

Alliance Historical Society

NOW & THEN



Volume 19, Issue 2

Spring 2026

Alliance City Band to Play Encore July 4



The Alliance City Band stands in front of the Alliance Post Office in their new uniforms in this photo from 1923 taken by Knoll Studio and found on alliancememory.org. Emil Rinkendorf, director of the band, is pictured on the left as the first person in the first row. A recreation of a 1926 concert will be conducted by Joseph Rubin of American Musical Productions in Silver Park as part of the city's America250 celebration.



City of Alliance

Events Planned for Nation's Semiquincentennial

As Americans join together to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, citizens in Alliance will be joining in with flags, music, and tributes that are significant to the city.

The semiquincentennial celebration will include a recreation of a 1926 Alliance City Band concert in Silver Park on Independence Day. (See accompanying story for details.)

A family picnic will also be held that day at Beech Creek Botanical Garden. More details about that event will be announced closer to the event.

There will be several significant events leading up to the July 4 festivities and a couple others that will keep the celebration going.

250 FLAGS

OVER GLAMORGAN

From Flag Day through the end of July, 250 American flags will be installed across the lawn of Glamorgan Castle. The effort will be led by the Alliance Rotary Club with help from area Scouts, Alliance Historical Society, Castle Crusaders, and Alliance Area Preservation Society, along with community volunteers. Funding for the purchase of the flags comes from a grant from Visit Canton and ArtsinStark.



JOSEPH RUBIN

Performance will re-create 1926 concert at Silver Park on 100th anniversary

In 1926, the United States was celebrating 150 years of freedom. Those festivities included the first-ever Alliance City Band concert inside Silver Park, which had been established just three years prior.

A century later, the Carnation City will mark 250 years of liberty with a recreation of that concert on July 4 inside Silver Park.

Joseph N. Rubin, a musicologist with American Musical Productions, will direct a period-authentic 23-piece wind band, attired in period uniform, in a 75-minute free concert based on a recently discovered program from that 1926 performance, which was held in Miller Pavilion with the audience sitting on the hillside.

See **CITY BAND** Inside

Spring Trivia Night Focuses on Nation's Anniversary

With our country planning to celebrate its 250th anniversary this year, it's only fitting that the Alliance Historical Society's Spring 2026 Trivia Night competition will take on an all-American theme for our nation's semiquincentennial.

This year, all rounds of questions will have American-themed answers. For example, Americans and the Olympics, our founding mothers, and American geography. There will be a round of "revolutionary ideas," which features American inventors, and the local history round will feature famous Americans who were Schooler lecturers at Mount Union. A round of general American trivia completes the event.



See **TRIVIA NIGHT** Inside

See **EVENTS** Inside



By the Numbers

A LOOK AT 2025

GENERAL STATISTICS

Visitors: 223

Home States of Visitors: 13

Volunteers: 31

Volunteer Hours: 1,787

Events: 12

Attendance: 459

Questions Answered: 211

Annual Members: 125

Life Members: 53

Item Donors: 58

Items Donated: 208

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook

4,437 Followers

30,299 Engagements

Instagram

204 Followers

1,657 Engagements

YouTube

61 Videos

520 Subscribers

5,900 Views

John Gross Resigns Board Seat



John Gross, seated, received trustee emeritus status recently after resigning from the board. Honoring Gross with a certificate are board officers, from left, Vice President Michelle Dillon, Secretary Jennifer Crist, and President Karen Perone.

After turning 87 years old in December, John Gross decided that it was time for his tenure on the board of trustees of the Alliance Historical Society to become history.

"I feel like I am just taking up a seat," said Gross at the conclusion of the January 2026 directors' meeting in tendering his resignation. "I think someone else who can contribute more should be sitting at this table."

During the meeting in February, it was with much regret that the board voted to accept his resignation and grant him trustee emeritus status with much thanks of his service to the Society and the promise that it will continue to call on him for his expertise and vast knowledge.

Since 2015, Gross had been a valuable asset to the board.

A cancer survivor, Gross ended his time on the board on a high note when he and fellow board member Don Shaffer oversaw the restoration of two Civil War-era cannons owned by the city and of which the Society has become caretakers. One is placed in Memorial Park and the other was mounted to a new carriage and will be used during various patriotic celebrations and observances. It made its debut in the 2025 Greater Alliance Carnation Parade.

Gross, a former FBI agent who also served as the city's safety-service director, was known for his many walking tours of Alliance City Cemetery and downtown Alliance as well as presentations on various topics.

Karen Twaddle, an active volunteer with the Society, was appointed to fill the final year on Gross' unexpired term.

Preuters Honored for Service to Society

Bill and Nancy Preuter, regular volunteers at the Alliance Historical Society's Wednesday work sessions at the Mabel Hartzell Historical Home, were honored for their continued and distinguished service during the 2025 annual meeting when Karen Perone surprised them with the President's Award.

The Society has many volunteer opportunities, including serving as tour guides, maintenance, historical projects, event planning, and more.

To learn how you can become a volunteer, visit alliancehistory.org/volunteer-opportunities.



Nancy and Bill Preuter, regular members of Wednesday work sessions at the Mabel Hartzell Historical Home were honored at the Alliance Historical Society's annual meeting in November 2025 when Karen Perone, right, surprised them with the President's Award for service to the organization.

Historical Society Trustees

Officers

Karen Perone, president

Michelle Dillon, vice president

Jennifer Crist, secretary

Michelle Baker Sams, treasurer

Board of Trustees

Alexis Armour

Stacy Digianantonio

Linda Ferguson

Jack Madison

Dave McMahan

Harry Paidas

Mike Patterson

Don Shaffer

Shirene Starn-Tapyrik

Karen Twaddle

Jack Weber Jr.

TRIVIA NIGHT

From Front

Trivia Night will be held Tuesday, March 24, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Don Pancho's Tex-MexCafe on West State Street.

Since starting in October 2022, the biannual Trivia Night has become a popular fun evening of friendly competition with good food, fellowship, and challenging questions. Teams of four people each will battle it out for fun and prizes.

Teams of four members each should register with a name, and the entry fee is \$120 per team that includes a taco bar (chicken, beef or vegetarian), soft drinks, chips and salsa, and a gratuity. A cash bar will be available.

Teams may register by going to alliancehistory.org/trivia-night.

Other fundraising activities that night will include a 50-50 drawing, table and round sponsorships, and basket raffles. Prizes will be given to the winning team.

Trivia Night and sponsorships help the Alliance Historical Society continue its work to preserve the history of Alliance and its maintenance of the Mabel Hartzell Historical Home and Alliance History Mini Museum.

Anyone who would like to become a sponsor or donate a gift card or raffle basket should email alliancehistory@yahoo.com.

Sponsors' names will be mentioned on the Historical Society's website and publicity for the event and a sponsors' logo will be placed on the tables at the event. Gold sponsorships are \$500, Silver sponsorships are \$250, Table sponsorships are \$100, and \$50 Question sponsors will have their name mentioned throughout the sponsored question round.

America250 is the nationwide celebration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, with events, such as our Trivia Night planned throughout the year. The celebrations aim to reflect on the nation's past, honor its diversity, and look to the future through historical exhibits, and service projects.



Historical Happenings

The following programs are scheduled at Rodman Public Library: (Register at rodmanlibrary.com)

FORGOTTEN FOUNDERS LECTURE SERIES

(Presented by Sidney Zufall)

March 16

Mercy Otis Warren:
The Lady of Liberty

April 13

James Otis Jr.
The Forgotten Flame
of American Liberty

May 11

Joseph Warren:
Doctor of Democracy

June 15

John Hancock:
The Signature of Liberty

June 29

(Presented by Jack Weber Jr.)
John Shreve and John Stark:
Alliance's Connection
to the Revolutionary War

JUNETEENTH OBSERVANCE

June 16

Michelle Dillon will present "The Mystery of New Guinea," a discussion about a colony of Black persons established around 1805 in Lexington Township

SEPTEMBER 11 COMMEMORATION

September 9

Ahead of the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, local photographer Ed Hall Jr. will share photos he took on assignment for The Alliance Review at Ground Zero just hours after the towers fell.

VETERANS DAY OBSERVANCE

November 11

Rodman Public Library Community Relations Manager Jack Weber Jr. will share interesting stories of Alliance area service members that he collected while conducting research during his 27-year career as a local journalist.

Find us on the web:

www.alliancehistory.org
www.facebook.com/alliancehistory
[YouTube.com/alliancehistory](https://www.youtube.com/alliancehistory)

2026 Open Hours Announced

The Mabel Hartzell Historical Home and Mini Museum will be open for tours during the second weekend of each month March through October. Hours will be 1 to 4 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday.

Both Glamorgan Castle and the Alliance Area Preservation Society's Haines House Underground Railroad Museum, partners with the Alliance Historical Society in preserving Alliance's history and collectively known as the 3 Families, will be open the same hours and weekends.

On June 14, however, the Castle will be the only site open due to the 250 Flags event. Additional tours of the Castle are also available each Friday.

Appointments can also be made for tours of the Mabel Hartzell Historical Home by calling 330-736-1116.

EVENTS

From Front

1776: THE MUSICAL

Brought to life by Carnation City Players, "1776" transports audiences to the intense summer days of the Continental Congress, where the monumental decision to declare independence hung in the balance. The production, which will be staged June 25-28 at the Firehouse Theater, offers a fascinating and humanizing glimpse into the spirited debates, fierce compromises, and extraordinary courage of those who shaped America's destiny, providing a powerful and timely reminder of the foundations of liberty. Special funding is provided by Visit Canton and ArtsinStark.

CITY BAND

From Front



EMIL RINKENDORF

During the 2026 "living history" concert, musicians will perform on the soundstage at Silver Park, featuring instrumentation as was used in the Alliance City Band in the 1920s and will wear band uniforms similar in style to those worn at the time.

As conductor, Rubin will portray Emil Rinkendorf, who conducted the Alliance City Band between 1917 and 1940. It was during Rinkendorf's tenure that the band, which provided music for the community from 1859 through 1992, was in its "golden era."

The concert will feature many beloved band classics as well as a march written by of Emil Rinkendorf.

The July 4 festivities at Silver Park will include food trucks and fireworks.

Ahead of the concert, Rubin will discuss his work at Rodman Public Library on Wednesday, July 1 at 11 a.m. when he presents "Programming the Past: An Alliance City Band Encore."

During his talk, Rubin will take the audience on a musical multimedia journey through his efforts to uncover and recreate turn-of-the-century band concert programs. The presentation will feature video clips from his "living history" concerts throughout the state and he will share newly discovered facts about the Alliance City Band and its long-time director Rinkendorf.

For up-to-date information about America250 events, follow the Alliance Historical Society on Facebook and visit our website at alliancehistory.org

FORGOTTEN FOUNDERS LECTURE SERIES

The ongoing Forgotten Founders Lecture Series continues at Rodman Public Library through June with monthly talks on patriotic figures who helped pave the way to independence on the national stage delivered by history enthusiast Sidney Zufall. (See complete listing under Historical Happenings at left).

On June 29, board member Jack Weber Jr. will share Alliance's connections to the Revolutionary War when he discusses the lives of John Shreve, a Revolutionary War veteran buried in Alliance, and John Stark, the general who is the namesake of Stark County.

ALLIANCE GOES TO THE MOVIES

On August 27, Alliance native and independent documentary producer Ben Patterson returns to Alliance to screen one of his films in Brush Hall on the campus of University of Mount Union. The film will be followed with a Q&A session to foster community dialogue and delve into the issues of producing a documentary film. Patterson is an award-winning filmmaker known for his 2015 documentary "Sweet Micky for President." His appearance is made possible with funds from Ohio Goes to the Movies and Visit Canton and ArtsinStark.

GLAMORGAN HISTORIC MARKER DEDICATION

An Ohio Historical Marker honoring Col. William Henry Morgan and Glamorgan Castle will be installed on the lawn of Glamorgan Castle commemorating the legacy of one of the city's most iconic figures and landmarks. The date for the dedication has not yet been determined. Col. Morgan revolutionized the field of engineering during the late 1800s and early 1900s with his electrical innovations. Holder of over 100 patents, he propelled the Morgan Engineering Company to international recognition. Glamorgan Castle was built as his family home from 1904-1908. Constructed of Vermont marble with a tiled roof, the Castle sits on 20 acres in Central Alliance and is maintained by the Alliance City School Administration and cared for by the Castle Crusaders. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. Funding for the marker comes from grants from Visit Canton and ArtsinStark and the Pomeroy Foundation.



Alliance Historical Society

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DISTURBANCE AT THE HARTZELL HOME

AN INCIDENT OF LATE JANUARY & EARLY FEBRUARY

A Tale of Snow, a Certain Groundhog, and Duty

Preservation work takes many forms, some more predictable than others. The lines below offer a reflection on a recent winter surprise – one memorable enough for a few lines of verse as told by the Mabel Hartzell Historical Home herself.



Chet, a groundhog of established residence beneath the porch of the Mabel Hartzell Historical Home, made his presence most inconveniently known in the wake of the snowstorm of January 2026. In the disorder left behind, one is reminded that even the quietest corners of a well-kept home are not immune to the intrusions of nature. This photograph captures Chet on an earlier and more temperate day, when both the weather and his conduct were considerably more becoming.

THE BALLAD OF CARNATION CITY CHET

'Twas January of twenty-six, in century of late,
A blizzard called upon Ohio – fierce, stern and great,
Placing foot of snow and sleet where my porches be,
Locking the earth in its grip of frosty tyranny.

Behind step and under floor, Chet slumbered hard and deep.
Entombed as winter pressed its will in bitter, icy keep,
But groundhogs stir in February from such hibernation,
Called by ancient practice of weather prognostication.

In panic, Chet rooted with his claws in fearful might,
When he found all exits sealed by shrouds of frigid white,
And I could feel a clamor anew, never sensed before,
In all the seasons that have passed outside my kitchen door.

The marmot, frantic in digging, a massive commotion made,
Disturbing soil ne'er touched since cornerstone was laid,
Till loosened dirt lay waiting, fine dust and silky silt,
Hidden since eighteen six-seven, when sturdy walls were built.

When at last Chet opened tunnels sufficient to flee,
Winter blew its arctic breath, and caused catastrophe,
As soil and grit pushed through every crevice, every crack,
Coating floor to ceiling, furnishing and artifact.

Surveying the layers of filth, where history we keep,
Within the hallowed halls where Earley hearts once beat,
One trustee was heard to say in weary despair,
“'Twould be easier to raze and rebuild than 'twere to repair.”

I bear no ill toward little creatures pressed by need,
Nor judge the acts that instinct bids them heed,
And I know that talk of ruin was surely done in jest,
For I trust in my caretakers, who always do what's best.

At last, in sun, Carnation City Chet spied shadow clear,
Six more weeks winter, so proclaimed the seer.
Thus learn, dear reader, a simple lesson from furry friend,
Great prophecy oft leaves tremendous mess to mend.

THE MORAL

Carnation City Chet, though not consulted by the board, acted in accordance with longstanding custom and seasonal expectation. His agitation resulted in no lasting harm to the Mabel Hartzell Historical Home or its contents, though it did occasion a notable cleaning effort. The remark regarding demolition was understood to be rhetorical and made in a moment of winter fatigue. In the end, the board reaffirmed its role as steward, picking up broom instead of ax and sledge. It was a reminder that prophecy may warn, dust may scatter, and shadows may frighten, but history survives only through careful hands, faithful to sworn duty. House and history within were put right, proving that action – not panic – keeps tradition intact.