



**PORTSMOUTH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PHOTO CAPTION: Downtown historical walking tours will be as entertaining this summer as they were in the days before face masks were required. Photo courtesy of Portsmouth Historical Society.

WALKING TOURS ARE THE PERFECT PORTSMOUTH ADVENTURE

Looking for the ideal outdoor activity during these unprecedented times? The Portsmouth Historical Society suggests its historical walking tours, which are totally affordable, super educational, and highly entertaining. They also provide outdoor exercise, allow for social distancing, and are a great way to get to know New Hampshire's oldest city and only seaport.

The 2020 downtown walking tour season is scheduled to begin July 10. All tours depart from the Discover Portsmouth Welcome Center at 10 Middle Street and last from 75 to 90 minutes. Walk-ins are welcomed, but for your safety and that of the guides, all tours are limited to six people this year, so reservations are strongly advised.

You can book your spot at www.PortsouthHistory.org today. Tickets are \$12 for Society members and \$15 for non-members. Facemasks (required), hand sanitizer, and two fully renovated and universally accessible public restrooms are available at the Discover Portsmouth Welcome Center that is currently scheduled to open July 10. Walking tour guests will be greeted outdoors. Please plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early.

“We’ll be using our new whisper-quiet headsets,” says walking tour director Robin Lurie-Meyerkopf. “It’s like tuning into a tiny private radio station. The tour guide transmits a crystal-clear signal to all visitors taking a walking tour, so they can stay socially distant and still hear perfectly. The headsets also block out a lot of street noise. It’s a great high-tech system.” While the headsets are always painstakingly sanitized after every use, the receivers accept headphones with any 3.5mm jack, so visitors may use the sets provided, bring their own earbuds, or even purchase a pair for just \$5.

The July 2020 walking tour calendar includes three fact-packed programs that focus on George Washington, the LGBTQ+ community, and (twice-daily) historic highlights of the city center. Additional tours and an expanded schedule are anticipated for August. Private tours led by Portsmouth Advocates founder Prof. Richard Candee are also available on request for an additional fee by calling 603-436-8433.

“Even locals may not know that George Washington slept here,” Lurie-Meyerkopf says. “He visited Portsmouth for four days in 1789. Our experienced guide will give you the low-down on where the first POTUS slept, worshipped, and dined—and even what he wrote in his private journal—while in town. The historic home of his controversial secretary, Tobias Lear, is just one fascinating stop along the way.”

Discover Portsmouth walking tour schedule:

Historic Downtown Portsmouth

This inspiring twice-daily 75-minute walking tour covers the streets, stories, and architecture of Portsmouth’s beloved city center.

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, & Mondays at 11:30 am and 2:30 pm, July through October

"Gay" Old Times: Stories of Portsmouth's LGBTQ+ Community

An engaging 75-minute "hidden history" of LGBTQ+ clubs, organizations, and the people who impacted the seacoast of NH, narrated by tour guide Tom Kaufhold.

Sundays at 3:30pm, July 5, 12, 19, 26

The Portsmouth Path of President Washington

Renowned tour guide and former teacher Jeff Thomson leads you in the footsteps of recently elected George Washington during his historic four-day Portsmouth visit in 1789.

Saturdays at 3:30 pm, July 4,11,18,25

The Discover Portsmouth Welcome Center and the 1758 John Paul Jones Historic House Museum are scheduled to open for the season on July 10. Reduced 2020 summer hours are Friday through Monday, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Guided tours of the John Paul Jones House can also be booked online beginning the week of June 28. The upcoming exhibition, "Threads: A Community Quilt for 2020," centered around a quilt assembled from squares submitted by members of the greater Seacoast public, and showcasing the Society's own quilt collection, is scheduled to open In the Academy Gallery on August 7. Please visit www.PortsmouthHistory.org or call 603-436-8433 for updates, booking tickets, membership information, and details of our virtual lectures, exhibitions, and other programs.