

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS



*Our entire team wishes you the very best for the season. From left, front row: Eric Pesta, KayAnn Warner, Kelly Bucci and Jeanne Kidder. Middle row, Geri Cicchetti, Sara Little, Theresa Gamble, Pam Parker and Pauline Stanton, Back row, Chris Anderson, Dave Pugh, Adam Macrino, Cal Pifer and Michael Hamilton. Missing from photo: Rob Bronson and Kathleen Harris. Photo by Michael Nesgoda*

WINTER 2023 NEWSLETTER

This holiday season, we want to thank you for all you do for us. It's truly been an amazing year for the History Center, and we are grateful you could be a part of it. Over the next month, we hope you will take time to visit. Our volunteers really worked hard to make the mansion shine. Our decorations remain up until Jan. 7.

## **Please join us for Victorian Holidays**

Thursday, Nov. 30th, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 1st, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.

(5 p.m.-8 p.m. Watson-Curtze Mansion only)

Saturday, Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Noon-1 p.m. Vocal students performing holiday songs

Sunday, Dec. 3, Noon-5 p.m.

Noon - 2 p.m. Mercyhurst Prep Show Choir

Our entire Erie campus will be open during Victorian Holidays for a \$2 admission fee, thanks to our Gold Sponsors Erie Federal Credit Union and Women Creating a Legacy and Silver Sponsor Erie Insurance. **Children 6 and under are free.**

*Thank You*

 HAGEN  
HISTORY CENTER

# AUTUMN EVENTS MADE HISTORY

## Months of fun events in Girard and Erie

Fall was time for us to do it all! We hope you had a chance to visit us in Erie and Girard this autumn. Here's just a sampling of the events we hosted:

- During the last week and weekend of September, we hosted a barbecue party, and our famous, sold-out, farm-to-table dinners in collaboration with Red Letter Hospitality at the Yellow House in Girard.
- Also in Girard, we held our first wedding vendor showcase with Red Letter Hospitality, Jessica Hunter Photography, Copper Carriage, We Weddings & Events, The Dollhouse at Pointe Fouré Vintage Boutique, Primo Tailoring, The Brig Cigar Lounge and more!
- Downtown, we welcomed hundreds of guests during a free admission day on Saturday, Sept. 30 in collaboration with Our West Bayfront during Porchfest. Free admission days are made possible thanks to Gold Sponsor Women Creating a Legacy, Silver Sponsor Erie Insurance and Bronze Sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union.
- On Oct. 5, we continued our collaboration with Jefferson Education Society. Eric Rivet spoke about the Ohio's Western Reserve (And Why It's Called the Connecticut Western Reserve).
- On Oct. 15, we celebrated Victorian Halloween in the mansion with more than 250 guests and reduced admission of \$2, thanks to our Gold Sponsors WJET-TV and Women Creating a Legacy & Bronze Sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union.
- The "Wicked Erie Tour" welcomed more than 60 people on Oct 21 and 28. Justin Dombrowski, author of multiple Erie -themed books, conducted the walking tours of Erie's crime locations. Thanks to our Gold Sponsor WJET-TV and Bronze Sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union.
- More than 100 people attended our walking tour of Glenwood Hills on Oct. 21 and learned the history of 8 stunning homes.
- In Girard, for four days in November, we partnered with Red Letter Hospitality on popup dinners that nearly sold out every night.



The Yellow House was all lit up for popup dinners in November.



The Cork 1794 served gourmet meals in the Yellow House on two weekends in November.



Justin Dombrowski led walking tours of downtown Erie's notable criminal cases.



More than 100 people participated in a walking tour of Glenwood Hills with stops to hear the history of 8 different homes.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## *Here's our tentative schedule for 2024*

We've been planning events for 2024, and mapped out some tentative dates. Some events, like our Sunflower Picnics, for example, are dependent on Mother Nature. We don't have exact dates for everything, so please visit our [website](#) for updates and details on each event.



### FEBRUARY /MARCH

Feb. 17 Pub & Club Tour

March 10 Free Admission Day at Erie campus

March 13 Canalside Bookreaders

### APRIL

April 6-7 free glasses for Eclipse

April 8 Eclipse viewing from our Erie and Girard properties

### MAY

May 11 Unseen Erie Tour

May 29 Bike tour in West County

### JUNE

June 9 HistErie Free Admission Day

June 24 – 28 History camp

Women's Night

### JULY

July 8 – 12 History camp

July 10 Canalside Readers Book Club

July 16 Annual Meeting at the White House in Girard

July 22 – 28 History camp

Men's Night

### AUGUST

July 30 – Aug. 4 Dan Rice Days

Outdoor movie screening at Yellow House

Aug. 1 Barbecue at the Yellow House

Aug. 11 Free Admission Day at Erie campus

Aug. 15 – 17 D-Day Conneaut, Ohio – bus tours

Aug. 21 Wednesday home tour West 6th Street

Aug. 24 Sunflower picnics Girard

Aug. 26 /27 Farm to table dinners Girard

### SEPTEMBER

Sept. 14 Night at the Museum Gala

Sept. 28 Porchfest Wood-Morrison House

### OCTOBER

Oct. 20 Victorian Halloween

Murder mystery tours with Justin Dombrowski

### NOVEMBER

Nov. 10 Free Admission Day

Nov. 20 Volunteer Appreciation Party

### DECEMBER

Victorian Holidays



HAGEN HISTORY CENTER AND  
WERNER BOOKS PRESENT  
HAGEN HISTORY CENTER MEMBERS  
**CANALSIDE READERS**  
BOOK CLUB  
MEETS SECOND WEDNESDAY  
OF EACH MONTH AT 5:30PM  
PRESIDENT'S ROOM - WOOD-MORRISON HOUSE  
ON THE HAGEN HISTORY CENTER CAMPUS  
EMAIL [SLITTLE@ERIEHISTORY.ORG](mailto:SLITTLE@ERIEHISTORY.ORG) TO JOIN

**Wednesday, Jan. 10, meet in Wood-Morrison House**  
at 5:30 p.m. Join Kyle Churman (owner of Werner Books) for some reading and discussion of books to be determined. Visit our [website](#) for updates.

# Announcing the new Doris Becker lecture series



We are honored to announce that Lieutenant Colonel Mark A. Becker, USA Retired, has chosen to underwrite our quarterly lecture series at the Jefferson Education Society. He wanted to name the series in honor of his late mother Doris Becker.

Doris was a musician and performer from the time she was 10 years old.



Erie Playhouse patrons know her well. She worked with actors of all ages in dozens of performances. Memories of the plays she was in lived on in charms on a necklace that she cherished.

Doris was also a commercial underwriter at Erie Insurance where she worked for 32 years. She continued volunteering after her retirement. She died in 2017 at age 92.

*Photos courtesy of Erie Insurance, Rick Klein and the Erie Playhouse*



## Enjoy behind-the-scenes private tours

In the past year, History Center Curtze Circle members (donors of \$1,000 or more) enjoyed private tours of historic spaces that are not open to the public.

These include Howard Falls; Erie Insurance Heritage Center; the renovated Sommerheim Pumping Station (Richard S. Wasielewski Water Treatment Plant) at the foot of Sommerheim Drive in Millcreek Township; and a West Sixth Street tour of mansions under renovation.



For more information on this program, please contact Geri Cicchetti at 814-454-1813 x 34 or [gicchetti@eriehistory.org](mailto:gicchetti@eriehistory.org).



## Discover your home's history



Fascinating home histories are treasured gifts. Pictured are the Wood-Morrison House on the left and Anne Morrison, who grew up in the Wood-Morrison House, on the right.

### *Who built your house? Who lived there?*

Would you like to learn more about your home or that of a loved one? It's not easy to find the accurate information you need, but we can help. Our new Historic Property and Land Research Program, available from our Library and Archives, offers several levels of research:

#### HOME HISTORY

Title search, establishing the year built, years of ownership, type of home, property description, purchase, and sales price. \$250

#### HOME + FAMILIES' HISTORY

Basic history of the family who owned the home. Obituaries, printed news articles while in residence, vital events that include marriages, birth of children, schools attended, deaths, etc. \$500\*

#### HISTORY + FAMILY BIOGRAPHIES + COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Full title search of the property as far back as traceable to the beginning of Erie County, with a biographical overview of the families who owned the property. This also includes development of the neighborhood and context of the community history as it relates to involvement by those who were the property owners. \$1,000\*

#### HISTORY + DETAILED BIOGRAPHIES + ARCHITECTURE

Expanded family history of the property owners and their involvement in the community, organizations, and institutions. Description of the architectural elements of the property may include input from other experts and architects. \$5,000\*

#### DETAILED HISTORY + FAMILY IMMIGRATION RECORDS

Full family histories, immigration records and American roots with connections to other possible families. \$10,000\*

\*If you had a Title Search completed during a purchase within the past 5 years, price is discounted \$250

For more information about the Historic Property and Land Research Program, contact Director of Collections, Theresa Gamble at [tgamble@eriehistory.org](mailto:tgamble@eriehistory.org).

## CULINARY CLASS SCHEDULE AT THE YELLOW HOUSE



Apple butter and brie sandwiches, martinis and delicious Mason Jar meal prep planning were among our first classes and they sold out. On December 5, our friends from Full Circle Winery will show us how to make traditional Wassail and mulled wine while we feast on charcuterie. It sold out just before press time.



Three culinary classes have sold out at the Yellow House.



**Tuesday, March 5** Cooking with Maple Syrup  
– Jan Woods, Hurry Hill Maple Museum  
Limited seating. \$50 per person. Coming up. Sign up at [eriehistory.org/events](http://eriehistory.org/events)



**Tuesday, May 7**  
Cooking with honey

**Tuesday June 4**  
Rhubarb: Pies and other uses

**Tuesday, July 2**  
Edible flowers

**Tuesday, August 6**  
Mushroom foraging

**Tuesday, April 2**  
Historic cooking over an open fire

## LET US HOST YOUR EVENT



Kelly Bucci's family held a Thanksgiving dinner at the Watson-Curtze Mansion. *Photo by Mike Conway*

We've hosted multiple celebrations this year, and we have the perfect space for any size event at our Erie and Girard venues.

**Is a wedding in your future?** A big party? Family reunion? Or, how about a birthday party, shower, high school reunion or holiday party?

**Enjoy Victorian elegance** at the History Center's West Sixth Street campus. Or have a **fabulous farm wedding** in Girard at our Battles properties that sit on more than 120 acres of bucolic scenery.

For a private tour, contact our special event coordinator Kelly Bucci at [events@eriehistory.org](mailto:events@eriehistory.org) or 814-860-1450.

# YEAR END GIVING IDEAS

## IRAS AND QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS

Did you know you can make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) up to \$100,000 total to one or more nonprofits directly from a taxable IRA?

If you have an Individual Retirement Account, you are required to take minimum distributions by age 73.

If you are age 70½ years old or older, you can donate instead of taking a required minimum distribution.

### Advantages include:

- Donors may avoid being pushed into higher income tax brackets
- QCDs are also called IRA charitable distributions or IRA charitable rollovers. These allow individuals to fulfill their required minimum distribution by a direct transfer of up to \$100,000 to a nonprofit.
- QCDs don't increase taxable income, both higher tax rates and phaseouts can be avoided.

QCDs reduce the balance of the IRA and may reduce required minimum distributions in future years.

The money is a direct transfer to a nonprofit. Your IRA custodian can handle an electronic transfer or a check directly to the nonprofit.

Deadline is Dec. 31 of the tax year in question. An individual can contribute up to \$100,000 per year. For married couples, each spouse can donate up to \$100,000 limit for a potential total of \$200,000.

You can make one large contribution or several smaller contributions over the course of the calendar year.

NOTE: Other rules, including state tax rules apply. You should consult a tax advisor and/or financial advisor to determine the appropriate strategy for your individual finances.

**Buy a membership for someone you love and get a great deal**



Give the gift of exploration and learning this year! Renew your History Center membership or purchase a new membership



and receive a second new membership at 50% off.



**Expires Dec. 20, 2023**

Use the QR code or email Sara Little at [slittle@eriehistory.org](mailto:slittle@eriehistory.org)



### Carve your name in brick!

You can put your name on our patio! A brick with 3 lines of type is only \$100. To purchase a brick, visit [eriehistory.org/support/buy-a-brick](http://eriehistory.org/support/buy-a-brick) or call 814-454-1813 x 27.



# HAGEN HISTORY CENTER

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## Santa shops at our Carriage House Gift Shop

Looking for a fun Erie gift? Want some history your family and friends will love? How about a Griswold T-shirt? Or an Erie sign or ornament? We have gifts for \$1 and up.

Visit the Carriage House Gift Shop on our campus for a sleigh full of gifts you won't find in other places! We have Erie- and holiday-themed items along with home decor, clothing, jewelry, games, stained-glass novelties, mugs, books by local authors, and did we mention socks?

Did you know Dec. 5 is National Sock Day? And we have some colorful and toasty-for-your-toes Frank Lloyd Wright design socks.

But that's just a taste of what we have. If you want a Griswold Cast-Iron or Rock-'Em-Sock-'Em Robots T-shirt, our Gift Shop has you covered!

We have inspiring gifts for the history lovers in your life, as well as fun gifts for kiddos and more!