

University of Melbourne Cultural Collections Placement, internship and volunteer opportunities

2011 Projects List

The cultural collections projects listed below have individual position guides (PGs) which outline in more detail the requirements of each project – to see individual PGs click on the link after the project description.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities please complete the *Expression of Interest* form available through our website <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/culturalcollections/projects/>

For more information contact:

Helen Arnoldi,
Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator,
University of Melbourne, tel. 8344 3103 or email
harnoldi@unimelb.edu.au

1. University of Melbourne Archives

The University of Melbourne Archives collects, manages and provides access to the historical records of the University, Victorian business, trade unions and other labour organisations, community and cultural organisations, as well as the personal papers of many individuals prominent within them. Records date back to the first years of the colony of Victoria up until the present-day and cover a very wide field of endeavour. The Archives were established in 1960 and to date hold some 15 kilometres of records.

Archives Collection website at: <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/archives/>

1.1 Collection Management – Archival Documentation (Lindsay Tanner Papers)

This project involves the documenting of the Lindsay Tanner Papers recently acquired by the University of Melbourne Archives. The Lindsay Tanner papers were acquired by the Archives in 2010, prior to the Federal Election after Tanner announced he would not be running for re-election in the seat of Melbourne. The collection contains material relating to Tanner's involvement in student politics; the Federated Clerks Union; the Waterfront Dispute; and the Australian Labour Party among others. The papers also contain a collection of radical publications. The primary requirements of this project will be to appraise, list and document the existing arrangement of the records and to create a consolidated finding aid for the collection.

1.2 Collection Management – Archival Storage, Textile re-housing

This project will primarily focus on the re-housing of textiles held within the collections of UMA to ensure their long-term preservation. The large scale banners are from various Trade Unions and the Victorian Women's Liberation & Lesbian Feminist Archives. Many of these textiles and banners are fragile, and in order to ensure their long term preservation they must be carefully stored, with the information that they contain recorded and accessible through the UMA's collection database. Having this information available electronically will significantly minimize unnecessary handling thus aiding in their future preservation.

This project would be ideal for two students/volunteers working together under the supervision of the Repository Co-ordinator.

1.3 Significance Assessment – Burnley Archive Collection

The Burnley Archive Collection is managed by the University of Melbourne Archives (UMA) and is located on the University's Burnley campus. The Burnley Gardens at the Burnley campus date back to 1861, when the Horticulture Society of Victoria established experimental gardens on the site. The primary goal of this project will be to complete a significance assessment on this archival collection which comprises of documents, photographs and artefacts that relate to the history of the site. Using the methodology outlined in *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections*, a set of criteria being used University-wide, the student/volunteer will assess the significance of this

collection. The significance assessment will be used to inform future collection management decisions in areas such as conservation, acquisition/de-accession, valuation and access.

1.4 Archives Project Placement (please note available semester two only)

This placement will provide the opportunity for a student, in consultation with the Senior Archivist, Collection Management, to devise their own archive related project. The project will be developed to meet the specific interests of the student while at the same time engaging with the priorities of the Archives collections. This is an excellent opportunity for a student who is keen to work closely with the collections of the University of Melbourne Archives to tailor a unique work placement.

2. Physics Museum

The Museum comprises approximately 400 items of equipment and photographs spanning the history of the School of Physics, with an emphasis on scientific apparatus constructed in the School for research undertaken by former professors and staff. Included in the collection is equipment used in the development of optical munitions during the Second World War and ruling engines and diffraction gratings produced by H.J. Grayson in the School and the CSIRO.

Physics Museum website at: <http://www.ph.unimelb.edu.au/museum/>

2.1 Collections Management - Cataloguing Assistant

This project involves the cataloguing and documentation of museum objects that are housed in The School of Physics Museum storage areas. The catalogue information will be incorporated into the museum's database where it will be accessible to the public through the museum's website.

2.2 Collection Management – Research Assistant

Under direction, the Research Assistant will create database content for a selected group of museum objects. The text created will be written for a general audience and aim to demystify the Physics Museum's collections. This information will be incorporated onto the museum's database where it will be accessible to the public via the Physics Museum's website.

3. Harry Brooks Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology

Contains more than 12,000 specimens, of which more than 3,000 are on display at any one time, complementing the Faculty's curricula. Historical displays include a series of bushrangers' death masks. The museum is open to current and former students and staff for study and research.

Harry Brooks Allen Museum website at <http://www.anatomy.unimelb.edu.au/museum/>

3.1 Research Project - Papier-mâché anatomical models

The Harry Brooks Allen Museum holds a large collection of anatomical models that have been crafted in plaster, wax and papier-mâché. The models have been used since the earliest days of teaching Anatomy at the University. The primary goal of this project will be to complete research into the significance and educational value of the papier-mâché models in the collection. Research completed on the anatomical models will be used to increase understanding, awareness and appreciation of this collection.

3.2 Research Project - World War I Specimens

The Harry Brooks Allen Museum holds a small collection of World War I anatomical specimens. The primary goal of this project will be to complete research into the background, history and origin of this collection. Utilising the limited data available (original labels on object jars) the student/volunteer will be required to research the provenance of these specimens and how they came into the Museum's collection. It is anticipated that this research will expand our understanding of these specimens within the Museum and provide a context in which to view them.

*Please note - due to the sensitive nature of this project, if you are interested in obtaining a position description please contact the Cultural Collections Coordinator.

4. The University of Melbourne Herbarium

The University of Melbourne Herbarium was established at the School of Botany in 1926. Its collection dates back to the 1850s and totals approximately 100,000 dried pressed plant specimens from all major plant groups. The specimens are used predominantly for teaching and research. The main emphasis of the collection is Victorian flora, however, for some plant groups interstate and overseas collections are included to adequately cover the range of variation within the group. Being an archival plant collection of international importance, the Herbarium contributes

substantially to the School of Botany through research, teaching, public relations and the exchange of specimens and information locally and globally.

See the Herbarium's website at <http://www.botany.unimelb.edu.au/herbarium/>

4.1 Collection Management – Research project - Breidahl Moss Collection c.1880-1900

The Breidahl Moss Collection was donated to the University of Melbourne Herbarium in 1948. It comprises of approximately 400-500 historic moss specimens which are still used today by local and international researchers. Very little is known about the donor of this important collection or its history. The goal of this project is to have research completed on the Breidahl Moss Collection to better understand it within the context of the Herbarium collections.

4.2 Collection Management – Conservation re-housing project - Breidahl Moss Collection c.1880-1900

The goal of this project is to re-house to conservation standards specimens in the Breidahl Moss Collection. The collection comprises of approximately 400-500 historic moss specimens which need to be re-housed with an inventory of the collection completed. The conservation re-housing and inventory of the collection will ensure that catalogue information on the collection is expanded and current, and that the moss specimens are stored to conservation standards.

4.3 Collection Management – Research, Burnley Herbarium Collection

The Burnley Herbarium Collection comprises of approximately 3000 specimens and was donated to the University of Melbourne Herbarium. It currently remains separate from the main collection. The collection has come from the University's Burnley campus. The Burnley Gardens at the Burnley campus date back to 1861, when the Horticulture Society of Victoria established experimental gardens on the site. The campus is situated on 9 hectares of heritage listed gardens with the grounds having operated as a learning centre at the forefront of horticultural education since 1891. Very little is known about this collection or its history and the goal of this project is to discover more about the provenance of the collection.

4.4 Preventative Conservation and Documentation project - Burnley Herbarium Collection

The Burnley Herbarium Collection comprises of approximately 3000 specimens donated to the University of Melbourne Herbarium. The main goal of this position is to ensure that specimens in the Burnley Herbarium Collection undergo basic preventative conservation practices to ensure their longevity and that they are fully documented on the database. The conservation re-housing and documentation of specimens within the collection will ensure that information on the collection is current, complete and all specimens are housed to conservation standards.

5. The Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum

The Museum documents the history of dentistry and dental education in Victoria. It includes historic records and archival material, as well as dental surgery, workroom and laboratory equipment dating from the 18th century to the present day.

Visit the Museum's website at <http://museum.dent.unimelb.edu.au/dental/home.html>

5.1 Collection Management – Significance Assessment (Dental Drill Collection)

The Museum holds an important collection of dental drills dating from approximately the early 19th century through to the 20th century, which includes examples of early single point hand held drills, through to mechanical, ratchet and bow drills, and dental foot engines (dental pedal drills). The primary goal of this project will be to complete a significance assessment on this collection, using the established methodology *Significance: A guide to assessing the significance of cultural heritage objects and collections* (Heritage Collections Council).

5.2 Collection Management – Catalogue Assistant

The primary goal of this position will be to work on the catalogue entries for a selection of items from the Dental Museum's collections. This project will either involve the completion of manual catalogue worksheets for collection items not yet documented, or the review, updating and expansion of existing catalogue records. Once fully catalogued, these new records and the enhanced entries will be added to the Dental Museum's electronic database, Vernon.

6. Medical History Museum

The museum houses a research collection which documents the history of the University of Melbourne medical school, its teaching hospitals and achievements of its graduates and, more broadly, the history of medical practice in Victoria. The collection consists of medical, surgical and scientific instruments, archival photographs, academic certificates, personal papers and records, commemorative medals, art works and a fully equipped relocated 19th-century London pharmacy.

Medical History Museum website: <http://www.chs.unimelb.edu.au/programs/jnmhu/museum>

6.1 Collection Management – Catalogue Assistant

The primary goal of this position will be to work with a selection of items from the Medical History Museum's collections and complete manual catalogue worksheets for new acquisitions yet to be documented, or to review, update and expand on existing catalogue records. Once fully catalogued, these new records and the augmented entries will be added to the Medical History Museum's new electronic database, Vernon. The project may include taking a digital image of the work for later attachment to the electronic catalogue record. The student/volunteer will be required to re-house objects as necessary to meet museum standards.

6.2 Collection Management – General Research Project

In consultation with the Curator, the student will be able to complete research on a particular aspect of the Medical History Museum's extensive collections. This project could focus on individual items or 'highlights' from the collection and research their provenance, historical use and greater significance in the broader community. Or, alternatively they may wish to explore the history and development of a particular collection/s. It is anticipated that any research completed on individual items within the collection will be used to augment the collection catalogue on the Museum's electronic database.

7. Special Collections – Baillieu Library

The Special Collections comprise some 200,000 rare or historic books, serials and pamphlets and literary archives. There are incunabula, rare and first editions, Australiana, children's books, middle-eastern manuscripts, prints, theses and the Melbourne University Press collection.

Special Collections website: <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/special/>

7.1 Collection Management – Significance Assessment, Brownless Rare Book Collection

The Brownless Rare Book Collection comprises approximately 1,850 volumes and covers the vast range of subjects that constitute the history of western medicine, dating from the first medical literature that emerged from the printing presses of the 16th century to the rare, privately published or limited editions of the 20th century. The primary goal of this position will be to use established significance assessment methodology to complete an assessment on this collection. The significance assessment will be used to inform future collection management decisions in areas such as conservation, acquisition/de-accession, valuation and access.

7.2 Collection Management – Re-housing and Listing, McLaren Collection (Parliamentary papers)

The McLaren Collection comprises some 50,000 items, including rare ephemeral pamphlet material, manuscripts, printed books and journals and realia. An enthusiastic bibliographer and former member of Parliament of Victoria, Ian McLaren assembled a large library which reflected his interests in the world of politics. The goal of this project will be the re-housing and listing of the McLaren Archive of parliamentary papers into archival boxes. This project will aid in the long term preservation of, and access to this important collection.

7.3 Special Collections Cataloguing Placement

Working with collections housed within the Special Collections of the Baillieu Library, this work experience style placement provides the opportunity for a student to be trained in, and gain experience using the INNOPAC cataloguing system. The student will catalogue items held within various Special Collections, including the Ian McLaren Australiana Collection and backlogs. If a student has Russian language skills, there may be a specific cataloguing placement available within the Nina Christesen Collection.

7.4 Collection Management 'Work Experience' Placement

This placement will provide the opportunity for a student, in consultation with the Deputy Curator, Special Collections, to devise their own 'work experience' related project. The placement will be developed to meet the specific interests of the student while at the same time engaging with the day-to-day priorities of Special Collections. This is an excellent opportunity for a Library Studies/Information Management student who is keen to work closely with Special Collections.

7.5 Collection Management – Research and Re-housing, Meanjin Collection

The literary and cultural affairs journal *Meanjin* was founded by C.B. (Clem) Christesen in Brisbane in 1940. In 1943 the University invited him to bring the journal to Melbourne where it has been published under its auspices ever since. The journal published the leading figures in Australian letters and introduced Australian audiences to many international writers. Special Collections holds a collection of linocut printing blocks dating from 1960s that were used to illustrate editions of the journal. The primary goal of this project will be to identify and complete research on a selection of author profile portraits that have appeared in past editions of the *Meanjin* journal. After identifying the sitters, a secondary task will be to re-house the linocut blocks to conservation standards.

8. Baillieu Library Print Collection, Special Collections – Baillieu Library

Comprises approximately 7,000 individual prints and volumes from the 16th to early 20th centuries. It covers many printmaking techniques including woodcuts, wood engravings, copper plates, steel engravings, etchings, mezzotints, aquatints, lithographs and chromolithographs.

For more information on the Print Collection go to: <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/special/prints/>

8.1 Collection Management – Catalogue Assistant

The goal of this position will be to assist in checking and researching information on a selection of prints from the Baillieu Print Collection. The information generated will be added to the electronic catalogue (EMu) at a later date. Under direction, the student/volunteer will ensure catalogue details for a selection of prints from the collection are reviewed for accuracy and that information is updated where possible. The student/volunteer will be responsible for checking, updating and expanding on current print catalogue records through the close inspection of the prints and use of current records. Catalogue fields that will require particular attention include dates, attributions and print states and the student/volunteer will need to research these areas using catalogues raisonnés and other appropriate resources.

8.2 Collection Management – Narratives compilation

For this project, the student/volunteer will be required to compile artist biographies and to research past exhibitions and other documentation that relates to the provenance of a selection of prints. This information will subsequently be added to the Narratives module of the EMu (Electronic Museum) database which will serve to enhance and expand the collection catalogue. In consultation with the curator, there may be the possibility to pursue additional research on individual prints and collector albums.

9. Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library: Rare Materials Collection

The Rare Collections of the Music Library are diverse in both content and origin. Though the Conservatorium was founded in 1891, there was no library at all until 1908, and for many years members of the teaching staff provided music for their students ad hoc. Some of these items are still with the library, augmented by numerous donations and purchases over the past century. The manuscripts are chiefly of works by Australian composers from the colonial period to the present day, while the printed music includes many early and rare editions of European composers from Corelli to Stravinsky. Among both the musical scores and the smaller collection of books on musical topics there are many unusual and obscure items.

For more information on the collection go to <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/music/rare/>

9.1 Collection Management – Preventative Conservation and Research

For this project the student/volunteer will be required to apply basic conservation practices to a scrapbook album held in the Rare Collections of the Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library. The album contains programs for concerts held in Melbourne and their associated press reviews and date from 1886 to 1916. The contents provide a rich resource of historical material that relates to musical performances in late 19th and early 20th century Melbourne. The album is currently in a fragile state and requires basic conservation measures and an index to be created to ensure that the historical information it contains is preserved and accessible for the future.

10. Creswick Campus Historical Collection

The Creswick Campus is one of three campuses at which students and staff from the Department of Forest and Ecosystem Science are based. The campus was first opened as the Victorian School of Forestry in 1910 and is located in Creswick in regional Victoria (1 ½ hours drive from Melbourne). The Creswick Campus Historical Collection comprises of approximately 250 items which relate to the teaching of forestry and includes photographs; student registers and results lists; items retrieved from an earlier 'School Museum'; a wood collection; various pieces of early teaching and research equipment; and miscellaneous items.

For information about the Creswick Campus, see <http://www.land-environment.unimelb.edu.au/creswick/>

10.1 Collection Management - Significance Assessment

The primary goal of this position will be to complete a significance assessment on the historical collection. Using the criteria outlined in *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections* (Russell, R & Winkworth, K, Canberra, Collections Council of Australia Ltd, 2009), the student/volunteer will be able to assess the significance of this collection against a set of criteria being used University-wide. The significance assessment will be used to inform future collection management decisions in areas such as conservation, acquisition/de-accession, valuation and access.

11. Ian Potter Museum of Art

The Potter houses the University of Melbourne Art Collection, comprising Australian art, classics and archaeology, international, Indigenous cultural material and decorative arts.

Ian Potter Museum of Art website at: <http://www.art-museum.unimelb.edu.au/>

11.1 Collection Management - Cataloguing and Conservation of the Herbst Poster Collection (available semester two)

This project will involve the manual cataloguing and conservation flattening of a selection of posters from the Gerard Herbst Poster Collection. The collection comprises approximately 3,000 posters and contains important examples of international and Australian graphic design from the twentieth century. As part of the project, and so that the student/volunteer gains experience in various aspects of collection management, they may also assist in an inventory of the collection and other related duties.

12. Victoria College of the Arts: VCA Art Collection

The VCA Art Collection spans the entire history of the College and its predecessor, the National Gallery School of Art. Comprising painting, sculpture, photography and works on paper, most works are by students, staff or alumni. The Collection continues to grow through gifts and acquisitive awards, ensuring that each year a number of graduating students' works are added. It includes work by such notable practitioners as John Brack, John Vickery, Jan Nelson, Jon Campbell and Sally Smart. There are also many life paintings and drawings from the National Gallery School of Art by prominent alumni including Hugh Ramsay, Charles Wheeler, Grace Joel and Constance Stokes. The Margaret Lawrence Australian Ceramics Collection was bequeathed to the Collection in 2004 and comprises some 500 pieces of Australian ceramic work from the 1920s through to 2004.

12.1 Collection Management - (projects details to be advised)

*Please note that 2011 projects with the VCA Art Collections are currently under development. If interested in these collections please contact the Cultural Collections Projects Coordinator.