

YOUR DAY AS A GUIDE AT THE JASON RUSSELL HOUSE 2022

Safety protocols for guides

1. Guides should make sure they are **not experiencing any COVID-19, cold or flu symptoms**, and have **not had “close contact”** with an individual diagnosed with COVID.
2. If any of these situations exist, **please telephone the Month Manager and fellow guide as soon as possible and try to find a replacement**. You should not come in for your shift if you are feeling sick.
 - a. Please **self-screen 24 hours before your shift**, so that you will have time to work with the Month Manager on finding a replacement.
3. Guides should **bring masks** when they come to guide and masks should be worn the entire time you are in the building.

Indoor tour safety protocols for visitors

1. Tours will be offered on Saturday and Sunday from 1pm-4pm, available on a walk-in basis. **Guides should arrive at the house by 12:45pm.**
2. **Maximum group size is 8 visitors.**
 - a. Please remind the visitor groups to try to remain **safely distanced by 6 feet** whenever possible during the tour.
3. **Masks are required for visitors to enter the museum, house, and exhibit.** Extra masks will be available for visitors if they do not have any.
 - a. **Beer Garden attendees can use the restroom without wearing a mask.**
 - b. An AHS representative will form a bathroom line outside the entrance.

Preparing for the day

1. The caretaker, Greg Stathopoulos, will open the house and meet you when you arrive. However, if the house is not open when you arrive, wait a few minutes, and if you have a cell phone, call **Greg (ph.781-589-7872)**. If you can't reach him, you can go around to the Mass Ave side and knock on his door. Other people with the key include two members of the Tour Guide Committee, whose phone numbers are listed at the end of this document. Enter these numbers into your phone so they are handy. **NEW: the new glass doors lock automatically when closed. You must have a key fob (see #2) with you if you exit the building after initially entering it.**
2. **One key fob on a coil bracelet** is kept in the front desk drawer. The key fob is needed to get in the building because the **front door locks automatically when it closes**. To open the door from the outside, place the fob on the small black rectangular box to the left of the “Ring” doorbell.
3. Put on your **name tag** which is kept in the alphabetized box in the grey cupboard.
4. **Greg will also unlock the Smith Museum and the April 19th exhibit.**
 - a. Turn on the **lights** in the Exhibit Room. One light switch is to the left of the door as you enter. The 2nd light switch is to the right of the door to the JRH kitchen.
 - Keep the dimmer switch as it is, at approximately the halfway mark.
 - b. Turn on the lights in the Smith Museum. One guide may want to sit there to be safely distanced.

5. There is a **phone** on the wall in the kitchen and a cordless phone is kept in the charger at the front desk.
 - a. To answer the cordless phone, push the green “talk” button on the left.
 - b. Guides can answer the phone and help people who want to know if we are open.
 - However, never take a message for AHS staff. Have the person call back on Monday.
6. Open the **Visitor’s Book (blue cover)** to the next blank page, enter the date and leave a pen for the visitors.
7. Locate the **Tour Binder (yellow cover)** in the cupboard. You can use this binder at the front desk. It stores our tour data so be sure it stays secure and is returned to the cupboard at the end of the day. This binder holds:
 - a. Guide roster with telephone numbers
 - b. Phone numbers for the Guide Committee and for Greg
 - c. Square Instructions
 - d. Blank and completed Tour Guide Logs
 - e. Blank and completed Russell Descendent Forms.
8. Begin filling out the **Tour Guide Log sheet** with the date and your names, and be sure to update it throughout the day with visitor and tour data.
9. Keep the glass front doors closed. Be sure to watch for approaching visitors so you can open the door and greet them.
10. Make sure the book cart is in the entry hall.
11. **Generally speaking, a tour guide should not serve alone.** For instructions on what to do if your fellow guide does not show up, please read “If your guide partner does not show” (Attachment A).

Using Square; setting up the cashbox and clear plastic donation box

1. **Square:** We have the ability to accept **admission fees, book sales payment and donations using credit cards.** Square instructions are in the yellow Tour Binder.
 - a. **Process all transactions on Square, including cash transactions, free admission and book sales.**
2. The **cash box** can be used for collecting cash for admission fees, book sales and for making change for cash sales.
 - a. Remove the grey cash box from the cupboard. Take out the plastic cash compartment from the cash box and put it inside the front desk drawer. **Keep the desk drawer closed during the afternoon.** Store the metal cash box in the cupboard for the day.
3. **Cash Donations:** visitors can put cash in the clear plastic donation box which can be put on the top of the cupboard.

Final set-up

1. Place the **“Open” flags** outside. The taller flag should go into the holder by the door, and the shorter one on the side of the wooden sign post which is closest to Mass Ave. These flags are kept in the closet.
 - a. We plan to order 2 teardrop signs and will email you later with instructions how to set them up.
2. Flip the **“Open” sign** on the glass front door.

Welcoming visitors

1. When visitors arrive, ask the head of household to **complete the Visitor's Book**.
 - a. Please be sure that all the information is completed. For our annual statistics we are particularly interested in knowing what state they live in and how they found out about the JRH.
2. For those identifying as *Russell descendants*, ask them to fill out the **Russell descendant form** found in the yellow Tour Binder (i.e., how they are related to Jason Russell, their home address, family stories they like to share). For more information on welcoming Russells, see the instructions "**If a Russell Descendant Visits**" (**Attachment B**).
3. Ask all visitors to **pay the admission fee** before they view the April 19th Exhibit and take a tour. The current entry fee amount is posted on a sign on the cupboard.
 - a. **Enter the number of visitors into Square and process the payment via credit card or cash.**
 - b. **Adults \$8; Students 6-18 years \$4; 5 and under are free**
 - c. Members of the following organizations, showing their cards, get **free entry**: Mass Teachers' Association (MTA); North American Reciprocal Museum Association (NARMA); New England Museum Association (NEMA); and active Military and their family. Entry is also free to Society Members.
 - i. **Visitors with free entry are also entered into Square.**
 - ii. Guides can be flexible about the membership cards the visitor shows.
 - d. **Entry to the Smith Museum without a house tour is free and self-guided.**
4. **One guide gives the tour** while the **other guide stays by the door** to greet new visitors who might arrive.
 - a. There are **two options** if visitors arrive while a tour is in progress.
 - b. If the visitors are **in the April 19th exhibit** (and if the total number of people will be less than 8) ask them if they would like to join the group in progress. Be sure to have them complete the Visitors Book and process payment before they join the group.
 - c. **Once the house tour has started in the JRH**, politely explain the situation to new visitors and suggest they visit the Smith Museum or April 19th exhibit until the tour finishes. You can offer to process their admission now or wait until they start the tour, as **sales are non-refundable**.
5. **Book sales:** Invite visitors to look at the book cart for items to purchase. All book sales can be processed on Square.
6. Remember that you are the ambassador for the Jason Russell House and for all of Arlington. Many guests are tourists from far away. Our guests should be welcomed with warmth and enthusiasm.
7. **Before beginning a tour, caution visitors that they must not touch anything in the house, lean on walls, or sit on furniture. Put on white gloves for your tour, but even with gloves, keep your own touching to a minimum.**

Downtime

1. Guides can take turns viewing the new exhibit, "Menotomy: Road to Revolution."

2. Please familiarize yourself with the **Reference Binder (green cover)** in the cupboard. This binder has information about the Jason Russell House (including the 2022 Tour Manual and Tour Outline). Consult this source if you have any questions about tour guiding content.
 - a. There is also a binder with information about the JRH Herb Garden.
 - b. Sara recommends that guides review the following books:
 - *Interpreting Our Heritage* by Freeman Tilden
 - *Good Guide*
3. There are also books available for review, which are on the shelf along the stairs going down to the basement.
4. Additional resources can be found at: <https://arlingtonhistorical.org/guide-resources/>

Ending the day

Starting around 3:45pm, encourage late arrivals to come back another time since tours are finished by 4:00pm. Here are the things to do:

1. Return 2 open flags to the closet (and later in the season, the 2 teardrop flags).
2. Flip the closed sign on the front door.
3. Make sure the outside door **key fob** is in the front desk drawer.
4. Complete Tour Guide Log in the yellow Tour Binder and return it to the cupboard.
 1. Don't forget to **put an accurate tally of the number of visitors and tours on this log sheet and total them**. This is important for our annual statistics and for grant proposals.
5. Place the plastic cash compartment in the cash box and put it in the cupboard.
6. Place the clear plastic donation box in the cupboard.
7. Return your name tag to the box in the cupboard.
8. Lights off in the April 19th Exhibit, Smith Museum, and entry hall.
9. As you leave, make sure all doors are closed and locked behind you.
 1. The alarm will be set by the caretaker or an AHS officer shortly after you leave, so you don't need to worry about that.

CONTACTS

Caretaker and key holder:

Greg Stathopoulos (C) 781-589-7872

Tour Guide Committee co-chairs and key holders:

Elaine Ropi (C) 617-816-6203

Jean Yoder (H) 781 643 9894 (C) 617-510-8371

Other Tour Guide Committee Members*

June Baer (C) 339-368-9040

Susan Lum (H) 781-643-4315 (C) 781-223-3005

Jim Vellanga (C) 617-217-1141

*Although these committee members do not have keys, you should feel free to call them for advice in case of a problem.

Attachment A: If your guiding partner does not ‘show’

Once in very great while one guide fails to appear either because of a last minute emergency or a memory lapse. This is of course a serious problem and very disconcerting for the guide who is already there. Generally speaking, **there should be two guides on duty at all times**, so we suggest that you take the following steps if your partner guide does not appear by 1:05 p.m.

1. Call the guide (A guide roster can be found at the front of the yellow Tour Binder). If you can reach them, they may tell you that they are just running late. In that case, you can go ahead and start setting up for the day. If you already have visitors, tell them that another guide will be there shortly and ask them to wait.
2. If you cannot reach the guide, call your “Month Manager” (Guide Committee member) whose name and number was given to you in the reminder email which you received earlier during your month. (Guide Committee phone numbers are also within the body of this document.) Your Month Manager will give you advice about what to do next. In some cases, a very experienced guide may be advised to work alone if they feel confident in doing so.
3. If you and a Guide Committee member decide you cannot work alone, you must call Greg (his number is inside the front door), explain the situation, close the house, and leave. **Tape a sign on the inside of the front door apologizing to visitors for the unexpected closure.**

And a final reminder...Remember that if you discover that you cannot guide on a certain day, **it is your responsibility to find a substitute as quickly as possible and notify your Month Manager of the change.** Please do not expect the Guide Committee or the Month Manager to find a substitute. If you know far enough in advance, you might be able to find a substitute or make a trade through email, but a more direct and effective option is to use the telephone—phone numbers will be on your guide roster. Sometimes you may have to contact several people to find someone who can serve, so be persistent. We must strive to develop a culture of helping our fellow guides in such circumstances because at some point we, too, might need to be bailed out!

Attachment B: If a Russell descendant visits

Occasionally, we receive visitors who are descendants of Jason Russell. Many of those visitors come from far away and have made a special trip to see the house. When a descendant visits the house, it is a special event for both the Historical Society and for the visitor(s). For the Historical Society, the visitor represents a person who can become an advocate for the Jason Russell House by describing his/her visit to their family and friends. They may also be willing some day to donate money to help preserve the house. As for the visitors, they have often found out about the house through genealogical research, and are extremely proud to find that one of their ancestors was significantly involved in the American Revolution. They are always overjoyed to find that the Society continues to tell the heroic story of Jason Russell and his house on the first day of the American Revolution. For some, the visit takes on characteristics of a pilgrimage.

Therefore, when you have a visitor who identifies him/herself as a Russell descendant, you have received a special visitor with whom you should follow these procedures:

Before the tour

- We have a special form, copies of which are in the yellow Tour Binder (with spaces for two separate sets of Russells per month) for genealogical information about Russell descendants. Once they have signed into the normal guest log, please ask them to fill out the special Russell descendant form. (If there are other visitors waiting for a tour, you should have the Russells fill out the form after their tour.) This form is kept in the Tour Binder behind the log sheets for each month.
- Please make sure to give them an AHS membership brochure, and encourage them to join the Society (in front hall).
- Finally, give them a free copy of the blue booklet, "Jason Russell and His House in Menotomy." by Nylander (on sale bookshelf).

After the tour

- Ask to take their photograph. With their approval we may use their photo on our website, Newsletter or Facebook page. Otherwise, we will simply store it in our archive. Use your cell phone. Take the photo outside, in front of the house (for best light). Be sure to get all photo information onto the Russell Descendant form (i.e. names of people in the photo, l. to r.). E-mail the photo directly from your cellphone to Sara. (contact@arlingtonhistorical.org).

In general, please make a big fuss about Russell visitors. They will appreciate it, and the good will you create is beneficial for everybody.