Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum

Student/Volunteer Position Guide

Position Title: Collection Management – Catalogue Assistant

Supervisor: Dr Jacqueline Healy, Curator
Helen Arnoldi, Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator

Position Goal: The primary goal of this position will be to catalogue a selection of objects from the Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum that have not previously been catalogued, and to review, update and expand upon existing catalogue entries. Once fully catalogued, these new or revised records will be added to the electronic database, Vernon where they will eventually be accessible to the public through the museum’s website.

Background: The Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum contains over 2500 objects, photographs, documents and catalogues relating to the history of dentistry and dental education in Victoria. Objects in the collection date from the early 1700s and provide insights into the changes and developments within the dental profession and its striving to improve the standard of dental education, dental health and dental care within Victoria and more broadly in Australia.

Further information on the museum can be found at http://museum.dent.unimelb.edu.au/

Responsibilities: In consultation with the Curator, the student/volunteer will be assigned a selection of collection objects that have not yet been catalogued. This work may include: the completion of manual catalogue worksheets, assigning of accession numbers and labelling or numbering of the object. Where appropriate the student/volunteer may be required to rehouse objects to meet museum standards. There is also scope within this project to work with a selection of objects from the collection that have been briefly catalogued in the past but would benefit from more detailed catalogue entries eg. expansion of fields such as acquisition details, object details and other gaps within the catalogue. The catalogue information will then be incorporated into the museum’s database (Vernon CMS).

Qualifications: A basic understanding of collection management principles specific to the documentation of museum objects (progress towards the completion of a degree in Curatorial/Museum Studies and/or previous volunteer experience with an Archive, Museum or Historical Society is desirable).

Knowledge of the correct procedures for the safe handling of objects is required as this position requires the handling and close inspection of artworks.

An interest in dental history would be beneficial.

A methodical, prudent approach with a keen eye for detail is required.
Training and Supervision: On-the-job training specific to the requirements of the position will be given.

Occasional meetings with the Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator to review how the project is progressing and discuss any ideas or problems encountered.

Benefits: Opportunity to work at close hand with one of the University of Melbourne’s extensive cultural collections.

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

Satisfaction in working closely with the Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum’s significant holdings and seeing a collection catalogued. The application of collection management principles to the University’s cultural collections is necessary to enhance our long term understanding, management and appreciation of the collections.

For more information on this position please contact:
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