Mid-West Tool Collectors Association Curatorial Internship 2004

George Washington's Mount Vernon, Mount Vernon, VA

Mount Vernon, the home of George and Martha Washington, originally extended over eight thousand acres and was divided into five farms. The property remained in the Washington family until 1858, when it was purchased by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, a non-profit organization founded by Ann Pamela Cunningham in 1853 to “perpetuate the sacred memory of the ‘the Father of his Country’” and to “preserve the relics at Mount Vernon.” The current historic site encompasses George Washington’s original Mansion House Farm and consists of 500 acres.

Today, Mount Vernon welcomes more than 1 million visitors a year, and it is the responsibility of the Collections Department to ensure that the objects on view in the Mansion, its outbuildings, and the Museum are historically accurate and preserved for these visitors. The Curatorial collection is built around the documented household and personal possessions of George and Martha Washington. The Association’s mission is to show the Mansion and outbuildings as they were furnished in 1799. Through the generosity of the Mid-West Tool Collectors Association, Mount Vernon offers one summer internship to an individual interested in assisting with this preservation and accuracy mission. The successful candidate for the Mid-West Tool Collectors Association Curatorial Internship will assess the objects used in one of George Washington’s 18th century outbuildings. The Gardener’s House has been selected for study in the summer of 2004. Located on the courtyard, the Gardener’s House was originally constructed in the 1770s as a hospital for slaves. It was later used as a home for some of Washington’s hired white servants, including the gardener. The MWTCA intern will evaluate the household furnishing and tools used in this building, and will use the Mount Vernon library and archives to research those objects. The intern will also study the inventories of Mount Vernon taken after the deaths of George and Martha Washington, as well as the inventories of the Washingtons’ contemporaries, to determine what objects were more likely in the Gardener’s House in 1799. The intern will then synthesize his/her research to determine which objects should be on display in this outbuilding in order to demonstrate historical accuracy. He/she will then construct a wish list of those objects not currently represented in the Mount Vernon collection, and this list will be shared with the Mid-West Tool Collectors Association and Ladies Auxiliary.
Compensation and Hours:
The MWTCA Curatorial Intern will be provided with round trip travel to and from Washington, DC, a weekly stipend, and housing on George Washington’s estate for the 10 weeks of the internship period. The intern will be expected to work Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm during these 10 weeks.

Qualifications:
The successful MWTCA Curatorial Intern candidate should possess an interest in museum or historic site management, museum collections, or material culture studies. An undergraduate or graduate level major in minor in American History, American Studies, Museum Studies or Art History is required.

How to Apply:
By March 15, 2004 please send letter of interest, resume, and the contact information for three references to:
Gretchen Goodell, Assistant Curator
George Washington's Mount Vernon
P.O. Box 110
Mount Vernon, VA 22121
Fax: 703.799.8698
ggoodell@mountvernon.org

All applicants will be notified of the success of his/her application by April 2, 2004.