

## WHAT IS A DOCENT?

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The dictionary says a docent (DOUGH-sent) is a trained volunteer museum guide. The term comes from the Latin *docere*, to teach.

## WHAT DOES A DOCENT DO?

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As an MWM docent you will be responsible for

- A. Opening the museum & preparing for visitors.
- B. Greeting visitors & answering questions if you can.
- C. Transacting sales of museum merchandise.
- D. Accepting monetary donations.
- E. Occasionally receiving gifted or loaned items for possible inclusion in MWM collections & completing necessary forms.
- F. Completing Accident Form if need arises.
- G. Closing the museum.

Please read the **Step-by-Step How-To** for details.

## THE SCHEDULE

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The museum is open May - October, Saturdays noon to 4 p.m., Sundays 1 to 4 p.m.

Generally, docents are scheduled to volunteer 4 hours on a Saturday or 3 hours on a Sunday. If you are scheduled as docent of the day and have a conflict, please arrange for a replacement.

## STEP-BY-STEP HOW-TO

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### A. Opening the Museum & Preparing for Visitors

[If you have been instructed to enter through rear door and provided with a code for the key pad, enter the code and turn handle directly below keypad to the RIGHT. Front door operates with a key and will open from inside by turning the knob on the lock to the RIGHT.]

1. Unlock front door and turn on lights upstairs and downstairs. Light switches for 1st floor: 1) behind counter on post by mailboxes at front counter, 2) on post, middle of main room, 3) on wall by wooden Indian at rear right, 4) by the door entering John Smith/Native American Room at rear; Upstairs: 1) on wall at foot of stairs, 2) beside box at top of stairs, 3) inside Crab Room by door at right steps, 4) inside Old Houses Room by door, 5) inside Oyster Room by door, 6) inside Farming/Fishing Room by opening to Crab Room.
2. Plug in display lights
  - in upstairs Wharf Room, lighthouse model extension cord on floor near left-hand steps
  - in upstairs Crab Room, soft-crabhouse model.
3. Turn on computers. Instructions are posted by each computer, one in first-floor hardware room, one upstairs in Old Houses Room, one in Black History exhibit.
4. Put out flags (facing the road from the museum: MWM flag on right, U.S. flag center, "Open" flag on left). Flags are stored in white box beside glass-topped counter at front of museum.

[While completing items 1 - 4 above, please make note of any issues (fallen photos, damage, etc.) and report later to Museum Administrator Brenda Gregory at 462-0214 or Curator Jeannie Bedwell at 238-8520.]

### B. Greeting Visitors, Answering Questions

NOTE: Children ages 12 & under visiting the museum must be accompanied by an adult.

Upon the arrival of visitors, please

1. Introduce yourself & welcome guests to the museum.
2. Ask guests to sign the guest register.
3. Offer a map-card of museum layout (on glass-top display case ); explain that tours are self-guided.
4. Point out walking tour maps on glass-top case and brochures containing MWM website and email addresses (on counter near guest register); offer a museum business card (in mailbox cubby).
5. Point out location of rest rooms.
6. Note that you are available to answer questions and can accompany visitors through the museum if they wish. (If a visitor asks a question you cannot answer, he/she can always email questions to MWM at the address in brochure.)
7. You may wish to start first-time guests on their visit by orienting them geographically and providing a very brief history of the museum:

• **The museum stands on a point jutting into the Rappahannock River. The river flows roughly NW to SE by Morattico Point at the end of the road; MWM faces Mulberry Bay and Belle Isle State Park at the mouth of Mulberry Creek; behind the museum, Lancaster Creek flows into the Rappahannock to the right of the Point.**

• **MWM is housed in the 1901 Morattico General Store building, in continuous operation under 9 owners until 2003 when the Weston F. Conley family made a gift of the building and property to be used as a non-profit museum and community center. Life-long and newer village residents work together to maintain the all-volunteer project, and MWM has achieved state and national Historic District status for Morattico. Items in the collections are local in nature and reflect the influence of the Native Americans', English planters', and watermen's cultures which have contributed to village history at various stages in its evolution.**

### **C. Transacting Sales of Museum Merchandise**

- Price list is posted on the side of display case; a second copy is located on counter behind mailboxes.
  - Additional t-shirts and other stock are stored in the large drawers behind the RCV model and in plastic bins behind the front counter.
  - A calculator is available on counter.
  - MWM does not charge sales tax. Docents may provide a handwritten receipt for sales items if one is requested.
    - There are plastic bags under the counter, as well as small paper bags. Paper bags can also be used as wrapping for delicate items.
1. Collect the money. A petty cash box is under the counter. Please use this **ONLY** for breaking large bills so that petty cash total remains constant for accounting purposes.

2. Place exact amount for purchase(s) in an envelope (available on counter). Write on the envelope the item/s purchased, amount of sale, date, and your name.
3. Drop the envelope into the gray wooden box under the large donations jar.

### **D. Accepting Monetary Donations**

Visitors may place donations in the large donation jar atop the gray wooden box on front counter.

### **E. Receiving Items for Gift or Loan**

Occasionally, docents will encounter visitors offering gift or loan items for the museum collection. While MWM policy stipulates that authority for acquisition of collection items lies with the Curator and Board, the docent should graciously receive proffered item(s) and complete the appropriate deed of gift/loan form(s), including potential donor's signature. (The more info potential donor can provide regarding the history/background of an item, the better.) The Curator will then make a final determination and oversee filing/dissemination of the form(s) and placement of the item(s) as needed.

1. Receive the item and ask potential donor or lender to complete the Deed of Gift or Loan Agreement (on clipboard at front counter).
2. Leave the form(s) upstairs on table in Old Houses Room.
3. Contact Curator Jeannie Bedwell (238-8520); let her know location of proffered item.

## **F. Locating First Aid Kit and Accident Forms**

There is a basic First Aid kit in the main level rest room should it be required. Accident Forms are on the clipboard near the sign-in register. If you complete an Accident Form, please notify museum Administrator Brenda Gregory at (804) 462-0214.

A flashlight is located on the front counter.

## **G. Closing the museum**

1. Bring in flags.
2. Turn off computers.
3. Unplug display lights.
4. Turn off lights upstairs and downstairs.
5. Close and lock doors. To lock front door, from inside turn the knob so that lock will engage when door is closed. To lock rear door, enter code on keypad and turn handle directly below keypad to the LEFT.

## **CONTACT NUMBERS**

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Docent Coordinator/s	Posted at front counter	
Curator	Jean Bedwell	238-8520
Administrator	Brenda Gregory	462-0214
Corr. Secretary	Mary B. Martin	462-0532
Fire		911
Sheriff's Office		911

**THANK YOU for your service as a docent!**