SPEAKING OF CLEVELAND
Forgotten Tales from Cleveland’s Past

CLEVELAND HISTORY CENTER
of the WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
SPEAKING OF CLEVELAND

Take a front row seat as the Cleveland History Center presents significant stories that capture the Cleveland spirit. Speaking of Cleveland features the intriguing, curious and oft-forgotten tales from Cleveland’s past. Pulled directly from the nationally-recognized collections of the Western Reserve Historical Society, these stories showcase the innovation, the grit and the pride that characterize Cleveland’s past, present and future.

Our historians and museum professionals are eager to share Cleveland’s stories with you. To book a Speaking of Cleveland engagement for your group or facility, please call 216-721-5722 x1502 or email education@wrhs.org.

SPECIALTY PROGRAMS
$250 per program + mileage

JOHN GRABOWSKI, PhD | Senior VP of Research & Public Relations

Cleveland: A to Z
Author and historian John Grabowski presents his newest book on Cleveland – a city guide focused on the people, places, and events that define our city.

Immigration and Migration to Cleveland: An Historical Overview in National and Global Context
Today, Northeast Ohio is home to over 120 ethnic groups. How did our city and region, once an outpost of New England, become a global community? This program will explore the history and traditions of Cleveland’s immigrant communities.
CONTENT EXPERTS
$150 per program + mileage

ERIC RIVET | Curator of Collections & Exhibits
Cleveland at War
Learn about how Cleveland's industrial power made key contributions to both World Wars. Hear the stories of prominent Clevelanders and local heroes who helped achieve victory and explore some of the treasures of the Western Reserve Historical Society’s military collections.

PATRICIA EDMONSON | Museum Advisory Council Curator of Costumes & Textiles
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.

Tales from the Chisholm Halle Costume Collection
Patricia Edmonson, Museum Advisory Council Curator of Costumes & Textiles, will highlight her most recent exhibit curated from the incredible Chisholm Halle Costume Collection. Topics rotate; please call for more information about the current exhibit.

JOHN FRATO | Euclid Beach Park Grand Carousel Training & Volunteer Coordinator
Euclid Beach Park's Grand Carousel
This is the story of the Euclid Beach Park Grand Carousel: its years at the park, its operation in Maine, and its journey back home to Cleveland. John Frato will recall the challenges encountered in the project to restore the 1910 carousel to full operation and tell the stories of carousel memories old and new.

The Story of Euclid Beach Park
Food, rides, and attractions. Why is Euclid Beach Park so very memorable? Learn about its beginnings in 1895 and reminisce about its heyday, as well as its final days in 1969. Relive those special memories that Euclid Beach Park holds for Clevelanders.

SEAN MARTIN, PhD | Associate Curator of Jewish 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.

PAMELA DORAZIO-DEAN | Associate Curator of Italian 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 19th Century through the present day, with a focus on life in the Italian neighborhoods.

ANN SINDELAR | Research Library Reference Supervisor
Beginning a Family History Project
Tracing your family history is a fun and compelling project. Find out how to research and add valuable information to your family tree. Learn how the WRHS Research Library collections, services, and classes can help you.

JOHN VACHA | Local Historian & Noted Author
Cleveland’s Great Lakes Exposition
Hear the story of how, right in the middle of the Great Depression, Cleveland put on the biggest party it’s ever thrown. The author of Meet Me on Lake Erie, Dearie will introduce you to the Streets of the World, Cliff Wilson’s Snake Show, and more.

Beyond the Frontlines
Based on David Van Tassel’s posthumously published Behind Bayonets, this program explores life on the home front in Cleveland during the Civil War. Special attention is given to the role played behind the frontline by women and the Soldiers’ Aid Society.

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CLEVELAND HISTORY FAVORITES

$130 per program + mileage

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.

Built for Good: Cleveland State Hospital
Built with good intentions for the treatment of those suffering from mental illness, Cleveland State Hospital’s patient practices quickly took a turn. How did a hospital built on progressive principles of compassionate care devolve into a national symbol of neglect and abuse? Drawn from manuscripts of investigative reporters sent to expose the hospital’s practices, this program will discuss the state of mental healthcare in 1950s Cleveland and the community’s efforts to keep up with the changing trends in the mental health field.

Cleveland Starts Here®
Learn about Cleveland’s history through a selection of objects featured in our exhibit, Cleveland Starts Here®, sponsored by the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation. Like the exhibit, this program explores the rich and diverse history of Northeast Ohio from early settlement to the modern day by focusing on the lives and stories of those who have called it home.

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 of Eliot Ness.

Garrett Morgan: Cleveland’s Civic-Minded Inventor
Garrett Morgan, the son of former slaves, moved north from the segregated south and went on to become a self-made businessman in Cleveland. An inventor and an entrepreneur, Morgan strive to better the city through his innovative work. Hear the story of how his inventions revolutionized public safety in the early automobile age.

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 19th Century and learn about the beautiful art and architecture of their homes.

Carl & Louis Stokes: From Projects to Politics
Two brothers from Cleveland helped reshape American history. Carl Stokes became the first African-American mayor of a major American city. His brother Louis was the first African-American US Congressman from Ohio. Together, they advanced civil rights, promoted urban issues, and helped to make the United States a more equitable nation.

Car Capitol of the World
At one time, Cleveland was the automobile capital of the world. Take a ride through the Western Reserve at the turn of the 20th Century and discover a treasure of Cleveland-made vehicles.

The Burning River
Discover the true tale behind the infamous spark in 1969 that would come to influence environmental policy across the nation. This program highlights the life and natural history of the Cuyahoga River – from key to industrial success to point of embarrassment and, finally, as a rallying cry for change.

Legacies that Live On
This program highlights the stories of four African-American women who acted as agents of change within the city of Cleveland. From advocating for social services, to fighting for women’s suffrage, to defending the growth of urban neighborhoods, these women helped shape the Cleveland we see today.

Rockefeller’s Cleveland
When he founded the Standard Oil Company, John D. Rockefeller was met with immense success and wealth. However, he soon found himself vilified by the public as the battle between capital and labor came to a head. Learn about Rockefeller’s tumultuous time as a Clevelander, including the lasting mark his philanthropic work left on the city, and get to know the divisive figure who would become one of the richest men in the world.

History of the Western Reserve
This overview of Cleveland’s history spans from the early formation of the Western Reserve to the city’s bicentennial and beyond. Highlighted is the parallel growth of the Western Reserve Historical Society, one of the oldest cultural institutions in the city.
SPECIAL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

$130 per program + mileage

Ghosts of Christmas Past

Enjoy a true Victorian holiday season and explore the ghosts and folklore that shaped 19th 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.

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.

Romance on Millionaires’ Row

Explore the origins of the Valentine’s Day holiday through the love stories of Cleveland’s Millionaires’ Row history. This program will highlight tales of romance from the city’s elite during the gilded age and beyond—from the sweet to scandalous!

CUSTOM PROGRAMS

Starting at $170 per program

Our curators’ research interests cover a wide range of topics and time periods. If you are interested in a specific subject not covered by the programs above, please call the Education & Public Programs office to see if we can customize a program for your group! (Pricing dependent upon topic and preparation required.)

TALK & TOURS

$250 (for groups up to 20)

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 real-life artifacts that inspired these programs!

CLEVELAND HISTORY CENTER

of the WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

10825 East Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44106
www.wrhs.org

MUSEUM HOURS
Tuesday – Sunday: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

RESEARCH LIBRARY HOURS
Thursday – Saturday: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

The Cleveland History Center is closed the following holidays:

Open Martin Luther King Jr Day & President’s Day

ADMISSION
Adults - $12.00  Active Military - FREE
Age 62+ - $9.00  Children 2 and under - FREE
Veterans - $7.00  Children (ages 3-12) - $6.00
WRHS Members - FREE

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Thank you to our partners:

Smithsonian Affiliate
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Ohio.gov
Cuyahoga Community College

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

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