



109 Pine Street, Towanda, PA 18848

570-265-2240

www.bradfordhistory.org

Preserving Bradford County's Story for another **250** Years

Dear NAME,

Every artifact, photograph, ledger book, family Bible, and historic building entrusted to the Bradford County Historical Society represents a piece of our shared story. Together, these collections tell the story of the people, places, and events that shaped Bradford County and continue to define our communities today.

Because of supporters like you, 2025 has been another year of meaningful progress.

Over the past year, the Society has continued to expand access to local history through exhibitions, research services, educational programs, historical markers, publications, and preservation projects. Visitor attendance has returned to pre-pandemic levels, with approximately 1,500 visitors using our museum and research facilities annually. Our *Friday Night at the Museum* series, America250 programming, guest speakers, and community partnerships have connected residents of all ages with Bradford County's remarkable past. The Society also secured grant funding to support outreach, advertising, and new initiatives that will help us reach even more people in the years ahead.

One of the most exciting developments this year has been the continued expansion of our collections and resources. The Society successfully implemented new software that will help make historical records more searchable and accessible for researchers by converting scanned documents and images into searchable digital text, making historical records easier to access, research, and preserve for future generations. Digitization efforts continue to move forward, helping preserve fragile documents while increasing public access to the information they contain. Our collections continue to grow through generous donations from individuals and families who recognize the importance of ensuring that Bradford County's history is preserved for future generations.

Our historical marker projects are advancing throughout Bradford County, helping to tell the stories of important people, places, industries, and events that might otherwise be forgotten. New educational partnerships with schools, libraries, community organizations, and local governments are helping us bring history directly into our communities. We are fulfilling our mission because of supporters and members like you!

In addition, the Society recently approved a merger with the LeRoy Heritage Museum, an important step that will help preserve additional collections and local history resources while expanding the Society's ability to serve residents throughout the county. By bringing these resources together under one organization, we can better ensure that important stories, artifacts, and records remain protected and accessible for generations to come.

While these accomplishments are worth celebrating, they also highlight an important reality: preserving history requires ongoing investment and we are seeking to raise \$100,000 this year to continue our work at BCHS.

The Society operates and maintains several historic facilities, including the former Bradford County Jail and Sheriff's House. These buildings are not only home to our collections and programs but are historic artifacts themselves. Like any aging structure, they require constant care and maintenance to remain safe, functional, and welcoming to visitors. If you haven't visited – you must. Our museum is world-class!

This year, the Board of Trustees identified several critical building projects that cannot be postponed. Among the most important are interior and exterior painting projects that will help protect and preserve our facilities while improving the visitor experience. Just as importantly, the Society has approved a major attic insulation project designed to improve energy efficiency, reduce long-term operating costs, and better protect our collections from temperature fluctuations and environmental conditions that can damage historical materials.

These projects represent a significant investment in the future of the Society. The insulation project alone will cost more than \$50,000. While not as visible as a new exhibit or public program, these improvements are essential to preserving the buildings and collections entrusted to our care. They will help reduce utility costs, improve environmental stability, and ensure that future generations can continue to learn from and enjoy Bradford County's history.

At the same time, annual operating support remains critical. Every day, the Society works to preserve artifacts, assist researchers, answer genealogical inquiries, maintain exhibits, care for historic properties, publish *The Settler*, support volunteers, and provide educational programming for the public. None of this happens without the financial support of members, donors, and friends who believe that our history matters.

History does not preserve itself.

It is preserved because people like you care enough to support it.

Your gift to the 2026 Annual Appeal will help fund three important priorities:

- Essential operating support that keeps the museum, library, and archives open and accessible.
- Interior and exterior painting projects that protect and maintain our historic facilities.
- The attic insulation project that will improve energy efficiency and provide better environmental protection for our collections.

Every contribution, regardless of size, helps ensure that the stories of Bradford County remain available to future generations. Whether your family has lived here for two hundred years or two years, the history preserved by the Society belongs to all of us. Your support today helps preserve Bradford County's history tomorrow. Please consider making a generous contribution to the 2026 Annual Appeal to support our operations, facility improvements, and collections preservation efforts.

As we look toward continuing to celebrate America's 250th anniversary and continue expanding our collections, educational programs, and community partnerships, we remain committed to preserving the people, places, and stories that define Bradford County. With your help, we can continue that work for years to come.

Thank you for your generosity, your membership, and your commitment to preserving our shared heritage. Happy 250th Birthday, America.

Sincerely,

J. Kelsey Jones, President

Matthew T. Carl, Executive Director