

Meet the Stan Hywet Staff

Melanie Kunsch
Retail Services Manager
Staff Member since 2012



What do you enjoy most about working at Stan?

Molly's Shop is usually the last stop for guests, and I enjoy hearing about what they've enjoyed most about Stan Hywet — they always have questions and want to discuss what they've learned on a tour. It is wonderful to hear to all the compliments about how beautiful it is here. I'm also the buyer for Molly's, so I buy unique items for our gift shop, I design the displays around the merchandise so that it meshes with our season's theme and the estate. It's like putting a giant puzzle together. I especially enjoy making Christmas displays in the store and decorating the grounds for Christmas.

Tell us about one unusual or interesting day at work? My favorite experience working during Founder's Day weekend, because it's wonderful to see people visit from all over the world to celebrate their recovery at the Gate Lodge. Guests are always happy to be here and discuss their personal experiences. The Gate Lodge has an interesting and very important history that many don't know about.

What would you tell someone who's never been to Stan to entice them to visit? Stan Hywet is a rare jewel. Not just in Ohio, but in the U.S. We are one of the few museums in Ohio that has the original collection [about 95% of Stan Hywet's collection is original]. Our gardens are stunning, and we offer many activities for families to enjoy throughout the year.

Where is your favorite place on the estate? My favorite place is the Lagoons. The view of the Tea Houses from the base of the Lagoons is just stunning, especially since the restoration in 2020, and it is a must-see. During select summer nights, Ohio Shakespeare Festival performs under the stars there, and the ambiance of the atmosphere sets the stage for a beautiful night of theater.

If you could go back in time and meet with one of the Seiberling family members, one of the paid household or grounds staff, or one of the architects or landscape designers, who would it be and what would you talk with them about? I would love to have a conversation with the domestic staff, to understand what it was like to work in the world of service. What was it like to work for a well-to-do family? And how did they manage to have their own lives apart from the Seiberlings?

What do you like to do in your free time, away from Stan? I love to attend concerts, especially in small venues, and I also frequent many museums. I tend to gravitate towards museums that have a focus on Colonial America. Some of my favorite museums are Colonial Williamsburg, the American Revolution Museum, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.