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Cover Picture

We feature our Executive Director and his wife, Susan, along with their family dog, Beau, impersonating a modern Sarah and George with their dog, Modjeska. We hope you come to enjoy their beautiful home, the Castle, and the grounds as much as they did.

Castle Watch Design

We welcome Dryden Meints to the Castle Watch as art director and are introducing a new "look" to this issue. He joined the Castle staff in March and has a biography elsewhere in this issue.

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Iim Prohaska

Facilities Maintenance

& Project Supervisor

Suzanne Withem

Interim Development Coordinator

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A Message from Executive Director, SIDNEY GNANN

It seems like ages since my last report! At this writing, summer is drawing to a close, which is always a little wistful for me as we enter the last

months of the year. As I think back over the year thus far, I have some fond memories of new things that we tried and new things that we've learned. After starting a 'normal' year, we quickly discovered that it was going to be pretty quiet at the Castle. We were humbled by the patience and generosity of our ticket holders as we canceled and rescheduled programs.

Restless to continue sharing Omaha's treasure, we started producing mini-tours to be enjoyed from the comfort of home. Wanting to see familiar faces in a safe environment, we booked food trucks to encourage groups of people to safely picnic in our beautiful gardens. Soon we will host our first ever 'virtual' Art and Literary Festival, aptly named "Close to Home." For that, we continue our longstanding partnership with Metropolitan Community College, and we'll also work with the Union for Contemporary Arts to bring you original material from the artists of our region. Likewise, the Historic Home Tour will be virtual, which means people will be able to see some of Omaha's finest homes from anywhere with an internet connection. In the pages ahead, you'll also see our programming focus on gatherings of a more intimate nature, a perfect fit for the Joslyns' residence.

Though the times are different than we're used to, our community and our culture is very much alive. This resilience will certainly profit us for years to come as we've built new ways of reaching people. I hope you'll continue to connect with us in a way that's meaningful for you throughout the remainder of 2020. Whether you're operating only in small groups or staying home, we will continue bringing out the Castle's best for you.

A Message from Board President, JOHN DECHANT

"There's no place like-"

C'mon, I know you finished that sentence yourself. There's no place like home, right? That's because it's true. Home is a special place. And the places we



deem important enough to call home are worth some reflection. The Joslyn Castle is one such place. It started out as a home for an entrepreneurial couple from Vermont who had moved west for better opportunities. Over time, it became home for an adopted daughter, then later a school district, and ultimately a community home of sorts.

This past February, Erin Grace wrote a column in the Omaha World-Herald that described a pleasant morning spent with her golden retriever on the Joslyn estate. Grace thoroughly captured just how accessible Joslyn Castle is to the Omaha community and to out-of-town visitors. It's true. This place is a community asset, unlike any other in Omaha. And for many—whether they're patrons, tenants, or dog-walking neighborhood folks like Erin—it's a second home. If you walk the grounds long enough, it starts to feel that way. I think George and Sarah Joslyn would be happy to know that their 35-room mansion and surrounding gardens have become a community treasure.

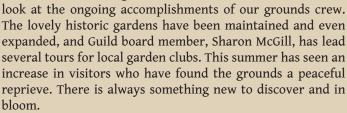
Another thing about home: you can always go back, even if you've been away for a while. If you struggle to remember the last time you visited the Castle, I urge you to come check it out. Perhaps you and a friend want to join a limited crowd for our popular Joslyn Castle Unlocked dinner and tour. Or you might enjoy our new "A Little Dinner Music" series that combines fine dining with live music in an intimate and socially distanced atmosphere. And stay tuned, because you'll start to see more programming available as virtual offerings, meaning you can enjoy it from the comfort of your own couch.

It's true that home is where you hang your hat. But it's also where you walk your dog, picnic with your family, or see a show with friends. Here's to Joslyn Castle, a second home to so many of us.

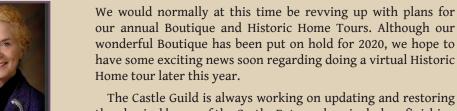
A Message from Guild President, KATHY GROSS

Greetings and a Happy Fall to all. I have always looked forward to this magical change of seasons.

Hopefully many of you have ventured to the Castle during the summer to



Our Guild membership has continued to see growth and I thank everyone who has renewed their membership.



The Castle Guild is always working on updating and restoring the physical bones of the Castle. Future plans include refinishing the floors in the kitchen and butler's pantry. The Conservatory is also getting a much needed "redo" with new lighting and plants. We are also looking for pre-1940 books that we can add to the ambience of the library. Please contact the Castle if you have books to donate.

Our doors are open to receive visitors during scheduled tour times, but the gardens are always open. Come see us soon and enjoy this beautiful setting both inside and out. And please be sure to look up the wonderful autumn programs the Castle staff has in store for you on our website.

BOARD MEMBERS

JOLEEN SMITH DAVID

Joleen Smith David, A.P.R., serves as Vice-Chair in a consulting capacity for Smith Kroeger Marketing Communications, the firm that was formed by the January 2019 sale of Smith Kaplan Allen & Reynolds (SKAR), where she served as Partner, President, and Director of Public Relations.



Joleen began her 41-year tenure at SKAR as a copywriter, advancing to writer/producer, department head, and vice president/creative director before joining a group of partners in buying SKAR from founders Wayne Smith and Ron Kaplan in 1997.

A lifelong Omahan, Joleen is a past secretary and past president of Omaha Northwest Rotary, past board member (2005 - 2010) of the Nebraska Humane Society, immediate past advisory board chair and current chair of the board recruitment and advancement committee for The Salvation Army Omaha, a member of the governing board serving on the governance and quality and patient safety committees of Children's Hospital and Medical Center, and a member of the national communications task force of the Prader Willi Association USA.

Donald James (DJ) Wisnieski

DJ was born and raised in Norfolk, Nebraska, where he also worked year-round for his family's small construction and home insulation companies. His parents' high level of involvement in community groups



(Jaycees, Norfolk City Council, Big Bang Boom, Inc., Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, and Nebraska Homebuilder's Assoc.) provided him with an interest in volunteer work. He was a longtime member of Big Bang Boom, Inc., the volunteer group that led every aspect of Norfolk's approximately \$40,000 per year Fourth of July fireworks event.

DJ attended the Universities of Nebraska at Omaha and Lincoln for a B.S. in Architectural Engineering and Master of Architectural Engineering, Structural Engineering degrees, respectively. He held an Information Technologies internship at Union Pacific Railroad throughout college and following graduation was hired by HDR, Inc. as a Railroad Bridge Engineer-in-Training (EIT). He passed the Professional Engineer (PE) exam and became a licensed Professional Civil (Structural) Engineer in December of 2018.

DJ met future wife, Summer, during college while they were interning at Union Pacific together. They married in 2018 and now live near the Castle. As a part of her community contribution, Summer is a member of The Great Plains Colon Cancer Task Force.

STAFF MEMBERS

DRYDEN MEINTS

Dryden comes to Joslyn Castle from the Omaha Conservatory of Music's marketing team. During his six years there, he gained experience in graphic design, copywriting, social media strategy, email, web development, and book layout.



Outside of marketing, he is a composer, singer-songwriter, and music producer who works with artists across the country and internationally. He is best known around town for composing the String Sprouts repertoire.

Dryden is tremendously excited to talk about all the wonderful things that happen at the Castle and help its programs grow!

Lyn Wallin Ziegenbein

Lyn Wallin Ziegenbein first visited the Castle in third grade when her grade school chose her to attend a book fair held in the Carriage House. She recalls the experience vividly and the "magical" feeling of the Castle. Two of her special interests, history and architecture, may have started that day.



Lyn is a fifth-generation resident of Douglas County. She is the Executive Emerita of the Peter Kiewit Foundation where she served more than 30 years and is also a former Assistant U.S. Attorney for Nebraska. She initiated the New North Makerhood arts and trades district when she was at the Foundation and continues to work on its operation.

She has extensive non-profit experience including current service at Completely Kids, Omaha Sports Commission, Museum of Nebraska Art, Habitat for Humanity, Film Streams, and College of Saint Mary. She also serves on the boards of Bridges Investment Fund and Assurity Insurance, Inc. Lyn was inducted into the Omaha Business Hall of Fame in 2011. Some of her past affiliations include the Omaha Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank, a White House Commission on Hispanic Education, vice-president of the Council on Foundations, and the board of the Higher Learning Commission in Chicago.

Lyn is a graduate of the William Allen White School of Journalism at the University of Kansas where she was a Campus Editor and the Creighton School of Law where she was on the Law Review. She also attended the University of London as an undergraduate.

Her hobbies include the piano, gardening, and designing needlepoint. She is reviving her journalism experience through writing based on her career in philanthropy.

Staff Members

JUDY ALDERMAN

Judy Alderman, the Rental Coordinator, is no stranger to the Castle. Following a 28-year career at Mutual of Omaha, Judy first joined the Castle staff in January of 2008, as the Tour Coordinator. She was instrumental in developing the "Violet's World" program



for children, as well as assisting with Castle events and rentals. Judy retired from the Castle in 2014 but continued to be involved as a volunteer and filled in from time to time during staff changes.

She began volunteering at the Visitor Center downtown in January, 2015. That volunteer work evolved into a paid position as a step-on guide for bus tour groups visiting the city. She continues to be engaged with the Visitor Center. In October, 2019, Judy was hired as the part-time rental coordinator.

Judy is active in several community groups, serving on the boards of the Omaha Walking Club and the Midtown Business Association. She is also the current secretary of the Bemis Park Neighborhood Association.

In what little free time she has, she enjoys reading, writing, gardening, and trying to keep up with her 18-month old Australian Shepherd.

SUZANNE WITHEM

Suzanne is a Nebraska native who grew up in Papillion, NE and has lived in or around Omaha for most of her life. She earned both her bachelor's degree in Theatre and her master's degree in English from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Most recently, Suzanne served as the Digital



Learning Coordinator at UNOmaha, and before that, she taught in UNOmaha's First Year Writing Program, teaching English composition and serving as a writing coach. For five years prior to that, she worked as a teaching artist at The Rose Theater.

Suzanne is also a professional director, actor, and stage manager, working primarily in and around Omaha. Suzanne's earliest and most vivid Castle memories come from a 4th grade field trip to the Castle where she first learned about the Joslyns' beautiful home and the impact they had on the city. She is thrilled to be sharing her skill and wide-ranging experiences in support of the Joslyns' lasting legacy.

Meet Our Docent



GARY ANDERS

Way back in 1972, Gary Anders lived in an apartment across the street from Joslyn Castle, and he would often bring his little boy to play on the Castle grounds. That was the start of Gary's relationship with Joslyn Castle. Now, many years later, Gary is retired from a career as a physical therapist and administrator and he's come back

to Joslyn Castle as a volunteer docent. Gary also serves as a volunteer ambassador for the Omaha Visitors Center, and it was a visit to Joslyn Castle with that group that piqued his interest. Fellow ambassador Judy Alderman, also a long-time docent at the Castle, provided the encouragement he needed to join our volunteer corps. Since last fall Gary's been a regular for weekday public tours, also helping out with group tours and bus tours whenever he can.

Gary brought plenty of experience with him when he came to the Castle, since he also serves as a step-on guide for many bus tours stopping in Omaha. Gary does Omaha Historic Tours and Billionaire Tours for tourist groups from all over the country.

Gary thinks stories of the Joslyns' and the Omaha Public Schools' tenure at the Castle are integral to the history of Omaha, and he loves sharing his knowledge with enthusiasm. "I want people to be as excited as I am," he says. When asked about his favorite room in the Castle, Gary says, "Whatever room I am in at the time is my favorite. I love the octagonal turret rooms. I love the Scottish asymmetry of the building. I love the view from Violet's bedroom window, because I love to tell the story about the construction of the Carriage House and the big party they had when it was completed. They had candy corn in the horse troughs!"

Gary and his wife Becky have two grown children and several grandchildren. When he's not volunteering he enjoys traveling, reading, and helping out at his church.

"I'm a project person," Gary says. When something captures his interest, he does as much research as possible on the topic, allowing him to use the information in a practical way. As a lover of history, giving tours of one of the area's great historic homes is a perfect match for Gary. We think we're pretty lucky to have him around.

Spring & Summer at the Castle

The summer months brought the outdoors to the forefront and we have witnessed a large influx of public gathering, picnicking, studying, dog walking, exercising, meditating, and enjoying the Castle gardens and grounds. We are seeing neighborhood regulars, but also many new faces that are just discovering the Castle for the first time. All are amazed to discover and enjoy our little gem tucked away in the city.

Our gardeners and grounds team have worked diligently to curate and maintain a beautiful sanctuary and gathering space for the community. Our space also serves well as a home to the surrounding urban wildlife. We take great pride that our grounds have been deemed a Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. We have also introduced four new bee houses, in different locations throughout the gardens, for solitary bees. These insects play a vital role in pollinating our gardens and orchard. Check out our video on the

Castle's Facebook page to see a video tour and pictures of the new bee houses presented by Facilities and Maintenance Project Supervisor, Jim Prohaska.

A new information kiosk at the trailhead entrance leading up to the Castle has recently been installed and is the first stage of a larger project to upgrade the Joslyn Castle and Gardens signage.

Moving inside, the Castle is undergoing a "makeover" of our Audio/Video system in the Music Room. Many upgrades and technological enhancements are being installed to provide a better visitor viewing experience. Our guests, tour groups, movie night attendees, board members, and other special events attendees will soon enjoy this much anticipated upgrade! The upgrades should prove to be greatly beneficial to new programming and will make the Castle more inviting to corporate events.

Garden Lecture Series Goes Virtual

In-person events may have paused this spring, but that doesn't mean learning did! We moved our Garden Lecture Series online, partnering with local experts on plants and animals.

We started with a talk on Nebraska Natives, where **Austen Hill** from Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources Department brought some radical reptiles and an awesome amphibian to the Joslyn Castle gardens. While they slithered or crawled for the camera, he filled us in on how each species makes its home on the prairie.

Shannon Kyler from City Sprouts gave two talks in June: one on the plants pollinators love, and one on fantastic herbs and how to use them. We learned that there's a surprising amount of crossover between the two categories as well!

Expert Arborist **Phil Pierce** delivered a master class in the art and science of pruning. He cautioned us away from cuts that damage trees, and showed us how certain cuts can make branches stronger. He even gave the young magnolia by the castle's overhang a little makeover on camera!

If you missed any of these events, you're in luck—they're still viewable at facebook.com/JoslynCastle/videos.



Speakeasy Series

Our hit Speakeasy Series was back for another run (and another rum) in 2020!

If you've been to one of the evenings, you know how it works. A local expert on the liquor of the evening chooses an array of top-shelf pours. Tidbits of knowledge about each offering accompany tidbits of cheeses, meats, and more, hand-selected by expert cheese monger Miranda McQuillan. The audience loosens up with each sip, and by the end, everyone is warm and chatty, full of mirth, cheese, and spirits.

Alzuri, spirit guide at Spirit World, led the opening of the series, giving us a delicious education on a range of rums. Kari Korenchen, independent spirits and wine expert, took us on a multi-continent tour of brandies in February. In June we explored Scotch, and in August capped it off with an array of gin.

We think George Joslyn would smile knowing that his home is still a place of such hearty revelry.



The Joslyns' music room overflowed with sound in 2020! Our brand-new partnership with the Omaha Conservatory of Music brought in their artist-faculty members to put on concerts on the first Tuesday of each month from February until May. Each show's theme evokes the Joslyn era from a different angle

In February, baritone Cody Jorgensen and pianist Anne Madison put on a vaudeville-inspired set called "Make 'Em Laugh." The program included everything from music theatre to contemporary classical art song, with the only unifying feature being comedy.

March's entry in the series featured Conservatory pianists Dr. Stacey Barelos, Vu Che, and Yulia Kalashnikova. The program showcased the diversity of styles that flourished in early twentieth century piano repertoire, from the lush and shifting harmonies of Debussy to the bold, lyric themes of Rachmaninoff to the quirky experimentation of Satie and Cowell.

The remaining two events were cancelled, but we hope to continue this collaboration in 2021!



PICNIC AT THE CASTLE

Just about the end of May, when people were getting really tired of staying at home, Joslyn Castle decided to throw a picnic. We asked our friends at Catering Creations and La Casa to bring their tents and their trucks and their food—and the people came! We had such a great turnout that night that we decided we should do it again!

So every Thursday evening in July we invited a couple of local food vendors and invited the public to enjoy a picnic in the beautiful Joslyn Castle gardens. With over five acres available to choose a picnic spot, our guests were able to enjoy a fun evening out and still maintain a comfortable, safe distance. Several hundred friends joined us over the five Thursdays, which included mini-tours of the Castle grounds. Our picnic partners were Catering Creations, La Casa, 402 BBQ, Hawks Pizza, Mosaic Pickle, Cattle Drive, and New Orleans Sneaux.



Tours

Public Tours

Over the past two years, Joslyn Castle has seen a steady increase in public tour attendance, so we have gradually added more tour opportunities each week! Our current schedule is:

EVERY SUNDAY - 1:00, 2:00, & 3:00 p.m.

EVERY MONDAY - 10:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

EVERY THURSDAY - 2:00 p.m.

A tour of Joslyn Castle begins with a 12-minute documentary about George and Sarah Joslyn and the construction of the estate, followed by a room-by-room guided tour of three floors of the Castle. Tours are led by members of our volunteer docent corps, who not only educate our visitors about the unique features of the building, but also enrich the experience with a variety of stories about George and Sarah and life in the Castle.



MINI-TOURS: BITE-SIZED, VIRTUAL TRIPS TO THE CASTLE

If you follow us on social media, you've probably seen a few of these videos pop up in your feed! While in-person tours were unavailable, we wanted to find a way to bring your Castle to you.

Virtual mini-tours were born. In each short video—no more than a minute long—programming director Keith Hart holds up a magnifying glass to one feature of the Castle, giving a rundown of its history. So far, there are six in the series, covering everything from the conservatory to the marble dog dish. We hope you've enjoyed them!

If you have questions about tours, or if you would like to become a docent, please contact Keith Hart, Manager of Programs at 402.595.1415 or khart@joslyncastle.com.

In compliance with the current public health directives:

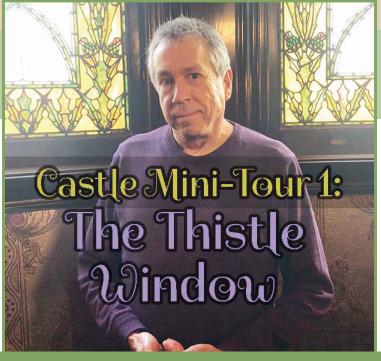
- There is a limit of 10 guests per tour time, no advance reservations, door sales only, first come, first served. appropriate distancing is strongly suggested.
- Masks are required for all staff, docents, and guests disposable masks are available at the door for \$2.
- Hand sanitizer is available at multiple locations throughout the tour route.

Private Tours

Joslyn Castle also offers private tours! For only an \$80 charge, you can have a private tour for up to 10 people—a great idea for a group of friends or a family outing! We will work with you to schedule a tour time that is convenient for you and customize your tour to suit your interests.

GROUP TOURS

Our group rate for 10 or more is only \$8 per person. A tour of Joslyn Castle is a unique outing for your club, church group, or student group. Joslyn Castle is situated on a 5.5 acre estate, so be sure to allow extra time when you schedule your group tour—Our gardens are perfectly suited for strolling, and you'll find something in bloom from April to October.



New Directions in Castle Rentals

In 2020, Joslyn Castle began offering a special price for small outdoor ceremonies. Usually these were groups of 10 – 15 people and required no set up on the part of the Castle. These ceremonies were quite popular throughout spring and summer, and some are scheduled into the fall. We anticipate continuing these small ceremony offerings in 2021.

Another special that was instituted about a month ago and will run through the end of the year is a 40% discount on private events and ceremonies/receptions with 50 or fewer guests. This special applies to Friday and Saturday events only. Weekday pricing will remain the same.

We are looking forward to a good year in 2021.



UPCOMING EVENTS

October

OCTOBER 14-18

Art & Literary Festival: "Close To Home"

Online events at 7pm each night, workshops weekend afternoons

OCTOBER 24

A LITTLE DINNER MUSIC II:
POLKA DOTS & MOONBEAMS
Doors open at 7 p.m., Dinner at 7:30 p.m.

Movember

NOVEMBER 7

JOSLYN CASTLE UNLOCKED Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 21

A LITTLE DINNER MUSIC III:
A NIGHT IN SPAIN
Doors open at 7 p.m., Dinner at 7:30 p.m.

December

DECEMBER 12

JOSLYN CASTLE UNLOCKED—
HOLIDAY EDITION
Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

DECEMBER 19

A LITTLE DINNER MUSIC IV:
MISTLETOE & WINE
Doors open at 7 p.m., Dinner at 7:30 p.m.

DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

HISTORIC HOME TOUR —

A VIRTUAL DELIGHT!

Stay in contact for further information



If you have been one of the many visitors this summer to the Castle grounds, it is possible you have seen the gardeners toiling among the flowers and shrubs. We can't let the summer go by without giving these dedicated workers a special mention. Please meet the fabulous crew listed below:

Volunteer Gardeners

Liz Anderson Ron Crampton Kay Lynn Goldner Diane Harder Sharon McGill Pam Sears

Staff Members

Martin DiGiacomo Jim Prohaska The volunteers are longtime gardeners who bring many years of gardening experience and knowledge to the grounds. They have their own gardens at home to tend, but generously spend many hours a week all summer helping at the Castle. They have no fear of any task, and have weathered many challenges including high heat, rain, humidity, bug bites, poison ivy, prickly weeds, and even coming upon the occasional garden snake. It is important to note that this is a small crew for such a large place, but due to their diligence and passion, the job gets done.

Staff members Martin and Jim deserve a special mention too. Their able assistance and support keeps it all going when the volunteers have gone.

If you haven't paid a visit to the Castle grounds yet this summer, there is still plenty of time left to enjoy the lovely landscape. You can walk your dog or have a picnic with your family or just roam the grounds by yourself looking for new plants and interesting gardening ideas.



This year we're keeping it *Close to Home*, with an (almost!) all-virtual Art & Literary Festival, October 14-18. Close to Home will explore the wealth of artistic talent we have right here in our backyard. Omahaarea writers of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and drama will be our guests, plus songwriters and visual artists. Online readings and performances will be aired nightly during the 5-day festival, with interviews from local visual artists. In addition, there will be seven **free** workshops on Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

The festival also includes a sculpture exhibit on the castle grounds, created by Michael Elizabeth Johnson, and made possible by a collaboration with the Union for Contemporary Art.

The Joslyn Castle Art & Literary Festival is an ongoing partnership between Joslyn Castle and the Metropolitan Community College Department of Fine Arts and Humanities.





Thank you to our event sponsor:





This special dinner series combines fine dining with fine music—performed live! You'll enjoy an intimate dinner—appropriately and safely distanced from other guests—in one of the elegant rooms of Joslyn Castle. Your special night out will be accompanied by musicians performing from the central hall. Accommodations are available for parties of 2 to 12.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24 – POLKA DOTS & MOONBEAMS

Step back in time to a classic 1940's lounge. Saxophonist Stan Harper and bassist Steve Gomez serve up all your favorite standards while you enjoy a menu of vintage American fare.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21 - A NIGHT IN SPAIN

Una noche española! Let the flavors of Spain awaken your taste buds while the music of Spain intoxicates your ears. Oboist/English hornist Darci Griffith Gamerl and cellist David Downing will take you away with the exotic sounds of Spanish, Mexican, South American, and Romani music.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 - MISTLETOE & WINE

Enjoy a little holiday cheer at the Castle! The halls will be decked, the fireplace aglow, and the Christmas feast prepared just for you. Keyboardist Jennifer Novak-Haar and bassist Mark Haar complete the atmosphere with all your favorite holiday tunes.

Tickets for all dinners are on sale at joslyncastle.com.





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Wolunteer AT Castle

Joslyn Castle's many programs, events, and tours are possible through the support of an exceptionally dedicated army of volunteers. About twenty-five volunteers serve as docents for tours, hosts for events, and administrative support, putting in a total of 2,340 hours of service last year. Other volunteers, such as board members, gardeners, and cleaning crews, log hundreds of hours more. These volunteers help keep the legacy of George and Sarah Joslyn alive, communicating their story of philanthropy to our many guests.

Are you looking for a fulfilling way to give back to your community? Join our volunteer team! People join our docent corps for many reasons: an interest in art, history, or architecture, or simply a desire to provide hospitality and help people have a rewarding visit to Joslyn Castle. Contact Keith Hart, Manager of Programs, if you'd like to talk about volunteer options.

Phone 402.595.1415 or email khart@joslyncastle.com.

