
5 Shopping

Going Through Your Closet

You can find clothing items almost everywhere. The first place to look is in your closets and drawers. Take inventory. For example:

- ☐ Do you have shoes that are suitable? Stockings or socks?
- ☐ Do you have a shirt or blouse, trousers or skirt that will work? How about ties, aprons, belts or braces, and hats?
- ☐ Do you have fabric you can use to make an outfit? Trims for hats?

Once you know what you need, you can either go to a seamstress or tailor, or go shopping at stores, garage and estate sales, flea markets, and through mail-order catalogs. It's fun to go shopping with a friend; two heads usually come up with more creative ideas than one.

Note *If you are unsure whether an item is appropriate or not, feel free to give me a call and ask before you buy! My home number is (408)255-5216.*

Seamstresses, Tailors, and Dressmakers

A seamstress, dressmaker, or tailor can make most items of clothes for you and can help you make and design a hat. Having a professional make your clothes can be expensive, so be sure you're going to get what you want. You'll get the best results if you show the sewer a picture of what you want. Be firm about you find acceptable or unacceptable. Don't be intimidated by the sewer's own views of what is correct. After reading this paper, you probably know more about what is correct than the sewer. Besides, you're paying a lot of money for the outfit and you should be happy with the results.

Stores

There are oodles and oodles of stores to choose from and all depends on what you want to buy or make.

For "do it yourselfers", fabric stores carry patterns (see Appendix B), fabrics, trims, and some hat forms (in the bridal section). Craft stores carry trims and materials for hat making: beads, birds, feathers, ribbon, paint, glue. Craft shops also sell plastic parasol frames. Don't use these frames: they usually look like plastic no matter what you do to decorate them. Costume shops and dance supply stores often carry bead appliques and hat forms. Ardenwood volunteers can get discounts at some fabric stores. Contact Frank Jahn or Fran Bartosek for information.

Department stores carry women's blouses and accessories that are appropriate for the 1890s. Look for lace collars, dickeys, hair bows (also can be used as neck bows), jewelry, belts, and hats that might be adaptable. Men can find braces and four-in-hand ties in department and men's stores. Men can also find shirts that are suitable if covered by a waistcoat.

Shoe departments and stores carry some shoes that can be worn on the farm. Costume shops carry hats such as bowlers, top hats, and boaters.

Thrift stores have lots of odds and ends such as petticoats, purses, ties, old suit jackets, blouses, shirts, waistcoats, women's vests, handkerchiefs, boy's pants that can be made into knickers, and many other items. One male docent found a suit jacket with small lapels that was perfect for Ardenwood. All he had to do was add the top button so that the jacket fastened close to the collar.

Antique shops and vintage clothing stores are also good but more expensive places to shop. Two vintage clothing stores of particular note in the East Bay are:

Grande Illusions

938 B Street

Hayward, CA 94541

(415)537-5595

Grande Illusions sells millinery goods, vintage clothing and accessories, some books, and some historic patterns. Grande Illusions also offers classes in hat-making, bustle and parasol making, and ribbon work.

Lacis

2982 Adeline St.

Berkeley, CA 94703

(415)843-7178

Lacis specializes in antique lace and textiles, and books on clothing and textile crafts. Lacis also carries some vintage purses and underclothing for women. If you are making an extra special dress for Ardenwood and want to spend some money on lace bead appliques, and buttons from the '90s, this is the place to go. Of special interest to those who would like to preserve their vintage items: Lacis carries acid-free boxes and tissue paper.

**Garage and Estate
Sales**

Garage and estate sales are fun. For the best selection, get to the sales early. Estate sales are generally better than garage sales. I've found hats, gloves, scarves, trims, fabric, and jewelry at these sales. To find sales, look in the classified ads under "Auctions and Estate Sales" or something similar. Feel free to bargain for items.

Flea Markets

Flea markets are my favorite shopping sites, especially for accessories and unexpected treasures. I found a watch and chain for \$15.00, clothes, lace, hats, fashion magazines, and many other items. A lot of the best flea markets take place at junior colleges. Ohlone College and Hayward College both have flea markets. Call the colleges for times and locations. Feel free to bargain for items.