Scientific article

УДК 930.25+94(470)

DOI 10.28995/2073-0101-2021-1-193-204

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Volunteering in Preservation of Material Patrimony in Soviet Russia: Pages of History: Materials from the State Archive of the Russian Federation

Abstract

The article draws on extensive sources discovered by the author in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF) to reconstruct the history of volunteering in preservation of material patrimony of Russia in the 1960–1980s under the auspices of the All-Russian Society for the

Protection of Monuments of History and Culture and to investigate forms and methods of public conservation activities. The relevance of the problem is connected to the development of national volunteer movement in preservation of historical and cultural monuments, which coincided with a rise in the scholars' interest to volunteering in general. The author has identified archival documents, many of which are being introduced into scientific use for the first time. The article reviews the composition of archival documents in the GARF fond, substantiates the possibility of integrated approach to studying of documentary materials on the history of volunteering in conservation and restoration. Documents differ in their content and quite adequately cover the multifaceted activities, forms and methods of work of voluntary activists. The first group is associated with organizational and administrative documents. The second group includes sources of reporting documentation. Office correspondence is the third group of sources. The information potential of various types of documents has been investigated. The value of these materials for studying organization and substantive aspects of voluntary public participation in the conservation activities (restoration and conservation work, identifying, photographing, assessing the condition and usage of historical and architectural monuments, patronage work, inspection, etc.) differs greatly. The author has revealed the names of participants in restoration volunteer groups and associations. The article takes on a special meaning in the context of development and replication of public activities in the field of preservation of material patrimony, while taking into account the historical experience.

Keywords

Archival document, sources, volunteering in restoration and conservation, All-Russian Society for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments, public inspection.

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Submitted 14.08.2019, published (for citation):

GORLOVA, N. I. Stranitsy istorii volonterstva v sfere sokhraneniya material'nogo kul'turnogo naslediya v sovetskoi Rossii. Po materialam Gosudarstvennogo arkhiva Rossiiskoi Federatsii [Volunteering in Preservation of Material Patrimony in Soviet Russia: Pages of History: Materials from the State Archive of the Russian Federation. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik arhivista / Herald of an Archivist, 2021, no. 1, pp. 193-204. doi 10.28995/2073-0101-2021-1-193-204

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Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки [здесь](#) .