

PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release

February 20, 2026

From: Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum
204 S Main St; Wichita, KS 67202

2026 MCILWAINE SPEAKER SERIES AT THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Quarterly 2026 – First in Series: March 21st

Presentations start at 2:00pm

Admission FREE

Open to the public, All ages

The Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum invites you to learn about a range of local history-related topics during its Charles & Joanne McIlwaine Quarterly Speaker Series. Once each quarter, the museum welcomes engaging presenters who will speak on the people, places, and events that influenced our community.

Sunday- March 21st, The Historical Museum starts our 2026 series with “All American City: Bluster, Boom, & Bust in Wichita” by Chase Billingham-

Chase Billingham, Associate Professor of Sociology at Wichita State University, will join us to discuss his newly published book. Billingham’s book is a critical social history of Wichita that extrapolates from this city’s experience to explain common contemporary economic development patterns across U.S. cities.

In his presentation, Billingham will draw connections between the themes addressed in the book and recent debates in Wichita regarding issues like the citywide sales tax proposal, riverfront development, and strategies to address homelessness. Questions and open discussion will follow the presentation.

Doors open at 1:00pm; the program starts at 2pm in the DeVore Auditorium (2nd Floor)
Open to the public. Free admission.

Mark your calendars for the remaining McIlwaine Speakers in 2026!

April 11th – “Civil War Union Veterans and the Influence of the G.A.R. Locally” by Dr. Alfred Eckes

July 11th & 12th – “Stearman Centennial” by Edward Phillips

November 28th – “Black Women Who Changed the Course of Wichita History” by Donna Rae Pearson

This quarterly speaker series is made possible through a generous grant from the Charles and Joanne McIlwaine Foundation.

Submitted by Michelle Frikken, Historical Museum Communications: museum@wichitahistory.org

Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum, 204 S. Main, Wichita, KS 67202

Contact: 316-265-9314, wschm@wichitahistory.org

Website: wichitahistory.org for additional information

Museum Hours: Tuesday – Friday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm; Saturday & Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 pm.

Regular Admission: \$5 Adults (13+); \$2 Children

Supported in part by the City of Wichita and the Board of Commissioners of Sedgwick County Kansas

OUR VISION: To provide a world-class museum experience, advancing the understanding and exploration of the rich historical and cultural heritage of Wichita and Sedgwick County Kansas.