



Organization Overview

The Dakota County Historical Society was founded in 1939 in South St. Paul, Minn. by Fred Lawshe and a group of historically minded individuals. The organization began collecting artifacts to preserve and have on exhibit. Over the years, various museum spaces were in the South St. Paul High School and South St. Paul City Hall. In 1976, Dakota County began the process of building a new museum for Dakota County. The museum officially opened to the public in 1978.

Today, the organization operates three historic sites throughout Dakota County. The Lawshe Museum houses the research library and the archival and artifact collections for the organization. In 2005, DCHS entered into a partnership with the City of Hastings to operate the LeDuc Historic Estate, which includes the LeDuc house, Carriage Barn, Simmons Shed and Ice House. In 2015, the organization entered into a partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society to operate the Sibley Historic Site in Mendota, Minn. The site consists of the Hypolite DuPuis House, Cold Storage, Henry Hastings Sibley House and the Jean Baptiste Faribault House.

DCHS is a 501(c) (3), nonprofit and membership organization that “preserves, interprets and promotes the history of Dakota County.”

Position Description

As a Museum Docent volunteer, you will be the welcoming face of the Dakota County Historical Society at the Lawshe Memorial Museum’s exhibit galleries. You will greet visitors, answer questions, and assist with general tasks that assist with the museum’s operations.

Your main tasks will be interacting and caring for the public as they enter the museum, answering questions about the exhibits and history they see throughout the museum. You will also provide a low-level of security in the spaces, ensuring that visitors are acting appropriately within the same and not damaging artifacts in exhibits. During downtime, you may be asked to assist with various other tasks regarding the museum’s operations.

If there is no one at the front desk, you may be asked to fill in with some of those duties, as outlined below. There may be the possibility of having two docents per day, dependent upon visitor traffic with the newly opened children’s exhibit. If there are two, the Docents will be located in the Exhibits Wing and Great Hall. If there is one person during a shift, they will move between the two different exhibit areas.

Your main tasks will be interacting and caring for the public as they enter the museum. During downtime, you may be asked to assist with various other tasks regarding with the museum’s operations. The volunteer will work closely with the Executive Director or Associate Director.

Duties & Responsibilities

Visitor Interaction

- Greet visitors as they enter the museum’s gallery(ies)
- As an admission-free museum, point out the donation box(es) throughout the museum
- Direct visitors to handouts of the museum’s exhibits and layout
 - Answer any questions they might have about the exhibits within the museum

General

- Notify staff if any items are running low in stock, or cash register
- Be the eyes and ears on the first floor for staff when visitors are in the building and notify staff of anything suspicious
- Assist with the security of the museum, artifacts, and people in the building
- Ensure that visitors, especially children, are acting and behaving appropriately
- Ensure that visitors are not touching artifacts they should not be touching
- Ensure that visitors are acting safely, especially within the children's exhibit
- Provide light cleanup of the gallery(ies) by sweeping, picking up items from the children's exhibit to put away, etc.
- Let staff know if anything breaks in the children's exhibit, or needs to be replenished

Gift Shop

- If no one is available for the Gift Shop, you may be asked to assist at the front desk
- Assist with purchases in the gift shop, running the cash register system
- Answer the phones and transfer to appropriate staff members
- Count out the till to ensure accuracy
- Provide change as needed
- Must be comfortable using an iPad to run the register, as well as handling money
- Complete data entry or filing tasks as requested and time allows

Open Hours:

- The Lawshe Museum is open year-round
- Volunteer Docents will be used Mid-May through September, but may be extended as needed
- Volunteer shifts will be
 - Wednesdays: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 - Thursdays: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., or 3 p.m. – 8 p.m.
 - Fridays: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 - Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- Some additional evenings may be needed to accommodate special events and/or programs

Interested volunteers should complete a volunteer form from the [DCHS website](#), or indicate their interest in the Dakota County Volunteer Management System.

If you have any questions, you can reach out via phone (651-552-7548) or email (dakotahistory@co.dakota.mn.us).