



HAGEN HISTORY CENTER

FOURTH QUARTER 2025

Dear Friends,

Thank you for helping us close out a record-breaking year of visitation, activities, exhibits, and fundraising! We're excited to build on this momentum as we head into 2026 with another incredible lineup of events.

Next year marks our nation's 250th anniversary, and we have several special celebrations planned — details coming soon. In the meantime, we're thrilled to announce two major national exhibits debuting in late spring.

Our most ambitious project is the Frank Lloyd Wright Field Office Museum, opening in May. This "museum within a museum" will feature cutting-edge exhibits and interpretation beyond the existing Wright office, along with a redesigned visitor orientation experience.

We'll also unveil a dedicated space honoring Oliver Hazard Perry, showcasing the largest private collection of Perry memorabilia ever offered at auction — items preserved within the Perry family for over 200 years.

Additional improvements on our campus include restoring 96 windows, in need of repair, in the Watson-Curtze Mansion.

Our spring newsletter will feature drawings, photos, and more details about these exciting projects. For now, please note that the Wright exhibit and The Story of Us are closed during construction, but we'll share progress updates on social media.

We'll be celebrating these and many more milestones in conjunction with America250PA throughout 2026. For now, our staff and board wish you the happiest of holidays!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Victorian Holidays
Dec. 5, 6, and 7

Mercyhurst Prep Show Choir
Sunday, Dec. 14 • 1 p.m.

Erie Day School Show Choir
Saturday, Dec. 20, Erie • Noon and 1 p.m.

Coming soon:
New Oliver Hazard Perry exhibit and Perry Symposium as part of our America250PA celebration

-MORE INFO ON PAGES 5-8-

Caleb M. Pifer
President



Thank you!

Thank you for your support throughout the year—especially during our tribute to Tom Hagen at his 90th Birthday Bash, which drew a record crowd of more than 800 people to our West 6th Street campus and became our most successful fundraiser ever.



Special thanks to the 20,000 people who visited our incredible sunflower fields this year.

The seeds have been harvested, and our liquor is in progress and on track to make its debut in our community in 2026.

Thanks to our partners Wilds Sunshine Factory in Kane, Pa., and the Girard community for making this a success. The fields will reopen in 2026.

Photo/video by Paul Gibbens



And the winners are:

Thanks to our sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union, our media partner Erie News Now, and everyone who played our Great Key Hunt game!

Winners were Janice Tobin and Brenda Castillo, who simultaneously found the key and shared the grand prize of \$1,500. The teams worked to solve the clues in a progressive Scavenger Hunt to find the key at Washington Park on Monday, Oct. 6.



Seated on the blue couch, from left, are Gary Peterson and Brenda Castillo. Standing are Tom Tobin and Janice Tobin. Brenda Castillo and her brother, Don Niles, worked together to find the key and Janice Tobin and her extended family also worked together to solve the clues and find the key Brenda and Janice snagged the key at the same time.

FUNDRAISING

Hagen History Center President and CEO Cal Pifer, (left), and Advancement Director Geri Cicchetti (right) accept commemorative signage from Andrea MacDonald (center), Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Our team celebrated the award of a \$100,000 Keystone Project Grant, which will partially fund repairs for the 96 windows in the historic Watson-Curtze Mansion, built in 1891.



Year-end giving ideas IRAs/Qualified Charitable Distributions



Did you know you can make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) up to \$108,000 (per person) to one or more nonprofits directly from a taxable IRA?

A Qualified Charitable Distribution is a way for anyone age 70½ or older to donate directly from their Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to a qualified nonprofit—without paying income tax on the amount.

If you're age 73, you must take Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from your IRA. A QCD can satisfy all or part of that requirement.

QCD advantages include:

- Donors may avoid being pushed into higher income tax brackets.
- QCDs allow individuals to fulfill their required minimum distribution by a direct transfer of up to \$108,000 to a nonprofit for 2025.
- 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. For more information, contact your financial advisor.

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GIFT IDEA?

BOGO

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**BUY OR RENEW ONE
MEMBERSHIP AND
RECEIVE THE SECOND
MEMBERSHIP
AT HALF PRICE**



Visit hagenhistory.org/holiday-memberships

Please consider remembering the History Center in your estate plans.

You can choose to include the History Center in your will, in a trust, and/or as the beneficiary of an insurance policy. This type of donation often provides transformational growth for the organization.

If you'd like to discuss any of the above options further, contact Geri Cicchetti, Advancement Director at 814-454-1813 x34 or at gicchetti@hagenhistory.org

HAVE YOU SEEN

5 New exhibits

1



ARCHIVES TREASURES

The Hand-Picked: Staff Selections exhibit includes dozens of artifacts from our archives. Our team members chose pieces we love and want to share with you. Make sure to stop in and see this fascinating collection and all the stories behind the items.

2

ERIE'S POLONIA

Erie historian Bobby J. Sulecki, traces the early history of churches and neighborhoods in Erie's Polish American community — known as Polonia. Each church gave rise to a distinct Polish neighborhood, shaping Erie's cultural and spiritual landscape. This exhibit leaves January 30.



3

SAINT VINCENT 150 YEARS

This exhibit celebrates Saint Vincent Hospital and its medical milestones over the past 150 years of caring for our community. It traces the history of the founding and many memories with hundreds of photos and artifacts. This exhibit leaves January 6.



4

FOUNDING FAMILIES

Meet the Colts, Sanfords & Spencers. In 1792, Erie became a desirable land for settlers. Judah Colt, Giles Sanford, Rufus S. Reed, Daniel Dobbins, and the Spencer family launched businesses, taverns, schools, and more with the next generations founding organizations Erieites still support today.



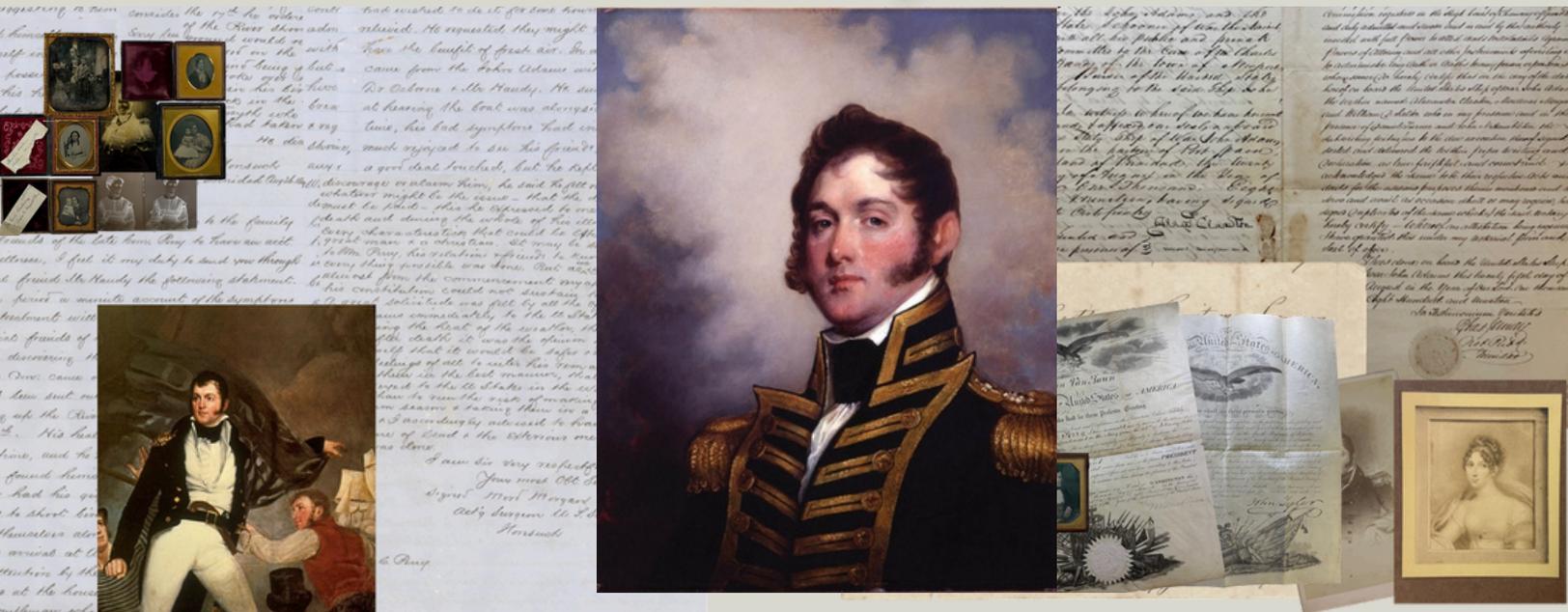
5



SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH 165 YEARS

The Sisters of St. Joseph arrived in Erie in 1860 and established their ministries in teaching, healing, and providing care for the elderly and orphans. Make sure to see it. This exhibit leaves January 6.

New nationally significant exhibits on the way



You'll find some incredible additions in 2026!

At a very competitive auction, the Hagen History Center acquired an extraordinary archives of more than 100 pieces of the Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry collection.

Rare images evoke powerful memories of a man who made history. His touching family letters include deeply personal correspondence that he had with his wife and father, during pivotal campaigns in 1813, with references to his expected command, military movements, and reflections following the victory at the Battle of Lake Erie. The collection was in the care of direct descendants of the Perry family.

We are dedicating a special space for this new exhibit in the Wood-Morrison House. We are also hosting a Perry Symposium to celebrate Perry and America250PA. Stay tuned for details.

MUSEUM WITHIN A MUSEUM

We're building the largest and most internationally significant exhibit in our history!

This exciting expansion will debut in May as the Frank Lloyd Wright Field Office Museum – an immersive addition to our existing museum experience.

A few of the features include:

- Interactive media that brings Wright's vision to life
- Rare artifacts, letters, and memorabilia never before seen by the public
- Little-known facts and stories that deepen understanding of Wright's legacy
- Visitors can take home stained-glass window artwork they create.



Visitors from Australia and across the globe have already toured our current office and are delighted to hear about this upcoming expansion. We can't wait to welcome even more guests to experience this extraordinary chapter in architectural history.

Enhanced tours are here

Take a look around with our Bloomberg Connects app that transforms your visit into an interactive, guided experience similar to national museum visits. Get behind-the-scenes stories about our exhibits – with your phone.

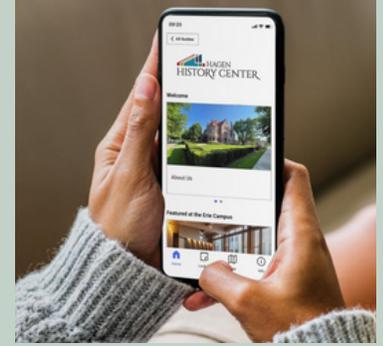
Find multimedia content, audio, and video insights when you download the app on your phone.

Thanks to philanthropist, Michael Bloomberg, Bloomberg Philanthropies for underwriting the entire program.



GET THIS INTERACTIVE TOOL

Download the Bloomberg Connects App and search for “Hagen History Center” or scan the QR code for a direct link.



New logos 2026



New logos will be a part of our rebranding in 2026. Here's a first look at how we'll be marketing the museum.



Coming in January

As part of our America250PA celebration, we're inviting you to participate in oral/video recordings where you can share a memory, hope, or dream. We will be unveiling the program soon. Stay tuned to our website and social media for updates and details.

Memories, HOPEs, and Dreams



HAGEN HISTORY CENTER



WHO LIVED IN YOUR HOME?

Curious about the history of your home — or that of a loved one?

Discover the stories hidden in the walls and land beneath your feet! You can dive into the research yourself by booking a research appointment with our team, or take advantage of our new **Historic Property and Land Research Program** through our Library and Archives.

Let us do the digging for you — projects start at just \$250. From cozy homes to city blocks, we've uncovered histories for properties of all shapes and sizes, including residences, businesses, and historic landmarks.

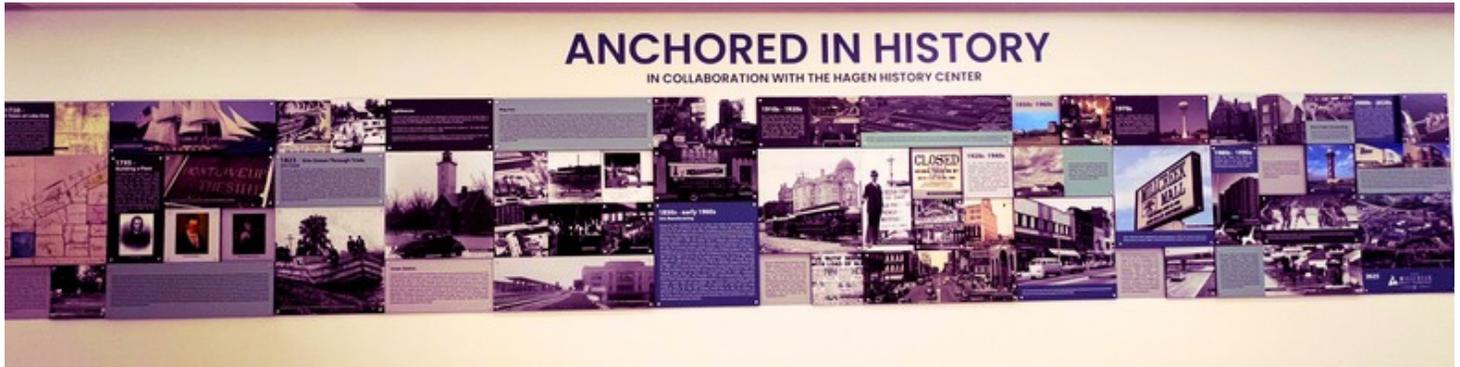
**Ready to uncover your property's past?
Contact us at info@hagenhistory.org**

EVENTS SCHEDULE

2025/2026

Some events, like our Sunflower Days, 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.

www.hagenhistory.org/events



Have you checked out our Anchored in History wall at the Millcreek Mall? Created in collaboration with mall staff, this display helps celebrate the mall's 50th anniversary with a fascinating look back at Erie history.

DECEMBER 2025

Dec. 5 to 7 Victorian Holidays (see page 8 for details)

JANUARY 2026

Mansion exhibits change:

- Saint Vincent exhibit closes
- Sisters of St. Joseph exhibit closes

New exhibits open:

- Bar Association opens
- Wilderness Lodge opens

Jan. 30 Polish history exhibit closes



Sunflower Days will return to Girard in August.

2026

New Oliver Hazard Perry exhibit opens/Perry Symposium

MAY 2026

Grand reopening of our NEW Welcome Exhibit/Frank Lloyd Wright Field Office Museum

JUNE 2026

June 10 Men at the Museum

June 22 -26 Student Architecture Camp

JULY 2026

July 31 to Aug. 3 Dan Rice Days, Girard

AUGUST 2026

Aug. 4 Women Creating A Legacy in Girard

Aug. 8 to 15 Sunflower Days featuring picnics, dinners, art classes, and flower arranging classes at the White House in Girard

Aug. 11 Annual meeting for members

SEPTEMBER 2026

TBD A Night at the Museum Gala



HAGEN
HISTORY CENTER

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YOU'RE INVITED TO VICTORIAN HOLIDAYS!

Celebrate the season with us at our beautifully decorated Erie campus. We have reduced admission, thanks to our sponsor Erie Federal Credit Union. Decorations are up now and remain until Jan. 5.

Event Dates & Times

- Friday, December 5 – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Saturday, December 6 – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday, December 7 – Noon to 5 p.m.

Admission

MEMBERS OF HISTORY CENTER AND ERIE
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

- Adults: \$3 per person
- Families: \$15
- Children 6 and under: Free

NON-MEMBERS

- Adults: \$5 per person
- Families: \$20
- Children 6 and under: Free