

Collections Projects Program 2023

University of Melbourne

Medical History Museum

Project Description

Collections Management – Audit, Microscope Collection

The Project

The primary goal of this position will be to assist in an audit of the microscope collection within the [Medical History Museum](#). The museum's storeroom currently has a collection of microscopes and associated storage boxes where boxes are not reconciled with the specific microscope meant to be housed within. This project provides the opportunity to complete an audit of the existing microscope store, cataloguing undocumented microscopes and completing additional cataloguing and analysis of the corresponding microscope boxes. This project will contribute to the accessibility, long term preservation, interpretation and appreciation of the Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences Collections.

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.

Details

In consultation with the Director and Registrar, for this project you will be able to assist in the audit and cataloguing of the microscope collections of the Medical History Museum. This will include examining the collection and determining which examples are uncatalogued or require further cataloguing, as well as reviewing the microscope boxes, many of which have become separated from the original microscope housed within. As part of the auditing process, you will also need to physically analyse the objects for functionality and dating and photograph the items for the catalogue. This information will be added to the catalogue expanding the documentation of the collection.

This project would suit a student with an interest in medical history and a basic understanding of collection management principles (progress towards a relevant degree is desirable). This project also requires well developed research skills, and the ability to physically analyse objects for functionality and dating. An understanding of the importance of data standards and the cataloguing process would be beneficial. Knowledge of the correct procedures for the safe handling of objects is required as is a methodical, prudent approach.

**Please note, to work on this project you will need to be available on Tuesdays.*

Benefits

Opportunity to work at close hand with the University of Melbourne's extensive cultural collections and 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 microscope collection audited with catalogue documentation updated and expanded. The application of collection management principles to the University's cultural collections enhances our long-term understanding, management and appreciation of the collections.

Supervisors

Director - Museums, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Registrar - MDHS Museum Collections