

Historic Deerfield, Inc. 2010 Summer Fellowship Program in Early American History and Material Culture

Contact: Joshua W. Lane, Curator of Furniture and Curator of Academic Programs,
Historic Deerfield, Inc., Deerfield MA 01342

Phone: (413) 775-7209

Email: lane@historic-deerfield.org

Website: www.historic-deerfield.org

Historic Deerfield, Inc. accepts 7 undergraduates enrolled as either juniors or seniors as of January 1, 2010. The program is intended for students in American Studies, Architecture, Archeology, Art and Art History, Design, History, Preservation and Museum Studies.

The Summer Fellowship Program is a 9-week residential living-and-learning opportunity at Historic Deerfield, Inc. in Deerfield Massachusetts. The 2010 program begins June 14 and ends August 15. Each fellow receives a non-monetary fellowship valued at \$7,500 that covers tuition, room and board and field trip expenses. A limited number of monetary grants ranging from \$500 to \$2000 are awarded to students with demonstrated need to help cover lost summer income.

Apply by February 26, 2010. Notification of acceptances will be announced in late March.

History and Material Culture Studies

Fellows participate in classroom seminars, walking tours and study-sessions in the museum houses led by Historic Deerfield's staff and visiting lecturers. Topics include dating New England architecture by details, history of daily life in New England as revealed in furniture, ceramics and textiles, the art and craft of gravestone carving, Native Americans in the Connecticut River Valley, understanding domestic space through probate inventories, the archaeological heritage of Deerfield, the Colonial Revival in New England, and the advantages and challenges of teaching early American history through objects. The program provides admission to the Dublin Seminar for New England Folk Life, held annually at Historic Deerfield; the 2010 Dublin Seminar topic is: "Dressing New England: Clothing, Fashion and Identity."

Museum Studies

Fellows learn about strategies for, and challenges of, exhibition development and public programming from Historic Deerfield's curatorial and museum education staff. From development, marketing and business office staff, they engage in issues of museum management and administration. Working with Historic Deerfield's professional guiding staff, Fellows offer guided tours of two historic houses. These guiding assignments enable fellows to study the houses and their furnishings up close, to interpret the American past through objects, and to meet visitors from throughout the nation and around the world.

Field Visits

Fellows participate in weekly field trips to other museums in New England such as: Old Sturbridge Village, Plimoth Plantation, Old Ship Meetinghouse, Roseland Cottage (an Historic New England property), the Mashantucket Pequot Museum, Strawberry Banke, Shelburne Museum, Mystic Seaport, the mansions of Newport, the Yale University Art Gallery and New Haven Colony Historical Society. During the final week of the program, Fellows travel to east coast museum such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Maymont Museum, Mount Vernon, Monticello, the National Museum of the American Indian, Winterthur Museum and Colonial Williamsburg. At each stop they meet with museum staff members for in-depth discussions about their interpretive philosophies and issues facing museums today.

Research and Writing

In order to build practical research and writing skills, Fellows write two papers: a short 5-10 page analysis of a recent museum acquisition (these studies provide the basis for a workshop in exhibition label-writing) and an extensive 15-20 page research essay based on primary textual sources and artifact in the collections of Historic Deerfield and the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. Both assignments introduce fellows to material culture studies and engage them in primary research on an aspect of regional history from the 17th to 20th centuries. Many Summer Fellowship papers have become the basis for senior theses and essays for publication.