Burnley Archive
University of Melbourne Archives

Student/Volunteer Position Guide

Position Title: Collection Management - Significance Assessment,
Burnley Archive, UMA

Supervisor: Sue Fairbanks, Deputy Archivist, UMA
Helen Arnoldi, Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator

Position Goal: The primary goal of this position will be to complete a significance assessment on the Burnley Archive which is managed by UMA. The significance assessment will be used to inform the status of the collection and future collection management decisions in areas such as conservation, acquisition/de-accession, valuation and access.

Background: The University of Melbourne’s Faculty of Science, Burnley Campus, was formerly the Burnley Horticultural College amongst other incarnations. It has been teaching horticultural courses for a variety of educational institutions since 1891, although land was first put aside at the site for the Victorian Horticultural Society in the 1850s.

The Burnley Archive consists of over 15 metres of material that relates to the Burnley Horticultural College. The archive was initially assembled for the 1991 teaching centenary of the College and to form a research source for the publication, Green Grows Our Garden: A Centenary History of Horticultural Education at Burnley, by A.P. Winzenried, Hyland House, 1991. The Archive comprises of materials that date back to the 19th century including the College’s official records (principals’ administration records, registers, student attendance books, alumni deposits, student club documents etc.), photographs, news cuttings, maps, plans and films. It also contains artefacts such as ploughs, leadlight windows and jodhpurs.

For more information on the University of Melbourne Archives visit their website at: http://archives.unimelb.edu.au/

Responsibilities: After training, the volunteer will use the established significance assessment methodology to provide the intellectual framework to complete a significance assessment on the Burnley Archive Collection. Using the criteria outlined in Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections (Russell, R & Winkworth, K, Canberra, Collections Council of Australia Ltd, 2009), see http://significance.collectionscouncil.com.au/home the student/volunteer will be able to assess the significance of this collection against a set of criteria being applied University-wide.
**Qualifications:**
A basic understanding of collection management principles specific to the documentation of objects would be ideal, although the student will be trained in the *Significance* 2.0 methodology.

Knowledge of the correct procedures for the safe handling of museum artefacts and archival material is desirable as this position requires the handling and close inspection of these materials. However, an appropriate candidate with no experience in this area may be eligible, subject to receiving training in object handling.

A methodical, prudent approach with a keen eye for detail is required, as is the ability to work both independently and as part of a small team.

**Training and Supervision:**
On-the-job training specific to the task of completing a significance assessment will be provided. The Deputy Archivist UMA will provide ongoing support for this project and liaise with relevant Burnley staff to facilitate access to the collection for the student/volunteer. The Volunteer Burnley Archivist will also assist by providing information and a context for the collection. The Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator will provide training in the significance assessment methodology and ongoing guidance during the research and writing stage of the project.

**Benefits:**
Opportunity to work at close hand with a unique archival collection and help ascertain the status of the collection.

The opportunity for professional development through experience gained in the application of collection management procedures and practice.

Satisfaction gained from completing a significance assessment on a collection within the University. This assessment will lay the foundation for future collection management decisions regarding the collection and thus increase our long term understanding, management and appreciation of the collection.

For more information on this position please contact:
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