

Docent Training Sessions

What does a docent do at the Foss Mansion?

Engage in conversation about the Woman's Literary Union, the Foss Mansion, and the Fosses.

A docent enhances a visitor's experience at the Mansion by making it personal, educational and interesting.

Dates and times to be determined by participants

Session 1

Docent agreement: Distribution and explanation Introductions; Ask how do you feel in the Foss Mansion?

Primary responsibilities/expectations of being a docent Mansion Walk Through

Assignment for next class: Bring in information about mural wallpaper, carpets, and stained glass from the early 1900s-1920.

Session 2

Questions or concerns

Slide show on history of WLU, Foss Mansion, the Fosses

Assignment for next class: Bring in information about plumbing, electricity, phone and utilities from the early 1900s-1920.

Session 3

Questions or concerns

Mansion and collection security and conservation Historic House Rules

Crowd control

Assignment for next class: Bring in information about servants, stores, shopping experiences and what was available in Lewiston-Auburn in the early 1900s-1920.

Session 4

Discussion pros and cons of having room docents versus whole-house docents

Architecture

Walk through house with inventory guide; select items

that should have museum cards and the information that the cards should contain.

Assignment for next class: Present your ideas on how to make tours entertaining and educational

Session 5

Emergency procedures

Tour demonstration

Develop your own entertaining tour script to use in conjunction with provided script

Assignment for next class: Prepare tour information to be given to visitors taking a tour

Session 6

Questions or concerns about personal talking points ("script") development

Mini presentations

Group discussion and problem solving

Assignment for next class: Come up with five questions and answers that visitors ask during tours

Session 7

Tea and Tour for members with docents leading the tour

Expectations of Docents:

- Dress appropriately, consistent with written policy, when giving tours to visitors;
- Conduct themselves in an appropriate, professional and ethical manner at all times when dealing with visitors and fellow members.
- Ensure that guests follow house rules; manage unforeseen visitor issues
- Provide tour support at special events
- Keep script in plastic sleeve and return it at end of training / tour