

## Heritage Artifact Collection

Racism and discrimination are real and affects many Surrey residents on a daily basis. Heritage staff recognizes that the agency and voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) have consistently been marginalized in Canadian museums, historic sites, and archives. Heritage staff are critically examining their own work and actions, and how their future actions can help confront racism in our communities.

Western museums, heritage sites, and collecting institutions are inherently colonial in nature. Their holdings were built from the prioritization of objects that document the work of colonial institutions and settlers. Surrey's heritage artifact collection developed in a similar manner, and thus predominantly documents the activities of settlers and citizens of European descent.

Staff are actively changing these practices to include the voices and experiences of BIPOC communities. The artifact collection consists of objects related to the people and history of Surrey. These objects and their stories help to inform how Surrey's history is understood, interpreted, and experienced by citizens. It is critical that we ensure the City's artifact collection grows to better reflect Surrey's diverse citizens and history.

Heritage staff are committed to ensuring Surrey's artifact collection grows in an equitable and responsible manner through the following actions:

- Develop a collections advisory committee, comprised of community members representative of Surrey's citizens.
- Actively seek out new relationships with marginalized communities to understand how Collections staff can eliminate barriers to participation. This commitment to listening and understanding may lead to trust, which is the key to maintaining meaningful relationships.
- Prioritize the description and digitization of objects relevant to marginalized communities.
- Review and update all policies and procedures to ensure diversity and inclusion are embedded within them.
- Review and update strategic directions and initiatives to ensure inclusivity.
- Continue ongoing staff training to ensure anti-racism, cultural sensitivity, recognition of biases to ensure inclusivity is integrated in all orientations and training.
- Work with Human Resources to develop strategies to diversify the Collections staff team.

Heritage staff welcome your input, feedback and suggestions, and can be reached at:  
[heritagecollections@surrey.ca](mailto:heritagecollections@surrey.ca)