

# mchenry county historical society

**mchenry county historical society** is a vital institution dedicated to preserving and promoting the rich heritage of McHenry County, Illinois. Established to safeguard the historical artifacts, documents, and stories of the region, the society plays a crucial role in educating the public about the county's past. Through a variety of programs, exhibits, and events, the McHenry County Historical Society offers residents and visitors a comprehensive glimpse into the area's development, culture, and significant milestones. The organization serves as a resource for historians, genealogists, educators, and anyone interested in the local history. This article will explore the history and mission of the McHenry County Historical Society, its collections and archives, educational programs and events, as well as its impact on the community. Readers will gain a thorough understanding of how this institution contributes to preserving McHenry County's legacy for future generations.

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## History and Mission of McHenry County Historical Society

The McHenry County Historical Society was founded with the purpose of preserving the unique cultural and historical heritage of McHenry County, Illinois. Since its inception, the society has been committed to collecting, preserving, and interpreting the county's history through a wide range of activities. The mission centers on fostering an appreciation for the county's past by maintaining historical records, artifacts, and structures while making them accessible to the public.

## Founding and Development

Established in the early 20th century, the McHenry County Historical Society grew from the efforts of local historians and community leaders who recognized the importance of documenting the county's history. Over time, the society expanded its scope and resources, acquiring a dedicated facility to

house its growing collections. This evolution reflects the community's ongoing engagement with its heritage and commitment to education.

## **Core Mission and Goals**

The society's core mission emphasizes preservation, education, and outreach. It aims to:

- Collect and safeguard historical artifacts and documents related to McHenry County.
- Provide educational programs and resources to schools, researchers, and the general public.
- Promote awareness and appreciation of local history through exhibits and publications.
- Support historical research and genealogy efforts within the community.

## **Collections and Archives**

The McHenry County Historical Society boasts an extensive collection of artifacts, photographs, documents, and records that chronicle the county's development from its earliest days to the present. These materials provide invaluable insights into the lives of the residents, economic growth, cultural shifts, and significant events that have shaped the region.

## **Artifacts and Exhibits**

The society's artifact collection includes a diverse array of objects such as tools, clothing, household items, and memorabilia that reflect various aspects of daily life in McHenry County over the centuries. Exhibits are curated to showcase these artifacts in thematic presentations, allowing visitors to experience the county's history in engaging and educational ways.

## **Photographic and Documentary Archives**

Photographs and documents form a crucial part of the society's archival holdings. This includes historical photographs capturing key moments, landmarks, and notable figures. Additionally, the archives contain newspapers, letters, diaries, maps, and official records, which serve as primary sources for researchers and genealogists.

## **Genealogical Resources**

The McHenry County Historical Society provides specialized genealogical resources for individuals tracing their family history within the county. These resources include census records, birth and death registers, and family histories, which are meticulously preserved and accessible to the public for research purposes.

## **Educational Programs and Community Events**

Education and community engagement are central components of the McHenry County Historical Society's efforts. Through a variety of programs and events, the society fosters a deeper understanding of local history among diverse audiences.

### **School Programs and Workshops**

The society collaborates with local schools to offer curriculum-aligned programs that bring history to life for students. Workshops, guided tours, and interactive sessions provide hands-on learning experiences that complement classroom instruction and stimulate interest in historical studies.

### **Public Lectures and Seminars**

Regularly scheduled lectures and seminars cover a wide range of topics related to McHenry County's history. These events feature historians, authors, and experts who share their knowledge and research findings with the community, enhancing public awareness and appreciation.

### **Annual Events and Celebrations**

The McHenry County Historical Society hosts annual events such as heritage days, historical reenactments, and community festivals. These gatherings celebrate the county's unique cultural identity and encourage community participation while raising awareness about the importance of historical preservation.

## **Preservation and Research Initiatives**

Preserving the historical integrity of McHenry County's landmarks, documents, and artifacts is a key priority for the society. Through various initiatives, the organization ensures that the county's heritage is maintained for future generations.

## **Historic Preservation Projects**

The society actively engages in preserving historic buildings and sites within McHenry County. This includes restoration efforts, advocacy for protective measures, and collaboration with local governments and organizations to maintain the county's architectural heritage.

## **Research Support and Publications**

The McHenry County Historical Society supports historical research by providing access to its archives and assisting researchers with inquiries. The society also produces publications, including newsletters, journals, and books, which disseminate historical knowledge and document ongoing research.

## **Volunteer and Membership Programs**

Volunteers play an essential role in the society's preservation and research efforts. Members contribute by cataloging collections, assisting with events, and supporting daily operations. Membership programs offer opportunities for community members to become actively involved in preserving McHenry County's history.

## **Visiting the McHenry County Historical Society**

The McHenry County Historical Society welcomes visitors interested in exploring the county's rich history. The society's facilities provide access to exhibits, archives, and resources for both casual visitors and serious researchers.

## **Location and Hours**

The society is located in a historic building that itself reflects the architectural heritage of the county. It is open to the public during specified hours, offering opportunities to view exhibits, conduct research, and participate in programs.

## **Guided Tours and Exhibitions**

Visitors can take guided tours that provide detailed explanations of the exhibits and the historical significance of the artifacts on display. Temporary and permanent exhibitions highlight various aspects of McHenry County's history, making each visit informative and engaging.

## **Visitor Information and Services**

The society offers services such as genealogical assistance, research guidance, and educational materials. Staff and volunteers are available to help visitors navigate the collections and make the most of their visit to the historical center.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the mission of the McHenry County Historical Society?**

The mission of the McHenry County Historical Society is to preserve, protect, and share the rich history and heritage of McHenry County through educational programs, exhibitions, and archival collections.

### **Where is the McHenry County Historical Society located?**

The McHenry County Historical Society is located in Woodstock, Illinois, serving as a central hub for local history and historical resources.

### **What kind of exhibits can visitors expect at the McHenry County Historical Society?**

Visitors to the McHenry County Historical Society can explore exhibits featuring local artifacts, historical photographs, documents, and interactive displays that highlight the county's cultural and social history.

### **Does the McHenry County Historical Society offer educational programs?**

Yes, the McHenry County Historical Society offers a variety of educational programs, including lectures, workshops, school tours, and community events designed to engage people of all ages with local history.

### **How can someone become a member of the McHenry County Historical Society?**

Individuals can become members of the McHenry County Historical Society by signing up through their website or visiting their office, with membership providing benefits such as newsletters, event discounts, and volunteer opportunities.

## **Are there volunteer opportunities available at the McHenry County Historical Society?**

Yes, the McHenry County Historical Society welcomes volunteers to assist with museum operations, educational programs, archival work, and special events to help support its mission.

## **Does the McHenry County Historical Society have an online archive or digital resources?**

The McHenry County Historical Society offers digital resources and online archives through their website, allowing the public to access historical documents, photographs, and research materials remotely.

## **Additional Resources**

### *1. McHenry County Chronicles: A Journey Through Time*

This book offers a comprehensive overview of McHenry County's history from its early settlement to modern times. It includes detailed accounts of significant events, influential figures, and the county's development. Richly illustrated with historical photographs and maps, it serves as an essential resource for history enthusiasts and residents alike.

### *2. Settlers and Stories: The Founding Families of McHenry County*

Focusing on the pioneer families who established McHenry County, this book delves into their lives, challenges, and contributions. Through personal letters, diaries, and oral histories, readers gain intimate insights into the county's formative years. It highlights the cultural diversity and resilience of early settlers.

### *3. Historic Landmarks of McHenry County*

This volume explores the architectural heritage of McHenry County, detailing notable buildings, homes, and public spaces. Each chapter discusses the historical significance and preservation efforts of these landmarks. It is an invaluable guide for those interested in local architecture and heritage tourism.

### *4. The Railroad and McHenry County: Tracks That Shaped a Community*

Examining the impact of the railroad industry on McHenry County's growth, this book traces the development of train lines and stations. It explains how railroads influenced economic expansion, population movement, and the local culture. Historical photographs and maps enrich the narrative.

### *5. McHenry County in the Civil War Era*

This title provides an in-depth look at McHenry County's role during the Civil War, including enlistments, local sentiments, and wartime contributions. It features personal stories of soldiers and civilians, as well as the social and political climate of the time. The book paints a vivid

picture of the county's wartime experience.

#### 6. *Farms and Fields: Agricultural History of McHenry County*

Highlighting McHenry County's agricultural roots, this book chronicles farming practices, crop evolution, and rural life. It showcases the transformation from subsistence farming to modern agriculture, emphasizing the community's connection to the land. Photographs and interviews with longtime farmers complement the text.

#### 7. *McHenry County's Industrial Heritage*

This book explores the rise of industry within the county, focusing on manufacturing, mining, and other key sectors. It explains how industrialization changed the economic landscape and affected daily life. The narrative includes profiles of prominent companies and workers who shaped the county's industrial era.

#### 8. *Preserving the Past: The Story of the McHenry County Historical Society*

Detailing the origins and mission of the McHenry County Historical Society, this book highlights its efforts in preserving local history and artifacts. It covers major projects, exhibitions, and community programs that have contributed to historical awareness. Readers gain an appreciation for the society's role in safeguarding heritage.

#### 9. *Portraits of McHenry County: People Who Made a Difference*

This collection of biographical sketches celebrates notable individuals from McHenry County's history. From political leaders to educators, entrepreneurs to artists, each profile illustrates the impact these figures had on the community. The book serves as both inspiration and a tribute to local legacy.

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McHenry County Historical Society (Illinois), 1994

**mchenry county historical society:** **McHenry County Historical Society 3rd Annual Heritage Fair** McHenry County Historical Society (McHenry County, Ill.), 1987

**mchenry county historical society:** McHenry County, Illinois Maryan Pelland, Dan Pelland, 2001-06-06 McHenry County, Illinois, is a picture-perfect farming community in the Heartland of Midwestern America. For nearly two centuries, a portion of the nation's food supply has come from this fertile land near the Fox River, and it has played a key role in the history of Chicago and the United States. Through the medium of historic photographs, this book captures the evolution of the people of McHenry County, from the mid-1800s to the second half of the twentieth century. These pages bring to life the people, events, communities, and industries that helped shape and transform

McHenry County. With more than 200 vintage images, culled from three collections-the McHenry County Historical Society, the Crystal Lake Historical Society, the James Keefe Collection, and the personal collection of Don Peasley-McHenry County, Illinois, portrays life against a backdrop of international wars, national social struggles, and technological advances in an expanding world.

**mchenry county historical society:** McHenry County History McHenry County Public Libraries Organization, 1967

**mchenry county historical society:** **McHenry** Sandra Landen Machaj, 2011 Historical images of the city of McHenry, Illinois, are placed side by side with contemporary photographs.

**mchenry county historical society:** *Publication of the Illinois State Historical Library, Illinois State Historical Society* Illinois State Historical Library, 1919

**mchenry county historical society:** Publications Illinois State Historical Society, 1902

**mchenry county historical society:** *The Lustron Home* Thomas T. Feters, 2015-08-01

Advertised as a new standard for living, the Lustron Home was introduced in 1948 in response to the urgent need for housing for veterans returning from World War II and their rapidly growing families. These enameled steel, prefabricated houses became very popular, and were heavily promoted from 1948 to 1950. Approximately 2,500 went up all over the United States and even South America. This work chronicles the history of the Lustron Corporation-how it got started and why it failed. The architectural differences between the six basic models of the Lustron Home, and how they could be built in as little as two days, are fully described. Also included is a listing that documents the location, model, color and various other particulars of the roughly 2,500 houses completed.

**mchenry county historical society:** *Genealogist's Address Book. 6th Edition* Elizabeth Petty Bentley, 2009-02 This book is the answer to the perennial question, What's out there in the world of genealogy? What organizations, institutions, special resources, and websites can help me? Where do I write or phone or send e-mail? Once again, Elizabeth Bentley's Address Book answers these questions and more. Now in its 6th edition, The Genealogist's Address Book gives you access to all the key sources of genealogical information, providing names, addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, websites, names of contact persons, and other pertinent information for more than 27,000 organizations, including libraries, archives, societies, government agencies, vital records offices, professional bodies, publications, research centers, and special interest groups.

**mchenry county historical society:** Northeast McHenry County Sandra Landen Machaj, 2009 Scattered across northeast McHenry County are small communities that have grown in close proximity to one another with the common thread of the Nippersink Creek. Each prides itself on maintaining a unique identity despite some common characteristics and shared resources. Richmond, Ringwood, and Spring Grove were all settled in the mid-1800s by European immigrants who farmed the land. The presence of the railroad helped them prosper, encouraging commerce. Wonder Lake was founded in the 1900s, formed by the damming of the Nippersink Creek and flooding farmland to produce the first and largest man-made lake in McHenry County. Today each of the four communities are thriving, maintaining the small-town friendliness of the past while stepping into the sophistication of modern-day life.

**mchenry county historical society:** *Directory of Historical Organizations in the United States and Canada* American Association for State and Local History, 2002 This multi-functional reference is a useful tool to find information about history-related organizations and programs and to contact those working in history across the country.

**mchenry county historical society:** Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society Illinois State Historical Society, 1919

**mchenry county historical society:** *Publications of the Illinois State Historical Library, Illinois State Historical Society*, 1900

**mchenry county historical society:** *The Directory of Museums & Living Displays* Kenneth Hudson, Ann Nicholls, 1985-06-18

**mchenry county historical society:** *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for the Year*, 1917



**mchenry county historical society:** Cumulative List of Organizations Described in Section 170 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 , 1987

**mchenry county historical society:** Cumulative List of Organizations Described in Section 170 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 , 2003

**mchenry county historical society: Place Names of Illinois** Edward Callary, 2010-10-01  
This extensive guide shows how the history and culture of Illinois are embedded in the names of its towns, cities, and other geographical features. Edward Callary unearths the origins of names of nearly three thousand Illinois communities and the circumstances surrounding their naming and renaming. Organized alphabetically, the entries are concise, engaging, and full of fascinating detail revealing the rich ethnic history of the state, the impact of industrialization and the coming of the railroads, and insight into local politics and personalities. Many entries also provide information on local pronunciation, the name's etymology, and the community's location, all set in historical and cultural context. A general introduction locates Illinois place names in the context of general patterns of place naming in the United States. An extremely useful reference for scholars of American history, geography, language, and culture, Place Names of Illinois also offers intriguing browsing material for the inquisitive reader and the curious traveler.

**mchenry county historical society: Private History in Public** Tammy S. Gordon, 2010 In small community museums, truck stops, restaurants, bars, barbershops, schools, and churches, people create displays to tell the histories that matter to them. Much of this history is personal: family history, community history, history of a trade, or the history of something considered less than genteel. It is often history based on the historical record, but also based on feelings, beliefs, and memory. It is neglected history. Private History in Public is about those history exhibits that complicate the public/private dichotomy, exhibits that serve to explain communities, families, and individuals to outsiders and tie insiders together through a shared narrative of historical experience. Tammy S. Gordon looks beyond the large professionalized museum exhibits that have dominated scholarship in museum studies and public history and offers a new way of understanding the broad spectrum of exhibition types in the United States.

**mchenry county historical society: Publication , 1991**

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