



American Baptist Historical Society Head of Archives and Special Collections / Archivist

The American Baptist Historical Society maintains the oldest and largest Baptist historical collection in the U.S., documenting the history of Baptists generally and American Baptist Churches USA (the most racially and ethnically diverse Protestant church in the US), specifically. ABHS collections include books, periodicals, manuscripts, and organizational records. Staff provide reference services, both internally and to the public by appointment.

Position Summary

The Head of Archives and Special Collections is responsible for the care and management of the American Baptist Historical Society's archival collections, including the official records of American Baptist Churches/USA partners, personal papers, manuscripts and other historical records and/or objects in a variety of media, including maps, audio visual materials, photographs, rare books, and artifacts. The Archivist interprets these and other special collections through reference consultation and exhibitions. The occupant of this position also provides advice and training to ABC/USA denominational partners concerning the organization and retention of records to preserve the heritage of the denomination. The Archivist provides direction and supervises the project duties of the Office Manager and student research assistants, as well as supervising interns and/or resident archivists as needed. The Head of Archives and Special Collections reports to the Executive Director.

Responsibilities

- Working with the Executive Director, provide creative leadership for establishing policy for and initiating projects involving the processing and preservation of and access to the historical society's archival collections.
- Responsible for the creation of tools of access to archival collections, including accession lists, inventories, and finding aids, both conventional and electronic. Provide content information for and advise on appropriate levels of description based upon an understanding of scholarly and research needs.
- Working with the Executive Director, identify and execute outreach efforts to effectively build the collections. Provide policy, advice and training to ABC

partners to organize, retain, and transfer appropriate records to the historical society. Oversee the acquisition and/or transfer of archival collections.

- Develop guidelines and procedures for appraisal, acceptance, and management of archival collections in a variety of formats in collaboration with the executive director. Identify, plan, and execute strategies for access of born-digital materials in collaboration with the ABHS digital archivist (to be hired in 2018), Mercer Libraries Special Projects Librarian, and ABHS web designer. Collaborate generally with the executive director on issues related to collection management.
- Supervise reading room and provide reference assistance to on-site and distance researchers. Build and manage a program to process and provide access to the Archives. Supervise interns, student assistants, and project professionals as needed.
- Supervise preservation and conservation of materials. Prioritize preservation needs within the archival collections.
- Working in a team environment contribute to development of departmental guidelines and procedures for public access to and use of collections, internal workflow procedures, preservation guidelines, exhibition policies, and other department-side activities. Actively participate in the organization's and department's strategic planning activities.
- Work with ABHS executive director, Mercer University, and other collaborators to identify, win and implement grants and other projects useful to the collections and the organization.
- Design and curate reading room and traveling exhibitions.
- Participate in digital projects, providing content information and collections context as required.
- Represent ABHS effectively through contact with researchers, members of the public, and professional organizations. Participate in professional development and service activities.
- Occasional travel required.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the executive director.

Experience/Qualifications

- Minimum of five years of progressively responsible experience, including supervisory, in an academic or research archives required. Demonstrated experience working with manuscripts or special collections, following established library and archival procedures.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the fundamentals of the management of manuscript collections including access and preservation issues; providing research and reference services to the various constituencies of a religious and denominational archives ; computer applications related to manuscript and records management.

Demonstrated understanding of HTML, EAD/EAC, and DACS. Familiarity with ArchivesSpace, CONTENTdm, institutional repositories and records management programs preferred.

- Ability to analyze and solve complex problems in collections management; work effectively with administrators, researchers, donors, staff and student workers; respond quickly to immediate reference needs; work independently. Ability to work effectively and collegially within a team environment.
- Ability to engage with constituents in a workshop setting or through other creative programming.
- Demonstrated ability to plan projects in a flexible, goal-oriented manner and supervise the work of support staff.
- Demonstrated computer competency and knowledge of relevant systems. Demonstrated competency using Microsoft Office, including MSWord, Excel, and Access.
- Skill in arranging complex collections in an orderly and clear manner according to accepted practices and professional standards; preparing clearly written guides to the collections; articulating needs and problems to students and supervisors; and use of computers for word processing and other office tasks. Excellent written and verbal skills.
- Ability to lift 40-lb. cartons (standard archival boxes), push fully-loaded library carts, and climb ladders to access collections.

Education

- Master's degree in archival studies from an ALA-accredited school or program or an archival studies master's program that conforms to SAA guidelines, or MLIS with coursework in archives or records management from an ALA-accredited program required. Incumbent will be expected to continue upgrading knowledge, skills, and abilities as standards evolve.
- Knowledge of Protestant church history in the United States needed; knowledge of Baptist history, polity and practice preferred.

The **American Baptist Historical Society** is located in Atlanta, Georgia. Salary is competitive; benefits include retirement, health insurance, generous paid time off. Review of applications will begin March 17.