Care and Preservation of Textiles
Topics

- Care/Cleaning
- Labeling
- Storage
- Exhibit
- Grants
Care/Cleaning

• Use low-suction vacuum with screen
  – Standard screening, tape ends with masking tape

• If sturdy, can wash on delicate/hand wash cycle with Orvis or Ivory Snow
Labeling

- Write accession number on twill tape or paper hang tag and affix with cotton thread
Storage—Environment

- Try to keep constant temperature and relative humidity levels
  - Ideal temperature: 60-65 degrees, max 70
  - Ideal relative humidity: 40-50%; range of 35-55% OK
- Low light levels—ideally no light
- Keep dust down
Storage—Methods

- Flat
- Hanging—use padded hangers
- Folded and boxed: make sure to pad out creases
- Rolled and hanging: interleave with tissue, cover with Tyvek or unbleached muslin
Buffered vs. Unbuffered

Use buffered tissue/boxes for:
- Cellulose fibers—cotton, linen, flax, jute

Use unbuffered tissue/boxes for:
- Wool and silk

When in doubt, use unbuffered materials. If you have a buffered box and need unbuffered, wrap the items in unbuffered tissue.
Exhibits

• Control light levels—no direct sunlight
• Use motion detectors or simply turn off gallery lights when there are no visitors
• Drape items that are light-sensitive—remove drape for visitors
• Make sure the objects are properly supported
  – Slant boards
  – Padded hanger, mannequin
  – Hanging over a tube
  – Hanging using Velcro strip
  – Folded
• Rotate items regularly so they can ‘rest’
Grants Assistance

• Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grants (Legacy Grants)
  – Manual online at www.mnhs.org/legacygrants
  – Grants available for multiple collections projects
    • Survey, Inventory, Cataloging, Storage/Rehousing, Conservation, Pest Management, HVAC, Lighting, Security, ADA Accessibility, Disaster Plan
  – No deadlines set yet; waiting on appropriation
  – Updates on website, Local History News
Grant Application Q & A

• Project Description
  – What exactly will you do? Be specific—What types of textiles? How many? What percentage of the collection?
  – For storage/rehousing: what size of storage materials? What kind of shelving? Why? How many storage materials vs. how many objects?
  – Needs to inspire confidence in the reviewer that the project is well designed and appropriate.

• Need and Rationale
  – Why this project? Why now?
  – Long range plan, museum assessment, etc.
Grant Application Q & A

• Work Plan and Timetable
  – What is the timeline for your project?
  – Build in extra time—keep in mind the project can’t start the moment you mail the application!
  – Work Plan must show how the project meets standards

• Project Personnel
  – Who will be doing the work? What are their qualifications?
  – Include resumes or job descriptions/desired skills
  – Demonstrate procurement—have bids/quotes on file
Grant Application Q & A

• Evaluation
  – What are the outcomes?
    • How much of the collections will be preserved?
    • Volunteers or staff are better able to care for the collection with a prioritized list for collections care, conservation, etc.
    • In what way will the public have better access?
  – Measure with outputs
    • Percentage of collection affected
    • Numbers of people who will use the collection, etc.
Grant Application Q & A

• Enduring Value and Sustainability
  – Remember—Legacy Amendment = *preserve and enhance access to Minnesota’s history and its cultural and historical resources*
  – Who will continue to care for the collections in the future?
  – How will your organization fund collections care?
  – What avenues will you use to ensure public access?

• Budget
  – Include catalog product numbers, prices, quantities
  – Be specific
Resources

- MHS Tech Talks:  
  [http://www.mnhs.org/about/publications/techtalk.html](http://www.mnhs.org/about/publications/techtalk.html)

- NPS Conserve O Grams:  

- NPS Museum Handbook:  

- Local History Office, 651-259-3460 (David) or 651-259-3459 (Melinda)

- Local History News enewsletter
Questions?