

## **2023 BLBB CHARITABLE Internship Program at Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle** **Operated by Bucks County Historical Society**

### **Doylestown, Bucks County, PA**

The *BLBB CHARITABLE* Internship program at the Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle allows a dynamic group of students with varied interests, strengths, and goals to immerse themselves in an outstanding educational and professional environment.

Interns learn and work directly with museum professionals in a team-based, collaborative environment that offers experiential learning, mentoring benefits, and leadership building skills.

An integral part of the internship is the weekly Enrichment Program, where interns spend time with museum colleagues from across departments as well as community professionals, and learn about museum careers, experiences and responsibilities.

#### **Background:**

Located in Doylestown, Bucks County, PA, the Mercer Museum and Fonthill Castle are historic castles celebrating the legacy of Henry Chapman Mercer (1856-1930), American archaeologist, anthropologist, ceramicist and scholar. Both sites are operated by the Bucks County Historical Society.

The Mercer Museum, one of Bucks County's premier cultural attractions and a Smithsonian affiliate, features both local and national seasonal exhibits as well as a core museum collection of over 50,000 pre-Industrial tools. This permanent collection offers visitors a unique window into pre-Industrial America through sixty different crafts and trades, and is one of the world's most comprehensive portraits of American material culture. The museum also features a research library that is a center for local history related to Bucks County and the surrounding region, with its roots dating back to the founding of the Bucks County Historical Society in 1880.

Fonthill Castle was built between 1908-1912, and was the home of Henry Chapman Mercer. Mercer built Fonthill Castle as his home and as a showplace for his collection of tiles and prints. The castle serves as an early example of reinforced concrete and features forty-four rooms, over two hundred windows, and eighteen fireplaces. Fonthill Castle's interior features Mercer's renowned, hand crafted ceramic tiles designed at the height of the Arts and Crafts movement.





**Internship Timeline:** The internship takes place from Monday, June 5, 2023 until Friday, August 11, 2023, and is a full-time position at 40 hours per week.

The Bucks County Historical Society follows all state and local safety guidelines for COVID-19, and recognizes that the overall situation remains fluid and is subject to change.

**Intern Compensation:** \$3,000, disbursed in three equal installments throughout the summer (June 16, July 14, and August 11, 2023)

### **Application Requirements:**

Please select your internship area(s) of interest, in order of preference, and list your preference order in your email and cover letter. The three possible areas of interest are:

1. Education & Community Services
2. Archives
3. Exhibits

**All intern applications must be saved as a single PDF** and should contain the following:

- A letter of interest / cover letter
- A résumé
- A list of 2-3 professional references

The single PDF should be sent with the email subject line “2023 Summer Internship + [Insert Your Last Name]” to [info@mercermuseum.org](mailto:info@mercermuseum.org).

**Deadline:** Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 5pm

Applicants should possess the following qualifications (as well as any other qualifications mentioned in the individual intern categories below):

- Graduate studies students preferred
- Undergraduate degree or expected degree in history, material culture, education, humanities, museum studies, museum education, anthropology or related field.
- Demonstrated interest/experience in museums, exhibits, programs, production, education, and/or history
- Strong writing, research, organizational, interpersonal, communication and computer skills
- Ability to work both independently and in groups
- Affinity for working with the public
- Helpful, positive attitude for other duties as assigned
- Sense of humor greatly appreciated!

## Education & Community Services Interns

The position of Education & Community Services Intern specializes in facilitating innovative, informal learning opportunities for museum guests of all ages at the Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle.

The intern will participate in the production and execution of educational and community programs to promote formal and informal learning with the Department of Community Services team. The internship includes opportunities to work with a wide array of guests in varied capacities such as special community programs, such as the Old Fashioned Fourth of July at Fonthill Castle and Shakespeare at Fonthill Castle.



Each Education & Community Services Intern will be trained to facilitate hands-on educational programs, activities, demonstrations, and family-oriented events for guests, including our legacy summer program.

The 2023 Mercer Wizarding Academy will be one of the highlights of this internship. This museum summer program connects history, science, literature, and magic in a one-of-a-kind castle setting for ages 7-12. Interns take leadership roles in managing the program and youth attendees in “classes” such as *Potions*, *Defense Against the Dark Arts*, *Care of Magical Creatures*, *Herbology*, *Quidditch*, and more.



During the course of the internship, interns will also be assigned an individual project based on organizational needs and the skills and interests of the individual.

This internship is ideal for students contemplating a career in museum education, program development, teaching, and/or youth development.





## **Archives Intern – Manuscript Collections:**

The 2023 Archives Intern will minimally process two manuscript collections that are part of the Mercer Museum Research Library's recent acquisitions.

The first collection is the Susan L. George Leidy papers. Susan Leidy was originally from Riegelsville, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. She served as an Army nurse in World War II at the 107th Evacuation Hospital. She toured overseas in Northern France and other parts of Europe. Her papers include ephemera from her time in Europe, photographs, and her original service records.

The second manuscript collection is the Burmeister family papers which primarily document the Tabor Home for Children. The Tabor Home was located in Doylestown Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. It served as a home for underprivileged or disadvantaged children starting in 1907.

This collection contains photographs of the children and the Tabor Home staff, annual reports, programs, and other ephemera related to the home and the Burmeister family.



This summer internship will be supervised by the Bucks County Historical Society's Director of Library & Archives, and will include processing the two collections according to a predetermined plan.

Processing includes re-housing, inventorying, labeling, and creating a finding aid. This finding aid will then be input into the archives collection management system, *ArchivEra*.

The project will require the intern to learn the Library's collections database, and adhere to contemporary archival best practices. The ideal candidate is a student pursuing an advanced degree in library and archival management, or related field. In addition to processing and re-housing, work may also involve climbing ladders, lifting 50 lb. boxes or other objects, cleaning shelves, and other physically demanding tasks.



## **Exhibits Intern – Mercer Museum Original Core: Exhibit Enhancement Project**

The core exhibits in the Mercer Museum “castle” retain much of their original character and appearance – as when first installed under the direction of museum founder Henry Chapman Mercer in 1916. While some changes in labeling, materials and lighting have been introduced over the past half-century, the density of artifacts and eccentric display methods remain key elements of the museum’s preserved interior. Despite the gradual introduction of labels in most of the museum’s warren of small rooms and alcoves over the past few decades, there are still a number of exhibit rooms that have little-to-no descriptive labeling. As a result, visitors lack information as they view and seek to understand the objects displayed in these spaces. The 2023 Curatorial Intern will be tasked with developing a new labeling scheme for at least two of these under-interpreted exhibit rooms.



The Curatorial Intern will work closely with the Mercer Museum’s VP of Collections, as well as with other members of the curatorial and collections team, to research, write and prepare plans for the introduction of new descriptive labels.

This will include working directly with the collections exhibited in the two exhibit rooms, and developing ideas about how to make those collections – and the traditional crafts or trades they represent – more engaging and intelligible to visitors.

The ideal candidate is a student pursuing an advanced degree in Museum Studies or Public History, preferably with some experience in the development of museum exhibits. The intern should also possess some expertise in handling cultural artifacts and experience with collections databases. Existing knowledge of pre-industrial American tools and technologies is a plus.

