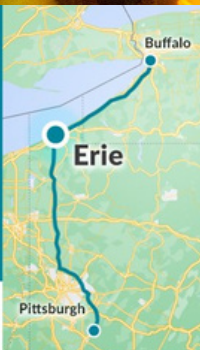




THE GREAT WRIGHT ROAD TRIP



2023



Dear Members and Friends,

As I reflect on the one-year mark of my tenure as executive director, I am filled with a sense of appreciation. I am incredibly grateful to our dedicated staff, amazing volunteers, and generous supporters who help to make the Hagen History Center a cultural leader within the Erie region. Together, we have surpassed our all-time record of individuals served during the course of the year. Our outreach activities and programs are selling out, and our school field trips have steadily been on the rise. In addition, our Frank Lloyd Wright office continues to draw tourists both nationally and internationally. Most recently, we hosted a tour group from Australia on a U.S. Frank Lloyd Wright tour.

In addition to great strides made at the History Center, our staff and volunteers have made enormous progress at the Battles Estate in Girard. The Yellow House is receiving both an exterior and interior renovation to make it more accessible to the public. As I write this letter, thousands of sunflowers are being planted on the property for the public's enjoyment later this summer.

We have multiple new events for your enjoyment this summer including a bike tour for those of you who like a dose of activity with your history as well as a new kids architecture camp that is completely sold-out. From our newly formed book club to our walking tours, and lecture partnership with the Jefferson Society, there are now more ways than ever to engage in our region's diverse history. Thank you for your continued support and dedication - Erie's history is your history.

Wishing you fair winds and calm seas for a fantastic summer ahead!

*Caleb Pifer*

Caleb M. Pifer  
Executive Director



Summer Newsletter 2023/Annual Report

# SUMMER WITH US

## WE HAVE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

**Sunday, July 9, Community Free Day** from noon to 5 p.m. Patrons enjoy free admission, thanks to Gold Sponsors Penelec and Women Creating a Legacy; Silver Sponsor Erie Insurance; and Bronze Sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union.

**Food Truck Day at the Watson-Curtze Mansion** Noon - 4 p.m. A Waffle Miracle.

**Monday through Friday, July 10 to 14** Sold-out History Detective Camp.

**Wednesday, July 12** Brian Hannah broadcasts live at the Watson-Curtze Mansion from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**Food Truck Day** at the Watson-Curtze Mansion! 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. A Waffle Miracle.

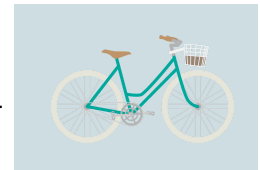
**Wednesday, July 19, at noon**, Yogilates with Michele Curtze at the Watson-Curtze Mansion, free will offering. Follow up your workout with

**Food Truck Day** at the Watson-Curtze Mansion! 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Food for Thought by the Charter School of Excellence.



**Monday through Friday, July 24 to 28** Sold-out Kids Architecture Camp.

**Friday, July 24, 6 p.m.**, bike tour sponsored by WJET-TV. Meet at the Watson-Curtze Mansion. Join Executive Director Cal Pifer and volunteer Michele Curtze for a tour of Erie's historical spots.



**Friday/Saturday, August 4-5** Dan Rice Days, Girard, open house at the Battles Estate White House, 306 Walnut St. and the Yellow House, 436 Walnut St.

**Tuesday, August 8, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.** Erie Gives.

**Wednesday, August 9**, Canalside Readers, 5:30 p.m. meet at the at Battles Estate White House, 306 Walnut St., Girard, for discussion of *"Dan Rice: The Most Famous Man You've Never Heard Of."*

**Friday, August 11, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.** Erie Society of Genealogical Research Collaboration free Open House, tours at Watson-Curtze Mansion. Meet experienced professionals in genealogy, and discover how to trace your ancestors during this valuable opportunity to meet with experts.

**Coming soon!**  
Glenwood Historic Homes Walking Tour

Sunflower Festival  
at Girard Battles properties

Curtze Circle tours

Unseen Erie Tour (2024)

**Tuesday, July 18, Member Summer Party & Annual Meeting** takes place at the The Yellow House, 436 Walnut St., Girard



Come on out, members, from 6 to 8 p.m.! Experience the extensive restoration of the Yellow House interior and exterior during this special grand opening with tours for members only!

You'll also see the 1930 Battles LaSalle cruising around while you enjoy beer, wine and charcuterie. Take time to check out our new sunflower garden, meet our staff and board members and stay for our bonfire!

RSVP by 7/12 to Sara Little  
Slittle@erierhistory.org

## Events continued

**Friday, August 11**, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., American Ancestors cocktail party D. Brenton Simons, president and CEO of the New England Historic Genealogical Society will speak in Erie at the History Center.

He will share his experiences on the popular PBS television show [Finding Your Roots](#) with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.



Register here:  
<https://tinyurl.com/8mkrnzru>

**Saturday, August 12**, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Erie Society of Genealogical Research American Ancestors genealogy seminar. You can learn more about your ancestors right here in Erie when the American Ancestors and New England Historic Genealogical Society host an in-person seminar "Tracing Ancestors on the Move." Join our experts at the Hagen History Center. Register here:  
<https://tinyurl.com/2p8mwvwy>

**Monday, August 14**, 7 p.m. Carrie Sowden at the Jefferson Education Society speaks about the Disappearance of Marquette and Bessemer No. 2. **Carrie Sowden** is the Archaeological and Research Director of the National Museum of the Great Lakes. Her research has taken her all over the globe. She has been focused on the Great Lakes for the last 18 years. Sowden has a Master of Arts from Texas A&M University in Anthropology with a focus in nautical archaeology.



**Wednesday, August 16**, at noon, Yogilates with Michele Curtze at the Watson-Curtze Mansion, free will offering. **Food Truck Day at the Watson-Curtze Mansion!** 11 a.m.-1p.m. Food for Thought by the Charter School of Excellence.

**Friday, Saturday, Sunday, August 18, 19, 20** Celebrate Erie.

**Wednesday, Sept. 13** 5:30 p.m. Canalside Readers book club discussion of "**The Witch's Fleet**," by John Corrigan.

**Saturday, Sept. 16**, A Night at the Museum Gala. We honor Former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge and First Lady Michele Ridge from 6 to 10 p.m. The evening includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, open bar, live music and dancing at the Hagen History Center, 356 West 6th Street. Homer and Marlene Mosco will serve as the honorary chair couple. For details, see page 5.

**Saturday, Sept. 30**, Porchfest and Community Free Day from noon to 5 p.m. Patrons receive free admission thanks to Gold Sponsor Women Creating a Legacy, Silver Sponsor Erie Insurance and Bronze Sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union.



**Food Truck Day** at the Watson-Curtze Mansion! 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Spanglish Skillet.

**Thursday, Oct. 5**, 7 p.m., Eric Rivet speaks about the Western Reserve at Jefferson Education Society.

**Wednesday, October 11th**, 5:30 p.m., Canalside Readers book club discussion of "**Frank Lloyd Wright: A Biography by Meryle Secret**."

**October Murder and Mayhem Tour** sponsored by WJET-TV, stay tuned for details.

**October Victorian Halloween in the mansion**, stay tuned for details.

**Nov. 30-Dec. 30 Victorian Holidays**, reduced admission thanks to Gold Sponsors Erie Federal Credit Union and Women Creating a Legacy and Silver Sponsor Erie Insurance.

# IN CASE YOU MISSED IT ...



## Charlotte Elizabeth Battles earned Emmy nomination

Congratulations to the entire WQLN Chronicles crew for gaining 7 regional EMMY nods for its new historical documentaries including "The Legacy of Charlotte Elizabeth Battles."

The crew didn't win, but WQLN and Chronicles made history with the nominations, and so did Charlotte.

## 356 Legacy Lager arrived

Our Koehler lager arrived in May, and it has already been served for the Men at the Museum event and for Women Creating a Legacy.

The beer is available only on our campus during special events. The label features the



Watson-Curtze Mansion's address 356 along with a photo of the Mansion in the background.

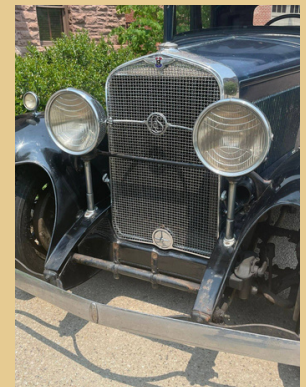
## Renovations underway in Girard

The Yellow House received some needed repairs and restoration. We'll be opening up for our special Member Summer Party & Annual Meeting on July 18. The grounds have been cleaned up and updated with many thanks to volunteers.

Inside the Yellow House, our staff completely renovated first-floor rooms. Sparkling lighting fixtures, and fresh paint are just part of the historic farmhouse's shine.

Behind the scenes, we updated plumbing and electrical.

The houses aren't the only things to be updated. Charlotte Elizabeth Battles' 1930 LaSalle is now roadworthy and has made several appearances at events this summer. More to come!



## Collaboration delivers history to a larger community

Our collaboration with the Jefferson Education Society brings free events to our members and patrons. More than 100 people attended Dr. Paul Turner's lecture, and 150 attended Duquesne University President Ken Gormley's talk. In August, Carrie Sowden will speak about the Disappearance of Marquette and Bessemer No. 2.



*In March, Frank Lloyd Wright expert and Stanford University Emeritus Professor Dr. Paul Turner spoke about "Frank Lloyd Wright's San Francisco Office and the Story of its Remarkable Travels" at JES and also in Pittsburgh.*



*In May, Duquesne University President Ken Gormley shared his experiences interviewing presidents during his discussion of how the Constitution impacts the U.S. Presidency.*

# PLEASE JOIN US AS WE HONOR TOM AND MICHELE RIDGE

SAVE THE DATE: We honor Former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge and First Lady Michele Ridge at A Night at the Museum Gala September 16, from 6 to 10 p.m.

Tom Ridge was also the first United States Secretary of Homeland Security. Michele Ridge is the former executive director of the Erie County Library System and a former board member and board chair for the Erie County Historical Society.

Homer and Marlene Mosco will serve as the honorary chair couple for this event. It is the third year this signature fundraiser will be held for the museum.

The evening includes heavy hors d'oeuvres, open bar, live music and dancing at the Hagen History Center, 356 West 6th Street.

Multiple sponsorship packages are available, and individual tickets are \$125 per person. For more information, please contact Geri Cicchetti at 814-454-1813 x 34 or [giccchetti@eriehistory.org](mailto:giccchetti@eriehistory.org).



*Photo courtesy of Mercyhurst University*

## HOWARD FAMILY SHARES HISTORY, INSPIRATION

Making history inspiring. That's what the Hagen History Center does, thanks to the generosity of our Curtze Circle members.

Erie County residents Dennis and Dianne Howard continue to support the History Center's mission. Both Dennis and Dianne retired from Lord Corp, where Dennis was Director of Global Supply Chain, and Dianne managed the Technical Libraries.

Living on their 7-generation family homestead at Howard Falls in southern Erie County, Dennis and Dianne and their family have a keen interest in Erie's past, present, and future.

"With our homes located within a designated Natural Heritage Area of PA, our children and now our grandchildren gain a rich appreciation for both our area's history and a sense of duty to preserve it for the future," Dennis said.

Their youngest daughter, Laura Howard, is a registered architect with Kidder Architects, focused on the restoration and preservation of structures in the West Sixth Street Historic District in Erie. She is also the leader of our July Architecture Camp for middle-school students.

Membership in the Curtze Circle at Hagen History Center is one of the best ways to ensure that Erie County storytelling will continue for future generations.

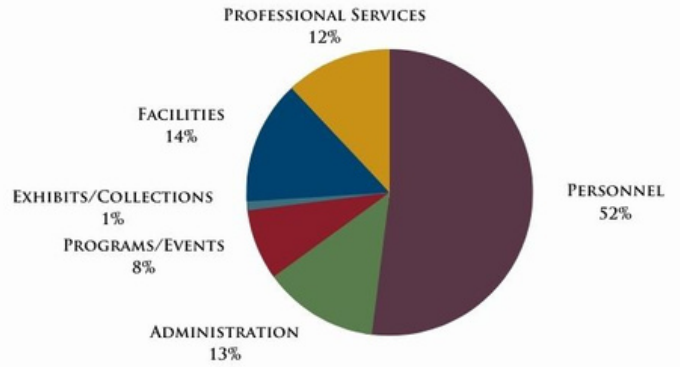
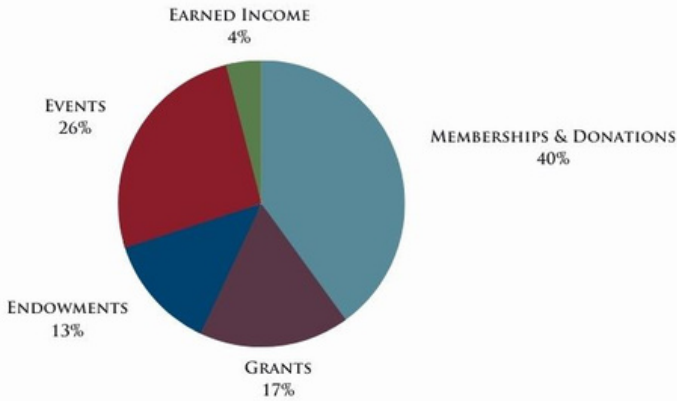


Dennis and Dianne are recent Curtze Circle members and are happy to help share the wonderfully rich story of Erie County.

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

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## FOR FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2021 TO JUNE 30, 2022

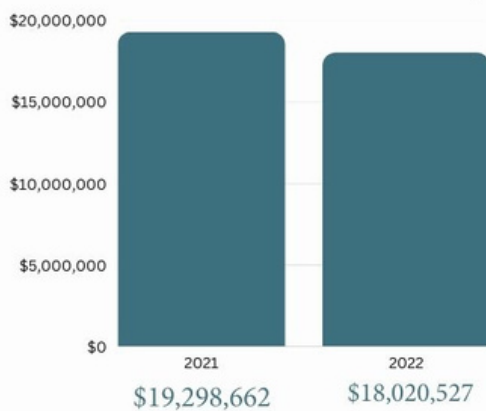


TOTAL INCOME	\$1,727,049
Membership & Donations	\$684,011
Grants	\$292,174
Endowments	\$224,150
Events	\$455,303
Earned Income	\$71,411

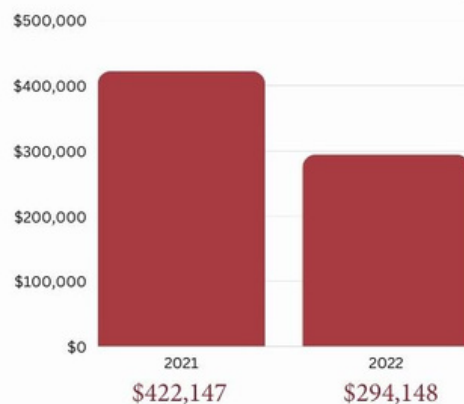
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$1,481,504
Personnel	\$766,833
Administration	\$199,744
Programing & Events	\$116,809
Exhibits & Collections	\$15,905
Facilities	\$203,603
Professional Services	\$178,610

**NET OPERATING INCOME: \$245,545**  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021 TO 2022

### ASSETS



### LIABILITIES



# THANKS FOR ATTENDING OUR EVENTS

It's been a busy, successful fundraising year, thanks to all who sponsored and attended. Here are a few of the events that enabled us to gather together:

Women Creating a Legacy set some new records in June. About 150 women attended the June 14 event, and it raised more than \$23,000. Thanks to our honorary chairs Barb Lechner, Abby Gallo Lechner and Leah Murphy for their generosity. The funds raised will help us offset the cost of free days at the museum.



*Thanks to our honorary chairs for Women Creating a Legacy, from left: Barb Lechner, Abby Gallo Lechner and Leah Murphy.*

Our second Men's Night at the Museum raised more than \$32,000, thanks to honorary chair Matt Clark and the 122 patrons.

The event included artifacts, a look at the recently refurbished Battles family 1930 LaSalle, a cigar bar and shoe shines.

To stay up to date on all of our events, follow us on social media and sign up for our newsletter by contacting Team Operations Leader Sara Little at [slittle@eriehistory.org](mailto:slittle@eriehistory.org)



*122 men participated in Men's Night at the Museum.*

Sold-out events proved that our patrons want more history! Our February Dinner Under the Stars and the new ethnic clubs and pubs tour sold out in a hurry. Our guests boarded the EMTA Trolley to tour Julius, the former Maennerchor Club, 1607 State St.; Polish Falcons, 431 East 3rd St.; Slovak Club, 902 Hess Ave.; Nuova Aurora, 1518 Walnut St.; and Sophia's Tavern, 514 Cherry St.



## Curtze Circle members enjoy behind-the-scenes private tours

History Center Curtze Circle members continue to enjoy private tours of historic spaces. Most recently, Tom Hagen conducted a private tour and reception for members of the Heritage Center at Erie insurance headquarters.

Members of the Curtze Circle (donors of \$1,000 or more) participate in quarterly tours of private historic sites. For more information on this program, please contact Geri Cicchetti at 814-454-1813 x 34 or [gcicchetti@eriehistory.org](mailto:gcicchetti@eriehistory.org).



## LET US BE YOUR EVENT CENTER

We have the perfect space for any size event, at our Erie and Girard venues. Hover over the QR code to visit our special events page, view pictures and find more information. Contact our special event coordinator Kelly Bucci for a tour at [events@eriehistory.org](mailto:events@eriehistory.org) or 814-860-1450.



## Have you visited our Carriage House Gift Shop?

Did you know you can buy great gifts for your friends and yourself in our gift shop?

We recently had visitors from Pittsburgh travel to our gift shop to find Griswold T-shirts! Last year, the shop had record sales and visitors love that you can purchase items for \$1 on up.

We have a full complement of books by local authors along with games, jewelry, clothing and more. Erie-themed and timely holiday-themed items are always available.

