

The Maine Historical Society (MHS)

Job Description

Collections Manager/Registrar

"The Maine Historical Society preserves the heritage and history of Maine: the stories of Maine people, the traditions of Maine communities, and the record of Maine's place in a changing world. Because an understanding of the past is vital to a healthy and progressive society, we collect, care for, and exhibit historical treasures; facilitate research into family, local, state, and national history; provide education programs that make history meaningful, accessible and enjoyable; and empower others to preserve and interpret the history of their communities and our state."

Our one-acre campus is in the heart of Portland's downtown cultural district and includes a museum gallery and store, the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, research library, and historic gardens. Founded in 1822, the Maine Historical Society is the third oldest state historical society in the United States.

The Maine Historical Society seeks a Collections Manager/Registrar to support the society's library, archival and museum collections.

POSITION TITLE: Collections Manager/Registrar
STATUS: Non-Exempt
SCHEDULE: Part-time, 26 hrs./week
DAYS/TIME: To be determined in consultation with supervisor
REPORTS TO: Director of Library Services
COMPENSATION: Hourly
REVISION DATE: January 2, 2018

1-POSITION SUMMARY:

The Collections Manager/Registrar is responsible for the overall documentation, preservation, safety, and maintenance of the Society's library, archival and museum collections. This position: manages all aspects of collections care, specifically environmental, and collection logistics; ensures best practices for the use, exhibition, movement and storage of the Society's collections; facilitates research into the Society's museum collections and oversees the collection management database (Past Perfect).

2-FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: (including other tasks as assigned related to Collections Manager/Registrar position).

I. Registrar:

- a. Accurately track and acknowledge all acquisitions.
- b. Document and facilitate deaccessions or dispersed collections according to the MHS Collections Management Policy.
- c. Manage loan logistics, including documentation, condition reports, packing, shipping and any other logistics that may arise.
- d. Create and manage existing collection documentation in its varied forms, including object files, source files and acquisition records.
- e. Responsible for reviewing and making recommendations towards the Fine Arts Insurance Policy.

II. Collection Management:

- a. Responsible for providing an informed opinion regarding the maintenance, exhibition, and integrity of all MHS collections.
- b. Actively participate as a collections representative at internal meetings regarding the use of collections in exhibitions, collection storage, research, strategic planning, and transportation.
- c. Serve as the MHS's collections management database (Past Perfect) Administrator, including online presentation, metadata standards, digital imagery and maintenance.
- d. Keep up to date the Past Perfect User Guide and train staff and volunteers on how to use the Guide.

- e. Adhere to preservation standards during the pre-processing of collections and transition periods.
- f. Conduct research regarding potential museum acquisitions as requested.
- g. Document, catalogue, and assign locations for incoming and existing museum collections.
- h. Participate in the management of collection physical environments in all four MHS buildings, including security, pest management and housekeeping.
- i. Supervise the Wadsworth-Longfellow House historic housekeeper, collection volunteers and interns.
- j. Provide assistance during physical exhibition installation/de-installation and return collections to their appropriate storage locations in a timely manner.

III. Access:

- a. Respond to or forward to appropriate staff online reference queries generated from the Past Perfect online portal or outside entities.
- b. Upon approval from the Chief Curator, provide access to museum collections for patron research. Required approval will be communicated to the Collections Manager/Registrar no less than 24 hours from the initial request.
- c. Coordinate with museum and library staff and volunteers to facilitate research into museum collections.

IV. Policy and Collaboration Access:

- a. Make sure that MHS's Collection Management Policy is adhered to by staff, volunteers and any other individual.
- b. Oversee, manage and update core documents, policies and forms related to collections management, including but not limited to, the Collections Management Policy, Emergency Response Plan and Temporary Custody Receipts.
- c. Participate in applicable Board of Trustee Committee meetings (particularly the Collections and Research Committee), MHS working groups, outreach and MHS strategic planning.

3-REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum of 2 years of professional experience as a registrar and in collections management.
- Demonstrated familiarity with museum and archival collections.
- A degree in Museum Studies, Library Science, collection management or related field.
- Demonstrated knowledge of collections content management systems.
- Strong communication skills: listening, written, and verbal.
- Strong computer skills and ability to learn new programs when needed.
- Ability to solve problems in a changing environment; high degree of flexibility and adaptability.
- An open and positive attitude and enjoy working with the public.
- Ability to work independently or as part of a group
- Ability to multi-task and facilitate several projects simultaneously.

4-PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Experience with Past Perfect content management system.
- Experience with museum and library nomenclature and meta data standards.
- A Master's Degree or certificate in Museum Studies or Library Science.
- A working knowledge of Maine history.
- Experience in supervising volunteers.
- Experience with historic house museums

5-WORKING CONDITIONS & PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Work is performed in an office environment using basic office equipment such as a computer, printer and copier. Work requires some sitting, but also walking and driving to and from various MHS facilities. Work will also entail driving to potential donors and loaning organizations within the New England area. Must be able to lift 40 lbs.

Send resume, cover letter and references to:

Jamie Kingman Rice
Director of Library Services
Maine Historical Society
489 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101-3498

Or jrice@mainehistory.org

No phone calls please.