

Donating to the Collection

What we collect

The St. Helena Historical Society accepts donations of artifacts, photographs, and documents related to the history of the St. Helena community. Our collection area roughly follows the boundaries of the St. Helena School District. It stretches North to Bale Lane and South to the edge of Yountville. It also includes Pope Valley and Angwin.

Donations to the collection are accepted based on their relevance and connection to the social, economic, agricultural, political and cultural heritage of St. Helena from prehistory to the present. An item does not need to be monetarily valuable, "old" or related to a prominent event or person in order to be historically significant. Examples of historical materials include:

- original photographs
- personal records such as diaries, scrapbooks, professional papers and letters.
- business and organizational records such as brochures, legal documents, ledgers and meeting minutes.
- certain objects representative of the economic, social, or cultural heritage of St. Helena.

How to make a Donation

The St. Helena Historical Society relies on the generosity of the community for donations of photos, printed material and objects which document our local history. If you have an item you would like to donate, please contact the Society by email at shstory@shstory.org or phone at 707-967-5502.

After discussing your donation with you, we may accept it on a temporary basis while the Collections Committee evaluates it for fit with the collection according to a list of specific criteria. This helps us build the most meaningful, relevant and complete collection of St. Helena artifacts available and make the best use of our limited storage space. If the item is accepted into the collection, you will be asked to sign a Deed of Gift transferring all rights of ownership and responsibility for preservation to the Society.

Acceptance criteria include:

- Was the item made or used in St. Helena?
- What is the item's historical significance? (How long has it been in St. Helena? Does it have ties to a resident, business or event? Does it tell a story about St. Helena? Is it representative of a type of artifact that might have been used in St. Helena?)
- Is the item rare or unique?
- Is there documentation (written or oral) on the item?

While Historical Society cannot accept everything that may be offered, we welcome the opportunity to review the item. If it is not appropriate for our collection, there may be another organization to which we can refer you. Some items, however, may be of more sentimental than historical value and should be kept by the individual or family.