PORT MACQUARIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose and context:

This policy outlines guidelines for Port Macquarie Historical Society and Port Macquarie Museum members and volunteers whilst engaging in social media technology.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the boundaries members and volunteers are required to understand about private identity within the social media context. There is the need to be mindful of behaviour that can impact on members' and volunteers' roles and the reputation of the Society.

While the purpose of this policy is not to prescribe boundaries to a member's private identity within the social media context, the inappropriate use of social media, either in a professional or personal capacity, can violate the privacy, breach the security and harm the reputations of other members and/or the Society. Such activity may be determined as misconduct or serious misconduct, resulting in possible disciplinary action or termination of membership.

Reference to other Society policies, regulations and codes of conduct regarding member and volunteer media representations and use of information technologies are included for consideration with this policy. Members and volunteers need to be aware of relevant policies and codes of conduct relevant to the use of computers and networks of the Society and social media sites.

Definitions:

"Member" means a person who is a current financial member of the Society.

"Volunteer" means a person who is engaged as a volunteer of the Society and/or the Port Macquarie Museum.

"Social media" and relevant information technology includes the transmission of text and images by, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Second Life, Wikipedia, LinkedIn, Flickr, Urban Dictionary and YouTube.

"Society" means the Port Macquarie Historical Society Inc.

"Museum" means the Port Macquarie Museum or any previous trading name/s.

Policy Statement:

Social media technology is now being used not only for online communities, but also as an alternative for 'traditional' business communication. For many people, participation in these forms of communication technologies is an integral aspect of their professional and social lives, which may lead to a blurring of the public face and private identity of members.

The Society recognises that social media is a term which encompasses the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audio. These activities, and the manner in which information is presented, are dependant upon varied perspectives and the creation of shared meaning as people share their stories and understandings.

1. Use of Social Media Technologies

The Society supports participation in social media technologies, recognising they are:

- used for both work and private use by many members and volunteers
- a valuable vehicle in teaching, learning and assessment processes
- an effective way to communicate with the broader community and each other
- to be encouraged as legitimate sources for research
- a vehicle for easy, unobtrusive creation and strengthening of ties among colleagues, and
- widely used to build and maintain external professional networks, such as LinkedIn.

2. Participation as a Representative of the Society

The authorised use of media forums, including social media, in any capacity on behalf of the Society and Museum to announce achievements and public comments within an area of expertise, will be delegated to authorised representatives only.

3. Participation as an Individual

The Society has a particular concern regarding the ease which professional distance and personal use can be blurred. With the immediacy of the media and false sense of anonymity often constructed through internet communication, members must be mindful that:

- personal views on members' social network spaces can affect perceptions of their professional views if taken in the wrong context;
- personal postings which discuss the Society or Museum should include disclosure that the views expressed are those of the individual and not necessarily those of the Society;
- the news media will always make the link between controversial comments made by a member or volunteer and the Society and Museum;
- appropriate member-volunteer boundaries can be breached and allegations of misconduct, inappropriate contact with members or inappropriate conduct outside of the Society are a possibility;
- tensions between members and volunteers may be exacerbated;
- care must be taken not to share unauthorised or confidential Society information;
- not everything on the web is free to copy and care must be taken not to intentionally or unintentionally breach copyright;
- web conversations with friends, family and colleagues about members, volunteers and/or the Society may breach the Society's **Code of Conduct**; and
- inappropriate postings may result in claims of defamation, discrimination, harassment and invasion of privacy. In any lawsuit, blogs, postings, e-mails and other digital exchanges may be subject to discovery.

4. Society computers and networks

Access to the Society's electronic systems is granted to members and volunteers who agree to comply with conditions included in the Society's **Code of Conduct** and other policies.

Appropriate use of the Society's Computers and Software is outlined in the Society's policies.

- While computers and networks are provided for Society purposes, volunteers are permitted limited personal use, which includes accessing social media sites. Access for personal use is to be managed and discussed within the work area and the "reasonableness test" applied to determine whether or not a volunteers' personal use of these resources is appropriate and does not interfere with their or others work.
- Members and volunteers must not deliberately access, download, store or send materials of a pornographic, racist, sexist, inflammatory, hateful or abusive nature and must comply with the Society's **Constitution** and **Code of Conduct** at all times.
- The Society will respect the privacy of individuals' electronic material (eg email, disk files), using Society computers and networks, and expects others to do likewise. However, no-one has the right to absolute privacy of material on the Society's systems. Users should recognise that there may be occasions when even the most private of their material may become disclosed.

5. Obligations of Social Media Users

Individual members of the Society are obliged to:

- be responsible for what they write and disseminate,
- not represent the Society unless authorised to do so,
- respect their audience, and
- respect Copyright.

Authorised members of the Society are obliged to:

- be responsible for what they write and disseminate,
- respect the goals, mission and objectives of the Society,
- respect their audience, and
- respect Copyright.

Any activity which represents a failure to meet these obligations may be determined as misconduct or serious misconduct, resulting in disciplinary action including termination of membership. Such action will be taken under the provisions of the Society's Constitution.

This policy was adopted on 15 December 2014.