

Collections Projects Program 2023

University of Melbourne

Medical History Museum

Project Description

Collections Management – Cataloguing and Research project

The Project

This project offers you the opportunity to catalogue items from the vast collections of the [Medical History Museum](#). The cataloguing project work entails using the *Vernon* (the MHM's electronic database) datafile template to catalogue and photograph objects in the collection. This project contributes to the accessibility, long-term preservation, storage and appreciation of the Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences Collections and through it you will acquire skills in best practice collection management, learn about responsible collection care, storage, inventory and display of the MHM Museum collection.

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 the Registrar, you will be able to catalogue a selection of objects from the collections of the Museum. This work may include completing cataloguing documentation, assigning accession numbers and labelling the objects. The catalogue information will be recorded on a datafile template before it is added to the *Vernon* electronic catalogue. The project will include taking a digital image of the work for attachment to the electronic catalogue record. You will also have the opportunity to learn about appropriate packing and storing of objects to meet museum standards.

This project would suit students who have an interest in medical history and a basic understanding of collection management principles (progress towards a relevant degree is desirable). Skills required include the ability to research medical objects using online and textbook reference materials, strong data standards and an understanding of the cataloguing process. Attention to detail is essential. 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 collection catalogue 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