

# Guide Book

For Prospective Volunteers



Alabama  
Department of  
Archives and  
History

## **Welcome to our Volunteer Team!**

Established in the 1980s, the volunteer program has assisted the Department of Archives and History for over 25 years. Some of our original volunteers are still at work today! Volunteers have helped the department weather many economic crises when staff have been reduced and during economic booms when programs and projects increased. We truly could not provide the quality of service without our volunteers and we are excited that you are interested in joining our great team. We have a place for each personality and skill set. We hope this guide book will orient you to our volunteer opportunities and help you discover how you can best fit into our Archives family.

## **Mission Statement:**

*To tell the story of the people of Alabama by preserving records and artifacts of historical value and promoting a better understanding of Alabama history.*

## **Hours:**

Museum: Monday-Saturday 8:30am-4:30pm

Research Room: Tuesday-Friday and Second Saturday 8:30am-4:30pm

## **Volunteer Benefits**

- Volunteer newsletter
- 10% discount on all gift shop purchases
- Service hours provided upon request
- Special parking
- Volunteer break area
- Enrichment training that highlights the history of the state and the work at the Archives
- Special events
- First-hand look at what goes on behind the scenes of the Archives

## Requirements

We depend on our volunteers to maintain the quality of service we provide. We couldn't do it without our dedicated, dependable, and committed volunteers. Below are the qualities we are looking for in a volunteer.

- **Dedication:** Your service is your greatest gift to us and we consider it a valuable resource. We prefer a regular and consistent contribution of time.
- **Dependability:** The job you do is important to us and our daily operations. Please notify us promptly if illness, vacation, family or other commitments will affect your schedule.
- **Commitment:** Many of our volunteers have been with us for over 10 years. Even though the job is voluntary we ask for a sincere commitment.
- **Attitude:** Volunteers should be open-minded and willing to be trained in their service area. We respect our volunteers and ask the same of you towards supervisors, employees, and other volunteers. We love to see enthusiastic smiling faces.

## Application process

Initial volunteer paperwork includes:

- Application (can be found online)
- Medical Release form
- Computer Usage form
- Parental/Guardian Release (Jr. Volunteers)
- Volunteer Contract (Jr. Volunteers)
- Permission to run background check

### Volunteer Coordinator Interview:

Each volunteer will be individually interviewed by the volunteer coordinator. The volunteer's interests and abilities will be discussed and appropriate placement will be agreed upon. The volunteer coordinator will provide a tour of the volunteer area and provide the following material:

- Building brochure
- Volunteer liaison contact list
- Volgistics (sign in/out) instructions
- Name tag (upon assignment)
- Parking pass (upon assignment)

### Liaison interview:

After the initial interview, an interview with the area liaison will be arranged to further discuss specific job duties, scheduling, and department policies and procedures. The liaison will also provide orientation of work space and building. Liaisons will provide all training and materials required for volunteers to be successful.

## **Current Volunteer Openings:**

- Docent (page 4)
- Gift Shop Attendant (page 5)
- Hands-On Gallery Assistant (page 6)
- Junior Volunteer (page 7)
- Education Outreach Volunteer (page 8)
- Special Projects (page 9)

Needed on a substitute basis:

- Receptionist (page 10)

## **Job Descriptions:**

### **Museum Docent**

#### ***Job description***

This position involves extensive contact with the public in the museum galleries of the Alabama Department of Archives and History. The volunteer is responsible for guiding visitors through the museum and for providing basic information about museum exhibits and the history of Alabama. The volunteer will give tours to school and adult groups. The volunteer will also be responsible for conducting specialized tours. Training will be provided.

#### ***Qualifications***

- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with staff of the Public Services Division
- Ability to express ideas and to speak to and communicate well with individuals and small groups, both adult and child
- Ability to convey accurate information in an appropriate and uncontroversial manner
- Ability to learn and absorb new information and take instruction well
- Ability to work independently after the training period
- Must be flexible and able to “think on your feet”
- Must be punctual and time conscious
- Neat personal appearance and positive attitude for public contact work
- Some knowledge of Alabama history and American history (training provided)

#### ***Location***

- Second floor galleries

### ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Flexible/prearranged schedule
- Required to conduct at least 6 tours monthly during tour seasons

## **Friends Gift Shop Attendant**

Gift shop is operated by the Friends of the Alabama Archives and serves visitors to the Archives.

### ***Job description***

This position involves extensive contact with the public. Volunteers will be responsible for selling museum-related items to school children, tourists, and visitors to the building. This includes counting money, making change, and operating a credit card machine. Other duties include preparing merchandise for sale, assembling kits and crafts, conducting inventory, and restocking merchandise.

### ***Qualifications***

- Ability to interact with public in a positive and helpful manner
- Ability to work independently after training
- Knowledge of computer operations and credit card processing helpful
- No knowledge of history necessary
- Willingness to assist with tedious tasks
- Patience
- Responsibility
- Ability to “think on your feet” and make decisions

### ***Location***

- 1<sup>st</sup> floor

### ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Minimum of 4 hours in one block or two blocks of 2 hours per week

# **Hands-On Gallery Assistant**

The Hands-On Gallery is a museum learning gallery where children and parents can interact creatively. Through play in Grandma's Attic and exploration of Discovery Boxes, visitors learn about Alabama history.

## ***Job description***

This position requires good interpersonal relationship skills with children and parents. The volunteer acts primarily as a facilitator of creativity between the child and the museum environment. The volunteer will guide the parent/guardian of the children in a successful, mutually enjoyable learning experience. This position also includes conducting tours/programs that take place in the gallery. This includes providing introduction and instruction, facilitating activities, reading a story, interpreting artifacts, and playing games. Volunteer also helps maintain the gallery, by performing routine duties, such as disinfecting surfaces, tidying Grandma's Attic, dusting, and replenishing supplies, such as activity sheets and quilt squares.

## ***Qualifications***

- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with staff of the Public Services Division and to work independently after the training period
- Ability to express ideas and to speak and communicate well with individuals and small groups, both adult and children
- Ability to learn and absorb new information
- An artistic or creative personality
- Neat personal appearance and pleasant attitude for public contact work
- Patience
- Must be flexible and enjoy an active working environment
- Willingness to occasionally perform tedious tasks
- Some knowledge of Alabama history and American history

## ***Location***

- Public Service Division (2<sup>nd</sup> floor Hands-On Gallery)

## ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Minimum of 4 hours in one block or two blocks of 2 hours per week

# **Junior Volunteer**

## ***Job description***

Junior volunteers are Receptionists, Hands-On Gallery Assistants, or Gift Shop Attendants. This position requires good interpersonal relationship skills with children and adults. **The volunteer must be a junior or senior high school student or equivalent, between the ages of 14 and 18.** Jr. Volunteers acquire practical work experience and community service hours. Teens are also able to explore various career fields in history. Training provided each summer in June.

## ***Qualifications***

- Must be able to learn and absorb new information
- Must have a highly developed sense of responsibility towards one's position
- Must have a neat appearance and a positive attitude for public contact work
- Must have some knowledge of Alabama history and American history
- Must have written approval of parent, guardian, or school sponsor

## ***Location***

- Public Services Division (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

## ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Minimum of 4 hours in one block or two blocks of 2 hours per week

# **Museum Education Outreach Volunteer**

## ***Job description***

This position involves extensive contact with the public. The volunteer must have skill in the areas of public speaking and presentation. Schools, club meetings, special events, and public relations appointments such as television and radio are possible assignments. In-town travel will be necessary. **This is an extra job possibility for those who area already assigned to another volunteer position, particularly within the education section.**

## ***Qualifications***

- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with staff of the Public Services Division and the public
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision after the training period
- Ability to express ideas and to speak and communicate well
- Ability to learn and absorb new information
- Capability to carry a project through to completion without close supervision
- Innovative personality and positive attitude for assigned tasks
- Poise and a highly developed sense of responsibility towards one's job

## ***Location***

- Public Services Division (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

## ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Flexible

# **Special Projects Volunteer**

## ***Job description***

This position involves completion of various tasks within the department. These opportunities include special event assistance, such as serving as a host/hostess at lectures, or clerical assistance, such as special mailings, photocopying, folding building guides, creating files, etc. Other special tasks may include sewing, cutting, or laminating. **This is an extra job possibility for those who are already assigned to another position.**

## ***Qualifications***

- Ability to learn and absorb new information
- Ability to understand and follow directions
- Capability to carry a project through to completion without close supervision
- Neat personal appearance and positive attitude for public contact work
- Poise and a highly developed sense of responsibility towards one's job

## ***Location***

- "Floating" position – different divisions (Public Services Division and Government Records Division)

## ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Flexible

# **Receptionist**

*We are currently accepting volunteers for this position on a substitute basis.*

## ***Job description***

This position requires extensive contact with the public in the Alabama Department of Archives and History. This volunteer is responsible for greeting visitors and providing orientation to building and services. In addition, the receptionist provides useful handouts for museum visitors. The volunteer must be able to give directions to and descriptions of areas of interest within the building. The volunteer must be familiar with and give directions to other attractions in Montgomery. During the school tour season, this volunteer will work closely with museum docents and guides to insure the orderly flow of visiting groups, and maintain an accurate visitors' register for record keeping.

## ***Qualifications***

- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with the staff of the Alabama Department of Archives and History
- Ability to work independently and make decisions
- Ability to express ideas and to communicate well with individuals and groups, both adult and child
- Ability to learn and absorb new information
- Must be pleasant, patient, and helpful
- Near personal appearance and positive attitude for public contact work

## ***Location***

- Front lobby at the information desk

## ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Flexible/prearranged schedule

The positions listed on the following pages (11-13) are currently filled and are not accepting new volunteers. If you are interested in these positions, we will place your name on a waiting list, and contact you when a vacancy occurs. Many volunteers choose to work in another capacity until there is an opening.

## **Archival Processing Aide**

### ***Job description***

The Alabama Department of Archives and History has extensive holdings of both government and private records. The department is responsible for inventorying, preserving, and cataloging those collections of state and local archival records (records of the Secretary of State, Governor, county probate officials, etc.) and private collections (individual and family papers, church records, and organization and business records). Many government and private record collections contain special format materials such as maps, photographs, broadsides, and more. The staff, with a corps of trained volunteers, organize and preserve these records. The volunteer will be assigned to work with a specific staff member and will be responsible primarily for putting records in proper order and/or preparing records for processing (arrangement and description) and placing them in archival folders and boxes. This will often include unfolding paper; removing paper clips, rubber bands, and staples; refiling papers in acid-free folders; and creating boxes and folder lids, etc.

### ***Qualifications***

- Interest in and ability to review and understand historical records (it is helpful to be able to read and understand old handwriting)
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, and to work closely with a staff member
- Ability to think logically and to organize papers
- Dependability and respect for the preservation and confidentiality of materials
- Willingness to assist with tedious assignments

### ***Location***

- Public Services Division and Government Records Division (3<sup>rd</sup> floor)

### ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Minimum of 4 hours in one block or two blocks of 2 hours per week

# **Preservation Aide**

## ***Job description***

The Alabama Department of Archives and History has a wide variety of special materials, ranging from manuscripts, and photos, maps, rare books, architectural drawings and blueprints, to portraits and artifacts in the museum collection. All of these materials require special care and handling. Volunteer duties in preserving these materials may include flattening and encapsulating materials in polyester film, mending maps and other torn documents, or assisting with artifact conservation and preparation.

## ***Qualifications***

- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships and to work closely with a staff member
- Ability to work neatly and accurately with hands (good hand-eye coordination ability)
- Dependability and respect for historical and esthetic value of the materials
- Interest in historical materials
- Interest in learning and utilizing conservation skills
- Willingness to assist with tedious assignments

## ***Location***

- Public Services Division and Government Records Division (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)

## ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Minimum of 4 hours in one block or two blocks of 2 hours per week

# **Reference Aide**

## ***Job description***

This is paraprofessional library work in which the volunteer assists in routine Research Room operations. The volunteer performs duties, which include registering researchers; answering research room phones; assisting patrons in the use of library materials and microfilm readers; refiling boxes of microfilm; re-shelving books in the open stack area; assisting in copying materials for patrons; and performing other duties as assigned. Additional service may include assisting with research requests by conducting research and addressing inquiries.

## ***Qualifications***

- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff and patrons in the Research Room
- Interest in and knowledge of family history, genealogy, and/or Alabama history
- Maturity, which includes a measure of poise, tact, and diplomacy, especially in dealing with patrons
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision after training
- Ability to communicate effectively with public
- Knowledge of computer operations helpful

## ***Location***

- Reference Room (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

## ***Preferred Time Commitment***

- Minimum of 4 hours in one block or two blocks of 2 hours per week

## Volunteer Contact Information

### Volunteer Office

Kelly Hoomes 353-4702 [kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov)

### Government Records

Mike Breedlove 353-4614 [mike.breedlove@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:mike.breedlove@archives.alabama.gov)

Alden Monroe 353-4613 [alden.monroe@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:alden.monroe@archives.alabama.gov)

### Conservation Officer/Registrar's Office

Sherrie Hamil 353-4726 [sherrie.hamilton@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:sherrie.hamilton@archives.alabama.gov)

### Private Records

Mary Jo Scott 353-4694 [maryjo.scott@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:maryjo.scott@archives.alabama.gov)

Cynthia Luckie 353-4695 [cynthia.luckie@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:cynthia.luckie@archives.alabama.gov)

### Research Room (Research Room Information Desk, Reference Letters)

Nancy Dupree 353-4674 [nancy.dupree@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:nancy.dupree@archives.alabama.gov)

### Museum Collections

Bob Bradley 353-4717 [bob.bradley@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:bob.bradley@archives.alabama.gov)

### School Tours (Docent)

Kelly Hoomes 353-4702 [kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov)

### Hands-On Gallery

Kelly Hoomes 353-4702 [kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov)

### Receptionist

Kelly Hoomes 353-4702 [kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:kelly.hoomes@archives.alabama.gov)

### Gift Shop

Allison Gore 353-4691 [allison.gore@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:allison.gore@archives.alabama.gov)