MENNO SIMONS HISTORICAL LIBRARY
Eastern Mennonite University

Mission & Vision Statement
Collection Development Policy

Mission Statement: The Menno Simons Historical Library complements the mission of EMU by collecting, maintaining, and providing access to materials that represent Anabaptist and Mennonite experiences as well as resources relating to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

Vision Statement: We envision the Menno Simons Historical Library as a place to share knowledge about and engage with Mennonite and Anabaptist stories, local history, and genealogy.

We work toward achieving this vision by:
--Collecting relevant materials, both historic and contemporary
--Curating informative and interesting digital collections, and
--Providing exceptional service by experienced and knowledgeable staff

I. **Areas of collecting focus:**
   A. Mennonite Church USA, with priority given to the Eastern part of the United States.
      i. History
      ii. Theology
      iii. Culture
   B. Genealogy
      i. Mennonite families
      ii. Local (Shenandoah Valley) families
      iii. Families related to Mennonites and other Anabaptist groups
      iv. Genealogical records from family Bibles may be scanned or copied and added to the collection. Family Bibles themselves will not be retained.
   C. Local History
      i. Shenandoah Valley
         1. Early Shenandoah Valley publications
      ii. Histories of other areas with significant Mennonite settlement and/or migration to or from the Shenandoah Valley
   D. Churches related to MCUSA and Anabaptism (e.g., Mennonite Church Canada, Conservative Conference, Southeastern Conference, Old-Order Mennonites, Amish, and Mennonite Brethren), with priority given to the eastern part of the United States.
      i. History
      ii. Theology
      iii. Culture
   E. Reformation sources of Anabaptist and European Mennonitism
      i. Anabaptist materials
         1. Writings by or about Anabaptists
         2. Topics and authors significant to early Anabaptism
      ii. Reformation sources supplemental to the Anabaptist story
         1. Disputation and polemical works
         2. Edicts, indexes of prohibited works, etc.

F. Churches sharing Mennonite values
  i. Church of the Brethren and Society of Friends (Quaker) materials prior to 1850, especially those related to the Shenandoah Valley
G. Bibles
  i. Those published by or for Anabaptists/Mennonites/Amish

II. Factors Determining Selection for the MSHL

A. Availability
  i. Rare or out of print materials
    Although the MSHL holds a large number of rare books, it no longer actively seeks to expand its collection. Special efforts will be made to obtain original Anabaptist/Mennonite materials when available and if affordable.
  ii. Current Items
    1. Purchase may be postponed to the next budget year if the item is published by a major publisher, but purchase should not be postponed if the edition is limited, if purchase is by subscription, if item is privately printed, or in high demand.
    2. The MSHL subscribes to a limited number of major academic journals of Mennonite interest, publications of the regional Mennonite Conferences, local Mennonite items and some popular material related to the core topics of the collection. The MSHL coordinates with Hartzler library to provide appropriate access to journals.

B. Editions and printings
  i. All editions and significant printings may be considered for purchase in the primary fields of the collection; others may be accepted as gifts.
  ii. Revisions and reprints of books held for use (as opposed to preservation) may be obtained if the new edition has significant new features (e.g., an index) or the older copy has heavy use or is considered rare or is deteriorating.

C. Duplicates
  i. Duplicate copies will not be added or retained unless there is a demonstrable need within the collection.

D. Gifts
  i. The MSHL welcomes donations of books and other materials. Gift books donated to the MSHL will be evaluated by staff and added or declined on the same criteria as purchased items.
  ii. The donor must understand that any valuation for tax purposes must be done by a qualified and disinterested appraiser before the gift is given. The staff of the HL cannot legally determine the value for tax purposes.
  iii. The terms of donation should be negotiated prior to receipt of the gift.

E. Format (print and digital) –
  i. Book bindings
    1. Preference is given to hardback over paperback.
    2. Paperback should not be rebound unless usage demands it
  ii. E-books – At this point the MSHL does not have an e-book collection, so books not available in traditional print are not considered.

F. Language
    i. English is preferred, but books within the core area will be considered in any language.
    ii. Other languages of the same work can be considered if the other language is the original, more authoritative, or the English translation has an overt interpretive bias.

G. Manuscripts, artifacts, and photographs – The MSHL does not purchase manuscripts, artifacts, or photographs but it will accept some items as donations if the item is closely associated with the core collecting areas

H. Art
    i. The MSHL does not seek out artwork, but it will accept some items as donations if the item is closely associated with the core collecting areas
    ii. Local fraktur are desirable for the collection but Mennonite fraktur from other areas could be accepted if donated.

I. Audiovisual materials – Audio and visual material can be added on a selective basis if seen as a seminal work in core areas of the collection, with the recognition that the MSHL's circulation policy will impact usage.

Collection Strengths:
Dutch Mennonite Rare Book collection
Joseph Funk letters and imprints
Ruebush-Kieffer Songbook Collection
Henkel Press materials
Shenandoah Valley History--county and city histories, church and governmental records
Theological material of Mennonite and other Anabaptist groups
Genealogy--both Mennonite and local families
Cultural materials about Mennonites and related groups
Vertical files
Staff expertise

Areas of Growth:
Original research
Electronic and digital resources

Goals:
Creating finding aids for specific collections
Collection publicity and outreach
Collaboration with other institutions
Obtaining grant money for special projects

Approved by the Hartzler Library staff April 29, 2015