



Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are the heart and soul of The Fells, and we have a wide variety of volunteer opportunities for all ages and interests. Whether you work on a weekly crew or a one-time event, we have something for all levels of experience and commitment. See below to learn about the challenging and rewarding work that is essential to The Fells as we pursue our mission to *welcome people of all ages to The Fells, making each visit an enriching experience with opportunities to explore and learn from our natural lakeside setting, our renowned gardens, and the historic achievements of statesman John Hay.*

Horticulture

Volunteers work Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings, 9am-11am, April to November, in all weather. These are hands-on, get dirty jobs. But equally important to all work sessions is the sharing of plant knowledge, plant care tips and individual gardening experiences. In the Landscape Department, we aim to make each day as educationally interesting as they are productive. No experience necessary; on the job training is provided as needed. Bring your favorite tools or use ours.

Tuesday focus: the Old Garden, the Rockery, Pebble Court, and Gatehouse areas. Throughout the season this crew weeds, deadheads, plants, and waters these garden beds on a rotating basis. Pruning shrubs properly and timely may also be undertaken.

Wednesday focus: the Rock Garden. This is meticulous work and includes weeding, planting, restoring soil and growing conditions for our existing specimens. We reference Clarence Hay's historical records of plant materials used and his design ideas as they are needed or relevant. We selectively introduce new varieties of plants as warranted. We share ideas, plant knowledge, and best-practices for rock garden work.

Thursday focus: the Perennial Border, Veranda, and Rose Terrace beds. General weeding, edging, deadheading, plant care and making soil improvements are the basic chores, supplemented with seasonal needs. These beds are also the source of many Fells Nursery plants so lifting, dividing, and replanting existing specimens are a regular late season task. Learning new skills and sharing experience and ideas are always encouraged.

Nursery focus: One day per week this group meets to grow and propagate existing and new plants for general use around the property or for future sale. Jobs include mixing soils, potting seeds, or plant plugs, dividing Fells perennials, and stocking or maintaining the Plant Stand at the Gatehouse. Nursery tasks will be performed in or near to our glasshouse, in-ground beds, and raised beds at the backside of the Pavilion.

Ecology

Trail Maintenance Crew: This crew monitors the John Hay Ecology, Carriage Road, Wildflower Loop, and Lake Loop Trails—clearing fallen debris and cutting back overgrowth.

History

Tour Guides and greeters are needed to work in the Main House. Training is provided by the Education and Site staffs and job manuals and instructions are provided. Commit to a weekly schedule or be on-call. Three-to-four-hour shifts are available, Wednesdays through Sundays, Memorial Day through Columbus Day. Opportunities are also available to conduct special private group tours.

House Guides and Greeters: Guides and Greeters welcome visitors to the Main House and operate a 15-minute movie. Guides conduct 30–45-minute tours of the 22-room Main House and answer guests' questions. They also assist customers in our small gift shop. Schedules are flexible with two to three docents scheduled to work each shift. Consistency and reliability are important. These volunteers work closely with the Site Manager.

Historical Research: The Education Department needs volunteers to assist with historical research, exhibit preparation and installation. Research can often be done from home. For more information about how you can help, contact our Education Director at 603-763-4789 x5.

Special Events

Special Visitation and Fundraising events have teams of workers chaired by one or more volunteers. Jobs vary according to the event and can include general planning, set-up, greeting guests, food service, tending bar, parking, poster distribution and cash handling. Event chairs work closely with the staff and have established budgets and guidelines. *Please note (with some exceptions) that we ask volunteers who are attending events to purchase tickets, even those working.*

Other Support Activities

Building & Equipment Maintenance: The Fells has a long list of projects, scheduled maintenance, and repairs to address on the property. Whether you consider yourself a “jack-of-all-trades” or possess expertise in carpentry, painting, plumbing, electrical or mechanical repair, please consider joining this team, which works Tuesday mornings, April through November.

Education Department: The Education Department needs volunteers to assist with program hosting, exhibit preparation and installation in both art and history, and historical research. Research can often be conducted from home. For more information about how you can help, contact our Education Director at 603-763-4789 x5.

Flower Arranging: Flower arrangers provide four to six fresh flower arrangements at the Main House every week throughout the summer season. Preparation is done at the Main House on Thursday mornings and “fluffing” as needed. Some selective cutting is allowed in the Nursery and gardens, and home-grown flowers from arrangers' gardens are always welcome. Vases and oasis are supplied. Sign up for one week or several.

Hospitality: The Hospitality Committee provides home baked goods or other specified food items for Fells Volunteer vents such as Volunteer Kick-off, Docent Training, Volunteer Orientation, as well as for Exhibit Openings, and select visitation events. They set-up, serve, and clean-up. Committee members recruit other volunteers to assist as needed. Functions range in size from 10 to 200.

News Clipping/Historian: This position requires avid news hounds who keep an eye out for Fells related articles and stories in all forms of media, print and on-line, then clip and systemize for The Fells library. This need is year-round and perfect for the volunteer who likes to work from home who already has lots of publications at hand.

Office Help: Help at the Gatehouse is needed year-round and includes assisting with mailings, on-line postings of programs to various websites and social media and working on other special projects. Shifts are generally three hours and scheduled as needed. Experience with Microsoft Office is helpful but not essential. Training is provided.

Social Media Expert: Are you Facebook savvy? What about Instagram? Do you enjoy the challenge of on-line searches? Are you a writer? Can you upload photos from your mobile device or camera? We need help with all these things to improve our online marketing presence. Email Outreach@thefells.org for more information.