



Mansion House Volunteer

Role description

History of the Shuttleworth Mansion House

The history of the Ongleys, the Shuttleworth family, the village of Old Warden and the Old Warden Estate with its Parklands, Swiss Garden, House and the Collection tells a powerful story of family, estate, countryside, steam, construction, aviation, mechanics, adventure, innovation, gardens, agriculture and education.

Joseph Shuttleworth was the son of a Lincolnshire shipwright and had spotted the potential of steam. In 1842 with his brother-in-law, Nathaniel Clayton, he formed Clayton & Shuttleworth Co., an iron foundry and engineering business that made portable steam engines and traction engines. By 1872, when Joseph Shuttleworth came to Old Warden, the firm had branches throughout Europe and exported their engines all over the world.

When Joseph acquired the Old Warden estate from the Ongley family in 1872 he had the old red brick Ongley house pulled down and commissioned the renowned architect Henry Clutton to design a house based on Gawthorpe Hall, the sixteenth century home of the Lancashire Shuttleworth family (no relation).

Clutton also designed extensive interior details such as the carved doors, the balustrade, the ornate chimney pieces, even the dado rails and the parquet floors. Local craftsmen provided each room with a different plasterwork ceiling. The majority of the furniture was supplied by Gillows of Lancaster but many ornaments and furniture were individually chosen, for instance the carved swags of fruit in the dining room were ordered from Strong of Riding House Street in London.

The furnishings of the house were gradually added to over a longer period. Most of the antique furniture, clocks, paintings and other antiquities were bought by Joseph and later his son, Frank, from throughout the country from the leading dealers of the times, some names such as Mallets and Agnew still well known today. In his later years Frank Shuttleworth concentrated mainly on old masters and invested in a number of very good and interesting paintings especially from the English school of the eighteenth century but probably the most interesting aspect of the collection are the very widely represented Victorian and Edwardian artists collected during their lifetimes. Many items have been sold or gone elsewhere over the years but there are still many remaining, especially beautiful paintings, chandeliers and mirrors.

Today, the House is open for regular events including Afternoon Tea and bespoke functions such as Weddings and private parties, and in conjunction with Air Show and some Parkland Events.

Why does Shuttleworth need my support?

Volunteers help bring the House and its contents to life when it is open to the public for various events, to ensure our customers receive an enjoyable insight into the history of the Shuttleworth story, or to guide them through the rooms.

How much time will I be expected to give?

You can choose. The opening of the House is usually linked to Air Show and Park Events, Afternoon Tea at the House, as well as private group bookings. Volunteers will be given a list of dates when the House is open to the public and asked to say when they can be available to help.

Where will I be based?

The House, Old Warden Park, Nr Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 9EA.

What will I be doing?**Room Stewards:**

- Steward the rooms in the House and provide a friendly greeting and informal environment
- Meet and greet visitors
- Ensure that visitors enjoy the experience of exploring the rooms that are open, and that the need of different audiences are catered for
- When appropriate, enable visitors to learn more about the rooms by providing additional relevant information

Tour Guides:

- Meet and greet groups
- Become conversant with the history of Old Warden Park and Shuttleworth family and share this knowledge with interested visitors by giving guided tours of the House (information will be provided)
- Ensure that visitors have a positive and enjoyable experience and that they feel their expectations have been met

What skills, qualities and experience do I need?

We are keen to involve people in this opportunity who:

- Are excellent communicators and enjoy meeting new people
- Are able to identify and promote the spirit of Shuttleworth
- Are able and keen to learn about history and heritage and to help others learn about history and heritage
- Are creative and full of enthusiasm

What will Shuttleworth expect of me?

- To be the friendly face of Shuttleworth and deliver excellent customer service
- To be reliable in attendance and dependable
- Help us maintain the highest standards of presentation at our site
- Wear Shuttleworth volunteer uniform where provided
- Follow our security and safety procedures including safeguarding
- Maintain good working relationships with staff, other volunteers and members of the public
- Attend appropriate training and learn about the Trust (generally a couple of hours with refreshments during the year!)

Benefits

You will:

- Develop inter-personal and communication skills
- Improve confidence
- Be part of a small, friendly team
- Gain knowledge into the history of Shuttleworth
- Training will be provided a couple of times a year along
- Visits and trips to other attractions once or twice a year

For further information email amanda.smith@shuttleworth.org or telephone 01767 627 906.