

The Manchester Historical Society
Tour guides and helpers needed

Walking Through History for Manchester school children

Volunteers needed for the annual tours in the Historic District for third-grade students. During 11 days during the month of May (and one day in April), children come from their schools by bus to visit the Cheney Homestead, Keeney Schoolhouse, Old Manchester Museum, the Fire Museum, Cheney Hall, and the Loom Room at the History Center.

From the bus drop-off at Cheney Hall at about 9:30 a.m. on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays**, children separate into three groups of about 20, and walk along town streets, taking about 40 minutes at each location, where our volunteers greet them, describe the location, and present an interactive program to engage the youth in the location's history.

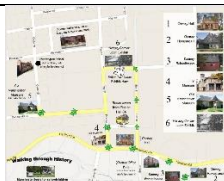
At each location, there's a helper and a guide. The **helper** assists with timing of the visit, answering teacher's questions, etc. The **guide** has a script (and training if wanted) to present information to each group – no lengthy descriptions, but an overview with emphasis on how children lived 100-200 years ago. Each team of helper and speaker hosts three groups of students at 9:45, 10:35, and 11:25, finishing at about 12:05.

The children then all walk to Cheney Hall for lunch (they bring their own), and a tour of Cheney Hall. Here we need volunteer helpers to assist in guiding the groups to the Silk Room downstairs and then tidy up the room after the children leave. One helper walks the group toward the Loom Room at the History Center where the children have a tour. The buses pick them up at 1:30 p.m. to return to school.

Notes:

- There is a fun and informative training and sign-up session held at the History Center, Thursday, April 11 at 3:00 p.m. Volunteers get to meet each other and find out more about the job duties before signing up.
- There are about 90 time slots to fill! Volunteers can be experienced or start out as helpers, find out more about the locations, and possibly choose to become docents (guides) at a later time. Volunteers are always in pairs.
- Here are the slots for volunteers (pick one!):
 - ❖ Morning locations: 9:30 a.m. to 12:05 p.m., or
 - ❖ Cheney Hall and Loom Room: 12:10 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., or
 - ❖ Greeters: 9:25 a.m. to 9:35 a.m. (usually the bus greeter will then take one of the other volunteer slots)
- Volunteers can fill more than one slot in one day, for example one could staff the Keeney Schoolhouse and then help at Cheney Hall.
- Volunteers can sign up for as few as one day or as many as all 11 days – and, yes, we have had a volunteer who has conducted the Loom Room tours single-handedly for several years! Thank you, Dennis Gleeson!
- Tours are held rain or shine, but our volunteers are indoors throughout.
- Each group of students is accompanied by a teacher and one or more chaperones.
- There are helpful maps and web pages given to the teachers in advance. Many teachers know the route and the locations very well. All have prepared their students with information about local history before they come.
- Please bring your cell phone with you if you have one. We may call you if the buses are late. You can always reach a committee member in case something comes up.
- Looking forward to working together!

The School Tour Committee: Marilyn Eastwood, Clair Leighton, Robin Starkel, Susan Barlow sbarlow627@aol.com



Map of district with tour locations

A sample schedule showing the route for two groups. The schedule is organized into two columns, Group #1 and Group #2, with rows for each location. The times listed are 9:30, 10:35, and 11:25. The locations are Cheney Hall, Keeney Schoolhouse, Old Manchester Museum, Fire Museum, Cheney Hall, and Loom Room at the History Center. The schedule shows the sequence of visits for each group and the times they will be at each location.

Sample schedule showing the route for two groups