



Monmouth County Historical Association

Museum Docent Volunteer Manual

Thank you for volunteering at Monmouth County Historical Association. We cannot thank you enough for committing your time to this event. We hope you enjoy volunteering and have a wonderful time at the exhibit and its opening night!

With many thanks,

The Staff of Monmouth County Historical Association,

Meg Sharp Walton, Executive Director

Bernadette Rogoff, Director of Collections

Pati Githens, Programs and Partnership Manager

Deanna Wilson, Development and Special Events Coordinator

Feyza Demirci, Marketing, Visitor Services and Volunteer Coordinator

Beth Gardella, Bookkeeper

Joe Zemla, Associate Curator

Dana Howell, Research Library and Archives

Kim Bedeti, Research Library and Archives

Organizational Mission

Monmouth County Historical Association collects, preserves, and interprets its extensive museum, research library, and archival collections that relate to Monmouth County's history and culture and makes these resources available to the widest possible audience.

The Association promotes the study and appreciation of regional and national history through educational programming, publications, special exhibits, and research services. The Association also preserves and interprets five significant historic sites which represent the County's vanishing architectural heritage.

Through its pursuit of these objectives, the Association enriches the quality of life in Monmouth County by preserving and passing on knowledge of its diverse heritage for future generations.

Historical Background

Over the past century, the MCHA has become a multi-faceted organization comprised of our Museum, Research Library & Archives and five Historic House Museums. Our Traveling Trunk Program, lectures and special events help us to provide a variety of opportunities for people of all ages to engage in learning about and appreciating the interesting history and cultural heritage of our unique area.

As a Volunteer at Monmouth County Historical Association, you are agreeing to:

- Attend training, or make arrangements to receive training materials in advance
- Arrive on-time and commit to working during exhibit hours
- Represent Monmouth County Historical Association in a professional, patient and kind manner
- Consider working in another volunteer's position if an emergency occurs and we need additional coverage

Monmouth County Historical Association agrees to:

- Provide free general admission to the museum (\$15 value)
- Provide free admission to Dancing in the Dark (\$250 value)
- Provide free general admission to the Research Library and Archives
- Provide you with advance training materials
- Provide you with access to water, lunchroom, and a place to rest
- Thank you endlessly for making this exhibition possible!

Overall Responsibilities

1. Answering both the front and back door when someone rings the appropriate bell.
2. Welcoming all visitors with a greeting such as "Thank you for visiting our Museum, my name is (your name). How can I help you today?"
 - a. If a guest has an appointment with a staff member, please call the appropriate staff member, a patron for the Research Library, a visitor to the Museum or a delivery person. Once you let a guest in please make sure the appropriate door is locked.
 - b. If the guest is visiting our exhibit, complete POS procedures and give them a sticker.
 - c. Usually, the people who come to the back door will be another volunteer, an archive patron, a repair person, or a board member. Ask visitors how you can help them.
 - d. Workers such as plumbers or generator technician and the like often come to the building. Please do not allow any worker to begin their work before letting one of our staff members know who is here and what type of work is to be done
 - e. An exception to this process is Cavanaugh's. They are our pest control contractor and can start their work without staff notification. As the Museum Docent, you can sign their form. Place it in the file holder in the kitchen.

3. All visitors to the Museum or Research Library need to sign the Sign-in Sheet at the front desk.
4. Your duties will also include answering the telephone. The instructions are in the admissions room next to the phone. Please note that if you are with a guest and giving a tour, a staff member will pick up after 2 rings.
5. Encourage our guests to feel free to take pictures (non-flash) and post them on social media with the hashtag of #mcha1898
6. At the beginning of your shift, please check the Volunteer Hours Sign-in book for any new notes or information since the previous day/shift.
7. Friday and Saturday Museum Docents are responsible for filling out the historic house call-in sheets during the open house season (**May-September**) as house docents call the Museum at the beginning and end of their shifts. Please mark down all the information in each column for every site.
8. The most important part of being a docent with MCHA is to make sure it is a safe environment. Never put yourself in harms' way to assure that one of our pieces is protected by some aggressive action of a visitor. If such a scenario were to occur, go to a safe area and call 911. Remember Safety First!
9. We depend on you to notify us if you see any of our displays that need to be cleaned. While we appreciate your hard work and diligence, we ask that you never clean any part of our exhibits. Once you notify us, we will bring in professional museum cleaners to preserve the integrity of our displays.
10. During your shift at the museum, help us look our best by keeping the door to the back hallway closed at all times.
11. If the mail is delivered during your shift, place it in the admissions room and call either ext. 11 or 19 and let the person know it has arrived.
12. When the museum is slow, take the opportunity to study the exhibitions. If you'd like, you may also bring in reading materials, handwork such as embroidery or sewing, or your tablet/laptop. Remember, though, when a visitor arrives, please put away the personal items, and show off our museum!

Morning Docents

1. Morning docents will be scheduled from 10:30 until 2:00
2. You may park in the back-parking lot.
3. Ring the back doorbell and someone will let you in.
4. Put the Open Flag in the flagpole outside. If there are physical limitations and you are unable to do this, please ask a staff member to hang it for you.
5. You will first need to sign in. There is a binder marked “Volunteer Hours” located in the admissions room. Please find the appropriate page with your name on it, sign your name, and add the date and number of hours you will volunteer that day. Remember to check new notes in the binder. This is the best way to find out if anything new is going on and might be important to know for your shift.
6. Turn on all gallery lights both upstairs and downstairs. Please keep them on all day. We are fortunate to have professional museum lighting that will do no harm to our displays.
7. It is critically important that we do not roll up the shades in the museum. These shades protect our pieces from dangerous UV rays from the sun.
8. On the Sign-in Sheets, write the date on the left top of the sheet. A new sheet is used each day, even if there are no visitors from the day before.
9. At the end of your shift, record the number of visitors on the Daily Balance Sheet.

Afternoon Docent - Closing Procedures

1. Afternoon docents are scheduled from 1:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
2. You may park in the back-parking lot.
3. Ring the back doorbell and someone will let you in.
4. You will first need to sign in. There is a binder marked “Volunteer Hours” located in the admissions room. Please find the appropriate page with your name on it, sign your name, and add the date and number of hours you will volunteer that day. Remember to check new notes in the binder. This is the best way to find out if anything new is going on and might be important to know for your shift.

5. Bring the Open Flag inside and place it to the right of the front door. If there are physical limitations and you are unable to do this, please ask a staff member to bring it in for you. Do not roll the flag up.
6. If the flag is wet, please place it in the back hall next to the kitchen
7. Turn off all gallery lights, both upstairs and downstairs.
8. Make sure that the front door is locked by turning the deadbolt
9. Let a staff member know that you are leaving for the day.

Your Volunteer Hours

1. We use Signup.com to facilitate the scheduling of museum docent shifts. When you first start, you will receive an email inviting you to visit the MCHA Volunteer website. On the website, you can access Signup.com to sign up for your shifts.
2. You will receive your schedule the last week of each month for the following month.
3. If, for some reason, you cannot cover your hours on the day of your shift, contact another museum docent to cover your hours. In addition to finding coverage, please notify Feyza, 732-462-1466, ext. 20, or fdemirci@monmouthhistory.org. If she is not available, please advise the person with whom you are speaking that you will not be able to cover your shift. It is very important that you do not leave a message on anyone's voice mail.

Visitor Experience

1. If visitors are here to use the Research Library, escort them into the Library and have them sign the Library Sign-in Sheet.
2. While our exhibitions are self-guided, it is important that you are available to answer any questions.
3. Whether our guests are first time visitors or return guests, we always want to be available, friendly and cordial to them, but we never want to be intrusive.
4. Remind our guests that our displays are priceless, and they cannot be touched or picked up or examined by our guests nor by our docents.
5. Remember you are the face and voice of MCHA. Please encourage non-member guests to become a member as well as visit our historic houses, which are open from May through September.

6. Children visiting our Museum with a responsible adult are always welcomed. However, if the adult is having difficulty managing the child, please remember it is not our job to be the parent. Please kindly say that perhaps this is not a good time for you to get the most out of this experience. Offer to refund their admission and invite them to return at a later date.

7. As always if any questions or concerns arise do not hesitate to reach out to a member of the staff.

What to Wear/ Bring

We encourage you to dress in business casual style. Please be comfortably dressed to move around in the museum. No shirts with large logos, jeans, or jean shorts. Business casual dress with comfortable shoes is ideal.

Parking

Parking Monmouth County Historical Association grounds is limited to staff, vendors, and volunteers.

Life Threatening Emergencies

In a potentially life-threatening emergency occurs call 911 immediately. It is important to tell them that you are at Monmouth County Historical Association Headquarters. Provide any vital information.

Fire Emergency

All fires are threatening emergencies at Monmouth County Historical Association. Call 911. If it is a contained fire that can possibly be extinguished you can find fire extinguishers in the mansion, stage side, and at the cigar bar. Always remember PASS (Pull the pin, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep across the fire)

Museum Charges and Payments

1. There is an admission charge to see the Museum or to use the Research Library. The admission prices are listed at the front desk. We accept cash, a check made out to "MCHA", and credit cards. Credit card slips can be found in the top desk drawer. Please note the following payment exceptions:

- No charge for Members
- No charge for jurors on duty
- No charge for Freehold **BORO** residents / Check ID + confirm
- No charge for active military and their families between Memorial Day and Labor Day
- Free admission for individuals presenting a membership card from another museum with a gold North American Reciprocal sticker.

2. When visitors have signed in and you have taken the admission fee please check that all columns on the visitor sign-in sheet are filled out completely. See attached visitor sheet. If a guest does not want to provide all this information, please ask them for their zip codes. This information helps us with future grant applications. Put the admission money into the cash box. When a guest pays for Museum or Library admissions, please give them a receipt, either as an e-mail or in print.
3. If a visitor identifies themselves as a lender to a current exhibition, they should be admitted to the museum at no charge. After they sign in, call the curator, Bernadette Rogoff at ext. 17 to let him know who is visiting. If Bernadette is not available, call Joe Zemla, ext. 23.
4. If you need more sign-in sheets or daily balance sheets, please make 30 copies of the last one for next month's supply.

Passport Programs and Gift Shop Items

The Passport Programs are a very exciting way to get people of all ages excited about History.

1. We participate in two different and exciting passport programs! If asked, we will stamp passports for the Crossroads of the American Revolution. The stamp is chained to the left side of the desk. We also participate in the Freehold Borough Arts Council Passport. If someone with children comes in, ask if they have heard about the program. They can purchase a passport for \$5. The stamp is on the right side of the desk next to the FBAC passports. Please fill out the person's information on the sheet for the FBAC passports.