



MADISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 2026



62nd Annual Craft Festival

The 62nd annual Craft Festival took place September 12th and 13th. It was a beautiful weekend, full of energy, creativity, and community spirit, with just a touch of rain on Sunday that certainly didn't dampen anyone's enthusiasm.

Our vendors, volunteers, and visitors brought so much life to the grounds, and we're already excited to take everything we learned this year and make next year's festival even better.

Thank you to our incredible community for your support, your smiles, and your commitment to celebrating local craftsmanship.



Message from the Director

As we begin to wind down the season, I'm filled with gratitude for everything we've accomplished together, and even more excitement for what's still ahead. Our momentum is strong, our community is growing, and there are so many wonderful projects and programs on the horizon. Thank you for being part of this journey; the best is yet to come.

NYS Path Through History Weekend — October 10 & 11



This October, the Madison County Historical Society is proud to participate once again in NYS Path Through History Weekend, a statewide celebration that invites communities to explore the stories, people, and places that shaped New York. We're offering two special programs that bring local history to life in engaging, family-friendly ways.

Ghost Walk - October 10 at 5 PM, Glenwood Cemetery

Step into the past with an evening stroll through Glenwood Cemetery, where costumed interpreters share stories of notable residents, local legends, and the moments that left a lasting mark on Madison County. This guided walk blends history and folklore for an unforgettable experience. **Registration is required.**



Pumpkin Carving on the Cottage Lawn October 11, 10 AM–1 PM

Join us the following morning on the Cottage Lawn. Bring your creativity and carve pumpkins in a relaxed, family-friendly setting surrounded by the beauty of our historic grounds. This program features a pumpkin-carving contest, a mini pumpkin scavenger hunt across the property, and Sweet & Twisted Food Truck on site selling their popular cider slushies. All ages are welcome, and carving tools will be provided. **Registration is required.**

Register for both of these events by visiting our website!
www.mchs1900.org

Annual Members Meeting 2026

You Are Invited to The Annual Members Meeting of the Madison County Historical Society **FROM THE ASHES:** A Year of Renewal

Join us as we celebrate the new chapter unfolding at MCHS. With new staff, new programs, and renewed energy, this year's meeting honors resilience, community, and the stories that rise from the ashes.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Matt Urtz, county historian and author of *Historic Fires of Madison County*, will present dramatic accounts from historic fires, exploring how these events transformed local towns, families, and landmarks.

TICKETS \$35/ PERSON INCLUDES DINNER

Tickets can be purchased online at:
www.mchs1900.org or
return the bottom portion with payment

October 18, 2026 1 – 3 pm

at The Madison Hop
7239 US-20,
Madison, NY 13402

Volunteers are essential to everything we do, and our volunteer Board members hold a special place in that work. During the event, we will announce nominees for our open Board seats.



Our Annual Members Meeting is just around the corner, and we look forward to gathering with you to celebrate the year's accomplishments and share exciting plans for what's ahead. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased directly through our website using a credit card or by selecting the option to mail a check. If you prefer to register by phone or need additional information, please feel free to call the office — we're always happy to help.

Grant Awarded!



The Madison County Historical Society (MCHS) is excited to announce that we have been selected to receive a FY2026 Museums for America award from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). MCHS was awarded \$143,500 for a three year project that will preserve, digitize, and share our extensive and nationally significant collections through the development of the Madison County Digital History Portal. This project will provide researchers, students, genealogists, and community members with online access to thousands of photographs, archival documents, and multimedia materials, while employing artificial intelligence to enhance discovery, engagement, and understanding of local and national history.

MCHS provides critical access to historical resources that are otherwise difficult to reach for residents, students, and researchers in dispersed communities. Madison County's fifteen towns and one city have long been a crossroads in the history of the United States. During the 19th century, the Erie Canal facilitated rapid movement of people, goods, and ideas, connecting the region to broader economic and cultural currents. Families migrated westward through Central New York, establishing new settlements and spreading regional traditions. MCHS's collections capture these developments through a rich variety of materials, documenting the social, economic, and cultural life of the county over more than a century.

Among these holdings are nationally significant items that illustrate MCHS's reach beyond the local community. The marble sculpture of Gerrit and Ann Smith's clasped hands by Edmonia Lewis is currently featured in the traveling multi-museum exhibition Edmonia Lewis: Said in Stone, which debuted at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, and will tour the Georgia Museum of Art and the North Carolina Museum of Art over the next 12 months. MCHS also holds an original daguerreotype from the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law Cazenovia Convention, featuring Frederick Douglass, which has been highlighted in Ken Burns Continued....

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documentaries. These items exemplify the national and historical significance of MCHS's collection, while other materials, such as newspapers, diaries, maps, genealogical records, and local crafts, document the county's social fabric and regional heritage in detail.

Project activities will include planning and infrastructure development, full digitization of the photograph and archival collections, development of the digital portal, and public launch with educational programs and workshops for students and teachers. The project will involve building the digital portal, implementing artificial intelligence (AI) functionality, and integrating the database with secure storage. The project will result in the Madison County Digital History Portal, an online platform featuring searchable digital records, AI-powered discovery tools, and curated exhibits that engage both the local community and broader audiences.

By combining professional digitization, AI-driven discovery, and targeted outreach, this project will significantly improve access to Madison County's rich historical resources, preserving both local and nationally important collections while engaging a wide range of audiences in meaningful exploration of the past.

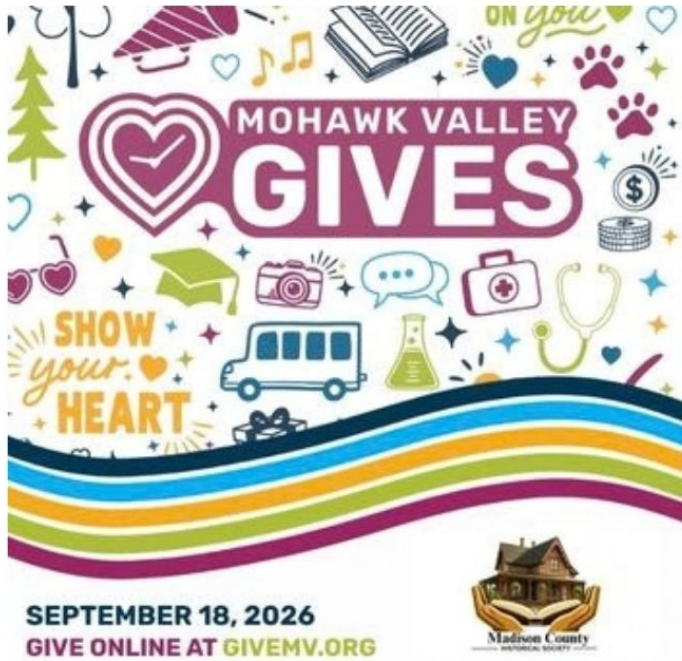
This year the IMLS received 343 applications requesting \$75,744,191. Of these, 92 projects were selected to receive funding totaling \$21,099,739. MCHS being selected in this extremely competitive process demonstrates the significance of our collection and the strength of our proposed project.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. They advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development. IMLS envisions a nation where individuals and communities have access to museums and libraries to learn from and be inspired by the trusted information, ideas, and stories they contain about our diverse natural and cultural heritage. To learn more, visit www.imls.gov and follow on Facebook and Twitter.

Written By Brian Barris, Madison County Historical Society Board Secretary

To get reservations or tickets to any of our events, please visit
www.mchs1900.org

Our First Year Participating in Mohawk Valley Gives — Thank You!



This year marked the Madison County Historical Society's first-ever participation in Mohawk Valley Gives Day. We saw wonderful engagement from supporters, and we extend a huge, heartfelt thank-you to everyone who donated, shared our page, or helped spread the word. Your generosity strengthens our mission and helps us continue preserving and sharing Madison County's history.

We're already looking forward to participating again next year and building on this momentum.

What Is Mohawk Valley Gives Day?

Mohawk Valley Gives Day is a regional 24-hour giving event created to support nonprofits across Herkimer, Oneida, and surrounding counties. Organized by the Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties and the UpMobility Foundation, the day brings together donors, businesses, and community organizations to celebrate the impact nonprofits have on local life.

Why Participate?

Mohawk Valley Gives Day offers donors a chance to make their contributions go even further. Throughout the event, nonprofits can earn bonus prize funds, and many local businesses offer corporate matches, doubling the impact of individual gifts. Even small donations can help organizations climb leaderboards, unlock additional funding, and reach new supporters across the region.

Thank You Again

We are deeply grateful to everyone who supported us during our first year in Mohawk Valley Gives Day. Your generosity helps us preserve our shared heritage and build a vibrant future for the museum. We can't wait to join the event again next year and continue growing this tradition with you.

Upcoming Events

- NYS Path Through History Ghost Walk Oct 10, 5 pm
- Pumpkin Carving Oct 11, 10 am -1 pm
- Annual Members Meeting Oct 1
- Snowflakes & Stories: A Victorian Open House and Indoor Market Dec 13, 12 -4 pm