costs must be paid by the borrower, using a qualified shipper. Requests for loans are directed to the Curator of Special Collections who will evaluate the status of the piece. The Director of the Library has final approval for all loans of artwork. The Jones Library reserves the right to recall any or all items within thirty (30) days after notice.

The library may choose to provide a reproduction instead of loaning the requested item.
Deaccession Policy

Criteria for Deaccession of materials will be the reverse of the criteria for new acquisitions, e.g. poor quality and condition; lacks relationship to western Massachusetts and especially to Amherst; or no appropriate location for installation or storage.

Disposition of Objects selected for deaccession: The manner of disposition chosen will be in the best interest of the library and its collection and in consideration of any previous terms of gift. Consideration is given first to placing the object through loan or exchange in another tax-exempt public institution. Second, if the object is offered for sale, preference should be given to sale at public auction or in the public marketplace. Library staff and Trustees and their families will be considered ineligible to purchase or otherwise acquire deaccessioned objects from the library collection. Objects with mandatory restrictions may not be deaccessioned prior to expiration of the time limit, if any exists. Any proceeds from the disposition of artwork will be applied to acquisitions and/or maintenance of the art collection. This procedure is in keeping with the American Alliance of Museums’ Code of Ethics which states that special collections “are organized as public trusts, holding their collections and information as a benefit for those they were established to serve” and “disposal of collections through sale, trade or research activities is solely for the advancement of the museum’s mission. Proceeds from the sale of nonliving collections are to be used consistent with the established standards of the museum’s discipline, but in no event shall they be used for anything other than acquisition or direct care of collections.”