

Future Donor,

Thank you for considering the Cultural Archive of Modern Paganism (CAMP) to entrust the care and preservation of your collection of materials. For millennia, written records have provided essential clues to the past. Letters, emails, diaries, photos, and other material accumulated over the years give vital and unique information regarding your life, as well as the history of your family and community. These materials obviously matter to you. Whether or not you or members of your family attained a degree of fame, they have contributed to the heritage of a certain place and time. When you donate your personal or family records to an archive, your family history becomes a part of your community's collective memory.

CAMP strives to preserve the culture and history of the Pagan community as it exists in the United States. As this community has grown over the decades it has come to support numerous organizations and businesses which in turn support our community. For this reason, our collections are open to accepting material related to these organizations, whether possessed by individuals or the businesses themselves. The heart of an organization's memory is in its records. If your organization values its history, you must act to save the original letters, minutes, reports, photographs, publications, and other documents—in both physical and digital forms—that officers, members, directors, employees, or volunteers have produced and compiled over the years. These documents provide unique testimony to the achievements of your organization. By donating your organizational records to CAMP, you will be assured that its history and heritage will be part of your community's collective memory.

Contained in the following pages is an explanation of some of the work an archive does, things to consider about your donation, and working with CAMP to prepare your donation. If you have any questions after reading this, please feel free to reach out.

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## **What is an Archive**

An archival repository is a place where professional archivists and curators care for and preserve historically significant collections of written, visual, audible, and electronic material. Archival repositories are frequently found in historical societies, academic institutions, public libraries, or standalone institutions whose mission it is to ensure the protection and accessibility of the materials they house. Most repositories have a collecting policy that informs their decisions about what to accept, and their professionals will discuss with you the historical significance of your records and advise you whether their repository is the best recipient of your records. If your personal, family, or organizational records are deemed appropriate for a repository's collection, and you agree to donate those materials, you stand to gain many benefits. A repository can provide the materials with environmentally controlled, secure physical and digital storage and can oversee their proper handling and use. Equally important, it can provide research access to the contents of the records, both to you and to others. In future years, researchers—including students, professors, genealogists, journalists, and many others—may thus find your records both interesting and of value to their work. In addition, once you donate your records, the staff will continue to work with you as you locate or identify other materials to donate.

## **Working with the Archive**

Many types of material can be valuable to a researcher. It is important that archives staff be permitted to survey collections to determine enduring historical value. Repositories cannot accept everything that you offer (whether because of staff and space constraints or because the materials are not within the collecting mission of the institution), it welcomes the chance to review material; if it is not appropriate for one repository, there may be another one to which it could be referred. Repositories focus on preserving rare and unique materials and generally do not take publications that are widely available elsewhere, such as popular magazines. Some material, too, may be of more sentimental than historical value and should be kept by the individual or family.

To ensure the preservation of materials for potential transfer to a repository, items should be kept in a cool, dry, temperature-stable environment. Digital materials should be backed up regularly. Most repositories accept donations of as little as a single item and as large as dozens of boxes or terabytes of digital files. To be historically significant, materials need not be organized; they need not be “old”; and they need not relate to a famous individual, event, or organization. Generally, repositories are more interested in a coherent body of material rather than individual items, and they prefer to receive the original items rather than copies. Photographs, tapes, and films should be identified. Digital directories and files should have names that indicate content or subject matter. Historical material should not be mailed or dropped off without first consulting with the staff; a repository must evaluate all material offered and ask the donor to sign a Deed of Gift.

Archivists are experts in identifying materials that should be transferred to a repository or manuscript library. Because the research value of records may be diminished if items are removed or if the records are rearranged, you should contact the repository staff before weeding, discarding, or reorganizing papers and records, regardless of their location or format. It is helpful, however, if you can provide contextual information, such as names of people who appear in photographs or the stories behind significant items that document personal or family history.

## **Starting Your Donation**

The first step in donating your material to CAMP is to set up an appointment with the archivist. This will give them the opportunity to gather initial information about your material and discuss the details of the donation process. Depending on the size of your donation its acceptance by CAMP may need to be reviewed by our Advisory Committee in accordance with our collections policies. Once the determination to accept your material has been made the next step is to decide

the terms under which your donation is made and sign the necessary documents such as a Deed of Gift. The archivist will answer questions and guide you through this process.

## **Preparing for Your Appointment**

An important step in preparing for your appointment is to gather some basic details about the material you are considering for your donation. This will help the archivist to quickly understand the nature and scope of the material. While you can compile this information in any form you prefer, CAMP has created forms for both physical and digital materials to help you in this process. If your donation includes a large amount of physical material, it can be helpful to take photographs of it in its current storage location and of any particularly significant pieces.

## **Formalizing Your Donation**

The most desirable way for CAMP to accept your material is through a donation as opposed to a deposit or loan. It can be difficult to grant access as well as invest in materials and labor in the preservation of items we do not own. By being a primarily digital repository, CAMP has greater flexibility in the transfer of ownership, the finer details will be explained in your initial appointment. Regardless of which option you choose you will be asked to sign a Deed of Gift, which formally signifies that the materials become the actual property of the archives.

Assignment of copyright is the most significant consideration in your agreement with CAMP. It can often be complex, and you should work with the archivist to clarify any issues of copyright ownership. Generally, copyright belongs to the creator of writings and other original material (such as photos and music) but can be legally transferred to heirs or others. In addition, ownership of copyright is separate from ownership of the physical item (the letter or photo). Archivists generally ask donors to donate not only the physical papers but also any copyright in them that the donor might own. This request makes it easier for CAMP and researchers to use portions of the materials in their published work.

Under the terms of U.S. Copyright Law, repositories may provide copies of items in their collections for scholarly research use. Under the “fair use” exemption, the law permits that researchers may publish portions of an item under copyright. However, permission to publish or quote extensively from the material must still be obtained from the copyright holder. Donated material which the Donor does not hold the copyright will also be given access under the “fair use” exemption. To learn more about copyright, see [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov), or ask your attorney.

An additional option if you are not comfortable with transferring your copyright ownership is to assign a creative commons license to CAMP. Creative Commons licenses give everyone from individual creators to large institutions a standardized way to grant the public permission to use their creative work under copyright law. From the perspective of CAMP or a researcher, the presence of a Creative Commons license on a copyrighted work answers the question, *What can I do with this work?* CAMP accepts copyright material under the terms of a BY NC SA Creative Commons license. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>) This allows for reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator. If you remix, adapt, or build upon the material, you must license the modified material under identical terms. CC BY-NC-SA includes the following elements: credit must be given to the creator, only noncommercial uses of the work are permitted, and adaptations must be shared under the same terms.

## **Handling of Physical Materials**

As CAMP will provide access to your material in digital form there are several options for the handling of physical materials after digitization has occurred. Regardless of the assignment of copyright, the Donor may request to have physical copies returned to them after digitization. Unless the material is particularly important in physical form, or it has greater preservation needs, this is a common request. This option can be applied to a portion of your donation or to its

entirety depending on your preference. Other options include CAMP retaining the physical material for preservation, the material being transferred to another repository with greater capacity, or disposal.

### **Conditional Gifts**

CAMP is unable to promise that donated materials will be exhibited or used in some other specific fashion as a condition of accepting the gift.

### **Deposits**

Deposited materials are taken into the custody of CAMP without any transfer of ownership or copyright. Due to the limitations of this arrangement, it will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Deposited materials are returned to the Donor following digitization and the digital copies can only be used as far as the “fair use” exemption allows. In these cases, CAMP will not assume any responsibility for preservation of the physical materials or their transfer to any other repository.

### **Monetary Appraisals for Tax Deductions**

In certain circumstances, it may be possible for a donor to take a tax deduction for the donation of a collection to CAMP. Speak with your tax accountant or attorney about this possibility. Archivists cannot give tax advice, nor are they permitted to appraise the monetary value of a collection that is under consideration for donation. The archivist may be able to provide you with a list of local manuscript appraisers who can (for a fee) make monetary appraisals. It is up to you, as the donor, to arrange and pay for any such appraisal.

### **Monetary Donations**

CAMP is a non-profit organization. Preparing materials for use by researchers is the most expensive operation in a repository. Although such monetary donations are rarely a prerequisite for the acceptance of a collection, donors who can assist repositories by providing funds toward the arrangement, cataloging, and conservation of their personal or family records are encouraged to discuss the possibility with the archivist.

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