Position Title: Collection Management, Exhibition Assistant – Reading Adventures

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

Position Goal: The student/volunteer will assist in various curatorial and collection management tasks involved in the staging of the exhibition Reading Adventures which will be held in the Noel Shaw Gallery, Baillieu Library, from July 2015.

Background: The Rare Books Collection consists of non-Australian early printed books, periodicals and pamphlets which, because of their age, beauty, rarity or other factors, are not suitable for placing on the open shelves. The collections also include manuscripts, high quality facsimiles, modern limited editions, examples of fine binding and printing and notable private press collections, including Doves and Kelmscott Press. Although the cut-off date for inclusion is generally 1880, there are also many later books in the collections.

The Reading Adventures exhibition is being curated by Dr Grace Moore (Snr Research Fellow, School of Culture and Communication) in association with Anthony Tedeschi, Curator of Rare Books, and will draw on materials from the Australiana Collection, the Ian McLaren Collection, the Frederick Morgan Collection of Children’s Books and the Public School Fiction Collection (held in the Baillieu Library). Much of the exhibition will focus around late 19th and early-mid 20th century writing for children and adolescents because this was the heyday of the adventure narrative. This visually rich exhibition, which will also include some of the toys held in the Morgan Collection, will be designed using a graphic treatment derived from the diverse styles of children’s book illustrations presented in the aforementioned collections.

Responsibilities: Under the guidance of the Curators and Exhibitions Coordinator, the student/volunteer will assist with the collection management and curatorial tasks involved in the staging of the exhibition. This work will involve developing a system of tracking all the exhibition items on a spreadsheet or small database. As part of this exhibition inventory, it will be necessary to list comprehensive item details including measurements, pages of texts to be open for display, preservation needs, any enhanced cataloguing requirements and reproduction needs. The student will also assist with other exhibition-related tasks as directed. If interested and available during the exhibition development period, the student will have the opportunity to contribute.
to the drafting of a selection of object labels. There may also be the opportunity to assist with the layout and installation of the exhibition within the gallery space.

**Qualifications:**

The student/volunteer will need to have a basic understanding of curatorship and collection management principles (progress towards the completion of a degree in Art Curatorship or Museum Studies would be ideal).

Familiarity with the correct procedures for the safe handling of museum objects is necessary.

Sound organisational skills and good communication and writing skills are needed.

The ability to work independently, and in consultation with a small team.

An interest in rare books and children’s literature would be ideal.

**Training and Supervision:**

On-the-job training specific to the task 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.

Professional development through experience gained in curatorial and collection management procedures and practice. This includes experience in handling museum objects as well as the processes involved in the staging of an exhibition.

Good public exposure of the exhibition as it will be seen by many high profile visitors, students and members of the academic and general community.

For more information on this position please contact:

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