

# Haan Museum of Indiana Art

## Training Manual For Docents

### Working with the Public

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### Volunteer Categories

#### Volunteers and Docents

"Docents" refers to volunteers who interact with visitors as greeters or tour guides, and assist with other tasks.

There are two levels of docents. There are separate instructions for those serving as greeters at Christmas and other special events.

- **Docents** — will meet and greet visitors, take admission fees, and give an introduction to visitors concerning the history of the Haans, the Worlds Fair, and moving the mansion. They will explain that the Museum contains Indiana art, American furniture, and Indiana ceramics, and be familiar with the time line of the acquisitions of each of these categories. They will be able to explain some of the major items on the first floor to visitors. They must study and follow the Docent Guide titled "Working with the Public". Docents will also assist Master Docents with large groups.
- **Master Docents** – will be able to do all of the above tasks, give a tour of the second floor, and give a complete guided tour of 1 1/2 hours, describing not only the contents but relating stories about the collections. Separate booklets about the first and second floors contain detailed information about the contents of the Museum.

"**Operations Volunteer**" refers to volunteers who help with the operations of the Museum. Generally this includes office help, kitchen help, grounds work, setting up Christmas decorations, and other tasks of this nature.

Generally, docents deal extensively with the public, while operations volunteers are not expected to interact on a substantial basis with visitors. Each of these categories have specific training requirements

before the volunteer is permitted to operate in that capacity.

## **Docent Training**

### **Knowledge Requirements**

All Docents and Master Docents are required to study the following subjects, which are covered in this booklet:

#### **Basic Knowledge**

- ☐ Culture of the Museum (Working with Visitors)
- ☐ Museum policies
- ☐ Safety
- ☐ Visitor behavior

#### **History**

All Docents and Master Docents must be familiar with the information in the Background and History booklet.

#### **Content Descriptions and Stories**

A group of Purdue students produced films for most of the first floor rooms, with Bob and Ellie talking about items in each room. Those can be found at [haanmuseum.org](http://haanmuseum.org). Staff can provide the password.

There are separate room guides for the first and second floors. These are not intended to be scripts. All docents must learn the contents, and conduct tours in their own style as they react to the interests of visitors. Docents should know the information in the first floor guide and Master Docents should know the information about both floors.

#### **Training Requirements**

Once they feel comfortable with the material in the videos and booklets, docents will lead a tour of the Haan Museum, accompanied by a master docent.

After the tour, the docent and master docent will meet and discuss how the tour went. The master docent will help the docent improve as a guide, and decide whether or not the docent can lead tours unaccompanied.

The Museum may require a special training session to familiarize docents with special exhibitions,

#### **Expectations**

The Museum expects that you will:

Be on time to the event or your tour.  
Know the material required for your docent level.

Engage the visitors according to this manual.

Commit to a minimum of one year due to the training time and learning curve.  
Serve as a docent at least an average of twice a month.

### **Docent Dress Code**

Although codes of dress may vary based upon volunteer duties, it is expected that docents who work with the public will be dressed appropriately. Business casual is considered appropriate. Blue denim, t-shirts, shirts with advertising messages, and sneakers are not allowed for docents.

Immodest clothing is not considered appropriate at any time in any volunteer position. This includes plunging necklines, high hemlines, sagging pants, or going without a shirt.

### **Parking**

Volunteers are asked to park on the street or in the first row along the wall to leave the best places for visitors.

### **Name Tags**

Volunteers working with the public must wear volunteer name tags and make sure the tags are visible at all times. The museum will supply the name tags.

### **Cell Phones**

Please turn ringers off when working with the public. If you anticipate a call of an emergency nature, get someone to cover for you and take the call out of any public area.

### **Purses**

Volunteers' purses can be stored in the office off the kitchen.

### **Working with Objects in the Museum**

Always take great care when working with or around the collections and mansion.

- Don't touch any collections object unless it is necessary to complete your assigned task.
- Don't touch the gold handles on the large Dick Hay vessel under any circumstances—it is real gold leaf.
- Don't be in a hurry to move objects, as it increases the chances of causing damage. Take your time.
- Get help moving long objects such as boards and ladders that could damage woodwork or collections. There should be one person at each end, carefully watching and guarding their end of the ladder or board. Any object longer than three feet that can't be carried vertically requires two people.

- Protect wood surfaces:
  - Never write on paper placed directly on a wood surface unless there is adequate padding under it.
  - Don't place hot or wet objects directly on wood. Waterproof heat pads are available for use on tables. Be aware of this issue when working with food, visitors, or caterers. Inform the caterer of this policy and find someone who can help if you are unsure of the procedure.
  - Every object in the museum collection that is placed on furniture or the floor must have adhesive felt pads on the bottom. If it doesn't, bring it to a staff member's attention. On furniture legs with casters, do not use furniture coasters with metal.
  - Do not place objects directly on wood surfaces. This includes purses with metal, deliveries, catering equipment, cups and saucers. Use coasters under bottles, cans, and cups. Paper is okay.
- Protect floors and carpets:
  - Remove wet or soiled shoes or boots before entering the Museum.
  - Leave wet umbrellas outside, or place gently in an umbrella stand, taking care not to drip on the hardwood floor.
  - Make sure that there are sufficient mats for guests during inclement weather.
  - Be aware of any wet or dripping objects.
  - Immediately wipe up any water, drink, food, or other spills that could potentially leave spots or stains on the wood floors, rugs, or furniture. The old wood floors do not have any sealant on them. and are especially susceptible to damage.
  - No spiked heels are allowed in the Museum.

### **Elevator Use**

Volunteers, especially docents, should be familiar with how to use the elevator. Elevator use is restricted to moving objects between floors, and for use by those who are physically unable to use the stairs. It is not designed to be a high use elevator. Physically challenged visitors requiring the use of the elevator must be accompanied by a companion or docent.

### **Reporting Hours**

Reporting the time that you spend helping the Museum is important for grants, so please record and report your time.

## **Museum Mission and Culture**

### **Haan Museum Mission Statement**

"The mission of the Haan Museum of Indiana Art is to preserve, protect and share the best of Indiana art and culture and the historic Haan Mansion property for future generations; educate the public about Indiana art, American furniture, and classical architecture and their relationship with Indiana history and culture; and instill a sense of pride in our Hoosier heritage."

Adopted on June 15, 2015 at the monthly Board meeting

Here is the statement broken down:

- Preserve, protect and share Indiana art and culture.
- Preserve, protect and share the historic Haan Mansion property.
- Educate the public about Indiana art, American furniture, and classical architecture.
- Educate the public about the relationship of the building and contents with Indiana history and culture.
- Instill a sense of pride in our Hoosier heritage

As defined by the mission statement, these are the primary responsibilities of volunteers and docents at the Haan Museum: preserve the collections, educate the public, and instill a sense of pride in Indiana culture.

How does this translate into a course of action for the Museum and docents?

### **Establishing a Healthy Culture at the Haan Museum**

An organization's culture is the sum total of expectations of behavior of staff and volunteers. We have the opportunity to have a tremendous impact on the future of the Museum for years to come by establishing a very positive culture.

Here are the steps we need to take to accomplish this goal.

While Operations Volunteers except those working inside the Museum won't have much customer contact, it is important to:

- Answer the door bell quickly.
- Make all visitors feel welcome.
- Be courteous to visitors and volunteers at all times,
- Be sensitive to cultural differences without highlighting them.
- When you are with visitors, they should be your only focus. Give them your undivided attention.
- Familiarize yourself with all items in the area you are covering.
- Cover the most important items on the required coverage list for the type of tour you are conducting.

### **Working with Visitors**

Here are some ways to make your tours rewarding to you and your visitors:

- Engage the visitor.
- Make eye contact with the visitors.
- Face the visitors, and not what you are talking about.
- Be interested in them by finding out where they are from and chit chat a little bit but don't be nosey or be intrusive into their personal lives if they resist.
- Ask what they are most interested in, and tailor the tour to fit their interests.
- Encourage engagement by asking questions.
- Be personal with a short personal message or story (past tours, why you like to be a docent, your

favorite piece, etc.).

- Tell stories about the house, paintings, or ceramics rather than just recite dates and names.
- Get right into the meat of your tour.
- Use a short description about an object and move on. Visitors don't want an analysis, there is too much to see.
- If there are children in the group who seem disinterested, concentrate on objects they would enjoy, and involve them with the object.
- Talk with enthusiasm in your voice, share your passion.
- Talk with a conversational voice and tone, not in a lecturing voice.
- Vary the order you cover items; it will sound less rehearsed and more conversational.
- Occasionally ask if anyone has questions.
- Don't try to impress visitors with how much you know.
- Don't worry about being perfect. If a visitor seems to know about something, ask them a question.
- Try to end on time and cover all of your area. Visitors don't want to feel they've missed half of the Museum because you spent too much time early in the tour.

As you give more tours, connecting with the visitors will become natural for you.

### **Off-Limit Areas**

The basement and third floor are always off limits to visitors and volunteers unless accompanied by a staff member, or given specific permission.

Please do not open closed doors or drawers except when necessary to complete your tasks.

## **Summary of Museum Policies**

### **Smoking**

To protect museum property and the health of staff, volunteers, and visitors, smoking is not allowed on Museum Property. Anyone wishing to smoke must leave the property.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

The possession or use of illegal drugs on the Museum premises is strictly prohibited. The use of alcohol on the Museum property is prohibited except for events where wine or other alcoholic beverages may be served and consumed in moderation if approved by the Executive Director.

If an employee, volunteer, or visitor is noticeably under the influence of drugs or alcohol, circumstances may dictate that they be asked to leave, or at least stop consumption if it is during an Museum event.

### **Food and Beverages**

Visitors may bring snacks or lunch to the Museum but they must be consumed outside, either on the grounds or verandas. Volunteers acting in that capacity may bring snacks or lunch to the Museum and consume them on the grounds or verandas, or in the kitchen. Both visitors and volunteers must pick up their food and containers promptly after their meal or snack.

Drinks must remain in the kitchen except during official Museum events and meetings. Under no circumstances are drinks to be placed directly on Museum furniture or other objects.

### **Equal Opportunity - Anti-Discrimination**

The Haan Museum accepts staff and volunteers on the basis of merit, qualifications, and competence as related to the position to be filled. Race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation or physical condition will not influence acceptance of individuals for staff or volunteer positions. No one acting on behalf of the Museum will act in any manner that discriminates on any of these bases.

### **Harassment**

All volunteers and staff are expected to conduct themselves in ways that ensure that others can work in an atmosphere free of harassment. Harassment can include verbal or physical abuse, unwelcome sexual advances, ethnic, sexist, or religious jokes or slurs, and pictures or posters that are pornographic in nature. Incidents related this policy should be reported to the Executive Director, and if this is not an alternative, directly to the Board Chairman.

### **Solicitation**

Museum policy prohibits personal solicitation, or passing out, posting, or leaving solicitation materials without the express consent of the executive director. Areas in the museum may be made available for this purpose, but material must still be approved. In no case are materials pertaining to an exhibition to be placed in an exhibit, except museum provided didactics.

Special events such as art fairs or paint outs may be held on the Museum grounds, and the Executive Director can authorize participants to provide their own materials without reviewing each one. Non-participants still must get individual permission.

### **Ethical Conduct**

The Museum is committed to maintaining a reputation of fair, impartial, ethical, and proper conduct. Therefore, integrity must underlie all Museum relationships, including those with employees, volunteers, visitors, and vendors.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Anyone acting on behalf of the Museum, including employees or volunteers, must only consider the best interests of the Museum in their decisions and actions, including accepting compensation. If conflict of interest is possible, the individual must withdraw from the decision-making process on that subject.

## **Visitor Behavior**

### **Photography**

Photography inside the Museum is, providing flash is not used and no photographs are taken of paintings directly. Photos including paintings that occur incidentally (but not purposely) as part of a

broader photograph are permitted. Please remind visitors of the policy and courteously request that they stop the violating action.

### **Touching objects, opening doors and cabinets**

Visitors are not allowed to touch or lean on objects or furniture in the Museum, nor are they allowed to sit in any chairs or sofas not designated for that purpose. If necessary, please remind them courteously not to touch the objects or furniture.

On occasion, the Executive Director may determine that guests may use the furniture during a special event.

### **Children**

Children 4 and under are not allowed in the museum except for Christmas tours. If older children are unruly, please tell the parents, "Please watch your child (children) closely. They must be near you and closely supervised at all times. We had a child cause serious damage to an important piece of ceramics, and don't want that to reoccur and cause us to change this policy."

### **Unruly Visitors**

If you feel a visitor is acting inappropriately and you don't feel comfortable approaching them, call for help to handle the situation. This could include calling 911 if the matter seems threatening.

### **Complaints**

If visitors have any complaints and you don't feel you can help, please refer them to the Executive Director. In any case, the complaints should be brought to the attention of the staff to avoid future complaints on that issue if possible.

### **Theft**

Notify the Executive Director or another person of authority if you have good reason to suspect that any staff, volunteer, or visitor is attempting to steal or damage property.

## **Safety**

### **Visitor Injury**

If a visitor requires medical attention, don't hesitate to call 911 if you think it is necessary. In any case, the Executive Director or other staff member should be notified as soon as possible, and the incident should be documented in writing.

### **Volunteer Injury**

If you or another volunteer requires medical attention, don't hesitate to call 911 if you think it is necessary. In any case, the Executive Director or other staff member should be notified. There is a small first aid kit in the downstairs bathroom medicine cabinet for small injuries. Assist the staff in

documenting the incident in writing.

## **Tornados**

The table tennis room at the bottom of the basement stairs is the designated storm shelter room. At the bottom of the basement stairs, go left through the next door and wait until the all clear signal is given.

Lafayette has a storm siren, but the best way to get storm information is through a cell phone.

The elevator goes to the basement, but the elevator car floor is not level with the basement floor. If someone is not able to negotiate stairs in the Museum during a tornado warning, volunteers must assist those visitors to the first floor bathroom or the hall at the top of the basement stairs, and stay with them unless they are accompanied by a responsible adult who stays with them.

## **Fire**

In case of fire, direct everyone to either of the two main fire exits:

- The front door
- The door next to the side entry door off the driveway (goes to veranda).

Both are equipped with easy exit door knobs. Mobility challenged individuals should exit the front door where there is a wheelchair ramp.

If the alarm sounds, it automatically notifies the monitoring company.

If you see fire or smell smoke but don't hear the alarm, immediately call 911, or push the red button on the alarm control panel by the side entry door to notify the monitoring company, who will call the fire department.

If another person is with you, they can use a fire extinguisher while you call 911.

All volunteers must be familiar with the locations of all fire extinguishers.

- Basement: At the bottom of the basement stairs on the stair post.
- First Floor: In the hall next to the first floor elevator door.
- First Floor: At the office exit door to the outside.
- Second Floor: In the hall next to the second floor elevator door.
- Third floor: Just outside the third floor elevator door.

## **How to Operate a Fire Extinguisher**

- Remove the fire extinguisher from the bracket
- Pull the pin located at the top of the handle
- Aim the nozzle at the source of the fire or base of the flames, and not at the actual flames
- Squeeze the handle
- Sweep back and forth over the source of the flames until the fire is extinguished. Watch long enough to assure that the fire does not reignite.

## Earthquake

In case of an earthquake, follow these steps.

- Do not leave the building due to the danger of falling objects
- Immediately drop to your hands and knees where you are so you don't get knocked down, and crawl under a nearby table or other object
- If no table or other object is close by, crawl to an interior wall away from windows or mirrors
- Cover your head and neck with one arm and hold on to the shelter with the other arm until the shaking ends
- Stay on your knees, and bend over to protect your vital organs

## Elevator Problems

The elevator can occasionally stop between floors. This happens when someone outside the elevator tries to open the outer door, or someone in the elevator opens the inner door. In either case, closing the door firmly and pushing the elevator button inside the car or on the wall will start the elevator again.

If there is a problem with the elevator beyond this, you might need to call 911 if Bob is not around. Information they might need to know:

- There is a release lever in the hole at the top of the outer door. Use a screwdriver to pry the release lever up so the outer door can be opened.
- It takes a long screwdriver, and one can be found in one of the kitchen drawers nearest the office door.
- You can also raise or lower the elevator with the crank in the elevator control room, in the area under the kitchen,

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