

# Town Life

## A Guide for Teachers



## Westfield Heritage Village

This guide provides an overview of the "Town Life" program as well as information that you will need to make the most of your visit to Westfield.

## **Program Overview**

We are delighted that you and your class will be joining us for our Town Life program. Westfield is a special place where students have the opportunity to learn about the past in an immersive, multi-sensory environment that makes history come alive. We strive to provide enjoyable, and informative educational opportunities that allow students to learn about our past through engaging, hands-on experiences.

Our educational programs are developed in accordance with the learning objectives outlined in the Ontario Curriculum, with the goal of being a valuable complement to the work that you do in the classroom. We are committed to offering a unique learning environment where students can explore, imagine and discover.

## **Program Objectives**

This program has been designed to help students gain an understanding of what life might have been like in a small community in Ontario in the second half of the nineteenth century. Utilizing our beautiful rural location, rare collection of period buildings and rich artifact collection, our knowledgeable and welcoming costumed interpreters will guide your students through four interpretive areas. Each of these stations illustrate important aspects of the culture and lifestyle of life in a small town at this time, including the domestic scene, the role of small businesses, transportation and popular entertainment. These stations all have a hands-on component that will allow the participants to experience a taste of town life in 19<sup>th</sup> century Canada.

The primary objectives of this program are to...

- illustrate aspects of the daily life of a family living in a small town in Canada during the mid-late nineteenth century
- identify factors that encouraged the formation and growth of early town and villages
- help students understand the connections between various businesses and services in a town and how they met the needs of the community
- develop an understanding of the social, cultural and technological circumstances that impacted individuals and families in Ontario in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- to describe the various roles in early economies, including business owners, suppliers, apprentices and consumers
- consider the impact of human activity on natural environments



## **Making the Most of Your Visit**

### **Confirmation Form**

Please check your confirmation form carefully and notify us as soon as possible if the information is incorrect, or if you need to make any changes. Westfield has a three week cancellation policy.

### **Payment**

We will send an invoice following your visit. If you prefer to pay on the day of your visit, please make cheque payable to "**Hamilton Conservation Authority.**"

### **Arrival Time**

Program times are 10:00 - 11:30 and 12:30 – 2:00. Please plan to arrive by 9:45 a.m. for a morning or all day program and by 12:15 pm. for an afternoon program. This will ensure your program will begin on time. When your group arrives you will be greeted by a costumed interpreter and given further directions.

### **Late Arrivals**

Any groups arriving after the program start time of 10:00 am or 12:30 pm will result in parts of the program being shortened or omitted. We will not be able to extend program times.

### **Lunches**

Program participants are encouraged to bring nut free, litter-less lunches and refillable drink bottles. Please note that Westfield cannot guarantee that our facilities are nut-free.

### **Lunch Space - The Ironwood Hall**

The Ironwood Hall is available as a lunch room at a cost of \$37.29, but needs to be booked in advance. Lunches will be stored here but please note that there is no refrigeration or microwaves available for school use. This area is not locked, so please do not leave valuable items. Washrooms are located in this building and you will also find a pay telephone and water fountain at the side entrance.

**Outside Picnic Area** – Groups are welcome to use our picnic area free of charge and the space does not need to be booked in advance. The picnic area is uncovered. You will have access to washrooms, a pay telephone and water fountain.

### **Storing Belongings**

In cases where groups have not booked the Ironwood Hall but wish to have lunch in the picnic area, you will be asked to leave your lunches outside of the Hall while in program. Please note that there is some shade in this area however no refrigeration. Please encourage program participants to pack an icepack and/or use thermo lunch bags.

### **Dressing for the Weather**

Students should dress appropriately for cool, hot or rainy weather. They will be spending the majority of the time outdoors and on gravel roads and in buildings that are heated by methods used during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During cold weather boots, mitts, hats and heavy coats are strongly encouraged. In warmer weather sun hats, sunscreen, bug spray are all recommended.

### **Extreme Weather**

All programs continue rain, snow, or shine. During weather extremes however a greater portion of our programs may be conducted indoors or adapted for the safety of participants and staff.

### **Movement Between Stations**

To make the most of your program, please encourage your group to move as efficiently as possible from station to station. Your interpreters will direct you to each of your stations.

### **Supervision**

You know your group best, so we will leave it to you to determine how many additional supervisors will be necessary. Please note, however, that due to the small sizes of many of our historic buildings, we recommend you not exceed a ratio of 1:5. You are responsible for supervising your group(s) at all times while on site.

### **Special Needs**

Westfield is working to make the village fully accessible for all visitors, however all areas are not fully accessible at this time. Please let us know if anyone in your group requires special assistance or accommodation and we will do our best to provide the best experience possible.

### **Costumes**

Students and teachers wishing to get into the spirit of the day are welcome to visit in historical costumes. Boys can wear dark dress pants, a white or plaid shirt, suspenders and vest. Girls can wear a dark dress or long dark skirt with cotton blouse and bib-style apron. All can wear straw hats, long black socks and dark leather shoes or boots. No jewelry or makeup should be worn.

### **Gift Shop**

The Gift Shop is not normally open during school programming days however if requested in advance arrangements may be made.

## **Program Structure**

To make the most of your program, please plan to arrive by 12:15 so that your program can begin promptly at 12:30. Upon arrival, you will be welcomed by a costumed interpreter, who will help organize the students into groups and explain the rotation system. Following a brief welcome and introduction, each group will be taken to the first of four stations by the interpreter. You will then be directed to each of the following stations.

### **A Centre of Town Life**

#### **Location: General Store**

This station will focus on the important role that General Stores played in a community. These family businesses were not only a place to purchase supplies, but were also a popular spot to socialize, hear the latest news, mail a letter, and perhaps even look for advice. Participants will learn about the three types of transactions: credit, trade and cash sales, discover the types of goods available in the early 19th century, and learn about the mail system with a visit to the post office.

### **Keeping House and Home**

#### **Location: Misener Home**

Homes of this time were simple and small, but much more comfortable than that of the generation earlier. The Misener house is an example of a Confederation-era home. In this rich setting, students will participate in a hands-on domestic task, and experience the expectations and responsibilities of a child living in the 1860s.

### **All Aboard!**

#### **Location: Jerseyville Railway Station**

In the last half of the 19th century, railways opened up the country in dramatic, unprecedented ways. In a country where land travel had been consistently difficult, rail lines allowed for the efficient movement of people, goods and information over large distances. Through an interactive visit to the Train Station, participants will learn about the wonder of steam technology and the various roles and functions of a busy railway station and its crew.

### **That's Entertainment!**

#### **Location: Century Theatre**

The invention of motion pictures in the 1890s was preceded by a fascinating series of innovations and popular entertainments, including traditional live theatre, still photography and a brilliant cast of inventors and innovators. Participants will have an opportunity to learn about these early roots of cinema, and to watch a short silent film giving them a taste of this extremely popular form of 19th century entertainment.