

'Downton Abbey' Episode Viewing and Afternoon Tea

[Ventress Memorial Library](#)

Adults

'Downton Abbey' Episode Viewing and Afternoon Tea

Feb 1, 2016

\$1-50

\$

Byline

Rachel Breen, Information Services Librarian, Ventress Memorial Library, Marshfield, Mass.

The "Downton Abbey" Episode Viewing and Afternoon Tea is a program held annually by the library to bring together patrons who love the television show. Participants pre-registered to attend an afternoon tea — complete with cakes, cookies, tea and other refreshments — and watch an episode of the popular PBS

series.

Advanced Planning

The "Downton Abbey" Episode Viewing and Afternoon Tea event sought to bring together patrons with a love of the period drama series and an interest in English traditions, such as the custom of afternoon tea. Patrons drank tea and nibbled refreshments while watching the Season 5 finale of "Downton Abbey," in preparation for the Season 6 premiere. (Note: Please ensure that you purchase a "Downton Abbey" DVD with public performance rights. Visit the [PBS Educational Media](#) offerings for details.)

Planning for the event began two months before the event date. Our information services librarian was the only person needed for the planning and hosting of the program, so it requires minimal staff! We required patrons to register ahead of time and limited the program to 25 patrons to ensure that we had enough seats and refreshments available. We researched which foods should be included in a traditional English afternoon tea, so that the patrons had an authentic experience and tailored our menu accordingly. **(View the full menu under Attachments at right.)**

Marketing

We promoted the event mainly with in-house promotion using fliers, posters and our website, and by adding the event to our library calendar, which is available to the public. We also utilized social media by posting updates for the event on our Facebook page and issuing press releases to our local newspapers.

Budgeting

The program cost approximately \$48. We spent the money on refreshments (food and tea) and supplies (cups, plates, etc.). All other materials used for the event were already owned by the library, such as the projector and screen, decorations (we

utilized what was available), tablecloths, and a hot water dispenser, which other libraries may need to buy. Silverware and platters were already owned by the library.

Day-of-event Activity

One staff member was needed for the event. Set-up required setting up the tables, chairs and the buffet table, as well as decorating. The computer and projector needed to be set up as well, and we made sure to cue up the DVD ahead of time and do a test run before patrons arrived. Luckily, there were no technical issues!

Program Execution

The event was a great success with the local community. The program ran very smoothly with no technical hiccups. We had 22 people attend, and each patron expressed their gratitude and enjoyment of the event.

Advice

This was a very fun event to plan, and there is a lot of flexibility when planning the menu! My advice would be to advertise for patrons to bring their own tea cups in order to add a more elegant and authentic feel to the event. Definitely make sure that patrons register ahead of time so you have enough supplies.

Supporting Materials

Document

[afternoon tea menu.pdf](#)

Document

[afternoon tea flier.pdf](#)

[Download this Program as a PDF](#)

- Feedback (Coming Soon!)

- [Programming Librarian Facebook Group](#)

Slideshow Images





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