

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS



*Decked out in red, plaid and flannel, our entire team wishes you the very best for the season. Enjoying the exquisite foyer fireplace in the mansion are, from left, front row: Courtney Baran, Amanda Rockwood, Anna Foll, Abbey Urbanski, Theresa Gamble, Jeanne Kidder and Pauline Stanton. Back row, from left: Adam Macrino, Dave Pugh, Jeff Sherry, Pam Parker, KayAnn Warner, Becky Weiser and Sara Little. Photo by Michael Nesgoda*

## Please join us for Victorian Holidays

We can't wait for you to visit! We've been busy decorating for the holidays and adding new exhibits.

Once again this year, our staff, docents and volunteers put some Elfen magic to work under the guidance of Shelby Graml. We've made the mansion sparkle for you, and we hope you enjoy it.

Our entire campus will be open free of charge during Victorian Holidays from Dec. 1 through Dec. 4, thanks to our gold sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union and bronze sponsors Erie Community Foundation and Erie Insurance.

## Victorian Holidays Hours:

Thursday, Dec. 1: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Friday, Dec. 2: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. to coincide with lighting of the tree in downtown Erie  
Saturday, Dec. 3: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday, Dec. 4: Noon to 5 p.m.

Remember, we're open year round, and the decorations will stay up until Jan. 8. We also have some new exhibits you'll want to see. Check page 2 for details.



*Geri Cicchetti and Cal Pifer were away from the office on picture day, but we captured them in their finest flannel and houndstooth.*



*The mansion is decorated for the holidays with a tree in nearly every room.*



# NEW EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS

## Coming up December 1:



Our Jewish Heritage exhibit on the second floor of the mansion includes objects from Temple Anshe Hesed or from our collection.

Special thanks to Gary and Barb Shapira who loaned us some items, while others are in the History Center's collection.



This is a must-see exhibit that will be on display for one year.



*Antique duck decoys will be among the artifacts on exhibit in the Watson-Curtze Mansion.*

A hunting and fishing exhibit will open Dec. 1, and features outerwear, artifacts, antique duck decoys and many valuable objects that members of the community have donated and/or loaned to the History Center.



*This 1890s dollhouse is among the dollhouses on exhibit on the second floor of the Watson-Curtze Mansion.*

A popup exhibit of dollhouses is on display on the mansion's second floor. From 1890s editions to Marx examples to more modern items, you'll want to see these eclectic examples of beautiful architectural wonders and all the pieces inside.

## In case you missed it

Special thanks to reenactors who shared history with more than 90 visitors on our free day on Veterans Day Weekend. From left are reenactors and the uniforms they wore: Nathan Albert, WW II soldier; Ed Bolla, USS Michigan sailor; Bill Smith, Brig Niagara sailor; Jeff Sherry, War of 1812 soldier; and Greg Henning, French Marine 1753.



## Griswold enameled cast iron and aluminum shine in Watson-Curtze kitchen

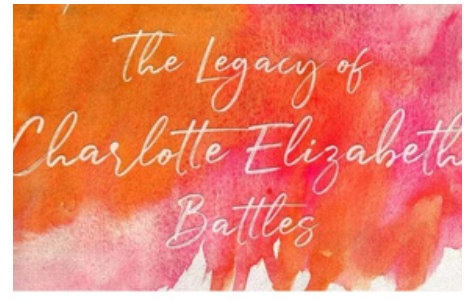
Most of us know plenty about the Griswold black cast iron made here in Erie dating back to the 1800s, but the company manufactured red, yellow, blue and green enameled cast iron starting in 1920.

We also have a collection of Griswold aluminum cookware. Winifred Watson (whose parents built the Watson-Curtze Mansion) married Ely Griswold (whose family owned the Griswold Manufacturing Co.), and some of our collection is on display in the Watson-Curtze Mansion kitchen.

## Special thanks to our reenactors







From left: The Battles Yellow House glows at 436 Walnut St. in Girard, during a farm-to-table dinner in September. About 50 patrons enjoyed 5-course meals on two beautiful autumn evenings. The Battles White House has also had plenty of activity this year including a premiere party for a WQLN Chronicles episode about Charlotte Elizabeth Battles.

## What's happening in Girard?

While we have numerous events at our downtown campus, the Girard Battles properties have had some shining moments this year, and we are grateful for all the support!

We were open for Girard art events, Dan Rice Days and solstice parties along with some special soirees we hosted. Those included two Farm-to-Table dinners at the Battles Yellow House. They sold out quickly and got rave reviews in September.

Red Letter Hospitality and the Cork 1794 team went all out on two fall evenings to provide an incredible 5-course meal that served up delectable fare for 50 people. We'll have more next year.

The second floor of the Battles Yellow House was available for [Airbnb](#) bookings and was booked weekends and weeks from May through November. Built in 1857, it features a two-bedroom apartment with a fully equipped kitchen.

To enjoy a unique stay with incredible views of more than 120 acres of scenic, country property, visit the listing on Airbnb. It's available for \$115 per night May through November.

## We celebrated our 90-year-old volunteer

Local TV stations joined us for our special tribute and impromptu birthday party for 90-year-old volunteer Dave Shaffer. We also installed a plaque in the garden that marks his years of service.

Dave knew and worked for Charlotte Elizabeth Battles, and he and his wife were among the many volunteers who tended the gardens.

The plaque that officially thanks him marks a gateway to the gardens. To learn more, visit these links <https://bit.ly/3TiEy7V> and <https://bit.ly/3zWoAcM>



## WQLN honored Girard's Charlotte Elizabeth Battles



We hosted a premiere party for the WQLN Chronicles series episode "The Legacy of Charlotte Elizabeth Battles." A crowd of 46 guests celebrated this mini-biography that included guest appearances by multiple Girard residents and History Center staff members who shared the Battles family history in banking and the community.

We have many more events planned in Girard. It's a prime wedding and event site. For more information on that, contact our special events coordinator Kelly Bucci at [events@eriehistory.org](mailto:events@eriehistory.org).

Next year, we'll be hosting a wonderful fall party for members of the History Center at the Battles Farm. We have plenty of ideas in the works for 2023. We hope you'll be a part of it.

Make sure to check our [website](#) for updates.

# EVENTS



## More Murder & Mayhem tours sold out fast

Nearly 100 patrons joined Justin Dombrowski, local author of "Murder and Mayhem in Erie, Pennsylvania," as he guided them on a tour of seven locations throughout downtown Erie and accounted tales of grave robbing, bizarre deaths and terror with big names in history that included the Strong and Scott families.

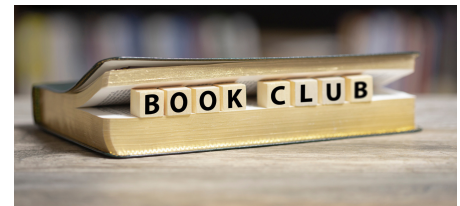


Our latest addition to the numerous speaking engagements our staffers offer are the Fireside Chats on the third Wednesday of the month in the Watson-Curtze Mansion.

The interactive speaker series begins at 4:30 p.m. and lasts about an hour. Space is limited. Contact Jeff Sherry [jsherry@eriehistory.org](mailto:jsherry@eriehistory.org) for more information.

## Book club off and reading

More than 30 members joined the Canalside Readers for its first meeting on Nov. 9. Facilitator Kyle Churman, who owns Werner Books with his wife Laura Shoemaker, started the discussion of "Murder and Mayhem in Erie, Pennsylvania," by Justin Dombrowski. Justin spoke, answered questions and hinted at his next book.



The Canalside Readers meet on the second Wednesday of every month, and it is free to all members of the History Center. Books will concentrate on local/regional history and area people who make history. To join, send an email to Sara Little [slittle@eriehistory.org](mailto:slittle@eriehistory.org).

The next meeting is Dec. 14 at the History Center, and the book we are reading is "Harry T. Burleigh: From the Spiritual to the Harlem Renaissance," by Jean E. Snyder. Additional books include:

"The History of the Standard Oil Company by Ida Tarbell; "Erie's Sensational Murder Trials," by Judge Dan Brabender, "An American Princess: The Many Lives of Allene Tew," by Annejet Zijl, Michele Hutchison; "Flying with Dad: A Daughter. A Father. And the Hidden Gifts in His Stories from World War II," by Yvonne Caputo.

The club plans to continue to include authors as speakers and possible field trips. More info is on the way, so stay tuned.

## Curtze Circle members enjoy behind the scenes tours

History Center Curtze Circle members enjoyed several private, historic tours.

Members toured the Howard Family's Howard Falls, a seventh-generation former stone quarry and Erie County's largest waterfall in Girard.

The second tour took more than 50 members through three West Sixth Street properties that were under construction.

Members of the Curtze Circle (donors of \$1,000 or more) participate in quarterly tours of private historic sites. If you'd like more information on the Curtze Circle, contact Cal Pifer [cpifer@eriehistory.org](mailto:cpifer@eriehistory.org)





# LET US BE YOUR EVENT CENTER

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*We have the perfect place to say, "I do."*



*More than 500 guests have attended events at the Mansion with outdoor seating and tents.*



*More than 120 acres surrounds the Battles Yellow House in Girard.*



*The President's Room is our newest venue.*

## Is a wedding in your future?

A big party? Family reunion?

Or, how about a birthday party, wedding shower, high school reunion?

We have the perfect space for any size event, and you'll receive all the planning help you need regarding our Erie and Girard venues from our special event coordinator Kelly Bucci.

## Enjoy Victorian elegance

The History Center's West Sixth Street campus can accommodate 150 guests inside our Richardsonian Romanesque Watson-Curtze Mansion. You'll find the perfect setting on our first floor or third-floor ballroom.

If you're planning an indoor/outdoor event, you can host more than 500 people on the History Center property.

During our Night at the Museum Gala, we welcomed 550 visitors with open bars, 12-piece bands, multiple tents, food stations and much more.

Thousands of wedding guests have enjoyed celebrations in the midst of a mansion that dates back to 1891. Every room has history, and we even have a bride's room on the second floor.

## Fabulous farm weddings

In Girard, our Battles properties sit on more than 120 acres of bucolic beauty. Weddings and events at the Battles Yellow House have received great reviews from brides and guests.

Smaller events, including our farm-to-table dinners, have also been a hit in Girard.

## The President's Room

Inside the Wood-Morrison House, the stone and brick room, that has the cozy feel of a wine cellar, is a unique setting for smaller groups of up to 40 people. Showers, parties and meetings are often held in this space, and our own Canalside Readers book club meets here monthly.

Guests can enjoy large windows, a fireplace and the cozy feeling the home built in 1859 offers.

How about a tour? Kelly can help you plan your event and make sure it's everything you dreamed it would be.



Contact Kelly at [events@eriehistory.org](mailto:events@eriehistory.org) or 814-860-1450.

# WE HAVE THE GIFTS YOU WANT TO GIVE



**Holiday membership special**

Renew your Hagen History Center membership or purchase a new membership

and receive a second new membership at 50% off

**Expires Dec. 23, 2022**



Our Carriage House Gift Shop is ready for the holidays, and we have something for everyone! Come on in and explore the store. We have items priced from \$1 on up. Choose from home decor items, books, socks, games, holiday accessories, clothing, and much more.

We are THE place for Frank Lloyd Wright merchandise with books, earrings, jewelry, stained-glass, mugs, home decor, the ever-popular socks and much more, and it's all in stock.

We also have holiday specials you won't want to miss. The shop is open during museum hours.

## Carve your name in brick!

For \$100, you can have a brick with 3 lines of type installed in our campus patio. To purchase a brick, visit [eriehistory.org/support/buy-a-brick](http://eriehistory.org/support/buy-a-brick) or call 814-454-1813 x 32.



## Membership sale! BOGO 50% off

Give the gift of exploration! Renew or purchase a new membership and receive a second membership for a friend or family member and save 50%  
**Individual (regularly \$40) Family (regularly \$60) Patron (regularly \$120)**  
 To take advantage of this offer, call 814-454-1813, ext. 34 or email [gicchetti@eriehistory.org](mailto:gicchetti@eriehistory.org). Thank you for your support

### Your membership includes:

- Free admission
- Free access to research in Library & Archives
- Free access to monthly book club
- Subscription to our newsletter
- Invitation to the summer member party in Erie and the new Autumn Member Appreciation Picnic schedule at the Battles Farm in Girard
- One complimentary issue of Journal of Erie Studies
- Guest passes
- 15% discount at the Carriage House Gift Shop on most purchases



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

# Thank You

... for your support all year, every year.

As we close out the year, we are most grateful for all the wonderful things our patrons have done for the History Center. Our donors, volunteers and visitors have made our campus a must-see in our region.

Your generous support brings in more than 11,000 visitors per year who share in our region's history. Please save the dates for three of our 2023 signature events.

## Save the Date

Men at the Museum  
June 7, 2023

Women Creating A Legacy June  
13, 2023

A Night at the Museum Gala  
September 16, 2023



## Please remember our annual fund

At this time of year, we know you receive numerous requests for donations, so why give to the Hagen History Center?

Because we preserve history, and we share it with you and your children! Since 1898, we've been collecting items of historic value.

Our annual fund supports student field trips through our 46,000 square feet of exhibit space. This year, hundreds of students have visited us to learn more about Erie County history.

While we receive major donations to support capital projects, we count on fundraising events and the Annual Fund to support our operating budget of \$1.4 million.

Our operating budget is funded with endowment income, donations, grants, event income, annual fund donations, memberships, admissions and gift shop sales.

Please help us continue our mission to collect, preserve and share our region's history. Thank you for your consideration. You can make your donation by going online to [www.eriehistory.org/donate](http://www.eriehistory.org/donate).



*French exchange students from Fairview High School enjoyed a free tour of the campus and danced in the mansion ballroom. Photo by Glenn Chichester*

## Here are two great ways to support the museum AND receive tax credits

### Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC)

The History Center is an approved nonprofit to receive EITC funding.

This program supports educational initiatives, and approved donors can contribute to the History Center and receive either a 75% or 90% tax credit on PA taxes in addition to a deduction on federal taxes.

These donations will fund educational programs, such as, student field trips, virtual programs, videos on historic topics and traveling trunk visits to schools.

### Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)

The History Center is an approved nonprofit to receive NAP funding.

This program's goal is to encourage businesses to invest in projects that improve distressed areas and support, among other things, educational opportunities. A tax credit of up to 55% can be awarded.

In the past, the History Center has directed NAP donations to fund the construction of new exhibit buildings and galleries and the digitization of archival materials. Your tax dollars can be returned to Erie County for local programming.

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

## Where History Inspires

356 W. 6th St.  
Erie, PA 16507  
www.eriehistory.org  
814-454-1813

**Please visit us!  
Hagen History Center Hours:**

We are open year round  
Tuesday through Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday: Noon to 5 p.m.  
Monday: Closed

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Erie, PA  
Permit No. 433



*Visitors from regional museums, colleges, universities and architectural firms visited the Frank Lloyd Wright San Francisco office in October.*



*The Story of Us exhibit has been popular among Erie residents past and present.*



*The Curtze Legacy Room is in the Watson-Curtze Mansion.*

## Museum collaboration is in the works

Cal Pifer hosted a get-together for more than 30 administrators of area museums, architecture firms and colleges and universities. Jeff Kidder gave everyone a tour of the Frank Lloyd Wright San Francisco office, and guests also enjoyed all of the History Center properties.

Great ideas resulted from this meeting, and partnership opportunities are in the works. History Center staff will be visiting the Fenton and the Comedy Center in December. More to come!

## Have you seen our new exhibits?

In July, we opened one of our largest exhibits ever. Visitors have expressed appreciation for the extraordinary gallery that tells our story: The Story of Us. Visitors have commented on the professionalism and the emotional impact of the display.

Erie residents recognize family names, businesses and artifacts throughout the 3,000 square feet of exhibit space. It features hundreds of photographs and dozens of stories of immigrants who moved here and established businesses and built homes, churches and social clubs.

Multiple interactive displays and kiosks enhance the stories for people of all ages.

In September, The Curtze Legacy Room opened and it gives guests a look at the background and history of the second owners of the Watson-Curtze Mansion.

The Curtze family donated the house to the school district, and it eventually was acquired by the History Center.