
(Name(s))

Social Narrative

Pre-Visit Guide to The History Center in
Tompkins County for Visitors on the
Autism Spectrum



The History Center in Tompkins County

Located inside the Tompkins Center for History & Culture
on the Ithaca Commons
110 North Tioga St.
Ithaca NY, 14850
Gayogohó:nq? Territory

Contact community@thehistorycenter.net with
questions about this guide or current displays.

SOCIAL NARRATIVE

Pre-Visit Guide to The History Center in Tompkins County
Exhibit Hall for Visitors on the Autism Spectrum pg. 1

Today we are going to The History Center in Tompkins County. Inside the museum there are artifacts from all over Tompkins County. Some of the artifacts are hundreds of years old, while others could be from last year.

The museum is open every week and we can stay as long as we want to during open hours. You can bring any devices or tools that help you get around, communicate with others, or stay grounded. There are also no rules about sound in the museum, you can be as loud as you want while you explore.

The museum also welcomes service and support animals. Service animals must remain on a leash.



Visitor looking at an exhibit.



When we first arrive at the museum, we will be on the busy, and sometimes loud, Ithaca Commons. There will be two glass doors with big windows. Above the door in white letters are the words, "Tompkins Center for History & Culture."



Tompkins Center from the Ithaca Commons



Mural on the Tompkins Center building

The mural on the side of our building was painted by Mary Beth Ihnken in 2019.

When we enter, we will arrive inside the atrium. This room has a lot of light, and is usually quiet. There will be an exhibit in the exhibit tower in the center of the atrium. This exhibit changes multiple times a year.



Atrium Exhibit Tower



Atrium wall and map.

To the right, you can see the Downtown Visitor Center where they have brochures, and gifts for sale. You can ask the staff at the desk questions about good food to eat and fun activities to do in Tompkins County.



Visitor Center Entrance



Inside Visitor Center

There are bathrooms to the left of the Downtown Visitor Center desk. We also have private bathrooms available on the second floor. You can go to the restrooms at any point during your visit. There are also two water fountains on the first floor if you get thirsty.



First Floor Bathroom Door



Second Floor Bathroom Doors

To the left of the atrium is the Community Arts Partnership (CAP) ArtSpace Gallery. This room has a different art exhibit every month. The room looks dark from far away, but when you walk inside the lights will turn on. Most events happen in this room.



Entrance to the CAP ArtSpace



Inside the CAP ArtSpace

To get to The History Center Exhibit Hall from the Atrium, we will walk straight from the Ithaca Commons front doors into the Exhibit Hall through another set of open glass doors.



Entrance to the Exhibit Hall

Here we will be greeted by people at the front desk, wearing blue nametags. They will ask questions like, "How are you today?", and "Where are you visiting from?" We can ask these people questions about the museum and the items on display. We can also hang up our coats and put our bags down while we visit.



CENTER THE HISTORY CENTER THE HISTORY CENTER THE HISTORY CENTER
Alan
 Docent
 THE HISTORY CENTER

Front Desk



Coat Rack

If we are carrying drinks or food, the people at the front desk will ask us to leave these items at the front desk. Drinks and food are not allowed inside the Exhibit Hall, since a spill could damage the displays. We can pick up our drinks and food when we leave.



Front Desk



Tommy Plane

We can walk freely throughout the Exhibit Hall, look at all the items inside the glass tower displays, and scroll through the touch screens. We aren't allowed to touch most items on display. If we are allowed to touch an exhibit a sign will tell us its okay. Ask the staff at the front desk if you aren't sure what you can touch.

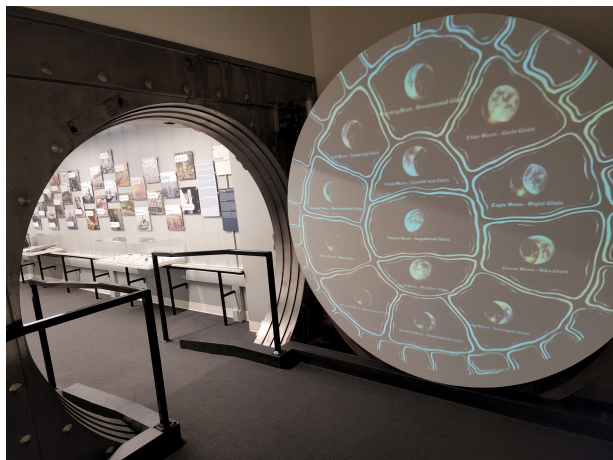


Front of Exhibit Hall



Back of Exhibit Hall

The History Center Exhibit Hall is entirely on the first floor. We can walk through the Passage Through Time Tunnel, explore the miniature Eight Square Schoolhouse, and check out the Tommy Plane exhibit.



Entrance to Passage Through Time



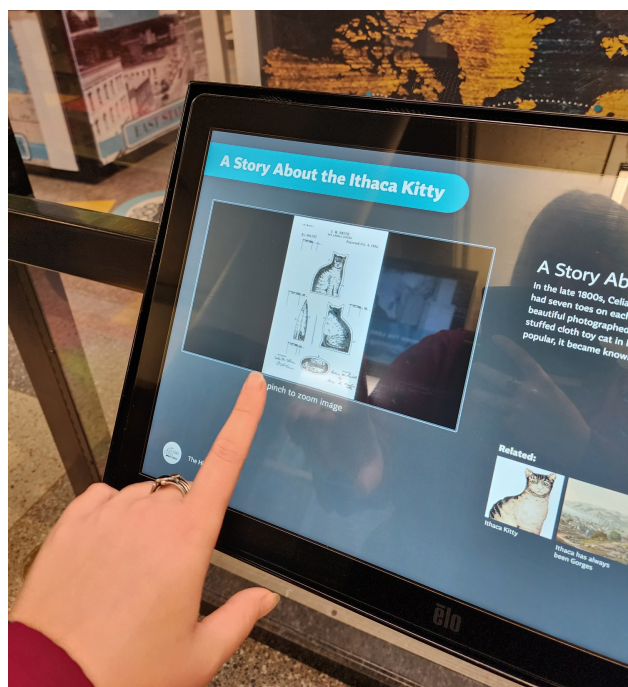
Inside Passage Through Time Tunnel

When we exit the Passage Through Time exhibit we will arrive at the Children's Education Area. There are books, coloring sheets, a cash register, chalk boards, and other toys here. We can play with, move, and touch anything in this area. We can play with these materials during our visit, but must put them back on the shelf before we leave the museum.



Eight Square Schoolhouse Replica - Children's Education Area

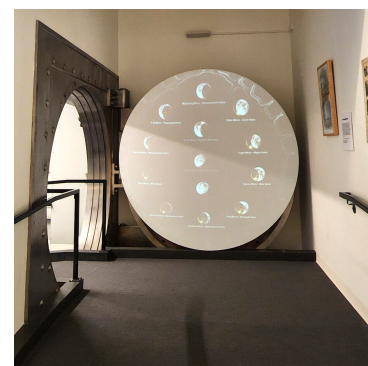
Some touch screens may have videos or make noise. I or my family can look at thehistorycenter.net/accessibility to find out which cases make sounds before our visit.



Throughout our visit there will be noise (speaking and singing in English and Cayuga) in the Exhibit Hall coming from the Gayogohónq? Creation Story video located at the Passage Through Time exhibit entrance. This video plays on a loop and the sounds and images will repeat throughout my visit.

If the noise becomes too much, I can go back out into the atrium or the CAP ArtSpace Gallery to find a quiet space.

We can also contact the museum staff before our visit to request this sound be turned off during our visit.



Another space with sound is the Story Vault. This is a small room where you can listen to audio clips from the oral history collections. These are interview clips where people talk about their lives and experiences in Tompkins County.



Entrance to the Story Vault



Listening inside the Story Vault

If you would prefer to listen to this exhibit at home, at a different volume, or with headphones ask the staff at the front desk about our SoundCloud playlists. This profile has all the same audio clips from the exhibit.



<https://soundcloud.com/tompkinshistory>



THE HISTORY CENTER
in Tompkins County

STOP and LISTEN to HERstory
A Curated Playlist of Historical Stories in Tompkins County

1 Yen Ospina - Inspiration ▶ 26
2 Yen Ospina - First Art Class ▶ 9
3 Melissa Tuckey - Poetry and Politics ▶ 13
4 June Morse - World War II ▶ 15
5 Leslyn McBean - Clairborne - Teaching ▶ 17

View 23 tracks

Followers: 5 | Following: 24 | Tracks: 55

The History Center in Tompkins County helps you use the tools of history to understand the past, gain perspective on the present, and play an informed role in shaping the future.

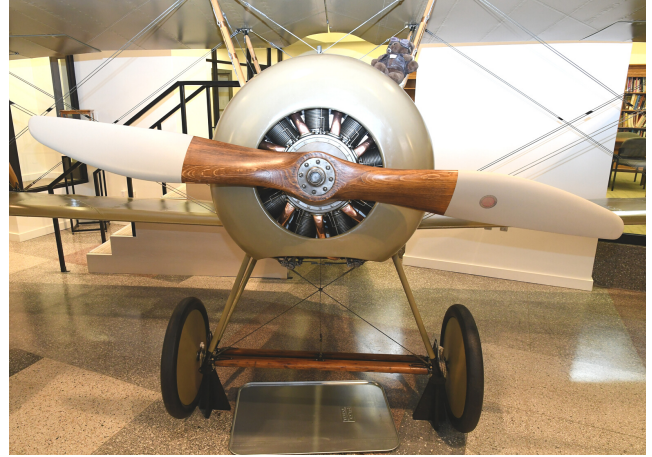
Website | Contact

44 likes | View all

Cayuga Radio Group | Ben Sandberg, History Center in To... ▶ 25 | 1 | 1

WRFHumanrightshow | Zoe van Nostrand March 4 ▶ 25 | 2 | 1

The Tommy Plane is one of the largest item in The History Center's collections. This Thomas Morse S4-B Scout, nicknamed "Tommy" was originally built in 1918 in Ithaca NY by the Thomas Morse Aviation Corporation. The plane was restored by the Ithaca Aviation Heritage Foundation over 14 years and flew in 2018.



We can walk all around the Tommy Plane, but should not touch the wings or propeller. The History Center hosts regular programs about the history of Tommy each year. We can learn more about the plane at www.thehistorycenter.net/tommy.

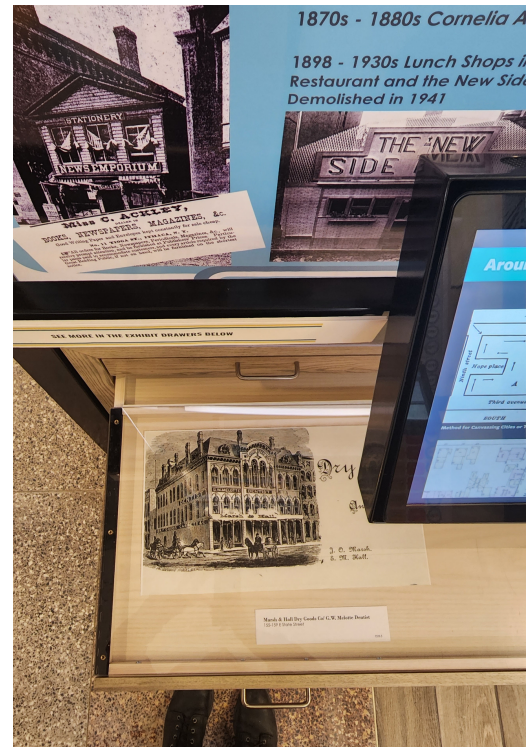


Tommy Plane Cockpit (View from top of the stairs)

If I designed a History Center Visit (PDF) list, I can follow my checklist. I can also change my tour and choose to see different things. There are always new displays at The History Center!



Children's Education Area



Artifact Drawers



Exhibit Tower



If I need a break or want to leave the museum, I will tell the adult I am with.



When I am ready to leave, I can pick up my coat, drinks, and bag where I left them. The staff at the front desk might ask me if I enjoyed my visit, or what my favorite display was.



I hope I can visit The History Center again soon and learn more about Tompkins County history!

Learn More About Tompkins County

After leaving The History Center I can continue to learn about the history and culture of Tompkins County from home. The resources below have more information.

Digital Links:

- The History Center has virtual exhibits, learning activities, videos, and more available on their website at thehistorycenter.net under the "Learn" tab.
- Tompkins County HistoryForge - tompkins.historyforge.net
- YouTube - youtube.com/@TompkinsHistory
- SoundCloud - soundcloud.com/tompkinshistory
- New York Heritage Digital Collections - nyheritage.org/organizations/history-center-tompkins-county
- PocketSights App - Self-Guided Tours - thehistorycenter.net/tours
- Public Libraries in Tompkins County
 - Tompkins County Public Library
 - Ulysses Philomathic Library
 - Lansing Community Library
 - Newfield Public Library
 - Groton Public Library



@TompkinsHistory





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607-273-8284
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www.thehistorycenter.net

Contact us for information about accessibility, accommodations, and programs for visitors with disabilities and neurodivergence.

thehistorycenter.net/accessibility

This booklet was designed in 2022 by The History Center in Tompkins County modeled off of the 2015 'Resources for Visitors on the Autism Spectrum' materials designed by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in collaboration with Autism Friendly Spaces.

Helvetica font was chosen specifically to make this booklet easier to read for those with dyslexia or difficulty interpreting serif fonts.

First draft and research compiled by MA student Leanza Kopa, completed by The History Center staff Zoë Van Nostrand.