

Greetings Sue:

I am sorry I could not respond to your message yesterday – I was visiting a relative at the hospital until late.

I am not certain what “2010 document” you are referring to, but that was the year we began caretaking the portion of the Pearson Air Museum collection that is in storage, with the permission of the City of Vancouver. The following is a description of collections management for the Vancouver National Historic Reserve partnership, which has been on our website:

*“Management of Museum Collections at the Vancouver National Historic Reserve*

*Museum collections are one of the most important resources of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. They are tangible, authentic pieces of the past from native peoples, Fort Vancouver, Pearson Field, and Vancouver Barracks.*

*The legislatively-mandated partners of the Historic Reserve – the City of Vancouver, the State of Washington, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Army – agreed that the National Park Service would be the lead agency for the care of museum collections.*

*This decision reflected the professional museum policies of the National Park Service, the second-largest museum system in the nation after the Smithsonian. National Park Service curators are held to the highest standards, and are the caretakers of some of our nation’s most special treasures.*

*For many years, professional curators at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site have cared for museum items associated with the Historic Reserve, over two million archaeological and historic artifacts housed in a secure, climate-controlled facility on site. The exception was the Pearson Air Museum collection specifically.*

*In 2010, with the permission of the City of Vancouver, the National Park Service also began safeguarding the portion of the Pearson Air Museum collection that was held in storage. We do not own the items, but are caring for them on behalf of the City of Vancouver. This is still the case, and we will continue to do so unless directed otherwise by the City. “*

We did do a full physical inventory of the Pearson collection (excluding aircraft) to confirm the records in a database that had been maintained for many years. In addition, NPS staff met with representatives from the Trust and the City to discuss and draft several professional museum documents which Pearson did not yet have. The NPS team that met with the City and Trust -- including staff from Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, the NPS Pacific West Regional Office, and specialists in aviation collections from other national parks – was brought in at no cost to the partners in order to offer our expertise. One of the efforts was an update to the overall scope of collection statement for the Vancouver National Historic Reserve – this document details the top priorities for acquisitions to a museum collection and is considered an essential baseline document for professional museums – so that goals for Pearson would be accurately reflected. NPS staff also drafted a preventive maintenance plan and an emergency operations plan for the Pearson facility. A preventive maintenance plan addresses housekeeping and

pest management, and was a response to several issues at the Air Museum. To the Trust's credit, the issues were quickly dealt with after the initial assessment. Both of these documents are also considered essential baseline documents, and we were happy to assist with providing them.

I can assure you that these tasks were done in a cooperative partnership, and contrary to the interpretation you left on my voicemail, at that time the National Park Service assumed the Trust would continue to operate the museum.

If you have further questions about the ownership or management of Pearson Air Museum collections, I suggest you contact Jan Bader in the City Manager's office.