Medical History 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 related items that have been recently gifted to Medical History Museum’s collections. This project will involve the completion of manual catalogue worksheets for the new acquisitions. Once fully catalogued, these new records will be added to the Medical History Museum’s electronic database, Vernon.

Background: Since its opening in 1967, the Medical History Museum’s collection has grown substantially through the donation of documents, photographs, instruments, and records from medical graduates, families and institutions in and around Melbourne. Originally the collection mainly reflected the teaching of medicine at the University of Melbourne and its clinical schools, and the achievements of its graduates from the 1860s to the present day. However, the donation in 1971 of the 19th century Savory and Moore Pharmacy, through a further grant from the Wellcome Trust, and the 1994 acquisition of the Australian Medical Association collection, has seen the scope of the museum broadened to reflect the history of medical practice in Victoria, and more generally the development of Western medicine.

The purpose of the museum is to encourage appreciation and understanding of the history of medicine and its role in society. The museum stimulates active learning about the history of medicine through research, teaching, and dialogue among communities of students, faculty, scholars, alumni, and the wider public. Further information on the museum can be found at http://museum.medicine.unimelb.edu.au/

Responsibilities: In consultation with the Curator, the student/volunteer will be required to manually catalogue a related body of objects that have recently been gifted to the Museum. This work may include: the completion of manual catalogue worksheets, assigning of accession numbers and labelling or numbering of the object. The volunteer will also need to record this catalogue information onto a spreadsheet before it is added by the cataloguer to Vernon, the Museum’s electronic catalogue. The project may also include taking a digital image of the work for later attachment to the electronic catalogue record. The student/volunteer will be required to rehouse objects as necessary to meet museum standards.

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 these vulnerable collections.

An interest in medical 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 Medical History Museum’s significant holdings and seeing the collection catalogue updated and expanded. 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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