**Junior Volunteers at Hutchison House 2022**

Every summer Hutchison House is lucky to have a group of young volunteers help us with our Scottish Teas. These young people are members of our Junior Volunteer program. Junior Volunteers are children between the ages of 8 and 13 years old. They come to Hutchison House 4 or 5 times a summer to help us by serving Scottish Tea to visitors. All spring forms are sent out to the junior volunteers who participated the year before as well as to any child who has reached the age of 8 and would like to participate in the program. Orientation is held at the end of June for all volunteers. At this training session they learn what is expected of them and how to serve the customers. They get a chance to practice by pretending to serve their peers during these practice sessions. At that time, they also receive their schedules for the summer and find costumes to wear.

When junior volunteers arrive at Hutchison House for their shift, they are expected to set up tables for tea on the terrace or in the Keeping Room if it is raining. Once they are done and they get into costume, the Museum Programming Assistant will provide them with fun activities to do while waiting for customers. These can be indoor or outdoor activities depending on the weather.

When visitors arrive, the juniors take turns serving tables. If there are enough customers during the afternoon everyone will get at least one table to serve. Once the visitors at the table that they have served leave they are responsible for clearing it, cleaning it and resetting it. The children are often left tips by their customers. These tips are all put in a jar in the kitchen and collected to go towards the the end of summer Junior Volunteer Party, a thank you gift and a donation to charity on behalf of the Junior Volunteers. At the end of the afternoon the juniors clear and put away the tables and get out of costume.

Once junior volunteers reach the age of 13 they are given the opportunity to train to be an apprentice tour guide. Every year two or three of the tea servers that are old enough decide to become tour guides. They receive their own training session and are scheduled with experienced adult volunteers so that they can learn how to give a tour and greet visitors appropriately. They are encouraged by the experienced guides to give partial tours of the rooms they feel comfortable with until they are ready to give a whole tour by themselves. High school students may log their hours and use them for the mandatory community service requirements for 40 hours prior to graduation.

For children who are over 13 but do not want to guide, there is the option of helping the Scottish Tea Co-ordinator in the Kitchen. These volunteers help to prepare the drinks and scones and dish the jam, butter and whip cream requested by the servers. If there are slow periods then kitchen volunteers help make oatcakes, jam and prepare dry mixes.

The junior volunteer program at Hutchison House provides children with a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, get valuable volunteer experience, gain confidence interacting with adults as well as speaking in public. If you can visit Hutchison House this summer and are given a tour or served tea by one of these enthusiastic young people, be sure to thank them for a job well done!

As government mandates have been lifting and evolving in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum guidelines are evolving as well. For up to date information on the current guidelines in place at the museum please see our website [www.phs-hutchisonhouse.ca](http://www.phs-hutchisonhouse.ca) or email at [info@hutchisonhouse.ca](mailto:info@hutchisonhouse.ca) or call the office at 705-743-9710. Museum staff are working to create an environment that is safe and satisfactory for all volunteers and visitors.