



## 2021 AHC Walking Tour Docent Training Program

### **About the Program:**

The Architectural Heritage Center (AHC) has been offering Portland area focused architecture and history-themed walking tours for more than a decade. Walking tours are a key component of the AHC's educational programming and we take pride in these well-researched, fact-based tours that aren't just educational, but also lots of fun for tour-goers and docents alike!

Mostly created and led by volunteers, AHC walking tours are regularly scheduled from March through October on Tuesday and Saturday mornings (10am) and from May through August on Thursday evenings (6pm). AHC walking tours are promoted in local, national, and international travel guides, and are a significant tool for conveying the organization's mission, while also providing a substantial amount of earned revenue. Recent tour seasons have included more than 100 tours per year from our catalog of more than 40 tour routes. The AHC staff and board of directors are committed to the walking tour program's continued growth, with the long-term goal of further increasing the number of tours available to both locals and tourists. To do so requires a structured and ongoing docent training program and new volunteer docents, willing to commit their time in support of this vital program.

Serving as an AHC walking tour docent is both individually fulfilling and vital to the AHC as a whole. Docents have the opportunity to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for Portland architecture and history, while pursuing their own interest in lifelong learning.

### **Expectations:**

The AHC walking tour program relies on volunteers committed to sharing their time and knowledge leading tours each season. We believe in providing high quality walking tours that are backed up by thorough research, and that can be tailored to some extent to the individual interests of each docent. To that end, new docents are expected to meet all of the basic training requirements outlined below.

### **Basic Requirements:**

- The AHC tour docent training program is free, but prospective new docents must agree to attend all four training sessions (Intro to the AHC/Basics of Leading a Walking Tour, Vocabulary of Architecture, Architectural Styles, and Portland 101). For 2021, trainees will need to have a computer with internet access in order to attend these classes virtually. The dates for these classes are listed below.
- New docent trainees must also attend (complimentary) at least three (practice or public) AHC walking tours, between February and May 2021, to experience how AHC tours function in real time. Trainees attending public tours must pre-register and check-in with the tour docent.
- New docent trainees must choose one of the following tours to learn and lead in their first year: Downtown's West End, Broadway & Mid-Town, Pearl District, Ladd's Addition, Portland Heights & Vista Avenue, Lair Hill, Colonial Heights, or the Mt Tabor neighborhood. If approved by tour program mentors and AHC program staff, new docents may learn and lead additional tours if desired and as it works within the regular tour schedule.
- New docents will lead at least one "final exam" practice tour with at least three members of the tour training program and/or other AHC volunteers, who will provide an evaluation and follow-up recommendations as necessary. Additional practice tours may be necessary, depending on the initial evaluation.
- Upon completion of the training program, new docents must commit to leading at least three (3) walking tours in their first 12 months and five (5) per annual tour season after that.

### **Additional Details:**

- Experienced AHC tour docents will serve as mentors to trainees, providing guidance as trainees learn their first tour.
- All docents are encouraged to check in with the AHC education manager and volunteer coordinator with any questions or concerns about the training program or tour specifics.
- All docents will be provided access (by appointment) to the AHC library for the purposes of research or further reading related to the tour(s) they plan to lead.
- Prospective docents will be given a booklet copy of their selected tour which includes a route map and details for each tour stop. This is not a script but a set of well-researched

materials that docents are expected to learn and adapt to their personal interests and skills. Also included with each tour will be suggestions for further reading.

- Upon completion of the training program, docents will be provided with an AHC volunteer nametag and other AHC identifiable clothing to be worn whenever leading an AHC tour, a portable microphone system, and a personal first aid kit.
- In the event that a docent trainee leaves the training program before completion, they must forfeit all training materials, tour information, and any other materials or equipment they may have been given as part of the program. Current or former tour docents may not use AHC tour materials, including provided tour booklets, route maps, and historic images, for the purpose of leading any tour for another group or individual, without acknowledgment of and the expressed written consent of the Architectural Heritage Center.

### **Benefits:**

Upon completion of the docent training program and completion of their first tour season, docents will receive the following benefits:

- Annual AHC Individual Membership (\$45 value)
- Free admission (as space allows – must pre-register) to AHC walking tours as well as selected other AHC education programming.

### **2021 Docent Training Schedule (all classes are required):**

Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 1PM – Portland Architectural Styles Lecture

Saturday, February 27, 2021 at 1PM – Vocabulary of Architecture Lecture

Saturday, March 6, 2021 at 1PM – Portland 101 Lecture

Saturday, March 20, 2021 at 1PM – Intro to the AHC and How to Lead a Walking Tour Lecture

All classes will meet live via Zoom. Please allow two hours for each class.

### **Contact Information:**

Volunteer Coordinator: Dave Johnson [DaveJ@VisitAHC.org](mailto:DaveJ@VisitAHC.org)

Education Manager: Val Ballestrem [ValB@VisitAHC.org](mailto:ValB@VisitAHC.org)