The **Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center** is a study center for understanding historic costumes and textiles. It was created in 1992 under the direction of the Nevada State Museum and Nevada Historical Society. The Marjorie Russell Center is composed of the costume and textile collections of both founding institutions as well as the Jessie Pope costume collection from the University of Nevada, Reno School of Home Economics. The size of the collections is approximately 10,000 artifacts. Most significant is the women's collection which ranges from the eighteenth century to current day fashions. Other strengths are the quilt collection, hats, children's wear, political and ceremonial dress, flags, banners, and military and men's wear.

Left: Curator of Clothing and Textiles Jan Loverin delights a group of visitors on a behind-the-scenes group tour. Photo by Jeanette McGregor.

The purpose of the Marjorie Russell Center is to enhance the awareness of fashion history as it relates to society, history, and material culture. Dress is an important symbol, communicating historic trends, economic status of the wearer, and various ideals of beauty. Important artifacts within the center include:

Virtual Exhibits

- A Delphos gown by Mariano Fortuny
- Leisure wear, including tea gowns, a Mother Hubbard, wrappers and housecoats
- Examples of turn-of-the-century ready-to-wear
- Chinese embroidered garments
- A Daughter of Charity habit
- Artistic dress and shoes
- Entertainment costumes from the gaming industry
- State and federal flags
- First Ladies ball gowns
- Beaded handbag made for Nevada's admission to the Union
- Governor Bob Miller's cowboy boots

Not only is the center a repository for artifacts, but it is also a research facility, providing technical data on various aspects of historic costumes and textiles. From exhibition and display work to how-to preserve family heirlooms, the curatorial staff offers to assist in researching technical problems and will refer patrons to trained textile experts. The research library features primary and secondary sources which are helpful to historic re-enactors, rural museum staff, and the general public.

Educational opportunities are available through student internships at the University of Nevada, Reno. Interns will gain experience working in the collections, investigating similarities and differences between artifacts, interpreting the past through dress, and defining the role of fashion within sub-cultures. Visiting scholars also use the center as a tool for historical research in the West.

The Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center is named after Marjorie Ann Guild Russell. Mrs. Russell was a native Nevadan, born and raised in Yerington and Carson City. She was a former First Lady of Nevada with her husband, Charles Hinton Russell serving as Governor from 1950 to 1958. The Russells had five children: Clark, Virginia, Craig, David and Todd.

Mrs. Russell served as a member of the Nevada State Museum's Board of Trustees from 1977-1992, where she was an active supporter of the clothing and textile collection. Mrs.

Russell acted as a liaison between the community and the museum, promoting many of our events and donating many of her personal items to the collection.

The center is open to the public by appointment only. The curatorial staff provides programs on diverse aspects of fashion history.

For more information, please call 775.687.6173 or fax 775.684.8315.

The Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center is a part of the Nevada State Museum. As a state funded institution, private donations are important, allowing the center to accomplish many of its goals.