

Coal Creek Cultural Collection

*A Guide for Community Members,
Donors and Volunteers*



South Gippsland
Shire Council

About the Collection

The Coal Creek Cultural Collection preserves and shares the stories of South Gippsland's people, industries and communities.

The Collection helps Coal Creek Community Park and Museum achieve its mission of educating future generations through an understanding of the past. Every object in the collection contributes to telling the story of our region and its people.

The Collection is managed by South Gippsland Shire Council in accordance with the Coal Creek Cultural Collection Policy and recognised museum standards.

What We Collect

Coal Creek collects objects that help tell the story of South Gippsland's cultural heritage, particularly during the period of 1890 to 1929.

The Collection focuses on the following themes:

- First Nations culture.
- Coal Mining.
- Farming and dairying.
- Forestry and sawmilling.
- Transport.
- Development of local towns.
- History of power generation.

Objects may include:

- Photographs.
- Documents and maps.
- Household items.
- Clothing and textiles.
- Tools and machinery.
- Agricultural equipment.
- Mining equipment.
- Business records.
- Signs.
- Furniture.
- Personal items.
- Other objects with a strong connection to South Gippsland.

What Makes an Item Suitable?

When considering an object for the permanent collection, Council looks at whether it:

- Has a strong connection to South Gippsland and Coal Creek's collecting themes.
- Helps tell an important regional story that dates from, or relates to, the collection's focus period.
- Has a known history (provenance) showing where it came from and who owned or used it.

- Can be safely stored and cared for.
- Is suitable for future research, interpretation or exhibition.
- Does not unnecessarily duplicate objects already held within the Collection.

Not every item offered can be accepted.

Available storage space, conservation requirements and the existing collection are all considered during the assessment process.

Items We Are Unlikely to Accept

Generally, Coal Creek will not accept items that:

- Have no clear connection to South Gippsland.
- Fall outside the museum's collecting themes.
- Cannot be safely stored or conserved.
- Have unclear ownership or provenance.
- Have legal or ethical restrictions that prevent their use.
- Duplicate items already represented in the Collection.

How to Offer an Item

If you would like to donate an object, please consider the following:

- Can you describe the item?
- Does the item have a connection to South Gippsland?
- Are there any stories related to it? Why do you think Coal Creek is the most appropriate place for your item?
- Where did you get it?
- Can you confirm you are the legal owner, and would be happy to transfer permanent legal ownership to South Gippsland Shire Council?
- If you have multiple items, can you describe the number or volume of the material?
- Can you provide a digital image of it for assessment purposes?

If you have the necessary information, please

contact Council's Cultural and Curatorial Officer who will undertake an initial assessment.

Suitable proposals will be referred to the Coal Creek Cultural Collection Advisory Panel for consideration. If approved, the donation will be formally documented before being added to the collection.

Please note that Council staff and volunteers cannot accept donations directly. All offers must follow the formal assessment process.

What Happens if My Donation is Accepted?

Accepted items become part of the Coal Creek Cultural Collection and are managed by Council.

Objects may be:

- Displayed in exhibitions.
- Used in educational programs.
- Preserved for future generations.
- Made available for research.

While every object is valued, acceptance into the Collection does not guarantee it will be permanently displayed.

Looking After the Collection

Council cares for the Collection using recognised museum practices wherever possible. This includes:

- Cataloguing and documenting every object.
- Appropriate storage and handling.
- Pest management.
- Conservation and maintenance.
- Monitoring environmental conditions as resources allow.

Collection records are maintained digitally, with many objects also available through Victorian Collections.

Accessing the Collection

The collection can be explored:

- During visits to Coal Creek.
- Online through Victorian Collections.
- By appointment for approved research purposes.

Researchers requiring access to specific objects will be assisted by Council staff.

Loans

Coal Creek may:

- Borrow items for temporary exhibitions.
- Lend collection items to other museums and cultural organisations where appropriate.

All loans are subject to written agreements and conversation requirements.

Coal Creek does not accept permanent loans.

Reviewing the Collection

From time to time, Council reviews the Collection to ensure it remains relevant, well cared for and aligned with Coal Creek's purpose.

In some circumstances, objects may be removed from the Collection if they:

- No longer fit the Collection Policy.
- Cannot be safely stored or cared for.
- Present health or safety risks.
- Have insufficient information to establish their significance.
- Unnecessary duplicate of other collection items.

Any decision to remove an object follows a formal assessment process, including review by the Coal Creek Cultural Collection Advisory Panel and compliance with legal and ethical museum standards.

Where appropriate, deaccessioned items may be returned to donors, transferred to another collecting institution or, if no suitable alternative exists, sold or disposed of responsibly. Any proceeds from approved sales are used solely to support the care and development of the Collection.

Working Together

Coal Creek's Cultural Collection exists because of the generosity, knowledge and support of the South Gippsland community.

By carefully selecting, preserving and sharing objects of regional significance, we can continue telling the stories that shape our shared heritage for future generations.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

9 Smith Street (Private Bag 4) Leongatha VIC 3953

Phone: 5662 9200

Email: council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

Website: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/southgippslandshirecouncil



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