

Student Programs Guide

2026-27



Patrick Henry's Scotchtown

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Preservation Virginia

Patrick Henry's Scotchtown is a Preservation Virginia Property

Preservation Virginia, a private non-profit organization and statewide historic preservation leader founded in 1889, is dedicated to perpetuating and revitalizing Virginia's cultural, architectural and historic heritage thereby ensuring that historic places are integral parts of the lives of present and future generations. Our mission is directly consistent with and supportive of Article XI of the Constitution Preservation of Virginia, benefiting both the Commonwealth and the nation. Preservation Virginia provides leadership, experience, influence, and services to the public and special audiences by saving, managing, and protecting historic places, and developing preservation policy, programs, and strategies with individuals, organizations, and local, state, and national partners.

Other Preservation Virginia historic properties include: **Bacon's Castle** (1665, Surry County); **Cape Henry Lighthouse** (1791, Virginia Beach); **Jamestown Island, "Historic Jamestowne"** (1607); **John Marshall House** (1790, Richmond); **Smith's Fort Plantation** (c. 1763, Surry).

Mission & Vision Statements

Our mission is to make Virginia's communities and historic places of memory stronger, more vital and economically sustainable through preservation, education and advocacy.

Our vision is that historic preservation will become an integral part of everyone's life.

Scotchtown Mission Statement

A site where revolution found its voice, Patrick Henry's Scotchtown educates audiences in the complex relationship between liberty, human rights, and the nation. Through our interpretation of Scotchtown and its inhabitants--free and enslaved--our mission is to preserve and promote civic responsibility in ourselves and our visitors.



Welcome to Scotchtown, the 1719 plantation that is most well-known for serving as Patrick Henry's main residence between 1771 and 1778. One of the only originally-standing homes of Patrick Henry, here the "orator of the American Revolution" conceived his most influential revolutionary ideas, including his famous "Liberty or Death" speech. In addition to growing his large family on this Hanover County property, Patrick Henry also grew his wealth at Scotchtown, derived from the enslaved labor of approximately 30 men, women, and children.



Irrefutably, Patrick Henry existed as one of America's most influential founders and contributed much to the crafting of American ideals and culture. However, like many of his generation and prestige, Henry relied on enslaved labor to maintain his lifestyle and get through the day. Integral to our interpretation of understanding Henry as a patriot, orator, statesman, governor, husband, father, and Virginian, is understanding his identity as an enslaver of over one hundred people during his lifetime. There is unlimited value in appreciating Henry's contributions to the United States, while placing his life and career in the context of the enslaved labor that helped make his success possible.

Why Scotchtown is a Great Place to Learn

House Museums Tell Unique Stories

House museums occupy a league of their own within the realm of public history institutions because we have the inherent benefit of offering a **place-based education**. As a former residence, Scotchtown served as the setting for both the lives of Henry and his family, and also the labors of the up to thirty people he enslaved between 1771-1778. **History happened here** and we are fortunate today to be the stewards of stories detailing a variety of lived experiences; it is our responsibility to share those histories with visitors and elevate the voices of the enslaved. Furthermore, house museums often remain the most tangible reminder of a person and their life. Sites like Scotchtown, which Preservation Virginia restored to its 18th century appearance, serve as a physical manifestation of a bygone era. Though Henry family objects and furnishings are limited throughout the house today, period pieces line the halls and walls of Scotchtown to provide further context about the space. Throughout the house, the human stories and experiences that happened in these spaces still exist, and that's an important concept to understand. Displaying our historic collection, both Henry pieces and others, help to illustrate those narratives. Preservation Virginia is proud to preserve, care for, and share with the public special items from Henry's life and other artifacts from the period.

Unfortunately, at this time we do not have any form of wheelchair access to the manor house due to the nature of the historic home. Please let us know if you require any special accommodations and we will do our best to assist.

Field Trip Experience Format at Scotchtown

At Scotchtown, we find that a rotation of activities and learning experiences works best to engage students and maximize their interest and retention. The **guided house tour** is a required rotation for each field trip, but teachers are invited to select up to three additional rotations based on the offerings listed below. Field trips on average total 2-hours.

Design Your Field Experience at Scotchtown

In addition to receiving the guided house tour, your students can receive up to three additional activities and programs. Please make your selections based on the information below. Rotations will be 20-25 minutes each.

<i>Automatically Included In Your Visit:</i>		
☐ Guided House Tour	4th-12th Grade	In this Museum Educator-led tour, students will exercise critical thinking and communication skills as they explore the varied lived experiences that took place in the house. Students will consider the impact of life at Scotchtown on Patrick Henry's career and perspectives about liberty, freedom, and slavery.
<i>Please Select up to 2 of the Following Exploratory Activities/Programs</i>		

☐ Historic Grounds Exploration	4th-12th Grade	Using primary sources students will learn about the historic outbuildings that once existed at Scotchtown and they will consider the lives and experiences of the enslaved men, women, and children who maintained the plantation.
☐ American Revolution Soldier Program	4th-12th Grade	Using reproduction artifacts and textiles, this interactive program will engage students in what it was like to serve in the Continental Army during the American Revolution.
☐ Crown or Colony Scavenger Hunt	4th-8th Grade	Students will be divided into groups to embark on a primary source scavenger hunt across the property with the purpose of identifying whether their group are Loyalists or Patriots.
☐ Sacred Symbols: Regimental Flags and Colors	4th-6th Grade	Using the <i>Liberty or Death</i> flag from the American Revolution, students will consider the significance of military flags and the symbols with which they are adorned. They will then design their own flag in a make-n-take craft.
☐ Timing the Trees: Dendrochronology at Scotchtown	6th-8th Grade	Students will explore our nature trail, learning not only about how generations of inhabitants have used Central Virginia's forests and trees, but students will also learn about dendrochronology. How do you tell how old a tree is and what stories does a tree's core tell us? Finally students will consider how the science of dendrochronology helps historians, like us here at Scotchtown, better understand historic structures.
☐ Scotchtown and the Atlantic World	4th-12th Grade	This program explores how the Triangle Trade's international commerce of raw materials, forced labor, and processed goods connected people, places, and products around the world in the 18th century. Using Patrick Henry's household account books kept at his Scotchtown plantation, students will consider the ways the Atlantic World came to impact life and labor in the American colonies.
☐ Colonial Games	K-6th Grade	Entertainment plays an important role in the lives of children today just as it did in the 1700s. The goal of this activity is to give students a glimpse into the lives of children of the 18th century through hands-on period games.

Please Select 1 of the Following Intensive Activities/Programs

☐ Colonial Colors: Fiberworks and Natural Dyes	4th-12th Grade	One of our historic demonstrations, students will learn how sheep's wool was produced at Scotchtown to create fibers, how clothes were made, and how colonial Virginians colored their textiles with natural dyes.
☐ Digging Up the Past: Archaeology at Scotchtown	4th-12th Grade	Archaeology helps historians learn more about historic places; it helps us unearth the past and better understand how people lived and how environments changed over time. Operating in pairs, students will learn the basics of archaeology and try their hand at excavating historic artifacts.
☐ Wool: The Fabric of Time	K-3rd Grade	Why are there sheep at Scotchtown? This interactive storytime program explores why sheep were important to the American Revolution, and how their wool is turned into cloth.
☐ Young Historians Natural History Hike	K-3rd Grade	Why does Virginia have a state bird, and where can you find one? What types of habitat are around Scotchtown? Join an interpreter for a hike along our nature trail to learn more about Hanover's natural history.

Virtual Field Trip Programs

In addition to hosting students on-site, Scotchtown is excited to also offer a growing number of original student virtual programs.

Revolutionary Rhetoric (40 mins) - Suggested 4th-12th

Patrick Henry is known as the "Orator of the Revolution," having fought the war for independence more prominently with his quill and his word than with a sword. What was so impactful about Henry's 1775 "Liberty or Death" speech given at St. John's Church in Richmond, Virginia? What does rhetoric mean to a movement? What other kinds of rhetoric inspired revolution against Great Britain? Coming from Patrick Henry's Scotchtown plantation where he penned his famous "Liberty or Death" oration, Museum Educators will present three different pieces of revolutionary rhetoric and lead students in a comparison and contrast of the ideals, their authors, subject, and impact. These three documents demonstrate the usage of literature as a tool during the Revolutionary War in addition to its powerful influence on society.

Patrick Henry's Road to Revolution (40 mins) - Suggested 4th-12th

This program examines key moments in Patrick Henry's personal and professional life that eventually led him to the floor of St. John's Church in March 1775 to deliver his famous words, "Give me liberty or give

me death!” Some events to be featured in this program include the Parson’s Cause and the Stamp Act resolutions. Students will exercise primary source analysis, historical inquiry, connecting past to present, and evaluating change over time.

Colonial Religion and the First Great Awakening (40 mins) - Suggested 9th-12th

Patrick Henry is primarily remembered as the Orator of the Revolution, but he also contributed to state and national conversations about freedom of religion and the separation of church and state—or lack thereof. He came of age in Virginia during a religiously tumultuous time known as the First Great Awakening. What was the religious landscape of colonial and early Virginia, and how did religion impact Patrick Henry both personally, professionally, and politically? Students will exercise primary source analysis, historical inquiry, connecting past to present, and evaluating change over time.

Planning Your Visit: Rates and Reservation Policies

You may reserve your field trip by contacting Site Coordinator, Patrick Laird, by email at plaird@preservationvirginia.org or by phone at (804) 227-3500. Field trip reservations, either on-site or virtually, must be made at least two **(2) weeks prior** to your desired date.

In-Person Field Experiences: \$10/student and non-school chaperone; school personnel are free. 10-person group minimum.

Virtual Field Trips: \$150 each and includes two (2) repeated sessions. Additional sessions can be added for \$50.00/each.

Reservations: A field trip or virtual program must be reserved with a **deposit of 50%** of your admission total two (2) weeks ahead of your scheduled date. The remaining payment for your visit may be completed day-of, though we will happily accommodate pre-payments, too. Credit card payment or checks will be accepted. To pay by check:

- Make payable to *Preservation Virginia* (204 W. Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23220)
- “Scotchtown Ed Program + program date” in the memo line

Cancellations made at least one (1) week before your scheduled field trip will be accepted and your deposit refunded. Cancellations made less than (1) week in advance or no-show on the day of the field trip will **not** receive a refunded deposit. If conflict or unforeseen circumstances arise--on your end or ours--preventing your field trip, we are happy to reschedule for a later date.

Planning Your Visit: Expectations

Parking and Arrival

Patrick Henry’s Scotchtown is the first entrance on the right after turning onto Chiswell Lane. The parking lot is large enough to accommodate buses and any additional vehicles. If your group is utilizing a bus for transportation, please make this arrangement known to the Site Coordinator at the time of reservation, and we will ensure there is enough room for all vehicles.

Field trips will begin with a check-in at the Scotchtown visitor center/gift shop directly next to the parking lot. Your guide(s) will greet you and provide instruction for your group on the lawn of the manor house. **Please arrive at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to your scheduled field trip start time.** If your group is running late, please contact the Interpretation Coordinator as soon as possible with an estimated arrival time. Late groups may result in a shortened visit. Additionally, please allow time for your students to visit the gift shop, use restrooms, and if desired, break for a snack.

Accessibility

Scotchtown is a partially accessible historic site. There are 10 steps that must be traversed to enter the home, once inside the building, a house tour will take place entirely on one floor. Seating can be provided if required by a student. The grounds of Scotchtown are uneven and should be traversed with caution, this can impact the visit of students with limited mobility. Construction of a ramp into the manor house is currently underway this project is to be completed by the end of 2026.

Food and Drink

While food and drink are not permitted inside the buildings at Scotchtown, your group is welcome to enjoy refreshments or bagged lunches at the picnic pavilion, benches, and lawns in our garden. Please note that we currently do not offer bagged lunches so this must be provided by the school. A staff member will provide receptacles to discard your trash.

Student Behavior

At Patrick Henry's Scotchtown, we practice *active preservation* in order to care for the house and our collection. This means:

- No running, yelling, or rough-housing in or outside of the museum.
- Please do not touch any objects, furniture, or surfaces unless instructed by your guide.
- Feel free to take pictures during your tour, but please **no flash**. If students become distracted by cell phones or cameras, your guide reserves the right to request that the devices be put away. Please **no video recording** of any part of your field trip.
- Cell phones are welcome during the field trip for taking photos, but Scotchtown staff retain the right to ask phones be put away if their usage becomes distracting to others.
- No food, open drink bottles, or chewing gum are allowed inside the house. We do not want to risk spilling of food or drink.
- We ask that students do not bring backpacks or bags on tour so as not to knock into any objects. We have a safe space to leave student belongings.
- Please be respectful of other classmates, teachers, and Patrick Henry's Scotchtown guide by not talking over each other, respecting others' opinions, and raising hands to answer or ask questions.

Thank you for your interest in Patrick Henry's Scotchtown. We look forward to visiting with you soon! Please reach out with any questions or concerns, and in the meantime, be sure to follow us on social media!

