

Volunteer Handbook

Davies Manor

Mission Statement:

The Davies Manor Association preserves and interprets the Davies Manor log-house museum and historic grounds. We aim to provide an inclusive, multi-faceted space for the educational study of the Davies family, regional history, early Shelby county farm life, and the natural environment; by doing so we create opportunities for the public to make meaningful connections between the past and present.

Our volunteers embrace this mission and strive to further it as a way to enrich their community.

Volunteers may aid the Davies Manor mission in several ways including:

- Docent

Davies relies on our docents to lead tours through the Manor house. A docent will be taught the history of Davies and share it with guests who arrive on the docents scheduled day. Shifts are four hours long, Tuesday- Saturday 12-4. Scheduling is done the month before to accommodate varying schedules. Docents are welcome to bring books or snacks as, while some days may bring many visitors, some days bring none. A basic snack and water are provided by Davies as is WiFi in the Manor. While good mobility and the ability to climb stairs is appreciated, if necessary, we can pair you with another docent to cover all parts of the Manor house.

- Field/ group trip docent

The majority of our scheduled trips are school trips for students between third and fifth grade, with occasional groups outside that range. Davies also hosts many home school groups that have a wide age range. Docents who enjoy working with children are needed to tour students through the house or lead them in an activity appropriate to their age group. Group trips for adults or senior groups need docents to lead groups through the Manor house, as well. It is possible to request to only assist adult groups, if a docent is uncomfortable working with children.

- Special events

Davies hosts many events throughout the year that may require volunteers. Each event is slightly different. Many events feature the Manor as an 'open house'. For such events, like the History Festival or the Quilt Show, we schedule at least two volunteers in shifts of three to four hours to monitor the house. Volunteers are not there to give tours in the manner they do as docents but simply to ensure guests are not touching, disturbing, or absconding with artifacts. However if guests approach with questions, volunteers are encouraged to answer to the best of their ability and then suggest guests return for a regular tour during regular hours.

- Internships

Internships depend on the interest of the applicant. There are many projects available to enhance the Davies Manor historic site including research on various projects, general museum care and practices, collections inventories, and others. If there is a topic or project a student is interested in exploring for or with the assistance of Davies Manor we would love to discuss it, especially if the research covers communities or peoples on whom our research is limited.

- Grounds

With thirty-seven acres, there are always projects to be done. Davies has two enclosed garden areas (the kitchen garden and the back garden) both with raised beds, trails, and beds outside the enclosed garden areas. Interested gardeners can pick areas to care for.

- Board

The board of directors at Davies Manor is made of volunteers who are interested in preserving the history of the area and giving back to their community. While volunteers, board members can look to the Policies and Procedures and Bylaws of Davies Manor for a better understanding of what is expected of them.

Volunteer Benefits

Volunteers play an important role at Davies Manor and we try to ensure all volunteers know they are valued with:

- A better understanding of Shelby County history and an appreciation for pioneer-era living
- An annual Docent Day in late March where docents are treated to lunch and an outing
- Exhibit sneak peeks, before new temporary exhibits launch volunteers are encouraged to come view and learn about the latest topic while also socializing with other volunteers
- Discounted admission to public events
- Special courses and lectures held to further volunteers' knowledge of the period Davies Manor covers

Recruitment

Davies Manor invites all members of our community with an interest in history to volunteer. Those interested in volunteering should fill out the Volunteer Application to allow the staff to get a feel for the perspective and background a new volunteer would bring to Davies Manor. The application must be submitted to daviesmanor@gmail.com or to 3570 Davieshire Dr Bartlett 38133. A member of staff will meet with the applicant via call, zoom, or in-person and will cover the basic history of Davies and the expectations for volunteers in each category. If both parties are still enthusiastic about joining the Davies volunteers, the volunteer sheet will be filled out and time will be set up to start training.

Training

Docent training starts with our Docent Packet which covers the script of the tour as well as other information. We ask that docents read the script to prepare for the next stage of training- training days and shadowing- but should not be daunted by the amount included in the script. Trainee docents can start with a training day or with shadowing, depending on their schedule and preferences. Training days are from 10-12 am the first Saturday of every month (excluding November which hosts our Quilt

Show) that the Manor is open. These days allow docents to refresh their knowledge, meet and learn new techniques from other docents, socialize, and ask questions. Trainee docents will need to shadow at least one experienced docent but are welcome to shadow until they feel comfortable with docent expectations. Besides, the regular training there is also an annual Docent Orientation hosted each spring before the open season starts to allow for socializing and updating docents on any new research.

Field trip, group trip, or special event training varies based on what is required. Generally for such events we ask the volunteers to come half an hour before the public start time to go over what is expected at the event. Field/ group trips may require a docent to shadow an experienced docent at least once.

Training for interns or grounds volunteers will depend on the knowledge level and project of the volunteer. However further training will be discussed to ensure the volunteer is comfortable in their role.

Hours

All volunteers will sign in on a volunteer hours sheet. Davies is interested in how many hours our volunteers donate to us and would like to ensure that their time is noted and applauded. Docent's hours' sheets will be in the pantry closet in the kitchen next to the cash box. Field trip/ group trip volunteers will be told where to go to sign in and get their assignments. All other volunteers will sign in in the office unless told otherwise. The sign in sheets will be in the plastic box hung on the wall, about head height, immediately to the right of the inner office door.

Evaluation

As we are a historical site, we want to ensure that our docents are correctly engaging the public and disseminating the correct information. Evaluations are an informal way for both docents and staff to work towards the common good for Davies Manor. Self- evaluations will be sent out at least once a year. They allow docents to illuminate areas in which they feel both they and Davies can do better. Additionally, at least once a year a staff member will accompany each docent on a tour of the Manor either with or without guests to evaluate their presentation. This tour will allow staff members to informally confirm that docents have the correct information, learn more about docents' special interests, and perhaps suggest and share new tour techniques.

We also want to ensure that staff are doing a good job. At the end of every season, we will send out an evaluation for docents to fill out about the volunteer experience. Davies Manor wants to ensure that the opinions of all who work here are heard and acknowledged.

General Information

Parking- Volunteers working at Hillwood may park anywhere in the parking lot unless told specifically where to park for a special event. Docents park in the grassy spaces in front of the notched fence to show guests where they are meant to park as well. Volunteers working in the garden/ on the grounds may park in any of the gravel pull offs behind the house.

Dress Code- Docents are welcome to wear business casual clothing. Be aware that the temperature of the house can fluctuate. It will be a little colder inside than outside during the early spring and late fall months. If you are concerned with the temperature, call the Museum Assistant to check. They may also wear period attire if they wish. Docents who own such outfits may wear it after it has been approved by a staff member. Docents who do not own any but are interested may discuss it with a staff member and it may use costumes owned by the association.

Food and Beverage- Davies attempts to provide basic snacks and water for volunteers. Volunteers are allowed to bring their own food and drink. Docents inside the Manor are required to keep any food and drink in the newer additions of the house- basically wherever the floor is painted blue, it is acceptable to eat. Be sure that all food and drink remains are disposed of properly.

Unable to Show Up- If volunteers are unable to make scheduled activities, we ask that you notify us as soon as possible so we can ensure coverage. This is especially true for field trips and group trips which are built around having a certain number of volunteers. Please call the office at 901-386-0715 or the number of their Davies Manor contact person. Docents have access to the names and numbers of all other docents and staff members on the side of their monthly calendar. Docents are encouraged to find their own replacements on days they are scheduled but not able to make. However, please still notify the office at Davies Manor of the schedule change. If a docent is unable or uncomfortable with finding a replacement, please contact the office and they will attempt to do so.

Procedures, Rules, and Worst Case Scenarios

Docent

- Arrive for their scheduled 12-4 shift in good time. Park in one of the grassy slots in front of the slotted fence, unless it has rained heavily; then park to the side of the gravel road in front of the house. The house should be unlocked and ready to be shown. Place your personal affects in the pantry closet in the kitchen.
- The cash box and docent sign in sheet will be in the pantry closet on the shelves to the right. Sign in on the sheet, noting your hours. Check the docent box for a daily slip, \$50 in cash, and the tablet with card reader.
- To fill out the daily slip it works best to make tally marks next to each adult, senior, or student. If guests wish to make an additional donation (either separate from paying or by saying “keep the change”), either mark the amount in Other or place the correct amount in the Donations box next to the sign in book.
- To take credit card payments, turn on the tablet and push the icon labeled Square. Click on the tab at the top of the open screen that looks like a calculator. Put in the total amount due (for example, two adults at \$5, put in \$10). Push the blue button that says Charge. A box will pop up but nothing needs to be done with it, just run the card through the square reader at an even pace. A rotating circle will pop up and say Authorizing and then Approved once the card is accepted. Have the guest sign the tablet and put in the necessary information if they would like a receipt. Mark the amount paid by card on the daily sheet.
- While taking payment suggest that guests sign in to our guest book. Stress that it helps us keep track of visitors and get an idea of where visitors are coming from. In the last column in the guest books, guests can add their email to sign up for our newsletter. The newsletter will inform them of programs and events, new research, and interesting occurrences at Davies Manor. Assure guests that this information is never shared or sold.
- Take the guest on a tour of the Manor house. A tour should generally take about forty-five minutes to an hour depending on the interest of the guests. However, if guests start to seem anxious or bored, it is acceptable to go faster.

- The preferred directions of a tour would start in the Dogtrot, then go Parlor, Master Bedroom, upstairs, Dining room, Kitchen, temporary exhibit, and then *Omitted in Mass*, the newest exhibit in the enclosed porch.
 - If new guests arrive while there is already a tour in progress, there are two options. One, ask the existing tour and the new comers if they would mind combining the two tours. At the end of the tour, go back over the rooms the second tour missed and ask if they have any questions. The other option is to suggest the guests visit the temporary exhibit and *Omitted in Mass* or tour the ground while the first tour is finished. This is the preferred option.
 - Most days there should be a Museum Assistant in the office by the bathrooms, if overwhelmed ask them for help.
 - If there is downtime and docents are interested, the daily log book needs to be filled out. Turn to the appropriate date and if the Temperature/ Humidity readings have not been done, record them. Fill in the time starting where indicated. Then, go from Parlor, Master Bedroom/ East bedroom, Girls, Boys, and Kitchen and record the readings on the screens. Record the first number (the temperature in degrees Fahrenheit), a dash, and then the bottom number (the percentage of humidity) last. This helps us keep track of the variations of temperature and humidity to track if we need to change tactics in caring for the house.
 - Additionally in the daily log book is the Docent Notes section where docents should record tour numbers, any questions raised they did not know, or anything of interest.
 - Also listed in the log book are the daily chores. Docents may assist with these if they have time and if they have been trained in the proper cleaning tactics.
 - We advertise that the last tour starts at 330, if by then there are no further guests, docents may start packing up. Record the end time on the sign in sheet. If the Museum Assistant is in the house, let them know before departing. If they are not in the house, take the Cash Box down to the office.
1. There should be no more than 15 people upstairs and 15 people downstairs at one time. However once a group is over about ten people it becomes difficult to do a productive tour.
 2. Guests should not touch items unless specifically told to by the docent. If guests are touching, please ask them not to. If children are touching and

parents are not supervising them, ask the parents to not allow their children to touch.

3. Try to keep the groups together. If guests wander off while discussion is going on in one room, ask them to stay with the group. Unsupervised guests are more likely to touch artifacts. Do not allow children to run through the house.
4. If docents do not know the answer to a question, do not make anything up. Acknowledge that you are unsure. Praise the guest for asking a question you've never heard of or hadn't considered and suggest they leave their email address and a staff member will get back to them.

Emergency Procedures

In case of emergency:

Kat Hansen, Executive Director-901-634-6328

Davies Office- 901-386-0715

Chris Mock, Grounds Manager- 901-496-2369

- There are three fire extinguishers in the house- in the pantry, next to the sink, behind the door in the boy's room. In case of small fires, use fire extinguishers. Call the Executive Director and other staff as soon as possible.
- There are three exits to Davies Manor- front door, back door, side door- use all three to exit in case of emergency.
- First aid supplies are in the pantry with further supplies in the office.
- In the case of guest medical emergencies, defer to the guests requests (i.e. whether an ambulance is called, whether they need treatment) but report the incident to a staff member at the earliest opportunity.