Rare Books Collection, University Library

Student/Volunteer Position Guide

Position Title: Rare Books Collection - Cataloguing placement, English Room

Supervisor: Anthony Tedeschi, Curator – Rare Books Collection, University Library
Helen Arnoldi, Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator

Position Goal: The primary goal of this position will be to update the records on the online catalogue and to amend the call number flags in the books for collections housed in the English Room, the layout of which has recently been modified.

Background: The English Room is home to a collection of rare and important editions of noted 18th- and 19th-century British authors, particularly Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Laurence Sterne, Oliver Goldsmith, James Boswell, Samuel Johnson, TF Dibdin, Robert Burns and Hugh Walpole. Numbering some 5,500 volumes, the majority of the collection was donated to the university by Dr Orde Poynton.

Responsibilities: This project will require the student to use the INNOPAC cataloguing system and they will be trained by an in-house cataloguer following a well-defined system of cataloguing already established within the collection. The focus of this project will be the collections housed within the English Room which has recently been reconfigured. As a result, book locations on the online catalogue will need to be updated which will also involve some cataloguing. As part of this project placement the student will also be required to physically update the corresponding flags on the books to reflect this change.

The student will also have the opportunity to identify priority items for rehousing or conservation through the cataloguing process.

Qualifications: The student will ideally have a basic understanding of collection management principles specific to library collections (progress towards the completion of a degree in Librarianship or similar is required).

A 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.

A methodical, prudent approach with a keen eye for detail is required.

The ability to work independently.
Training and Supervision:  On-the-job training specific to the task will be coordinated by the Curator with specialist librarians.

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 cataloguing procedures and practice.

The satisfaction gained through focusing on a specific area of the Rare Books Collection in the Baillieu Library and ensuring the collection items are catalogued and therefore accessible. This project will enhance our long term understanding, management and appreciation of the collections.

For more information on this position please contact:
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