

# The Lackawanna Historical Society BULLETIN

Vol. 11, No. 4

September 1978



## LACKAWANNA COUNTY CENTENNIAL BAND CONCERT

Friday, September 15, 1978 8 P.M.

University of Scranton Student Center, Linden St.

Featuring the "RINGGOLD BAND"

Under the Direction of Ted Riggi with a medley of popular old American Band Music.

The Ringgold Band was organized in 1875 and is the oldest extant musical organization in Scranton. The Band played at the ceremonies for the laying of the cornerstone for the Court House in 1881 and for the dedication of the Court House in 1884.

Come and celebrate our County's Centennial at an old fashioned Band Concert. Concert co-sponsored by University of Scranton and Historical Society.

## FORTHCOMING PROGRAMS

Wednesday, October 18

Films of D. L. & W. and Phebe Snow Trains  
Filmed and narrated by Thomas Taber,  
Muncy, Pa.

Wednesday, November 15

CBS TV Film "An Island called Ellis"

Moving story of European emmigration into USA.

Wednesday, December 13

The History of Christmas Cards - Slide presentation by Archie Litweiler. Holiday music and antique decorations.

These programs will all be held at the Catlin House, 232 Monroe Ave., Scranton at 8 P.M. Additional programs from February thru May will include silent films of Scranton in 1938; a talk a Henry Drinker, early promoter of Lackawanna County; slides on Endless Mountains scenic area and a talk and slides on Victorian furniture at the annual dinner meeting in May. Dates will be announced.

## COUNTY CENTENNIAL EVENTS

The celebrations for the Centennial of the founding of Lackawanna County began with a Grand Birthday Banquet at the Masonic Temple on Monday, August 21, the actual date the county was created 100 years ago. Over 500 guests enjoyed a delicious banquet and a delightful program which included addresses by Atty. Philip V. Mattes, 90, former county Solicitor and Hon. Michael J. Eagen, Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

Other events which have already been held include: Ecumenical Sunday in all county churches August 20; ringing of all bells and sirens at noon August 21; Centennial Sales Days and tours of the Court House during the following week; very well attended presentations of Agatha Christie's exciting drama "Witness for the Prosecution" in Courtroom No. 1 from August 18 to 27th; the Audubon String Quartet Concert and the Corvette Road Rally August 25 and 27 and the Labor Day People's Picnic at McDade State Park which drew a crowd of over 1000 and featured free entertainment, bicycle and running races, pony rides magicians and hot air balloon ascensions, etc.

Events still to come include:

September 7-8-9-10- Lackawanna Arts Festival on Court House Square.

Saturday, Sept. 9 - Centennial motorized Parade throughout the county ending at the Court House Square 1 P.M.

Sunday, Sept. 10 - Pocono Century Bicycle Tour of County - All Day.

Saturday, Sept. 16 - Centennial Costume Ball at Watres Armory - 9 P.M.

Sunday, Sept. 24 - N. E. Penna. Philharmonic Concert on Court House Square concluding with fireworks extravaganza 7:30 P.M.

These events have been planned and promoted by a Lackawanna County Centennial Committee composed of over 50 citizens and co-chaired by Atty. John R. Lenahan, Thomas Blomaine and Rev. William P. Lewis.

## CATLIN HOUSE NEW

During the summer, the Catlin House has welcomed a continual flow of visitors to see the house or do research in our Library. In June 115 came; 135 in July and 128 in August, from all across the USA as well as visitors from England, Belgium, Germany, Iran, Indonesia, Australia and Hawaii.

Improvements made to our grounds include a new front sidewalk on Monroe Avenue composed of blacktopping and the rebuilding of our driveway brick gateposts.

Valuable accessions to our collections have been received recently from Hon. and Mrs. William W. Scranton - antique clothing, maps, books and pictures; Mrs. Elizabeth Tiffany, Philadelphia - antique clothing and War War I uniforms; Miss Edna Osborne - books and old photos; Edward Schumann - old books and maps and Mrs. Theodore Morris - an antique hand sewing machine and books. We are grateful for all of these interesting and useful donations.

The Fashion Committee has been working mornings to continue the cataloguing and organizing of our very large and beautiful collection of period clothes. A number of costumes and bicycles have been loaned to the Globe Store for their centennial.

A Bus Trip to the Sleepy Hollow Restorations in the Hudson River Valley is planned for Saturday October 14; more details later.

## U.S.A. 1878

When Lackawanna County was created a century ago; what was happening in our country and what was life like in the U.S.A.? It may be of interest to see where we fitted into the national scene.

Rutherford B. Hayes became our 19th President in March 1877. He had served as a General in the Civil War, two terms in Congress and two terms as Governor of Ohio, his native state. He was a conservative Republican and is remembered as an honest and reserved President. He was declared the winner in the disputed election of 1876 after gaining a narrow margin over Samuel

# LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CATLIN HOUSE  
232 MONROE AVENUE  
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18510

J. Tilden in a decision which was finally settled by the Electoral College. Hayes was able to restore stability to the government after the corruption, frauds and scandals that marked the previous Grant Administration. One of the first actions he took was the withdrawal of the last of the Federal Troops from the South, thus ending an era of carpet-bag rule and Reconstruction in the Southern States. This change also ushered in an era of White Supremacy which lasted in the South for the next 80 years.

The times were not unlike our own; there was comparative peace in the world and a growing prosperity in America. The nation was just recovering from the Panic and Depression of 1873 and the Great Railroad Strike of the summer of 1877 had caused so much violence and destruction that Hayes sent out Federal Troops to restore order. It was the time of the Mollie Maguires and the beginnings of the Knights of Labor. But in 1878 U.S. finances were put back on the Gold Standard which helped to restore business confidence and ushered in a time of economic prosperity which lasted well into the 80's.

U.S. population was just over 50 million and there were 38 states; much of the West was still national and Indian territory. Custer made his famous 'Last Stand' in Montana in 1876. Europeans were emmigrating to American in record numbers and American cities continued to expand. Three unique inventions appeared at this time which have changed the quality of life ever since: Bell's telephone in 1876; Edison's phonograph in 1877 and Edison's electric light in 1878. Horse racing and baseball were popular sports and the first manufactured bicycles "highwheelers" immediately became the rage.

Americans were reading Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier and Lowell's poems and Mark Twain, Sidney Lanier, Henry James and Sarah Orne Jewett's novels. The newspapers reported the social life of the Vanderbilts, Astors, Goulds and Rockerfellers and a new drink "root beer" was introduced to the public. The American Bar Assoc. was organized in 1878 and the first intercollegiate sporting events were held. It was a era of middle class rectitude and the temperance movement was strong; the First Lady in the White House was called "Lemonade Lucy" because she refused to serve alcoholic beverages but she is also remembered as a perfect hostess at the continual receptions the Hayes gave and for introducing the custom of Easter Egg Rolling on the White House lawn.

Such was life in the United States when Lackawanna County was created and Scranton became the county seat. The times were optimistic, business was good, there was room for expansion, the West was still being won and we were ready for the 'Roaring Eightys'.

William P. Lewis  
Executive Director

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