Historical Clothing and Textiles Coordinator

As part of the Historic Sites and Guest Experience Team, the Historical Clothing and Textiles Coordinator (HCTC) focuses on making and mending, cleaning and caring for historical reproduction costumes and household textiles in daily use on our living history sites.

We will provide on the job training in historically-appropriate techniques but you need to have costume/fashion production experience and/or training, perhaps through working in a similar role in a theater or other cultural organization. You should have an interest in dress history. Your creative spirit and positive attitude will enrich our Museum, build strong relationships with your coworkers, and impress our guests.

Primary Responsibilities and Duties

Reporting to the GEM - English Village, you will use your well-rounded, diverse costume skills in all aspects of wardrobe production and maintenance including but not limited to:

- Using industrial sewing equipment (machines, sergers, irons) and needle & thread to produce historical costumes and textiles. Most of our garments are machine-sewn and hand-finished where visible or necessary (e.g., buttonholes, eyelets, pick stitching, hemming).
- Measuring and fitting costume pieces on staff members. Altering stock garments after fitting.
- Evaluating designs, patterns, and techniques for their historical appropriateness before construction or repair.
- Assessing the condition of garments and textiles for issue, repair, and/or replacement.
- Repairing garments and textiles using such skills as patching and darning.
- Laundering garments and textiles as required using machines or by hand.
- Issuing to, intaking, and tracking items for staff members, as well as maintaining accurate records of departmental activities and inventory.
- Providing wardrobe support during film and media opportunities and public programming or outreach.
- Participating in the upkeep, cleanliness, and organization of wardrobe workspaces.
- Collaborating with both internal museum departments and volunteers and/or outside organizations.
- Other duties as assigned.

This outline description focuses on the primary duties of the position. It is not designed nor intended to include all duties and responsibilities inherent in satisfactory performance of the position. Management reserves the right to revise this job description from time to time as needed.

Qualifications: Experience, Knowledge, and Skills

- Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent experience related to hands-on costume or clothing production, costume technology, theatre, art/dress history, fashion, or the arts.
Prior work experience in a theatrical, film, historical costume shop (any position - first hand, cutter/draper, stitcher, wardrobe crew, student assistant, tailor, apprenticeship, etc.).
Must have excellent costume construction skills with a willingness to learn historical sewing techniques.
Hand-finishing skills, fitting, and alteration skills.
Familiarity with hand tools, sewing machines, washers, dryers, steamers, and irons.
Knowledge of and/or interest in historical dress.
Strong organizational skills.
Ability to work safely, cleanly, and efficiently.
Ability to work independently without direct supervision as well as collaboratively with others.
Reliability, dependability, punctuality, and patience.
Ability to follow directions. Attention to detail.
Fluency in English with the ability to communicate verbally and in writing.
Ability to apply learned information.

Preferred But Not Required
- Experience with 16th and/or 17th century costumes, garments, and/or dress history (Tudor, Elizabethan, Shakespearean, Stuart, etc.).
- Experience with leatherwork such as repairing split seams on shoes or stitching buckles onto leather belts.
- Familiarity with knitting and/or other costume or textile-related processes such as weaving, dyeing, spinning, braiding, button making, or wig making.
- Familiarity with blocking felt or knit hats/caps.
- Experience working with the public.

Physical Requirements and Work Environment

The physical demands outlined here are representative of those which must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. There can be significant repetitive or strenuous motion to accomplish certain tasks. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.
- Work sitting, standing, kneeling, or bent over, sometimes for extended periods of time.
- Must be capable of lifting and moving objects up to 20 pounds.
- Work is usually conducted in well-lit and climate controlled environments.
- The historic sites are outdoors and subject to a variety of weather conditions, in dusty or smoky environments, in poorly lit areas, near open fires, and/or in cramped or crowded places.
- Noise levels may vary from quiet to loud

Additional Requirements
- Occasional weekend and holiday work required.
- A portfolio demonstrating relevant work and skills such as costumes and accessories.