

Conococheague Institute Historical Interpretation Standards

Mission:

The purpose of Historical Interpretation of the Conococheague Institute (CI) is to educate the public concerning the lives, trades, and services of the civilian population in the area surrounding CI through accurate portrayal of aforementioned persons. Historical interpretation will be based on extensive research and documentation.

Authenticity:

CI continually strives to provide the most accurate representation of the past, while recognizing limitations of attempting to recreate the past. Clothing, equipment, daily actions, and all other aspects of interpretive activity will be based on historic documentation.

During public hours, public interpreters of CI will remain in an interpreter's mindset throughout all public hours to educate the public in an open, friendly, and engaging manner. Interpreters will remain within the interpreted time period during the entire duration of the period, including during off hours only in the company of other interpreters. Modern items must be kept minimal and must be hidden from view.

To maintain authenticity for all participants, after-hours activities should conform to authenticity standards.

Standards Adoption and Approval Process:

The Historical Interpretation standards of CI are not a means of preventing participation; it is a means of promoting interpretive standards across the organization through constant research.

All participants are required to submit a picture of clothing and personal interpretive items to CI prior to participation. This includes existing Interpreters with new clothing items or interpretive programs. CI will review clothing, personal items, and equipment, interpretive programs, etc. for historic accuracy.

We welcome new research and developments from our volunteers. These guidelines are a starting point from which new research will constantly evolve.

Alternatives:

If you cannot dress in authentic period clothing it doesn't mean your knowledge of the time period is lacking. Time and finances can play a key part. Interpretation can be just as valuable and credible if done in modern clothing in a docent role. If a world renowned lecturer offered to do a talk on women's roles in early American, but only had a Pirate Wench costume from Party City: The site would ask them to talk in modern clothing. Anything less would detract from the presentation.

Equality and Understanding:

Following modern museum guidelines, CI requires volunteers portraying a specific race to be a certified member of that race. Cultural appropriation of black and red face is detrimental to our educational values and to the cultures being interpreted. We do not seek to offend or upset any cultural group through our interpretation.

As above though, if someone has the knowledge, the same information presented in a modern docentry role gives both the educational value and credibility.

Basic Guidelines

Overall Authenticity

All aspects of an Interpreter's kit i.e. clothing, personal items, accouterments, food, activities, etc. are expected to conform to authenticity standards. The main interpretive period of the CI surrounds the lower to middling classes during the Mid 18th Century (1730-1780); however, CI will interpret other periods. The authenticity standards outlined in this document will pertain to the mid-18th century period only. We will continue to develop guidelines for other areas as our scope broadens.

Men's Clothing: Men's clothing should be typical of a lower or middling person of the mid-18th century. Clothing should be of the appropriate age, properly fitted, and of appropriate textiles of the person portrayed. See further details below.

Women's Clothing: Women's clothing should be typical of a lower or middling person of the mid-18th century. Clothing should be of the appropriate age, properly fitted, and of appropriate textiles of the person portrayed. See further details below.

Children's Clothing: Accuracy in children's clothing is continual concern as they grow rapidly and some items are not available. Reasonable concessions in accuracy will be made for children. Clothing should be of the appropriate age, properly fitted, and of appropriate textiles of the person portrayed. See further details below.

Modern Items and Fashions

- Eyewear: All persons requiring assistance with eyewear are encouraged to wear contact lenses as spectacles in the 18th century were not common for daily use. Original or reproduction 18th eyewear is acceptable but discouraged. As per **ADA compliance** if modern glasses are required for your health they may be worn, but will require further explanation to the Visitor
- Jewelry: No modern jewelry or watches. Watches will not be worn on the waistcoat.
- Facial Hair: Facial hair is inappropriate for nearly all men of the 18th century. Facial hair is only acceptable for very specific impressions. Clean Shaven is best. Stubble is ok. Unkempt beards work better for itinerant labourers than a clearly modern style. European facial hair can fit if being portrayed properly. The norm is always better than the exception.
- Modern hair dyes: Modern hair dyes must not be visible and should be covered with a hat or cap. Visible modern hair dyes are unacceptable.
- Modern cosmetics: Modern cosmetics and painted finger or toe nails are unacceptable.
- Tattoos: Modern tattoo designs and colors must not be visible and should be covered. Historic tattoos are acceptable for appropriate impressions and must be of documented design and context. Visible, non-18th century tattoos are unacceptable.

Materials:

The materials that we use for our clothing are not just for authenticity, but also safety. Natural fibers are less likely to combust or, in the case of synthetics, melt. It is important to remember that when choosing or making historic clothing that you as the maker/shopper pick materials that are appropriate for both the period and your own safety. **For this reason we ask that no synthetic fibers be worn for historic programming at CI.**

How we rate what we wear

C.I. uses four ratings to rate the accuracy of impressions and garments being worn. They are:

- **Exceptional:** We should all try to fall under this category as it is the most authentic representation of period dress. In this category clothing and accessories are handmade and based off of the most contextually appropriate primary sources.
- **Acceptable:** This category refers to garments and items that may be machine made, but all visible details are finished by hand to make them appear appropriate. A garment can be made to look handmade by redoing the button holes or by adjusting certain details
- **Discouraged:** These are items that can be worn in small numbers, but lack characteristics that make them wholly authentic. While these items can be worn, alternatives should be considered
- **Unacceptable:** These are items that should not be seen on site. Either they don't align with the mission of the site or are not authentic in their make. **The site asks that you respect our standards when interpreting at CI.**

Material Culture Guidelines for Female Interpreters

Undergarments:

Shift:

Exceptional: Completely hand-sewn shift made of 3-5 oz. white linen. Sleeves should have fitted wristbands that are closed with sleeve buttons or ties. Wristbands should be stitched and can be plain or ruffled. The neck should be fitted without a drawstring. Very poor women sometimes made shift bodies of unbleached (oznabrig) linen with white sleeves.

Acceptable: Same as above, excepting that the garment is hand finished with machined internal, long seams.

Discouraged: Completely machine sewn shift. Shifts made of cotton Unacceptable:

Modern fibres, or other undocumentable fabric. Colored or printed shift.

Stockings:

Exceptional: Shaped, handmade wool or thread over-the-knee stocking with a stitched back seam and common heel of a documentable color found in the 18th century. This includes white, off-white, grey, brown, green, blue, and "clouded."

Acceptable: Machine made back seamed stockings in wool, linen, or cotton in appropriate colors.

Discouraged: Machine made wool, linen, or cotton stockings without a back seam or common heel. Machine made clocked stockings of appropriate color and textile.

Unacceptable: Machine made synthetic stockings. Tube stockings or socks. Knee socks. Modern hosiery. Striped stockings.

Garters:

Exceptional: Hand-woven garters, twill woolen tape, Dutch linen tape, hand loomed tapes, worn above or just below the knee.

Unacceptable: Leather garters with buckles. This is a male clothing accessory and should not be worn by female interpreters.

Stays:

Exceptional: Properly fitted hand sewn, fully- or partially-boned stays with exterior fabric of wool or linen boned in baleen, wood cane, or German boning. Green, brown, blue, and yellows being the most common colors. Stays must be front or front and back lacing. Hand sewn jumps for manual labor are encouraged. Properly fitted and constructed leather stays are permitted for low-class impressions.

Acceptable: Properly fitted machine sewn fully- or partially-boned stays with hand finishing. Exterior fabric of wool or linen boned in baleen, wood cane, or German boning. Green, brown, blue, and yellows being the most common colors. Stays must be front or front and back lacing. Hand sewn jumps for manual labor are encouraged.

Discouraged: Modern Bras - If your figure is developed enough to wear a bra but you cannot wear stays due to medical reasons please wear a snug fitting low line sports bra (with tummy support). This will make your figure look less modern.

Unacceptable: No stays (unless part of a unique documentable impression), stays with metal eyelets (unless non-visible only), any non-18th historical or fantasy corsetry. Stays made of synthetic material.

Pockets:

Exceptional: Hand sewn pockets of a documentable size and shape. Pockets may be made of documented linen, dimity, diaper, quilted, wool, printed cotton, lindsey woolsey, embroidered, or pieced in a pattern. Pockets may be bound or unbound. Pockets should be suspended on a linen or woolen tape individually or as a pair. Pockets should be worn over stays and under outer garments.

Acceptable: Machine sewn, hand finished pockets of documentable size and shape. Materials and wear are the same as above.

Discouraged: Machine sewn pockets

Unacceptable: pockets made of modern (synthetic, upholstery, etc.) fabric or non-documented printed cottons. Pockets worn as an outer garment.

Outer Garments:

Gown:

Exceptional: Completely hand sewn and properly fit gown with back pleats, stomacher, and robings (English gown) in appropriate worsted wool, lindsey woolsey, linen, Virginia cloth, or documented cotton print.

Acceptable: Hand finished and properly fit gown with back pleats, stomacher, and robings (English gown) with only the non-visible, long seams machine sewn. Gowns may be of appropriate worsted wool, lindsey woolsey, linen, Virginia cloth, or documented cotton print.

Discouraged: Completely machine sewn gown, gowns made without back pleating,

Riding habits.

Unacceptable: gowns of synthetic fiber or non-documentable cotton prints. Gowns that do not fit properly

Bedgown/Jacket:

Exceptional: Completely handsewn bedgown or jacket of documentable pattern in appropriate worsted wool, lindsey woolsey, linen, Virginia cloth, or documented cotton print.

Acceptable: Hand finished bedgown or jacket of a documentable pattern with only the non-visible, long seams machine sewn, made of appropriate worsted wool, lindsey woolsey, linen, Virginia cloth, or documented cotton print.

Discouraged: Completely machine sewn Bedgown or Jacket.

Unacceptable: Synthetic fibers or non-documentable prints.

Petticoats:

Exceptional: Completely hand sewn petticoats of documentable worsted wool, linsey woolsey, linen, flannel, cloth, Marseilles cloth, or hand-quilted flannel, worsted, linen or silk. Documented printed cotton petticoats may be worn with a gown of the same print. Petticoats should be pleated, strung from linen or woolen tape, and should have a slit opening on each side. Petticoat length should range from the top of the foot to about 2 inches above the ankle. Petticoats may have a plain or bound hem.

Acceptable: Hand finished petticoats with non-visible long seams machine sewn only. Petticoats should be of the same textile and construction mentioned above.

Discouraged: Entirely machine sewn petticoats.

Unacceptable: Petticoats of synthetic fiber or undocumentable cotton prints. Drawstring petticoats.

Aprons:

Exceptional: Hand sewn linen apron in documentable check, stripe, or solid. Hand sewn worsted aprons of the same manufacture of linen. Aprons should be stroke gathered, and fasted at the waist with a narrow linen or handloomed tape.

Discouraged: Machine sew apron

Unacceptable: Aprons of cotton, printed fabrics, synthetic fibers, silk. Pleated or drawstring aprons.

Shoes:

Exceptional: Handmade, bespoke turned shoes of leather or fabric with a forward squash heel. Handmade bespoke men's shoes will work depending on the impression. Shoes should be fastened with a buckle or the straps tied with a ribbon or string. No shoes for lower impressions.

Acceptable: Machine made turned shoes of the style outlined above. The Fugawee

Connie is the best commercially available option. The American Duchess Kensington or Frasier are acceptable, but often do not last in rough terrain.

Unacceptable: Any 19th century shoes, laced shoes, ankle boots, any modern shoes.

Cloak:

Exceptional: Hand sewn cloak in wool cloth, plush, or superfine. Gathered hood may be lined in silk, wool or linen. Edges may be faced or bound in wool tape. Cloak should be closed using a documentable hook and eye or ties.

Acceptable: Hand finished cloak with machine-sewn long seams of above textile and construction.

Discouraged: Machine sewing cloaks.

Unacceptable: Blended woolen cloaks, synthetic fabrics, modern, Victorian, or fantasy cloaks. Modern clasps or undocumented closures.

Headware:

Caps:

Exceptional: Completely hand sewn cap made of white linen, cotton organdy, or silk organdy. Caps may be winged, with lappets, or pleated with the bag height at the crown. Caps may be worn with or without a ribbon. Hair should be your own and confined and styled neatly within the cap in an 18th century manner.

Discouraged: Machine sewn caps

Unacceptable: Printed or colored caps. "Mob caps." Undocumentable cap trim. Visible unnatural dyed hair or synthetic wigs. No cap.

Hats:

Exceptional: Chip or straw flat hat. Wool or beaver felt hats of the same design with round crown. Straw hats may be uncovered or covered in silk. Hats may be curled at the front or both the front and back. Ties should originate from the crown and all trims should be hand sewn of documentable materials.

Acceptable: Hats being worn by certain cultural or religious groups like Welsh women wearing old round hats etc... but must be contextually relevant for the impression

Unacceptable: Hats worn without a cap. Wearing a flat hat with the brim pinned to the crown in the back. Ties going over the brim to make a tunnel. Floral decorations on the hat or machine applied trim. Synthetic ribbons or trim.

Bonnets:

Exceptional: Hand sewn bonnets of appropriate pattern to the time period. Bonnets of the mid-18th century have smaller and flatter crowns than those of the latter part of the century. Most bonnets were silk and black, but did exist in blue, green, and white.

Unacceptable: Bonnets worn without a cap. High and large crowned bonnets of later

periods. Bonnets of undocumented or synthetic textiles..

Accessories:

Handkerchief:

Exceptional: Narrowly hand hemmed square or rectangular piece of cotton, linen, or china silk in documentable colors, prints, or patterns. Linen or cotton should be very fine if white. White is by far what appears to be the most common in the period. Color resist dyed and printed cotton handkerchiefs were common and primarily worn with solid color gowns.

Handkerchiefs may be tucked into the neckline or outside of the gown to form a triangle at the waist.

Unacceptable: No handkerchief, synthetic fabrics, undocumented prints, modern prints, heavy fabric

Jewelry:

Exceptional: No jewelry. Simple wedding band of silver or brass. Documentable posey and trade rings. Choker of silk ribbon.

Unacceptable: Modern jewelry, jewelry non documentable to your social class.

Carrying Items:

Exceptional: Split, willow, or reed basket of period form and design (no ornamental colorings). Reed frails. Handsewn linen wallet of utilitarian linen.

Discouraged: Machine Sewn wallet.

Unacceptable: Modern baskets, wallets made of fabric other than linen.

Spectacles:

Exceptional: None. Wear contact lenses. Spectacles in the 18th century were primarily worn for close work and do not appear in most imagery.

Acceptable: Original 18th century frames or reproduction frames with appropriate round ear pieces fitted with new prescription lenses. Reproduction glasses should have any modern finishes removed.

Discouraged: Modern glasses for Medical Necessity.

Unacceptable: colored lenses, sunglasses.

Material Culture Guidelines for Male Interpreters

Facial Hair

Facial hair does exist in the 18th century in specific contexts. It appears in art and descriptions; however, terminology and context of facial hair is very specific and does not always align with modern diction. A few acknowledges facts on facial hair in the 18th century:

- The term “beard” was not used as it is today. It often referred to noticeable stubble which could be used to identify a runaway or deserter.

- Mustaches existed only in specific military occurrences and were limited to a uniform regulation of specified regiments or sub-groups within the regiment. Often these mustaches were fake and made of applied blackball to the lip, furthering the personal stigma of facial hair in the 18th century.
- Beards that are depicted in 18th century artwork are typically the mark of a specified social stigma, such as a fugitive, physical or mental handicap, a destitute person, or an unconventional religious faith.
- Beards mentioned in the description of some 18th century Pennsylvania German farmers in a unique regional context and dress.

Undergarments

Shirts:

Exceptional: Completely hand sewn white, off-white, checked, or striped linen of a documented pattern. Wristbands should be fitted and should not exceed 1 inch in width. Wristband should be closed with sleeve buttons or a single thread or Dorset button. Shoulder straps should be narrow. Collar should be fitted and closed with thread or Dorset button.

Acceptable: Hand finished shirt with machined long seams of the same textile and pattern of above.

Discouraged: Completely machine sewn shirt. Machine Sewn Buttonholes

Unacceptable: Shirts made of cotton, printed fabrics, or undocumented checks, such as “windowpane” patterns. Wristbands exceeding 1 inch in width, bone, horn, or plastic buttons.

Stockings:

Exceptional: Shaped, handmade wool or thread over-the-knee stocking with a stitched back seam and common heel of a documentable color found in the 18th century. This includes white, off-white, grey, brown, green, blue, and “clouded.”

Acceptable: Machine made back seamed stockings in wool, linen, or cotton in appropriate colors.

Discouraged: Machine made wool, linen, or cotton stockings without a back seam or common heel. Machine made clocked stockings of appropriate color and textile.

Unacceptable: Machine made synthetic stockings. Tube stockings or socks. Knee socks. Modern hosiery. Striped stockings.

Garters:

Exceptional: Hand-woven garters, twill woolen tape, Dutch linen tape, hand loomed tapes, worn above or just below the knee. Leather garters with buckles.

Outerwear

Coat:

Exceptional: Well-fitted, hand sewn coat or jacket made of documentable wool or linen fabric. Coats should be of the mid-century style so that it fully closes in the front and the

panels are distributed in thirds and made using proper period techniques. Skirt length may vary from mid-thigh to now lower than the bottom of the breeches. Sleeves should end approximately 2 inches above the wrist. Buttons should be cloth covered, thread covered, bone/horn shanked, or metal of an appropriate design and material. Coats should be lined in shalloon, serge, baize, or silk, or may be unlined. **Linen farmers' frocks (smocks) may be worn in limited numbers and proper context.**

Acceptable: Same as above with machine sewn interior stitches. All visible stitching should be done by hand.

Discouraged: Coats of Best or Acceptable category lined in linen. Machine sewn visible (buttonholes etc)

Unacceptable: Overly large, long, or unfitted coats. Bag-lined garments. Military coats or hunting shirts. Coats of later periods. Garments made of brocade, synthetic, upholstery fabrics, or any other undocumentable textile. Drilled hole horn or bone buttons. Leather “long hunter” or “rendezvous” coats, fringe.

Waistcoat:

Exceptional: Well fitted, hand sewn made of documentable wool or linen fabric cut in the style of the mid-18th century. Skirts should be closed and end around the top of the inseam. Waistcoats may be single or double breasted in documentable patterns and may be sleeved with the same or contrasting fabric. Buttons should be cloth covered, thread covered, bone/horn shanked, or metal of an appropriate design and material.

Acceptable: Same as above with machine sewn interior stitches. All visible stitching should be done by hand. Sleeved waistcoats as an outer garment.

Discouraged: All Machine Sewn Garments

Unacceptable: Waistcoats with no, overly long, or cutaway skirts. Bag lined waistcoats.. Garments made of brocade, synthetic, upholstery fabrics, or any other undocumentable textile. Drilled hole horn or bone buttons.

Leg Wear:

Exceptional: Properly fitted, hand sewn leather, wool, or linen breeches with a fall or fly front. Breeches should be fitted throughout the leg and end with a knee band no more than 2 inches below the base of the knee. Kneebands should fasten either with a buckle or ties. **Linen or wool trowsers.**

Acceptable: Same as above with machine sewn interior stitches. All visible stitching should be done by hand. Breeches with button closures on the kneeband.

Discouraged: Completely machine sewn garments

Unacceptable: Baggy, unfit, or overly long breeches. Leather “long hunter” or “rendezvous” breeches or trowzers, fringe. Breech clouts and leggings.. Garments made of brocade, synthetic, upholstery fabrics, or any other undocumentable textile. Drilled hole horn or bone buttons.

Shoes:

Exceptional: Handmade, bespoke shoes of leather. Shoes should be fastened with a

buckle or the straps tied with a ribbon or string. No shoes for lower impressions.

Acceptable: Machine made shoes of the style outlined above. Shoes from Robert Land, or the Fugawee Ligonier or Concord with cut down tongue are acceptable.

Unacceptable: Any 19th century shoes, laced shoes, ankles boots, any modern shoes.

Accessories:

Neckwear:

Exceptional: Handkerchief or roller of solid, striped, or checked linen with a hand-stitched hem. Solid colored silk handkerchiefs, cotton handkerchief in period block prints or resist dyes. Neckwear should be commensurate with social class portrayed.

Unacceptable: Undocumented print or patterns, synthetic textiles. Military stocks, neckwear outside of social class, no neckwear.

Hats/Caps:

Exceptional: Black round blocked wool, fur, or beaver hat in black, fully or partially lined with line or silk. Hats may have small plain round brims (2-4 inches) or be cocked or styled in the manner of the mid-18th century. Brims should not exceed 5 inches at any part. Knit Monmouth caps in solid or striped wools. Linen tube caps may be worn while laboring.

Discouraged: Oval blocked hats of the Best category. Cockades except those being worn as a volunteer signifier.

Unacceptable: Military hats, Straw hats, Hats with flamboyant decoration (feathers, animal hides, etc.) Four seam linen caps. Cocked hats of later styles.

Carrying Items

Exceptional: Handsewn linen wallet of utilitarian linen. Hands.

Acceptable: Hand Finished linen wallet. Handsewn linen knapsack of the Uhl pattern.

Discouraged: Military knapsacks, painted knapsacks, haversacks

Unacceptable: Modern bags. Carpet bags. Trash bags.

Spectacles:

Exceptional: None. Wear contact lenses. Spectacles in the 18th century were primarily worn for close work and do not appear in most imagery.

Acceptable: Original 18th century frames or reproduction frames with appropriate round ear pieces fitted with new prescription lenses. Reproduction glasses should have any modern finishes removed.

Discouraged: Modern eyewear for medical reasons

Unacceptable: colored lenses, sunglasses.

Jewelry:

Exceptional: No jewelry. Simple wedding band of silver or brass. Documentable posey

and trade rings. Choker of silk ribbon.

Unacceptable: Modern jewelry, jewelry non documentable to your social class.

Watches:

Exceptional: Original 18th century or aesthetically similar key-wind watch with a metal or ribbon fob and keys. Watch worn in waistband pocket of breeches

Acceptable: Modern pocket watch with appropriate equipage kept in waistband pocket of breeches and hidden from spectators.

Unacceptable: Wristwatches. Watches kept in waistcoat pockets, waistcoat chains

Hair:

Exceptional: Natural long hair, hair cut in 18th century mullet, cropped hair in 18th century style of lower classes.

Acceptable: Wig of natural hair (if portraying upper class), modern scissor hair styles

Discouraged: Recently done modern hair styles with clippers. Try to get a haircut no sooner than a week before an event if your stylist uses clippers.

Unacceptable: Modernly colored hair, blatantly non-period appropriate hairstyles (undercuts, mohawks, etc.)