

Rare Book Room

TACOMA PUBLIC LIBRARY
Administrative Policy: #10.38
Adopted June 13, 1990

In recent years there has been a rash of thefts of rare books, manuscripts, and works of art from libraries across the United States. It is in the best interest of the Citizens of Tacoma, the Tacoma Public Library, and future generations to protect what has been entrusted to us.

The Rare Book Room (RBR) in the Carnegie Library includes: rare, valuable, and fragile books; Edward Curtis prints; Handforth prints; selected Richards photographs; lantern slides; early City of Tacoma records; artifacts; soap stone sculpture; statuary; paintings and more. The provisions of this policy are designed to preserve and protect these materials, while allowing the widest-possible use by the public.

Although access to the RBR is intended for serious examination and use of the materials, any patron who has the proper identification and is willing to follow these procedures may use it. These procedures are based on similar policies used by the Suzallo Library at the University of Washington, and many other rare book facilities across the country.

The procedures for use of the RBR are as follows:

1. The user must complete a Request to Use the RBR form (see attachment).
2. The user must present identification (driver's license, photo ID, or TPL library card). This identification will be held at the Northwest Room desk until the patron is ready to relinquish use of the RBR.
3. The user will check all carry-in items in a locker in the staff room. The items checked will be noted on the Request to Use RBR form. The key to the locker will be given to the user to retain until he or she is ready to leave the room.
4. The user may take only pencils (no pens) and three sheets of paper into the RBR. The user may request more paper as needed, but only two or three sheets are to be in the RBR at any one time.
5. Cabinets in the RBR are kept locked and alarmed at all times. The user may request use of up to three books or items at a time. These must be returned to the staff member when a request for additional items is made.
6. The user must wear cotton gloves (furnished by the Library) while handling items from the RBR.
7. The doors to the RBR are to be kept locked at all times. In an emergency a user may, of course, leave the RBR. Under ordinary circumstances, however, the user must notify a staff member as he or she leaves the RBR.