

**To: Potential Museum and/or Archives Donors**

**Re: Instructions for Donating Items to the Museum and/or Archives**

Thank you for your interest in donating materials to the NMAJMH. We are very proud to have an exceptional collection of items pertaining to American Jews in the US armed forces. We actively preserve and present our collection in many ways, and are continuously searching for additional artifacts. Please read the following information about our collection and the acquisition policies that we follow.

The NMAJMH collects a wide variety of artifacts that support its purpose of preserving a record of the patriotic contributions of the men and women of the Jewish faith who served in the US Armed Forces for future generations by exhibits, publications, and educational programs. Within that broad spectrum, the Museum actively seeks the following:

- ◆ Items that are consistent with the Museum's purpose and contain prime exhibit or research material
- ◆ Items that have direct connections to significant people, places, or events pertaining to American Jews in the military
- ◆ Items reflective or illustrative of military life and service, including military equipment and regalia

Most duplicate items are rejected unless the one to be donated is in better condition than the one already within the collection. Consideration is always given to the future expense of conservation, insurance, physical protection, and storage of an item. If the NMAJMH turns away an offer, many other organizations may be interested in your artifact, including other museums, historical societies, and private collectors.

**Appraisals and Taxes:** The NMAJMH, like most museums, does not provide appraisals for artifacts. Most gifts to nonprofit organizations, however, are tax deductible, so a donor may have an appraisal made at their expense before giving the Museum an artifact. It is very helpful to the Museum Staff to know early in the donation process if the donor anticipates engaging the services of an appraiser to provide a detailed appraisal for tax purposes. It is the responsibility of donors to confer with their tax advisors regarding the tax benefits, details, and implications of large donations. Museum Staff cannot offer tax advice. As a rule, advance formal appraisals are permitted by the IRS only 60 days prior to the actual date of gift. When requested, the Museum Staff will complete IRS Form 8283 covering the receipt of non-cash charitable contributions.

**To offer items for donation to the Museum/Archives, please follow these steps:**

1. **Do not send items at this time.** Because of the high volume of offers made to the Museum, all collection offers must be made in writing. We cannot accept actual artifacts for review without prior consultation.
2. Complete a Donor Questionnaire form, being as thoroughly as possible.
  - a. List **each** item, attaching a list if necessary. If possible, please also include photographs of objects.
  - b. Give a detailed provenance for the items (who owned it/used it, where was it used, any important stories, anecdotes, or other information). **The background of the item is as important as the item itself.**
  - c. Provide detailed information regarding the military service of the person involved. Include military documents and photos if possible.
3. Return the questionnaire to the NMAJMH's Collections Manager. The information provided will be reviewed and you will be contacted via mail with a response. If your donation is accepted or if we would like you to send it in for closer inspection you will be provided with instructions.

**Please remember:**

- ◆ Only the legal owners of an item (or their legally designated representative) can donate (transfer title to) items.
- ◆ The Museum cannot guarantee that donated items will be exhibited.
- ◆ Anyone desiring to take a tax deduction for their gift to the Museum must have the item(s) appraised by a professional appraiser prior to the donation. The Museum cannot appraise items or recommend an appraiser. Check with the American Association of Appraisers (212/889-5404) for the name of an appraiser near you.
- ◆ The Museum does not have the capacity to accept all items offered for donation due to a variety of limitations (space, duplication of items already in the collections, lack of provenance, etc.).

## DONOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer as many questions as possible. This information is very important in helping us to fully document artifacts in our collection and to use them in our interpretive programs and exhibitions.

### Donor Information

Donor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_ (fax) \_\_\_\_\_

### Item Information

Item(s) (attach list/photos if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How long have you owned this object? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you acquire it?  Purchase  Inheritance  Gift  Found  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

When did you acquire it? \_\_\_\_\_ How did you keep or store it? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any documents (such as photographs, letters, bill of sale, or newspaper articles) related to the item that you would like to include in the donation, or allow the museum to copy? \_\_\_\_\_

If the item is a photograph, please describe the event or the people it depicts and/or the place and date it was taken. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who made it? \_\_\_\_\_ Where made/purchased: \_\_\_\_\_ When made/purchased: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you perform any repairs or make any changes to it while it was in your care? If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How was it used? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who used it? \_\_\_\_\_ Where was it used? \_\_\_\_\_ When was it used? \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete information on other side.⇒

## Previous/Original Owner's Information

Please provide us with information regarding the original owner and their military service.  
Please also provide discharge (DD-214) papers when possible.

Was there any previous owner?  Yes  No Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Original Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Death Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Death: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Burial: \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where Lived: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Division of service:  US Army  US Navy  US Marine Corps  US Air Force  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of service: \_\_\_\_\_ Final rank attained: \_\_\_\_\_ Service Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Military training specialization(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where stationed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Units served in: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Conflicts (and any significant battles) served in: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did the veteran sustain any combat or service-related injuries?  Yes  No Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was the veteran a prisoner-of-war?  Yes  No Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Medals/awards received: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please attach any further comments, photographs/photocopies or items, or other relevant information.*

**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.**

Please return to: Pamela Elbe, Collections Manager and Archivist, NMAJMH, 1811 R Street NW, Washington DC 20009.