

The James & Elizabeth Tarr Mansion

Saving Our Past.
Building Our Future.



Dear Friend and Supporter,

In 1802, a young Harm Jan Huidekoper arrived in Meadville, accepting the post of bookkeeper to the Holland Land Company. The 26 years old Dutch immigrant soon became the company's general agent- responsible for the settlement of western Pennsylvania and beyond. By his death in 1854, Huidekoper played an integral role in turning the small frontier village he arrived in fifty-two years earlier into a bustling city with an operating canal, vibrant industry, and two colleges- one of which he founded. Huidekoper saw his role in the fledgling territory as one of expanding upon opportunities for the betterment of society.

The Crawford County Historical Society is delighted to present you with an opportunity for community revitalization unlike any seen in recent years. We at the Society have undertaken a project that will bring our region's proud history and our bright future together seamlessly. We are converting the Tarr Mansion at the heart of Meadville's Diamond Park into a self-sustaining blend of residential units and the most sophisticated regional history center in northwestern Pennsylvania.

This is our moment! We have an opportunity to make a difference in the way Crawford County is seen by both tourists and those here at home. By focusing on a community rebirth highlighting how we care for our past, we preserve and strengthen the historic character that makes Crawford County an ideal place to either visit or raise a family. The Historical Society has taken on the lofty goal of maintaining this character in Meadville and beyond as well as enriching our region with the best arts and cultural opportunities available. We ask that you consider making a contribution of any amount towards this cause. Help us ensure that Crawford County's best days are ahead of us. A tax-deductible financial pledge of support at any level will aid the Society in the restoration of the Tarr Mansion, a nationally significant structure in the heart of our county.

In addition, please note pledges can be divided over up to three years, allowing you to get the most from your donation for tax purposes. Within these pages you will encounter our plans for site development as well as more details on how you can become a part of our restoration efforts. Thank you for becoming a part of Crawford County's vibrant future by helping to preserve its glorious past.

Sincerely,
Joshua F. Sherretts, Board President
Crawford County Historical Society



A dispatch from Meadville yesterday informs us that James Tarr, of Tarr farm celebrity, died at his residence on Monday last. Five or six years ago, no man in Oil Creek was more familiarly known.

He belonged to the class of old residents who found themselves made suddenly rich by the possession of oil territory, whose unthrifty soil has for many years previous afforded them but a scanty subsistence."



James Tarr

The Titusville Herald

November 22, 1871

The James and Elizabeth Tarr Mansion

On December 7, 2015, the Crawford County Historical Society purchased the **James and Elizabeth Tarr Mansion**, saving it from demolition. In that moment, thanks largely to the support of the community, the Society took a major step towards both preserving our past and building a new future.

This exquisite Italianate building was designed by Francis Marion Ellis and paid for with the Tarr Family's substantial oil boom fortune. It is a testament to oil's influence on our region as well as the nation. The Tarr home, of over 16,000 square feet, will stand the test of time becoming a **self-sustaining research center** for the Crawford County Historical Society!



Saving Our Past...



“I have always believed that it is incredibly important to preserve our history. Because of the dedication of the Crawford County Historical Society, generations to come will be able learn about their heritage.”

- U. S. Representative, Mike Kelly

...Building Our Future

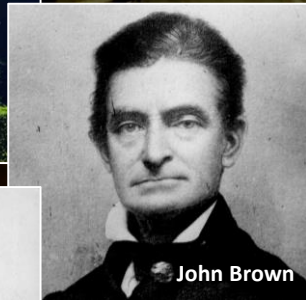
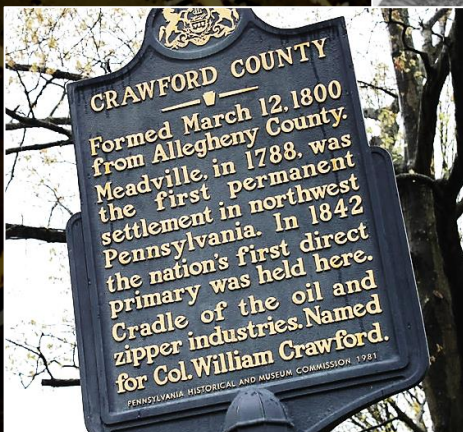
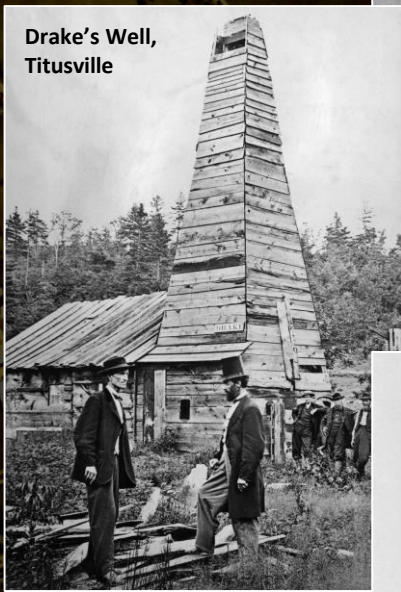
“As president of a college that is almost as old as America itself, I feel a special responsibility to preserve the history of our nation. Understanding our past is fundamental to preparing young people to assume leadership in our nation and to insuring the long term viability of our society.”

- Allegheny College President,
James H. Mullen Jr.



A Home for Our History

The James and Elizabeth Tarr Mansion is not just being saved to preserve history, but to preserve *your* history! From family letters to corporate records, the Historical Society of Crawford County will be able to protect, display, and educate for generations to come.



First described in the journal of a young George Washington as he traveled through Northwest Pennsylvania, **Crawford County** has been the backdrop to an extraordinary history with global impact. Once roamed by the Iroquois and Seneca who revered its woods, streams, and a lake made of snow, the area was settled by visionary pioneers who witnessed this country's birth and would foster its growth.

A troubled Supreme Court Justice would build a grand retirement home here then die too soon to enjoy it. A firebrand abolitionist would establish a tannery here and operate a railroad to freedom before inciting a war that yielded three local Medal of Honor recipients. A black liquid discovered while drilling here would spark the world's first oil boom, creating an industry that changed the global economy forever. Its mightiest captain would then be taken down by an Allegheny graduate whose abhorrence of injustice fueled the muckraking tactics of modern investigative journalism.

These highlight but a few of the stories rooted in Crawford County to be housed at the historic Tarr Mansion where even more will await students, academics, researchers, and enthusiasts, as well as those simply in search of their own past.



A Self-Sustaining National Treasure

The Tarr family is considered to be among our country's first oil barons. Discovery of oil on the land of these once struggling farmers afforded them a lifestyle akin to *Downton Abbey* meets *The Beverly Hillbillies* and thus, money was no object in constructing their home.

Once this project is complete, it will not only house one of the most extensive, historical research collections in western Pennsylvania, but residents as well! Given its considerable size, The Tarr Mansion has the space to allow for eight apartments in addition to the society's offices, archives, and community spaces. By offering residential living, we are in a unique position to generate direct revenue for use in rehabilitating and maintaining this historical structure. Through the generous efforts of volunteers and trade partners we are already seeing success from operating a mixed-use facility.

Currently, several apartments have already been renovated, offering tiled floors, exposed brick, upgraded countertops, stylish cabinets, modern lighting, and stainless steel appliances. By installing such contemporary features at a coveted location in the heart of Meadville, we are able to offer these one, two, and three-bedroom units at rates on par with the higher end of the local rental market, and demand is high. While several units have been renovated and are now occupied, several more still need extensive work before they can be turned into homes. Once completed, these units will become added assets, not only to the society, but to the community as well.



Renovated Apartments at
the Tarr Mansion



A Hub for Arts and Culture

The Crawford County Historical Society holds one of the most extensive collections of archival materials and artifacts in western Pennsylvania. From family history to academic research, the Society is ever expanding our focus and holdings, thus providing for a better learning and research experience.

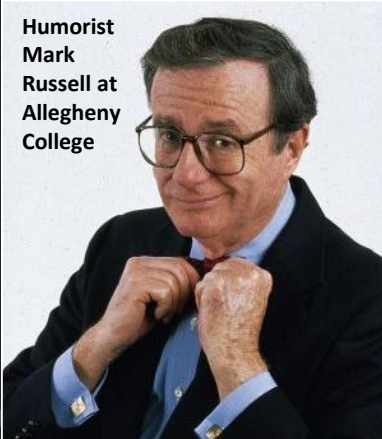
Once described as the “Athens of the Western Frontier,” Crawford County has been a leading hub of culture and education since the days of our earliest pioneers. In the years to follow, fine arts schools, theaters, and opera houses could be found in Meadville, Titusville, and other towns within Crawford County. The area would likewise, produce many talents such as noted American painter, Austa Densmore Sturdevant and early magazine illustrator, Clarence Underwood, as well as the Tinker Sisters who sang on stages from here to New York City.

With our cultural heritage in mind, the Crawford County Historical Society’s mission includes the preservation of real property as well as collecting, preserving, and sharing this history with the public. The Tarr Mansion now allows the Society’s vision to expand beyond just brining history alive, but also serving as the hub of arts and culture for the region. In recent years, the Society has offered a variety of events to include national performers, dinner theaters, exhibitions, and more with great success. The Tarr Mansion will serve as headquarters for our mission, allowing us to expand our services and programs while also offering the community more cultural events and opportunities to enjoy.

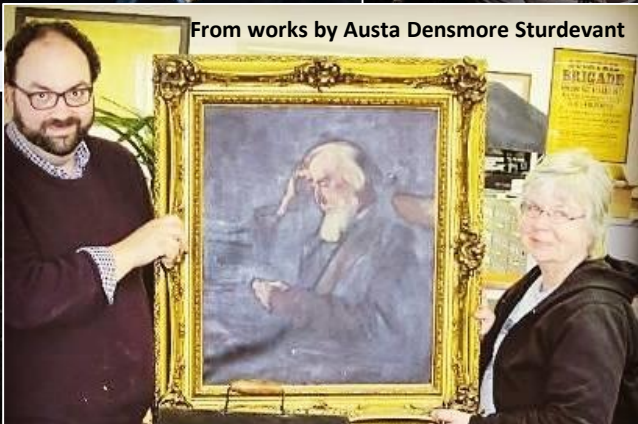


Humorist
Mark
Russell at
Allegheny
College

150th “Bucktails”
Regiment, Muster Day



From works by Austa Densmore Sturdevant



From the
Alfonso Fugagli
collection



A Premier Center for Research

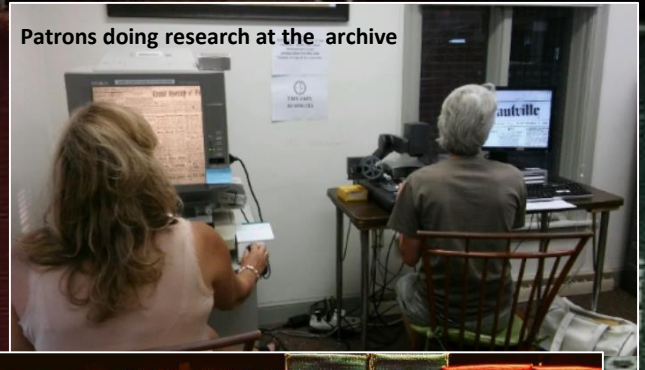
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The archives of the Crawford County Historical Society is a rich repository of records, artifacts, and correspondence offering insights into the lives of national figures and family ancestors alike. It is rare for small historical societies to offer such an extensive and valuable collection.

Access the writings of Supreme Court Justice, Henry Baldwin along with letters by several U.S. presidents. Read first-hand accounts from prominent families as they detail the struggles to build the Atlantic & Great Western Railroad, spend a day picnicking with Andrew Carnegie, or dance with General Grant at a Washington DC ball. Study the plans and patent documents detailing the invention of the "hookless fastener" and its evolution into the zipper.

These are just a few examples of what patrons and researchers can find amongst census records, directories, newspapers, court records, cemetery listings, maps, manuscripts, published resources, military records, photos, and more. However, such a vast array of material is useless if it cannot be found or goes unnoticed. The Tarr Mansion will help in avoiding this problem, providing open spaces for display of such materials as well as ample room for conducting research.

Patrons doing research at the archive



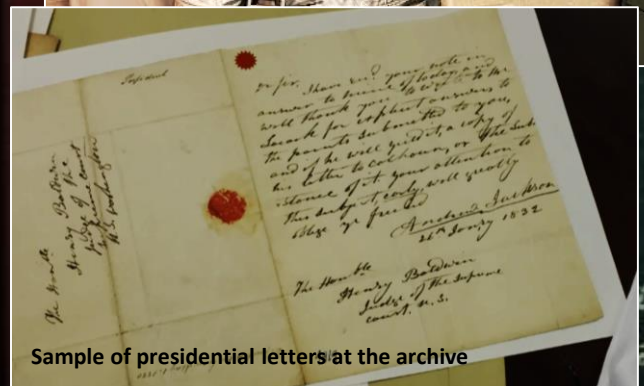
Some of the archive's many volumes



NASA space suit with Talon zippers on display



Sample of presidential letters at the archive

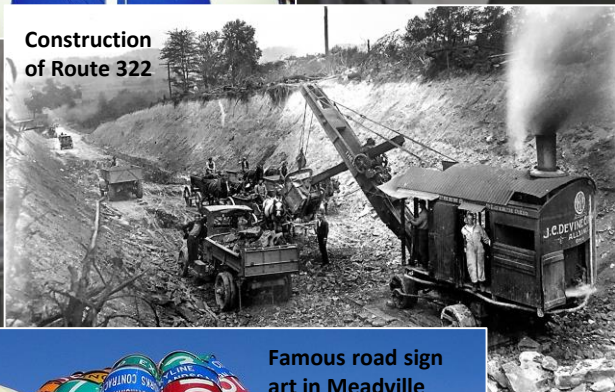


A Model for Community Rebirth

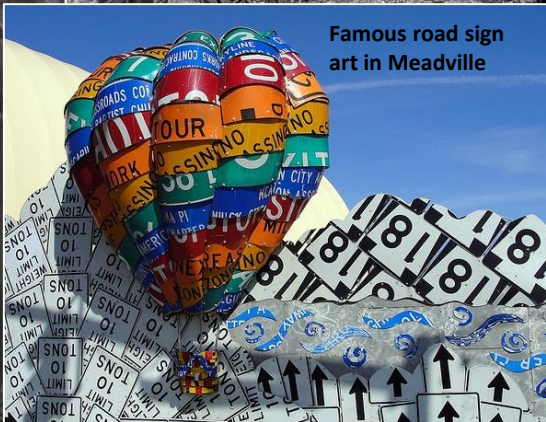
The James and Elizabeth Tarr Mansion is not just any building project, it's an example of historic preservation making economic sense- a sample of hard work and dedication to save a national treasure, and a model for the rebirth of a community!



Champion Tool workers,
later Channellock



Construction
of Route 322



Famous road sign
art in Meadville

When Talon Zipper moved their headquarters and production facilities from Meadville in 1993, the community assumed they were doomed. Jobs by the hundreds suddenly evaporated and a major cornerstone of the community was gone forever. It was the end of an era. As result of Talon's departure, however, an abundance of out of work journeymen started their own tool and die shops, plastic injection molding companies, and more. Crawford County has always "brushed off the dust," reorganized and moved forward.

The Historical Society is currently leading the way in the revitalization of Crawford County's historic landscape. With the purchase of the Tarr Mansion, the Society has gone from exhibiting our past to building our future. From working with local government and entrepreneurs to encourage the reuse of historic properties to preserving and refreshing historic advertising and public art in Meadville's downtown, the Society is bring history to life and bringing history to our lives in Crawford County. Historic preservation makes economic sense, and the Historical Society is using it to make our community a better one in which to live.



Where the Needs Exist

How your contributions will impact the future:

• Net property acquisition cost	\$365,000
• Exterior restoration (paint & brick work)	\$120,000
• Restoration of hall & society use areas	\$75,000
• Balcony & Window Repair	\$50,000
• Roof Repair	\$25,000
• HVAC Installation	\$20,000
• Fixtures & Furnishings (Bookshelves, Tables, etc.)	\$20,000
• Lighting & Hardware	\$15,000
• Apartment 1 Renovation	\$15,000
• Handicap Access Ramp Install	\$10,000
• Renovate Restrooms for ADA compliance	\$10,000
• Carpeting for CCHS Space	\$10,000
• Landscaping	\$7,000



A Legacy for Future Generations

Create your legacy today by preserving our history for future generations!

Naming Opportunity

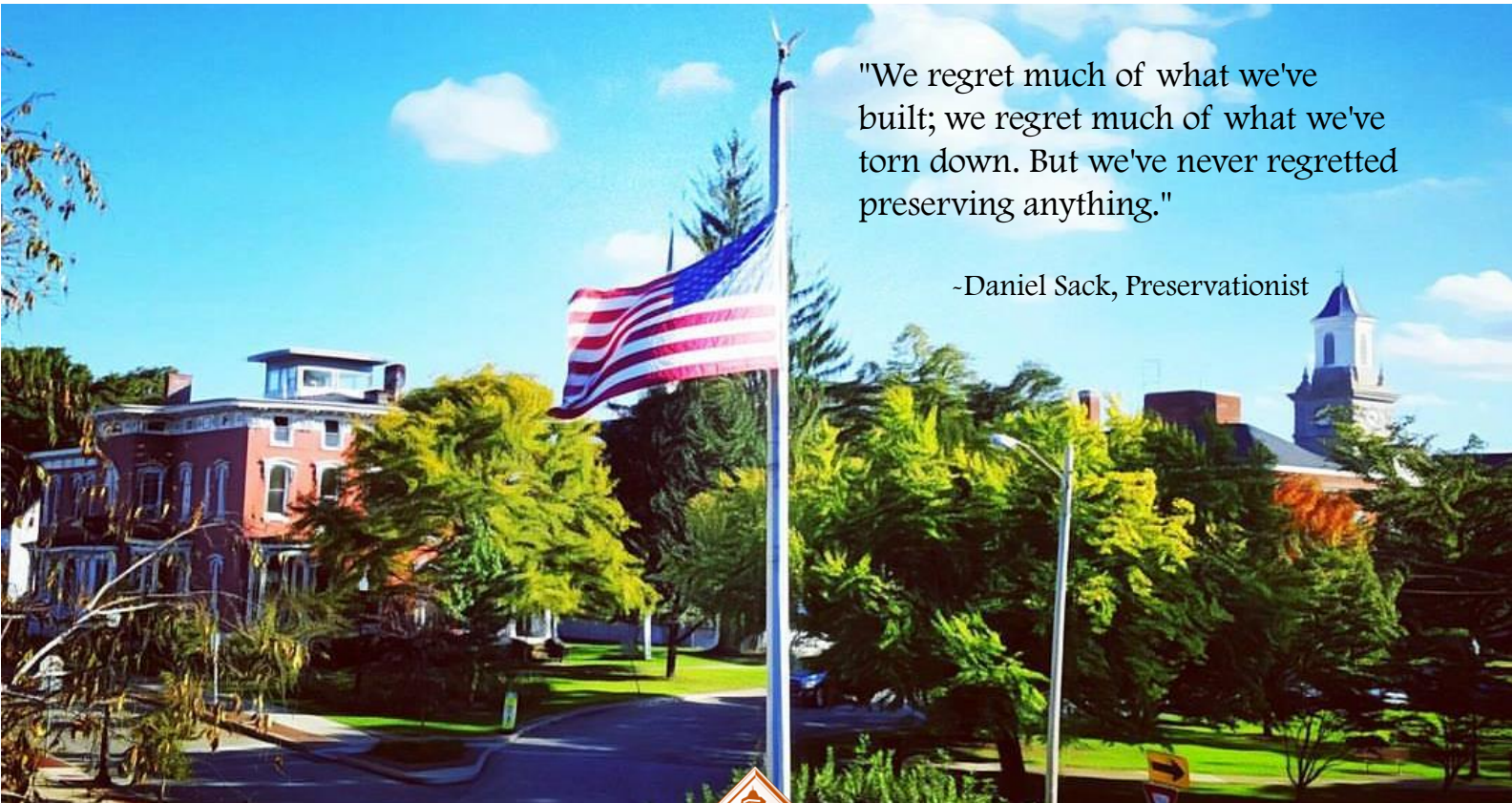
Sponsorship Amount

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| • History Center (Facility Name) | \$250,000 |
| • Reading or Education Room | \$100,000 |
| • Archive/Records Room | \$100,000 |
| • Garden / Cupola / Staircase / Hall | \$50,000 |
| • Porch | \$25,000 |
| • Alcove / Bay Window / Balcony | \$10,000 |
| • Fireplace or Garden Bench | \$5,000 |
| • Bookshelf/Reception Counter | \$1,000 |

Gifts over \$250 will be recognized in perpetuity on a plaque in the new facility.
This being said, we, of course, recognize and appreciate gifts of any size.

"We regret much of what we've built; we regret much of what we've torn down. But we've never regretted preserving anything."

-Daniel Sack, Preservationist



Building Campaign Pledge Agreement

I am excited to become a partner in saving the Tarr Mansion as a example of Oil Region and Crawford County history at its finest. I hereby offer my financial pledge amount to the Tarr Mansion.

Campaign as \$_____, payable over _____ years.

% paid for: Year 1 _____, Year 2 _____, Year 3 _____.

Address: _____

Printed name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Checks can be made payable to: *Crawford County Historical Society*

Or go online to give securely at <http://bit.ly/TarrRenov>

Crawford County Historical Society
P.O. Box 871
Meadville, PA 16335

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RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED

