



# Cleveland History Center

**Speaking of Cleveland** features stories that capture the Cleveland spirit. Uncover oft-forgotten tales from Cleveland's rich past, sourced from the esteemed collections of the Western Reserve Historical Society. These narratives highlight the innovation, grit, and pride that define Cleveland's history, shaping its past, present, and future. Allow our passionate historians and museum professionals to share these captivating stories of Cleveland with you.



216.721.5722



[info@wrhs.org](mailto:info@wrhs.org)



[@CleStartsHere](#)



10825 East Blvd.  
Cleveland, OH

## CLEVELAND HISTORY FAVORITES

### **\$130 per program + mileage (if applicable)**

#### Battle for the Ballot: Cleveland's Suffragist Movement

There is no complete record of the brave, often unnamed women who fought for their right to vote and finally triumphed in 1920. Learn about a band of women who dedicated themselves to the public interest and grew into an organization that won the respect and confidence of the nation. This program will tell the story behind the Cleveland women who advocated for suffrage and went on to help establish the League of Women Voters.

#### Eliot Ness & the Torso Murders

While acting as Cleveland's Safety Director, Eliot Ness made great improvements in our infrastructure that created a lasting legacy for the city. However, in these same years, Ness would come head-to-head with a series of heinous crimes – the Torso Murders. Explore the famous case that is still considered unsolved to this day, and learn about the Cleveland era of Eliot Ness.

#### The Golden Age of Shopping

Explore the heyday of Cleveland's most glamorous department stores. From small grocers to giant palaces, companies like Higbee's, the May Company, and Halle Brothers grew with the city and came to define Cleveland fashion and shopping for decades.

#### Stories from Millionaires' Row

Declared "the most beautiful street in America," Euclid Avenue was once home to powerful families who not only shaped Cleveland, but national politics and industry, as well. Hear their stories as you take a walk down Euclid Avenue in the nineteenth century and learn about the beautiful art and architecture of their homes.

#### Carl and Louis Stokes: From Projects to Politics

Two brothers from Cleveland, Ohio, helped reshape American history. Carl and Louis Stokes, along with others, created pathways, policies, and programs that advanced civil rights, promoted urban issues, and helped make the United States a more equitable nation. This program will focus on their life story, one of ordinary people struggling to achieve extraordinary things in a city, nation, and world that held many barriers for people who were poor and black.

#### Thanks to Garrett Morgan: The Life and Times of Cleveland's Inventor Extraordinaire

This program highlights his inventions with global significance. As the first African American car owner in the city, Morgan played a key role in fostering community unity through social clubs and newspapers. His story sheds light on the development of the African American community in Cleveland, showcasing how creativity and innovation can triumph over stereotypes and oppression.

### The Euclid Beach Park Carousel's Long Journey Back

The Euclid Beach Park Grand Carousel opened to riders in a brand new pavilion at the Cleveland History Center in November 2014, but it lived many lives before then. This program explores its first hundred years after its original opening at Euclid Beach, a local amusement park, in 1910. Through the closure of the original park in 1969, the Carousel's removal from Northeast Ohio, and its complex return and restoration process, this is the story of survival of a beloved piece of Cleveland's history.

### Amanda Wicker: Black Fashion Design in Cleveland

Amanda Wicker (1894-1987) moved to Cleveland in 1924 with not much more than her skills as a dressmaker. With a single student enrolled, she began the Clarke School of Dressmaking and Fashion Design in her home on Cedar Avenue in Cleveland's Fairfax neighborhood. For the following six decades, she established herself as the preeminent fashion teacher and mentor in the predominantly African American Fairfax neighborhood.

*\*This program can be presented by Patricia Edmonson, Museum Advisory Council Curator of Costumes & Textiles for an additional surcharge of \$20. Only available upon request.*

### Wow Factor: 150 Years of Collecting Bold Clothes

Clevelanders use fashion to stand out in a crowd. Share in the images and stories from our extensive costume collection to learn more about our city's trendsetters, who they were, and where they shopped.

*\*This program can be presented by Patricia Edmonson, Museum Advisory Council Curator of Costumes & Textiles for an additional surcharge of \$20. Only available upon request.*

### Valentine's Day in Cleveland

This program highlights love stories of Cleveland's past while highlighting the history of St. Valentine's Day. Explore how the holiday and its advertisements have changed over the years, especially in local press.

### Cleveland's Holiday Traditions

From early settler traditions to department store palaces, Cleveland has always embraced the holiday season in a big way. Share your memories of Mr. Jingeling and department store windows while learning about some of the lesser-known holiday traditions of Clevelanders both then and now.

### Ghosts of Christmas Past

Enjoy a true Victorian holiday season and explore the ghosts and folklore that shaped nineteenth century holidays in Cleveland. Whether you view them as creepy superstitions or tales with hidden wisdom, these stories are made to entertain and will leave you looking at holiday traditions in a whole new way.

### The Speedway in the Sky: Cleveland's Air Races

Between 1929 and 1949, except for a hiatus during World War II, Cleveland hosted the National Air Races, an extraordinary spectacle meant to showcase new developments in aviation technology. In this program, hear stories of the different races that occurred, the bold and brave pilots who performed death-defying stunts, and the benefits for the city of Cleveland and its new municipal airport. Until planes grew too powerful to safely race over the densely populated areas of Northeast Ohio, the achievements of these yearly events reflected the quickly changing social and political realities of their time.

### The Case of Sam Sheppard

On the fateful day of July 4, 1954, the quiet streets of Bay Village, Ohio, were forever marked by a gruesome event. Marilyn Reese Sheppard was discovered murdered in her Bay Village home, setting off a chain of events that would captivate the nation. Amidst the chaos and confusion, her husband, Sam, claimed it was a perpetrator. The Cleveland Press under the watchful eye of editor Louis Seltzer, began to push for answers. Explore the gripping tale of the Sheppard murder case, a local true crime story.

### Brief History of the Western Reserve

Most people in Northeast Ohio know the term Western Reserve, but how many people really know what it means? Join the Cleveland History Center for a discussion about the fascinating history of the region and see some of the rarest treasures in the Western Reserve Historical Society's collection.

### Car Capitol of the World

At one time, Cleveland was the automobile capitol of the world. Take a ride through the Western Reserve at the turn of the twentieth century and discover a treasure trove of Cleveland-made vehicles.

### The Burning River: A Natural and Social History of the Cuyahoga River

The Cuyahoga River has been at the heart of life in Northeast Ohio for thousands of years, yet the enduring vision of the Cuyahoga is that of the Burning River. Join the Cleveland History Center to look behind the myth to see what history tells us really happened, and why the 1969 fire and Cleveland became the face of the industrial urban crisis.

## CONTENT EXPERTS

**\$150 per program + mileage (if applicable)**

MARY MANNING, PhD | PK-12 Education Manager

### History of Hough Bakery

Founded in 1903, Hough Bakery was a Cleveland staple for 90 years. Through access to the Hough Bakery archives in the library of the Western Reserve Historical Society, this program will focus on the founding and growth of the company, products, and its closure in 1992. Find out how, why, and the ways in which their legacy lives on.

Larry Doby

When Larry Doby signed with the Cleveland Indians in July 1947, he became the second African American player in Major League Baseball and the first in the American League. Though Doby played on some of the greatest teams of all time, he never quite received the same media attention as Jackie Robinson, who had broken MLB's color barrier in 1947. This program will explore Doby's life, how Cleveland was well-positioned to field an integrated team by the late 1940s, and how Bill Veeck, the Indians' team owner, and team president at the time, chose Doby from all the stellar Negro League players to integrate baseball in Cleveland.

SEAN MARTIN, PhD | Curator for Jewish History Ethnicity & Local History

### Ethnicity & Local History

How do local groups operate within larger, national ethnic groups? How do they help us negotiate our identities as citizens? Explore the variety of ethnic communities to which we belong and the local groups in which we live. The Changing Borders of Eastern Europe: A Guide for Genealogists Wars, treaties and other world events can change boundaries, politics, and even a country's name. Knowing the basics can help a researcher navigate the complicated geography of nineteenth and twentieth century Eastern Europe.

### The Changing Borders of Eastern Europe: A Guide for Genealogists

Wars, treaties and other world events can change boundaries, politics, and even a country's name. Knowing the basics can help a researcher navigate the complicated geography of nineteenth and twentieth century Eastern Europe.



PAMELA DORAZIO-DEAN | Curator for Italian American History

### Italian-American Life in Cleveland

Today, Cleveland is home to a vibrant Italian-American community that has grown over decades of immigration. Explore Italian immigration to the city from the late nineteenth century through the present day, with a focus on life in the Italian neighborhoods.

### The Art & History of Italian Sculpting in Northeast Ohio

Among the Italians who immigrated to Cleveland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were skilled stone carvers and sculptors. Their skills and talents helped to create exquisite works in stone that continue to beautify Northeast Ohio. This talk will explore the stone carvers and some of the works they created, including monuments and headstones at Lake View Cemetery, the Soldiers & Sailors Monument, and the iconic Guardians of Transportation.

ERIC RIVET | Chief Curator

### Before They Were Famous: Celebrity Veterans of World War II

More than sixteen million Americans served during World War II. Most of them would return home to a normal life, but some would go on to become beloved celebrities after the war. Join Chief Curator Eric Rivet for an audience participation presentation on how some of Hollywood's best known celebrities served their country.

### A Tale of Two Torpedoes: The Sinking of the German Battleship Bismarck

The German battleship Bismarck was one of the deadliest ships afloat at the beginning of World War II. The story of the nine-day chase and destruction of the Bismarck was full of so many twists and turns that it could have been written by Hollywood. Hear the saga of the Bismarck and learn how the epic story hinged on two torpedoes, one British and one German.

### The Battle of Leyte Gulf

The Battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944 was one of the largest naval battles in history. Actually five separate battles spread around the Philippine Islands, the American victory at Leyte Gulf effectively removed the Imperial Japanese Navy as a threat in the Pacific Theater. Join Eric Rivet to learn more about this key World War II battle.

### The Apollo Program

Between 1969 and 1972, twenty-one American astronauts left Earth's orbit and voyaged to the moon as part of NASA's Apollo Program. Twelve of those men walked on the lunar surface. Discover the triumphs and tragedies of the Apollo Program and learn about the men and machines that made it possible for us to leave Earth.

REGENNIA N. WILLIAMS, PhD | Distinguished Scholar of African American History and Culture  
\$250 per program + mileage (if applicable) Email directly to schedule: [rwilliams@wrhs.org](mailto:rwilliams@wrhs.org)

### Praying Grounds: African American Faith Communities

In this presentation historian and author Regennia N. Williams, PhD will discuss the evolving role of religion in Black America. Based on her ongoing research for the Praying Grounds Oral History Project and her books and other publications, including "Cleveland, Ohio and Race, Religion, and Reconciliation: Academic Initiatives, Leadership Development, and Social Change."

### Jazz in Cleveland

Historian and music lover Regennia N. Williams, PhD, will present a lecture-discussion on the contributions of Cleveland natives Ernie Freeman, Evelyn Freeman Roberts, and Albert Ayler, as well as those of musical artists such as Noble Sissie and others who spent part of their careers in Cleveland. *Going There & Knowing There: The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Cleveland, OH* This presentation will focus on Dr. King's many visits to Cleveland, Ohio in the 1960s, the purpose of those visits, the individuals and organizations that worked with him, and Cleveland's place in the larger history of the Civil Rights Movement in America. The lecture-discussion will include a consideration of the churches and other local landmarks associated with Dr. King's work.

### Black Agency and Black Activism

Based on Dr. Regennia N. Williams' research for her own publications and primary and secondary materials for a course that she designed for the Western Reserve Historical Society in 2021, this presentation will provide participants with opportunities to consider the long view of Black Agency and Black Activism, from the Modern Civil Rights Movement to the #BlackLivesMatter Movement, c.1960-2022.

### Partnerships, Portraits, and the Power of Photojournalism: The Impact of the Great Migration on Cleveland

One statistical portrait of Black Cleveland during the first wave of the Great Migration suggests that the population increased from 8,448 to more than 34,000 from 1910 to 1925. At the time, Blacks were concentrated on the city's east side, with many living in the Greater Cedar-Central Area. Find out more about the factors that influenced the migration and its impact on the social, cultural, political, and economic history of Cleveland in the 20th century.

### Black History and Photographic Memories

This presentation explores the social and cultural history of Black Americans through the lens of photography. It highlights the work of renowned artists such as James Van der Zee, Gordon Parks, and Deborah Willis, whose book-length publications offer powerful visual narratives of Black life in America. The presentation also features Cleveland-based photographers showcased in *History in Their Hands: Black Photographers in Cleveland, Ohio, 1968–Present*, the inaugural exhibition of the African American History Gallery at the Western Reserve Historical Society.

## CUSTOM PROGRAMS

Starting at \$170 per program

Our team of experts explores a broad spectrum of subjects across various time periods. If you have a particular interest that isn't included in the programs listed above, don't hesitate to get in touch. We're happy to tailor a program to your group's specific needs! (Pricing will be determined based on the topic and preparation involved.)

## TALK & TOURS

Pair your Speaking of Cleveland experience with a tour of our museum galleries! Come to the Cleveland History Center to enjoy highlights from any of the programs listed above, followed by a gallery tour to learn more about the original artifacts that inspired these programs!

\$50 fee + museum admission rates for educator led programs

\$150 fee + museum admission for all curator led programs

**Ready to reserve your speaker?**

[www.wrhs.org/explore/pa](http://www.wrhs.org/explore/pa)

or scan the QR code



**Thank you to our partners!**



Western Reserve  
Historical Society



Smithsonian  
Affiliate

**Ohio.gov**



Western Reserve Historical Society gratefully acknowledges support from the State of Ohio  
and from the citizens of Cuyahoga County through Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

