

Manley has wanted to feature a “fun community exhibit” like this for a long time. She explained how she was inspired by the “High Museum Collects” exhibit that she experienced while working at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta.

“I’ve always thought it was a great way to pull a community together, just to see for fun what people collect, because as we’re already learning, it’s so diverse,” Manley said.

The exhibit team reviewing submissions includes Manley, along with Taylor Rosini, the museum’s collections associate and grant writer, and Aine Powers ’24, who recently began working for the museum.

Collectors must fill out the [submission form](#), found on the Henry Sheldon museum’s website, by March 21. Manley said she expects that most submissions will be able to be featured. “Part of it will be ‘does the object fit our goal for the exhibit,’ which pretty much everything, I think, will,” she said. “We also have to think about and consider the exhibit space, and how we would display it, and can we display it safely, so that will be another consideration as we make our decision.”

A series of programs and events will be held in conjunction with the exhibit during the summer months. The events will take place either in the gallery or outside in the Sheldon garden, depending on Covid-19 and the type of event. Programs will range from talks on collecting, to explanations of collection care and how auctioning works, to conversations with collectors whose items are featured in the exhibit.

“We plan to have a tent out in the Sheldon’s garden, and we like to use that space as a nice community gathering space,” Manley said. “This being a community exhibit, we plan to have some of the programs outside.” Concerts will also take place in the garden during the summer.

For younger collectors, a complimentary exhibit will take place in an adjacent room to the main exhibit, called “Addison County Kids Collect,” giving local kids the chance to show off their own collections. “I feel like from a young age everyone kind of has this desire to collect knick knacks, and there’s so many kids with their little rock collections, or their baseball card collections and things like that,” Powers said. The exhibit will be an interactive experience, incorporating hands-on activities with summer workshops.

One item that will be featured in the main exhibit is an Abenaki sweetgrass thimble basket, collected by Wendy Butler. Originally acquired by her great-grandmother in the early 20th century, the basket has been in Butler’s family for a long time. “[It has] sort of inspired me to collect other Abenaki fancy baskets,” Butler said.

Abenaki basket makers began producing these artistic baskets around the end of the 19th century, Butler added.

Butler said she hopes the item will be accompanied by information about the history and cultural value of the basket, and that others who also own these baskets will be able to learn about their value. “I really like the idea that it’s sort of an opportunity for this culture to survive.”

The exhibit will also showcase homeopathic medicinal bottles and a daguerreotype case, which were used by a Cornwall physician who graduated from the Cleveland Homeopathic Medical College in 1858. Additionally, it will include clothing or reindeer carvings from Mongolia, the first official issue of Mizz Magazine from 1972 and a sextant used on a ship for navigation.

According to Manley, the common theme among the exhibit is that every collector has a story. “Unlike some exhibits, we’re not showing a whole collection. [We have] asked people to submit one object that represents their collection, so it might be their favorite piece, or the one they feel like has the most interesting story. The stories tie everything together, [and] we’re amazed at the variety of objects that we’re seeing,” said Manley.

Submissions could range from scientific to artistic. The exhibit is designed to reflect the full range of types of items Sheldon collected, including archival materials such as photographs and maps.

“It’s about passion,” Manley added. “Henry Sheldon was so passionate about collecting. We want to say: people in Addison County are still passionate about collecting.”

The exhibit will also give collectors a unique opportunity to see their collections in a museum.

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“This is a way for them to share something they’re passionate about, that they love, but only their small circle of friends or family might ever see,” Manley said. “To get them out in the museum for all our visitors to enjoy is really special.”

Visitors are expected from all around the world during the summer and fall. The museum is considering featuring a map of the world to highlight these areas, along with a historical map of Addison County.

“It’s really an international exhibit coming from collections in Addison County,” Manley said.

Manley said she hopes that professors at the college, or students who come from Addison County whose families might collect, will consider lending an item to the exhibit.

To encourage any and all interested in the exhibit to visit, the museum will also host a “free Saturday” once a month.

More information about the exhibit, including the form for submitting objects for the exhibit can be found at <https://www.henrysheldonmuseum.org/addison-county-collects>.



Maya Heikkinen

Maya Heikkinen '24 (she/her) is an Editor at Large. She has previously served as a News editor, copy editor and staff writer. Maya is majoring in Conservation Biology, likely with a minor in Spanish, but is also passionate about writing. She is from Orcas Island, WA, and loves being immersed in forests, running, gardening, and hanging with plants and cats. In addition to The Campus, she is involved with WildMidd and SNEG. This past summer Maya worked for the Green Mountain Club and became allergic to insect stings.
