Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology

Student/Volunteer Position Guide

Position Title: Collection Management – Interpretation and Display

Supervisor: Dr Ryan Jefferies, Curator, HBA Museum
Helen Arnoldi, Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator

Position Goal: The primary goal of this position will be to reinvigorate the current displays on exhibit in the Harry Brookes Allen Museum. This will be achieved through the re-labelling of the display which features body regions and systems.

Background: The Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology has one of the largest collections of anatomical and pathological specimens and teaching models in Australia and serves as an educational facility for students studying medicine and related science disciplines. A majority of the 12,000 objects within the collection are dissected human remains (organs, systems or regions), some of which date back to the time of Sir Harry Brookes Allen (June 1854 – March 1926). Most of the museum is arranged according to anatomical regions and systems of the human body, with corresponding pathologies. The Harry Brookes Allen Museum’s collection also includes a significant collection of historical plaster, papier-mâché and wax anatomical models imported from Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, historical death masks and a wax dermatological moulage collection.

Responsibilities: In consultation with the Curator, for this project the student/volunteer will be involved in the systematic relabelling of displays featuring body regions and systems. Using an established style-guide, new labels and title panels will be created using Adobe InDesign, then printed and installed in the museum. The volunteer may also be involved in other tasks, including updating museum catalogue records with specimen descriptions, moving objects for display and writing extended labels.

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).

A knowledge of the correct procedures for the safe handling of museum objects is desirable as this position requires the handling and close inspection of these items.
As this project will involve working closely with preserved human remains an understanding of bioethics and a relevant science background is recommended.

Good communication and sound research and writing skills are needed.

A science background and an interest in medical history would be ideal.

A methodical, prudent approach and a keen eye for detail.

**Training and Supervision:**

On-the-job training specific to the task of this position will be provided.

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 through the reinvigoration of the HBA Museum’s current display.

Professional development through experience gained in curatorial and collection management procedures and practice. This includes experience in handling museum objects as well as the creation of intellectual content.

The display has a prominent position in the Museum and as such will be viewed by many high profile visitors, students and members of the academic medical community.

Satisfaction gained through knowing that your work on this project contributes to the interpretation of the University’s cultural collections which enhances our long term understanding, management and appreciation of the collections.

For more information on this position please contact:
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