



# GUEST SPEAKERS PROGRAM

PRESENTATION TOPICS

2018

Top 10  
Architectural Features

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# Bring Buffalo to you!

Book our docents to bring the stories of Buffalo's fascinating history to your facility!

## BOOKING INFORMATION

All bookings include a one hour presentation (45 minute presentation, 15 minute discussion).

Explore Buffalo can provide technology if your facility does not have it available.

Bookings cost \$75.

Please contact Paige Melin at (716) 245.3032 x203 or [paige@explorebuffalo.org](mailto:paige@explorebuffalo.org) for more information.



*"Our docent's knowledge and engaging personality made the talk very interesting!"*



# Presentation Topics

Please note: Talk availability is subject to the availability of our docents.

## **Abraham Lincoln in Buffalo & WNY**

Buffalo's presidential history is arguably the country's most significant, with exception of Washington D.C. We are well aware that Millard Fillmore and Grover Cleveland were residents and political stalwarts of Buffalo when elected, and that William McKinley was assassinated and Theodore Roosevelt was inaugurated here in September 1901. But what about Abraham Lincoln? Is there a chapter in Western New York's presidential book regarding his presence and legacy? This talk will reveal the answers to these questions as it describes Lincoln's four visits to Buffalo and Western New York.

## **Art's Up: The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy & Its Impact Near & Far**

The parent organization of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery is the BFAA which was established in 1862 and for over 150 years has been an ambassador for Buffalo — locally, nationally, and globally. In this talk, we will briefly review BFAA's history, including key events and "firsts" such as being the first major art museum to have a woman director. We'll focus on a selection of people throughout the years who've had significant influence, such as our own "Monuments Men" who helped recover Nazi-looted art during World War II. The fascinating facts you learn may help you in a trivia contest — and even more, offer a better understanding of the BFAA's role yesterday, today, and tomorrow as it sets its goals to continue to serve a diverse community and remain a leading promoter of the Buffalo area.

## **Beerffalo: The Ales & Tales of Buffalo**

Buffalonians have been enjoying the taste of locally made beer since before the War of 1812. With a brewing resurgence in full force today and all the micro-breweries finding homes in the city, it's a perfect moment to reflect on Buffalo's brewing past. In this talk, we'll explore Buffalo's rich brewing history and culture, as well as the amazing renaissance that is ongoing today.

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## **Before Buffalo: The English, French, & Native Americans**

“Before Buffalo” examines the Niagara Frontier during the period of 1600 to 1800, just as the Buffalo Creek settlement was forming. The region was inhabited by Native American tribes who represented a buffer zone between the strong Huron Confederacy to the west and the Iroquois Confederacy to the east. The French, and later British, were the first of the Europeans to enter the region. This lecture will discuss their activities and adventures during this rich and fascinating period of Western New York history.

## **A Buffalo Culinary Journey**

Food is something that Buffalonians are proud to embrace and boast about. From chicken wings and beef on weck to food festivals that celebrate our immigrant roots, Buffalo has a wonderful culinary heritage. Join us for this talk where we'll take a look into the history of the various foods created and celebrated throughout Buffalo's delicious history.

## **Buffalo's Sporting Life**

Are you a diehard Buffalo Sabres fan? Do you keep rooting for the Bills year after year? Are you just getting into all that Buffalo sports has to offer? Whether an aficionado or an amateur, this talk is for you! Presented through the eyes of a 60-year-old lifelong Buffalo sports fan, this talk will focus on professional sports in Buffalo through the years, including the history of the Bills, the Bisons, the Braves, the Sabres, and more!

## **Buffalo Then & Now**

In this compare-and-contrast presentation, see what the sites of some of your favorite Buffalo buildings looked like one hundred years ago! This presentation will show what various locations around the Queen City looked like in 1918, juxtaposed with their 2018 appearance. You'll be surprised by how much the city has in some ways changed, and in some ways remained the same!



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## **The Burchfield-Penney Art Center: The First "Green" Museum in NYS**

The BPAC is celebrating 50 years as the Museum for Western New York Arts. In this talk we will briefly review the history of this art center, then discuss the present building design by Gwathmey Siegel and Associates. We'll illustrate how the architectural structure has distinctive features reflecting artist Charles E. Burchfield's love of nature. We'll also explore how the building design serves the BPAC's diverse programming to provide artists, students, scholars, collectors, and the general public with opportunities to learn and exchange ideas about the cultural legacy of the region.

## **Christmas Shopping in Buffalo**

Do you remember being in downtown Buffalo at Christmastime? This talk will bring back memories of getting dressed up, spending the day shopping in the wonderful stores, looking at the department store window decorations, eating at the AM&A's top floor restaurant and so much more! We'll also talk about all of the great retailers that made Buffalo their home.

## **The Erie Canal: The Creation of the Empire State**

The Erie Canal had a significant impact not only on the growth of Buffalo but the growth of the nation. The talk includes: the initial concept of the Canal, the political fight to make it a reality, the construction of this amazing civil engineering feat, and its effect on the economy of Buffalo as it became one of the largest inland ports in the world.

## **From Soaps to Riches: Larkin, Hubbard, & Wright**

This lecture will tell the story of the Larkin Soap Company founders, John Larkin and Elbert Hubbard, and their relationship with architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright designed not only famous Larkin Company administration building, but also houses for company executives Darwin Martin, Walter Davidson, George Barton, and William Heath.



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## **German Immigrants in Buffalo & WNY**

Buffalo's history is a story of immigrants. Among the first immigrants were people from the German "states". In fact, individuals of German heritage comprise the largest immigrant group to settle in the United States as a whole. The nation of Germany as we know it was not established until the completion of the Franco-Prussian war around 1870. The talk covers early immigration prior to this period through the early part of the 20th century. It will also include information about the speaker's family that came from what is now the Alsace region of France.

## **The Guaranty Building**

The Guaranty Building, completed in 1895, is considered one of Louis Sullivan's masterpieces. In the 1890s, the skyscraper was a new and uniquely American building type. Sullivan is one of the most important American architects of the 19th century and is considered the "Father of the Skyscraper." Learn about the history and architect of this landmark building in detail.

## **History of Buffalo Aviation: People, Places, & Planes**

Did you know that Buffalo was once the center of United States Aviation? In a Casey Kasem countdown-style format, this talk will introduce the top five people that influenced Buffalo's aviation history. Come hear about the manufacturing centers existing and long gone that created the industry. Listen to stories and facts about Buffalo built planes that affected the world. Let your knowledge soar to new heights!

## **Kleinhans Music Hall**

Anyone who has spent time in Buffalo has heard that the acoustics of Kleinhans Music Hall are amongst the finest in the world. Based on original research in the Kleinhans Music Hall archives, this talk will explore the history of the acoustical design of the main auditorium – including the intriguing story of dual consultants – and the ultimate acoustic results which perhaps surprisingly, fell short of what they had desired to achieve. Elements of acoustical planning and recent changes to the design of Kleinhans Music Hall will be discussed.



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## **Larkland: The Larkin Family Estate**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, one of Buffalo's leading families purchased an entire city block on Lincoln Parkway, bordering Delaware Park, to create an estate for themselves. John D. Larkin, owner of the immensely successful Larkin Soap Company, built homes for himself and four of his children. Enclosed by a low stone wall that is still seen today, the place was called "Larkland." Learn about the family and their soap business, their connections to Frank Lloyd Wright, and their legacy to the City of Buffalo.

## **Learning, Caring, & Curing: Medical History in Buffalo**

Since the mid-1800s, Buffalo has seen the development of quality clinical care, education, and medical research facilities. The opening of the new John R. Oishei Children's Hospital and the UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences in 2017 only continue this tradition. With the expansion of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus driving the city's resurgence, this presentation takes a look back at the evolution and development of the medical school, hospitals, and research facilities within the city. This talk will showcase some of the highlights of Buffalo's history of medical excellence, innovations, and inventions, as well as many photographs of buildings and sites that were once home to hospitals and schools.

## **Life in the Original Larkinville**

Today, Larkinville is a revitalized neighborhood that boasts of successful businesses, a vibrant arts scene and, of course, food truck Tuesdays. Many people, however, know very little about the namesake Larkin Soap Company, which was one of Buffalo's major employers 100 years ago. The Larkin Soap Company was a leader in changing the work place environment by placing an emphasis on the overall well-being of their employees. This talk will look at the policies and benefits that were instituted by the Larkin Soap Company that not only improved the lives of their employees but also the lives of the citizens of Buffalo.



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## **Merry Christmas from Buffalo, NY**

Despite modern-day commercialism, Christmas here in Buffalo and throughout this nation was first a religious celebration whose roots date back to the Romans and to ancient pagan rites. While it eventually evolved into a general celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, Christmas was deeply rooted in the specific ethnic origins and traditions of the families celebrating it. Buffalo, with its diverse ethnic population, had an abundance of Christmas traditions that influenced the various ways this holiday was celebrated. Join us to learn how these early Buffalonians brought their unique ethnic and religious traditions to help define a Buffalo Christmas!

## **A Night Out on the Town**

This talk revives the exciting history of the entertainment community in Buffalo. Are you a movie buff? We will talk about the variety of theatres that would have shown everyone from Charlie Chaplin to Cary Grant to the original Star Wars. Is music more your speed? We will help you imagine where you would have sat to listen to the likes of Sinatra, Elvis, the Stones, and the Goo Goo Dolls. From vaudeville to live stage productions, Buffalo has been home to wondrous theatres and other venues which are no longer physically with us but, through this talk, can once again be part of our collective memory.

## **Presidents in Buffalo: Which Ones & When?**

Every time a United States President visits Buffalo, the question arises: How many Presidents have come to Buffalo (or the region), either before, during or after their presidency? The answer may not be definitive yet, as researchers continue to discover new information. However, with assistance from the Buffalo History Museum and several other individuals, Bren T. Price, Sr. has compiled a (nearly) comprehensive list to answer this question. Aside from our two resident presidents, you may be surprised to learn who came first, the most, or not at all.

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## **Spiritualism in WNY**

Many Buffalonians are familiar with Lily Dale, but fewer of us know that spiritualism actually has a long and rich history in Western New York. Join us for this interesting talk which will introduce the concept of spiritualism and its development in the United States before delving into its history here in WNY. You'll learn about famous locals such as the Fox sisters and the Davenport brothers, along with others who influenced the practice of spiritualism in this area. The talk also includes information about Lily Dale and its place as the center of spiritualism in the United States.

## **They Worked Hard for Their Money! Working Women at the Turn of the Century**

The influx of Irish immigrants and the Industrial Revolution changed the lives of women, especially single women, between 1870 and 1920. Although it was the Gilded Age in Buffalo, not everyone was a millionaire living on Delaware Avenue. What kind of work were women doing and where were they doing it? From domestic servants to ground-breaking professionals, hear the stories of Buffalo's working women - their struggles and their successes.

## **Top 10 Architectural Features**

Join us for this talk where you'll learn the top ten most frequently used architectural terms. Once you know these, no matter where you travel in the Western world you'll be an architecture "expert." This talk features many examples derived from the Illustrated Dictionary on the website Buffalo Architecture and History ([BuffaloAH.com](http://BuffaloAH.com)).

## **Trains Yesterday, Today, & Tomorrow**

Although Buffalo was always known to be an important Great Lakes shipping port, it is less well known that Buffalo became the 2nd largest railroad hub in America. The story of the importance of railroads to Buffalo and the great railroad stations built here to serve them is a fascinating one. The story may yet have another interesting chapter as we will also examine the very topical issue of the future of rail travel in Buffalo. All aboard!





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