



Donating Your Collection

Are you considering donating your Seabee or Civil Engineer Corps related materials?

When you offer your materials to the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum (USNSM), a Department of the Navy Museum, you have the potential to support the museum. Our mission is to ensure that the construction and engineering accomplishments of the Seabees and the Civil Engineer Corps to the Navy and the nation are not forgotten, remain relevant, and educate as many people as possible. We “Can Do” this together.

NO DROP-OFF COLLECTIONS ARE ACCEPTED

The USNSM is very selective in accepting new collection offers. This is because we make a promise to you to keep accepted material in perpetuity – in other words, anyone should be able to come research your donation 200 years from now. The U.S. Navy Seabee Museum accepts collections based on current needs and priorities.

How do we begin the process?

- 1) Discuss the donation with your family. It is important that you and your family agree on what to do with your materials, whether it is a uniform, knick-knacks, documents, books or photographs.
- 2) Take an inventory of the materials you want to donate. Group the objects and photograph them. Photographs taken with a cell phone are completely acceptable if they are in focus.
- 3) Contact the museum by emailing SeabeeMuseumColl@navy.mil. Your information will be directed to the curator in charge of collections. The collections curator normally responds within 72 hours.
- 4) Be prepared to answer questions. We want to know the history behind your materials and why you think they belong in our museum. Let’s determine if the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum is the best place for your materials.
- 5) We may decline a collection when we have more than sufficient similar materials. IF this happens to you, we may suggest at least two other museums that might be interested in accepting your offer.

What happens next?

- 1) If the USNSM is the best place for your offered materials, the collections curator creates a Collection Report that is presented to the USNSM’s Collection Committee. This committee determines whether your offer becomes part of the museum’s permanent collection. Although meetings usually occur bi-monthly, Covid-19 is affecting when these meetings occur. Thank you for your patience.
- 2) If your offer is accepted, the curator sends a Deed of Gift and Donor Information form to complete. The process of transferring ownership of your material begins when you mail your material with the completed forms. The donor is responsible for all shipping costs.
- 3) Once the material and paperwork are received, the collections curator forwards the Deed of Gift and the Collection Committee’s Endorsement to the Curator of the Navy for final approval. This can take 4 to 8 weeks.
- 4) After the Deed of Gift is signed by the Curator of the U.S. Navy, it is returned to the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum. At this point, your material becomes part of the museum’s permanent collection.

Once your collection is permanent, you will then receive a “thank you” letter that contains your material’s museum identification number. This number is referred to as an accession number. Along with the donor and usernames, this is how material is identified in the museum’s permanent collection catalog.

Not every collection accepted goes on exhibit. Some items are kept as “research only” for numerous reasons, including their rarity. The USNSM’s photographic web presence is increasing every day; therefore, photographs of the materials are increasingly available online. Donating your material is a detailed, time-consuming process for all involved. Plan on the donation process taking a minimum of three months from the moment you contact us until the day you receive our thanks. Together, let’s make this as smooth and rewarding as possible so that the story of the U.S. Navy’s Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps is told!