

# HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

Volume 52 Issue 2

Fall 2024

Inspiration through Heritage since 1875



**16th**  
MEMORIES  
OF  
*Christmas*  
PAST  
Arms Family Museum

Sponsored by

**premier bank**

POWERED BY PEOPLE.

## Opens Saturday, November 16

## Annual Report Issue

For the fiscal year  
ending June 30, 2024

## Plus

- Recognizing Our Members
- American Cyanamid Explosion
- IDARM Project

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# MEMORIES OF Christmas PAST

Arms Family Museum



MVHS is pleased to announce that the 16th **Memories of Christmas Past** exhibit at Arms Family Museum, 648 Wick Avenue, Youngstown, OH will open on Saturday, **November 16, 2024**, and run through New Year's Eve, Tuesday, **December 31, 2024**. We will also host a members-only preview party on **Friday, November 15**.

This beloved exhibit features seven classically decorated rooms full of lights and sights that are sure to spark visitors' fondest memories of the holiday season. Regular hours will be Tuesday through Sunday, noon to 4:00 p.m. See the calendar below for all open and closed dates and times.



Admissions and additional gift shop space for *Memories of Christmas Past* will be in the Stewart Media Archives Center, directly behind Arms Family Museum, just steps away from the entrance.

Admission fees for this season will be \$10 for Adults, \$9 for seniors (60+) and college students (with I.D.), and \$8 for children (3-18). Admission is **FREE** for toddlers (under 3), MVHS members, active military and veterans (with I.D.)

Additionally, MVHS will provide \$1 off coupons in many of its holiday advertisements. As is our tradition, both new and vintage merchandise will be for sale. The Hands-On-History Room will again be transformed into a Christmas-themed experience for visitors of all ages.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>16TH MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS PAST CALENDAR</b>					NOV 15 Invitation-only Preview Party Session #1 - 3-4:30pm Session #2 - 5:30-7:30pm	16 OPENING DAY Noon-4pm
17 OPEN Noon-4pm	18 CLOSED	19 OPEN Noon-4pm	20 OPEN Noon-4pm	21 OPEN Noon-4pm	22 OPEN Noon-4pm	23 OPEN Noon-4pm
24 OPEN Noon-4pm	25 CLOSED	26 OPEN Noon-4pm	27 OPEN Noon-4pm	28 Thanksgiving CLOSED	29 OPEN Noon-4pm	30 OPEN Noon-4pm
DEC 1 OPEN Noon-4pm	2 CLOSED	3 OPEN Noon-4pm	4 OPEN Noon-4pm	5 Twilight Thursday Noon-7pm	6 OPEN Noon-4pm	7 OPEN Noon-4pm
8 OPEN Noon-4pm	9 CLOSED	10 OPEN Noon-4pm	11 OPEN Noon-4pm	12 Twilight Thursday Noon-7pm	13 OPEN Noon-4pm	14 OPEN Noon-4pm
15 OPEN Noon-4pm	16 CLOSED	17 OPEN Noon-4pm	18 OPEN Noon-4pm	19 Twilight Thursday Noon-7pm	20 OPEN Noon-4pm	21 OPEN Noon-4pm
22 OPEN Noon-4pm	23 CLOSED	24 Christmas Eve CLOSED	25 Christmas Day CLOSED	26 Twilight Thursday Noon-7pm	27 OPEN Noon-4pm	28 OPEN Noon-4pm
29 OPEN Noon-4pm	30 OPEN Noon-4pm	31 New Years Eve FINAL DAY OPEN Noon-4pm	JAN 1 New Years Day CLOSED	ARMS FAMILY MUSEUM reopens to the public on Tuesday, January 28, 2025 with regular hours/admissions.		

Get into the Christmas spirit by visiting the Memories of Christmas Past exhibits at the Arms Family Museum! For large groups, schedule a tour by calling Curatorial Assistant, Brooke Bobovnyik, at 330-743-2589 at ext. 123 or email at [armsmuseum@mahoninghistory.org](mailto:armsmuseum@mahoninghistory.org)



## Maximize Your Giving with a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)

When you donate to a qualified charity – like Mahoning Valley Historical Society –, you typically receive a charitable tax deduction for the value of your gift. But here's the catch—you only get that benefit if you itemize your deductions. If you own an IRA, there's another option worth exploring: the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

A QCD allows IRA owners aged 70½ and older to transfer up to \$105,000 directly to a charity, tax-free, every year. Your spouse can also give \$105,000, effectively doubling

the size of your donation. This is a simple and efficient way to make a meaningful gift before year-end. You could support your favorite non-profit without triggering any taxable income from your IRA.

If you're 73 or older, a QCD does even more. Not only is it tax-free, but it also counts toward your required minimum distribution (RMD)—the amount you're required to withdraw from your IRA each year.

Want to learn more? Contact your IRA custodian to see how a Qualified

Charitable Distribution could work for you and your financial goals.



## Save the Date for the 13th Annual Cookie Table & Cocktails!

**Cookie Table and Cocktails** will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2025 at St. Mary's Assumption Social Center on South Belle Vista Avenue in Youngstown. As always, the cookies will be the stars of the show, along with a Youngstown-style wedding buffet, a silent auction, and basket raffle. Musical entertainment will be provided by The Zolka Brothers.

Invitations will be mailed in January 2025. Sponsorships are available to support this great event, and items for the basket and silent auctions are also needed. Call 330-743-2589 and ask for Linda for details. This year's theme will be Idora Park!



## Making Memories

Give a gift to our community this holiday season by supporting the 16th annual **Memories of Christmas Past**, our most popular and well-attended exhibit. Sponsorships range from the \$150 Christmas Card to the \$2,500 Event Sponsor levels. We think there is one that will fit into your corporate or individual philanthropic philosophy. Higher levels of sponsorship can be tailored to your needs.

For 16 years, tens of thousands of guests have visited "Olive's home" – Olive being Mrs. Olive F. A. Arms, who donated her magnificent residence and its contents to MVHS in 1960. As visitors enjoy the traditional and whimsical holiday decorations, they will observe the support of our sponsors through recognition in signage, advertising, and on social media. Memories of Christmas Past is on display for six weeks, so the return on your investment will be significant. Visit our website at [www.mahoninghistory.org/mcp](http://www.mahoninghistory.org/mcp) for the details and sponsorship benefits, or call Linda at 330.743.2589, ext. 125.



## The MVHS Annual Fund-A Great Way to Invest in Local History

For nearly 150 years, Mahoning Valley Historical Society has been dedicated to preserving the rich history of the people who shaped our community. From family traditions to local businesses, our valley's story is one of resilience, innovation, and community. But without your help, these stories could be lost forever.

When you support the MVHS Annual Fund, you ensure that

our past remains present and accessible for generations to come. Your gift helps us care for valued collections, acquire new pieces of local history, and expand education programs to local school children.

Your gift safeguards the personal stories behind each artifact; stories that weave together the fabric of our Valley's history. With your support, we can continue

telling these stories, keeping our history alive for years to come.

Join us in preserving the legacy of our community. Here's how you can make a difference:

- Donate online at [www.mahoninghistory.org](http://www.mahoninghistory.org)
- Mail your gift to MVHS at 648 Wick Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio, 44502
- Call us at 330.743.2589 to make a donation over the phone

## IDARM Project Secures NEH Funding to Develop Regional Archival Network

**Editor's Note:** *MVHS has been invited to participate in the IDARM network, spotlighted below by guest author Melissa E. Marinaro. In October, Multimedia Specialist Chris Rutushin and Collections Manager Jessica Trickett will attend IDARM's conference in Pittsburgh, where organizations from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia will meet to make contacts and share resources to further the project's goal.*

The Italian Diaspora Archive Research Map (IDARM) project is working to make visible, searchable, and accessible to researchers, educators, students, and the public the wealth of archival materials related to the Italian diasporic experience in the Pennsylvania (PA)-West Virginia (WV)-Ohio (OH) tristate region. This region of the US is home to a high concentration of Americans of Italian descent whose ancestors immigrated during the Great Immigration and post-WWII periods to work in the industrial complex, especially the coal, glass, and steel industries. Due to the size of the Italian American community, extensive material culture has been deposited into a variety of repositories and archives across the tristate region. Though informal networks existed among archivists, librarians, researchers, and academics working in Italian and Italian American studies, no overarching framework existed to capture the full breadth of the resources available within this geo-cultural footprint. IDARM was founded in 2020 by co-conveners Nancy A. Caronia, Visiting Scholar, Chatham University; Lina Insana, Associate Professor, UPitt; and Melissa E. Marinaro, Director, Italian American Program, HHC and recently received a \$50K NEH Development Grant to expand the project.



Back row from left: Lina Insana, Melissa E. Marinaro, and Nancy Ann Caronia with friends in Rome, Italy, 2023

Nancy Ann Caronia is a writer, educator, and scholar. She has worked with archives in the United States, Italy, and Scotland. She has also collaborated with the West Virginia & Regional History Center, sharing collections about the Italian Diaspora, including the hand-written drafts of West Virginia writer Denise Giardina and the Monongah Mining papers of Thoney Pietro and the Monongah Mining Relief Committee Papers.

Lina Insana is a literary scholar by training, but archives of various kinds have always been vital to her research and teaching. A native Pittsburgher, a proud Sicilian American, and, since 2000, a member of the Italian faculty at UPitt, Insana has long-standing ties to the Heinz History Center's Italian American Program.

Melissa E. Marinaro joined the Heinz History Center as the Director of the Italian American Program in 2013. She's collaborated with UPitt and WVU to provide students with internships, classroom experiences with primary sources, and research support; many students are Americans of Italian descent from the Ohio River Valley and the Appalachian Mountains.

# Annual Report of Mahoning Valley Historical Society

Virtual Connections to MVHS Members, Supporters, and the General Public

Social Media



**Over 9,000 followers** on Facebook



**Nearly 2,000 followers** on Instagram



**Over 1,000 subscribers** on YouTube

Customized Emails

**3,538 contacts** to our email lists.

**60 different emails** communicated artifact features, program and event videos, and members-only information.

**15,078 pairs of eyes** saw messages from MVHS!

Website



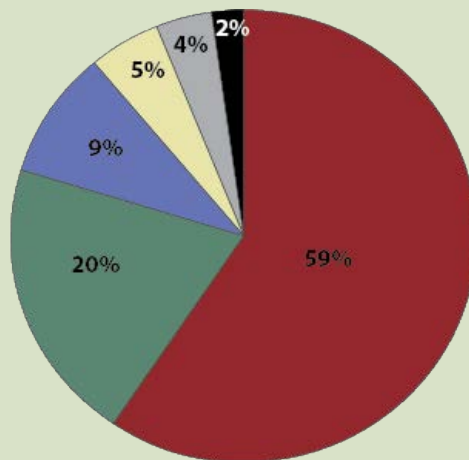
In July 2023, while in the midst of a nine-month road closure of the 300 block of West Federal Street, Mahoning Valley Historical Society purchased the parking lot on the west side of Tyler History Center; this very fortunate acquisition permanently secures parking for staff and visitors and could facilitate expansion of the Tyler facilities in the future.

After more than two years of negotiations and due diligence, MVHS purchased the 1980 Urban Renewal-era office building and property at 250 East Federal Street,

in which the Historical Society had leased storage space since 1999; with 68,000 square feet under roof on four levels, this building will help MVHS manage growth of programs and collections for the next generation.

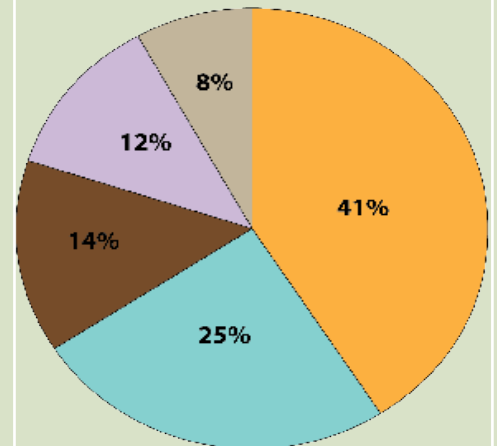
These important acquisitions, plus many more initiatives and programs, are happening while the Historical Society completes an accreditation review with the American Alliance of Museums; the timing couldn't be better as our future course of action comes into clear focus!

Operating Support and Revenues: \$1,464,791



- Private Foundation Support: \$870,723
- Endowment and Other Earned Income: \$294,246
- Operating Revenues: \$146,459
- Annual Appeal/ Other Contributions: \$69,291
- Memberships: \$53,554
- 250 E. Federal Revenues: \$30,518

Operating Expenses: \$1,388,304



- Tyler History Center: \$574,091
- Arms Family Museum: \$341,418
- General & Administrative: \$195,612
- 250 E. Federal St: \$164,253
- Stewart Media Archives: \$112,930



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 Cleo Nastopoulos  
 Donna Nolfi  
 Richard Novotny  
 Deborah O'Mellan  
 Barbara Orenic  
 J. Michael Orwell  
 Pamela Pallante  
 Bonnie Pearl  
 Dina M. Petracci  
 Diane Powell  
 Alice Proffit  
 Lillian Reeher  
 Gary Reel  
 Martin Repasky  
 Gail Repasky  
 Cynthia Ricci  
 John Rochford  
 James Rogers  
 Barbara Rogich  
 Sandy Ross  
 Rosanne Volpini  
 Susan M. Rossi-Wilcox  
 Art Rothenberg  
 Kathleen Rothman  
 Rev. Joseph Rudjak  
 Patty Rush  
 Patricia Rutushin  
 K. Janet Scali  
 Patricia Ann Scarmuzzi  
 Richard S. Scarsella  
 Emily W. Schaff  
 Mary Schall  
 Mary Ann Senediak  
 Steven Senich  
 Ronald Shimko  
 Mary Beth Gartland Shobel  
 Stephanie Sicaface  
 Margaret Skripac  
 Sara Smith  
 Katherine Smith  
 Judith R. Solomon  
 Joe Steller  
 Margaret Stetts  
 Anita Stothard

Anita Stothard  
 Laura Sullivan  
 Mildred Terihay  
 Nancy Terlesky  
 Marjorie Thornton  
 Rosemarie Torem  
 Susanne Trigg  
 Robert Trube  
 John Uvena  
 Susan Vallos  
 Deanna Vallos  
 Andreas Vamvakis  
 Maria Vamvakis  
 Robert Waddington  
 Debra Walker  
 Marlyn Wallace  
 Denise Walters Dobson  
 Linda Wellington  
 Raymond Wiesen  
 Alvin D. Williams  
 Bernadette Zets  
 Thomas A. Zilla

**STUDENT**

Vito Colella  
 India Gatts  
 Jacob Harver  
 Emilie Kolenich  
 Riley LaRocca  
 Anthony Vivacqua

\* Deceased 2023-2024

This list is compiled from our membership database, and every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy. If a discrepancy is detected, please call Linda Kostka CFRE, at 330-743-2589, ext. 125.

## 2023-2024 Corporate Membership of MVHS

**PLATINUM PARTNER**

Boak and Sons Roofing  
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 YNDC

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 Chalet Premier  
 CR Electric

# Annual Report of Mahoning Valley Historical Society

## Audience by the Numbers

### 8,767

people visited Arms Family Museum

### 975

people visited Tyler History Center

### 8,452

participants in on-site and outreach educational programs

### Over 8,000

visited Memories of Christmas Past

### Over 400

attended Cookie Table & Cocktails

### 4,100

attended events in the Tyler History Center Thomas Ballroom

### 5,600

students educated by our suitcase programs

### 645

attended Bites & Bits of History Lunchtime Programs

### 809

attended Mahoning Valley Cultural Alliance events

## Signature Events

Our *History-To-Go* Series was a huge success, holding three programs: Bus tour to Hale Farm and Village, The Amazing History Race, Founder's Day Historic Wick Avenue and Elm Street districts, and Oak Hill Cemetery Tours.



Partnering with Mahoning Valley Cultural Alliance, we continued the *Culture and Cuisine* series and *Stories of Immigrants to the Mahoning Valley* series in 2024, sharing stories from four different countries.



The 12th *Cookie Table & Cocktails* was held on Saturday, February 24 and attendees enjoyed over 10,000 cookies. The event had a net profit of over \$22,000 to aid in the support of MVHS programs and facilities.



## New Faces

Vito Colella, a student at YSU, interned at SMAC during the spring.

YSU intern, Erica Constance, helped with cataloging and entering data for the Calvin collection in the spring.

Dante Bernard joined the staff as our Museum Educator in September 2023.

Stephanie Godsey joined the staff as our Administrative Assistant in May.

Anne-Marie Alexander joined the staff as our Capital Campaign Administrative Assistant in June.

## 2023-2024 Exhibits

### Arms Family Museum

April 5, 2024: *Behind the Scenes: Servants of Greystone*

### Tyler History Center Youngstown Foundation Community History Gallery

October 2023-April 2024: *Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown: 150 Years of Gospel Service*

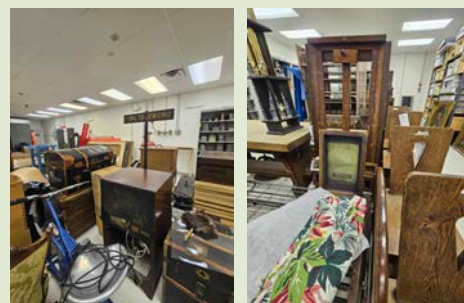
May 2023-August 2024: *Arts for the Table*

### Archives Research Center

Archivist provided information and images for the producers of the PBS series *Finding Your Roots*

## Making a Move

The collections staff spent December 2023 through March 2024 relocating MVHS three-dimensional collections to the new consolidated storage center at 250 East Federal Street.





# BITES AND BITS OF HISTORY

PRESENTED BY  
THE JOHN AND  
LORETTA HYNES  
FOUNDATION

*Bites and Bits of History* lunchtime programs are held at noon on the third Thursday of each month at Tyler History Center.

## Carving out the Mahoning Valley: 14,000 BCE through 1875

Traci Manning,  
MVHS Curator of Education



## A Region on the Rise: The Mahoning Valley in the 1880s and 1890s

Jessica Trickett,  
MHVS Collections Curator



## The Modernization of Youngstown & the Mahoning Valley, 1900-1910

Brooke Bobovnyik,  
MVHS Curatorial Assistant



**October 17, 2024**

Humans have called the Mahoning Valley home for thousands of years. This presentation will highlight the stories of Indigenous Peoples who lived and traveled through this region prior to European contact. After the American Revolution, the region became a destination for migrating Americans looking for land and opportunity in the western frontier. Explore the history of Youngstown and the surrounding communities before it became a major center of industry, transportation, entertainment, and population growth.

**November 21, 2024**

The last decades of the 19th century were a time of prosperity, as well as tremendous growth and change, for Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley. In 1880, Youngstown's population (15,435) had grown by 90% over the previous decade. By 1896, it was designated a First Class City with a population over 25,000. The population swelled rapidly as people moved here to work in the iron and coal industries, and other trades and businesses that grew along with the city and the surrounding townships. It was the period just before steel overshadowed iron and the city truly became a metropolis.

**December 19, 2024**

The period from 1900 to 1910 was a time of economic modernization in Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley. Fueled by the rapidly growing population, several significant changes occurred in the region's infrastructure, industry, and even entertainment, to better meet the needs and demands of the region's residents. Such changes included the building of new bridges, the appearance of skyscrapers, the boom of the automobile and steel industries, and the rise of nickelodeons. These events that unfolded continued to shape Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley into a region of opportunity and prosperity.

## Attention Teachers!

It is that time of the year! Registration for the popular MVHS Suitcase Programs is now open but spots are filling up fast. Thanks to a generous grant from the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley, these programs are presented to local classrooms at no cost to the school, teachers, or students. These programs bring the museum experience to your classroom! Each presentation is a detailed look at the ever-evolving peoples, cultures, and institutions that make up the Mahoning Valley through the course of history. To tell these stories, every suitcase comes equipped with reproduction artifacts, maps, photographs, and hands-on activities and is led by a professional museum educator. Reach out the Education Team at [education@mahoninghistory.org](mailto:education@mahoninghistory.org) for more information or to book a program!



# Bringing Closure After Tragedy



On June 6, 1964 disaster struck the American Cyanamid chemical plant in Edinburg, Pennsylvania. After a series of four explosions, five men lost their lives, and eight others were severely injured. The blast occurred on the gelatin line that produced nitroglycerin. The blast was so strong that it was felt throughout western Lawrence County, and even twisted the railroad tracks that were used to move products from the plant. To avoid any further devastation, city officials evacuated five square miles around the plant. Damages totaled \$500,000, which would equal nearly \$5 million today. There has not been any official explanation as to what caused the blasts.

In June of this year, the son of one of the five men, reached out to Stewart Media Archives Research Center to inquire if we had any film or news reels about the explosion. Fortunately, we were able to find the story in our collection and send him footage of the WKBN news crew that reported on the incident.

We have since posted the video to our YouTube page, along with links and other resources about this tragedy. The direct link to this story on our YouTube page is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJR5g4ZoLzU>.

If there is a story that you are interested in and would like to find out more about, please contact us at 330-743-2589. You never know, your inquiry could help someone find a long lost relative or friend, peace of mind, or closure to a tragedy such as this.



## Thanks to our 2024 *Memories of Christmas Past* Sponsors!

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# A Look at the Life of Harry C. Price

It is funny how some stories are as well-known as someone's own name, yet how others have disappeared over time, and are unknown and unseen. Recently MVHS was allowed to borrow some photographs and artifacts from a local family that shed light on one of those disappearing stories.

In April of 1928, Harry C. Price of Youngstown, Ohio filed an application for a patent for a highway crossing protection device to assist in making railroad travel more safe. In his own words the apparatus was for "protecting the intersections of railways and highways." His patent was accepted 11 February 1930. At the time Mr. Price was a General Signal Inspector for the Erie Railroad. The assignor for the patent was the Union Switch and Signal Company of Swissvale, PA.

According to our patron, another individual patented the long-arm bar protection we are all familiar with at railroad crossings some years after Mr. Price first received his patent. According to his descendants, Price was never paid for his invention in monetary terms. Instead, he and his family were compensated with railroad passes to travel upon.

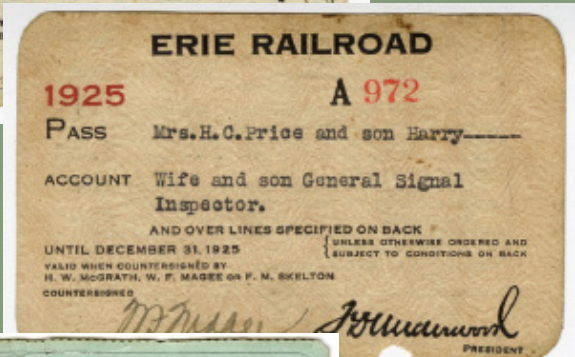
Harry Crotient Price was born November 19, 1882 on Staten Island, New York and died in 1951, buried in Middletown, Monmouth County, New Jersey. His wife Emma A. Sickie was born in 1875 and died in 1945. Their son Harry Chester Price was born September 14, 1907 in Red Bank, New Jersey and died January 22, 1981 in Youngstown, Mahoning County, Ohio and is buried in Forest Lawn Memorial Park Cemetery.

In 1918 the family lived in Bayonne, Hudson, New Jersey. In 1927-1928 the elder Harry and wife Emma are listed as living at 3034 Idlewood Avenue, and the younger Harry was living nearby. By 1930 the elder Prices were living in Manhattan, New York where Mr. Price worked as an electrical engineer in building construction. During World War II, Harry senior was working for the U. S. Navy in the electrical department in New York. In 1946 Harry junior worked for the Erie Railroad in the Mahoning Valley, and later served as a leading maintainer in the signal department for the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad.



Harry C. Price, inventor of the "Highway Crossing Protection" apparatus. Loaned by Robert Wallace.

One view of the apparatus. Loaned by Robert Wallace.



Samples of Railroad Passes preserved by the family. Loaned by Robert Wallace.

648 Wick Avenue  
Youngstown, OH 44502

*The Mahoning Valley Historical Society celebrates the history of the people of the Mahoning Valley.*

## HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

is published quarterly and sent as a benefit of MVHS membership.

Lindsay Samblanet, Editor  
lsamblanet@mahoninghistory.org



### ARMS FAMILY MUSEUM

648 WICK AVENUE  
YOUNGSTOWN, OH 44502

Tuesday-Sunday  
12:00 to 4:00 p.m.

### STEWART MEDIA ARCHIVES

648 WICK AVENUE  
YOUNGSTOWN, OH 44502

Tuesday-Friday  
12:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Weekends by appointment  
business\_media@mahoninghistory.org

### TYLER HISTORY CENTER

325 WEST FEDERAL STREET  
YOUNGSTOWN, OH 44503

Tuesday-Sunday  
12:00 to 4:00 p.m.

### ARCHIVES RESEARCH CENTER AT TYLER HISTORY CENTER

Tuesday-Saturday  
12:00 to 4:00 p.m.

archives@mahoninghistory.org

Phone: 330-743-2589

Fax: 330-743-7210

mvhs@mahoninghistory.org

www.mahoninghistory.org

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## Celebrate With Us!

Join us throughout the year as we celebrate our 150th anniversary!





**Oak Hill Cemetery Tour-**  
**Saturday, October 19, 2024**  
Registration Required

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Join us every third Thursday of each month.  
From September 2024 to August 2025 we will be discussing the history of the Mahoning Valley throughout the decades. These free events begin at noon in the Thomas Ballroom at Tyler History Center.

## BITES AND BITS OF HISTORY

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## MEMORIES OF Christmas PAST

Arms Family Museum

Saturday, November 16, 2024  
through  
Tuesday, December 31, 2024

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**Cookie Table and Cocktails-**  
Saturday, February 22, 2025



**Cookie Table and Cocktails**

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## HISTORY To Go

EVENT SERIES

Watch for:  
**Amazing History Race**  
**History on Tap**  
**National Ice Cream Day**



**Founders Day Open House**  
Sunday,  
**September 7, 2025**  
Noon to 4 pm  
Arms Family Museum

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**Founders Day Gala**  
Wednesday,  
September 10, 2025  
Tyler History Center  
Members Only Event

