

WHA ARCHIVIST – JOB DESCRIPTION

Jane Martin, January 2022

Overall Qualifications and Role:

The WHA archivist is a generalist who plays a critical role in managing all aspects of the association's permanent archives and research collection. To do so requires a **background in the basic principles and application of archival science**, acquired either through a specialized university degree program, or through work experience in an established archival facility. Archival mandates and the principles of archival classification, conservation, etc. differ substantially from practices in a library setting.

In lieu of professional archival credentials, experience in library or documents management could be a qualification if combined with a serious ongoing commitment to archival self-education using recognized manuals, texts, online courses, and other resources. Self-motivation, curiosity, and a strong interest in local history, excellent communications skills, intermediate to advanced computer skills (including working with digital images), and ease dealing with city officials, municipal staff, researchers, and individual citizens are all important assets.

Responsibilities:

Specific duties are highly diverse, requiring sound judgment, strong organizational skills, and attention to fine detail. Among the most important recurring tasks, in no particular order, are:

Acquiring and processing donations of historical materials;

Processing new acquisitions (documents, photos, a/v material, etc.) according to professional Canadian norms;

Continuing systematic digitization of photographs for inclusion in our searchable, in-house database using Adobe Lightroom;

Maintaining and expanding subject files for research;

Cataloguing and maintaining a reference collection;

Ordering archival and other supplies;

Planning maximization of available space;

Monitoring email and phone messages, answering questions, and responding to requests for information or research assistance;

Supervising visits to the Archives and locating relevant material for researchers or others;

Assisting WHA board and committee members with research linked to lectures, the *Historian* newsletter, and other activities;

Supervising any volunteer assistance with archival tasks;

Initiating and maintaining statistics related to archival use;

Planning and writing a regular archival page in the *Historian*;

Attending WHA board meetings each month; reporting on Archives activity and initiatives;

Researching issues related to archival practice and implementing new systems as best determined (example: digitization, copyright, conservation practices, etc.).

Time Required:

Potentially unlimited, but with much flexibility regarding priorities and personal scheduling. Realistically, the position entails being present at the Archives at least once weekly for three to four hours between 9am and 4pm, PLUS varying amounts of additional time spent either on-site or working from home on a regular basis. The Archives is officially closed during July and August, and accessibility to the office depends on opening hours of Victoria Hall as set by the City.