

# The Lackawanna Historical Society BULLETIN

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## CATLIN HOUSE NEWS

Mrs. Harold Wech (June) 404 Melrose Ave., Clarks Summit, began work as our new Hostess-Secretary on June 12. We welcome her to the staff of the Catlin House. Mrs. Juanita Gruener has served as a part-time hostess since February but did not wish to continue as she is already retired.

During the month of April we had 149 visitors including three groups and in May we had 283 visitors and five groups. On May 9 we held our annual dinner meeting and installation of officers with 80 present and a very interesting slide presentation by Peter Strickland from Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc. New York on "Furnishings of the Victorian Period".

Recent donations to our collections include a box of over 500 Mattes Family Letters dating from 1841 to 1898 given by Atty. Philip V. Mattes; old Scranton Fire Dept. photos given by Miss Elsie Rosan; three ladies beaded evening bags and Bird of Paradise hat feathers by the family of Elizabeth Levi; a small black cast iron heating stove used in an early D.L. & W. Railroad caboose given by Norval Cornell and a new book "History of the Scranton Railway Co." by Ben Rohrbeck. This is the story of the Electric street cars of our city from 1865 to 1954 and copies of the book are available here for \$8.00 each.

Trustees of the Lackawanna Historical Society will hold their bi-monthly meeting here on Wednesday, June 13 at 4 P.M. with Dr. John L. Earl presiding.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETIES OF N.E. PENNSYLVANIA

The Lackawanna Historical Society is one of several kindred organizations with similar interests and concerns to be found in the neighboring counties of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Having recently visited each one of these Societies and learned first-hand about their work and collections, I wish to present herewith a brief review and directory of each one which might prove helpful to visitors.

## THE WYOMING HISTORICAL AND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

This Society, located at 49 South Franklin St. Wilkes Barre, Pa., was founded in 1858 and is therefore one of the oldest historical societies in our state and nation. They have a very fine research library of 4500 volumes and manuscript collections in their offices at the Bishop House, which was the former Rectory of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. They also have a three story brick museum built in 1893 located nearby at the rear of the Osterhout Free Library which houses their collections and changing exhibits. The Library is open to the public Tuesday thru Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the Museum is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons 1 to 4 p.m. William H. Siener is the Executive Director and has a staff of four employees: Miss Jean Winnie, curator; Mrs. Margaret Craft, librarian; Mrs. Marcia Nelson, secretary and Ron Andrews, director of architectural surveys. The Society has 825 members, a Board of 29 members who meet quarterly, an annual budget of \$75,000 and invested endowment funds of over \$560,000. They publish a quarterly newsletter called "Forecast". Annual dues range from \$10 for individuals, \$15 for families to \$150 for Life Membership.

The Society also owns and manages the beautiful old William Swetland Homestead located at 885 Wyoming Avenue in the Borough of Wyoming. It was built from 1797 to 1815 and was the home of the Swetland family until 1958 when descendants donated it to the Society. Furnished with period antiques from pioneer to Victorian times, this historic house is open to visitors from June 14 to September 1 daily except Mondays. Admission is \$1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children. Telephone 823-6244.

## WAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This Society is located in a quaint brick building at 810 Main Street, Honesdale, the former offices of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Co. The building was erected in 1860 and now houses an interesting museum which has a valuable collection of Dorflinger cut glass, artifacts from the D.&H. Canal, antiques and other memorabilia from Wayne County history. It is open to the public Monday thru Saturday 10 to 12 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. with an admission charge of 50¢. It is staffed by three part-time guides: Mrs. Charles Hames, Mrs. Hildred Lewsley and Mrs. Wanda Taylor. Founded in 1917 the Society now has 500 members who pay annual dues of \$4.00. Two program dinner meetings

are held annually for the membership in October and April; there is also a Board of 29 members who meet monthly. Officers of the Society are currently: Charles L. Hames, president; Mrs. Jeanette Brownell and William Seland, vice president; Mrs. Hildred Lewsley, secretary and Mrs. Wanda Taylor, treasurer. Dr. Vernon Leslie, R.D. 1, Honesdale, is the official County Historian.

The Society is cooperating with a local committee to celebrate the Sesquicentennial anniversary of the "Stourbridge Lion," the first steam locomotive to run in America - August 8, 1829. The celebrations will be held in Honesdale this coming September 13, 14, 15, 16.

## SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND FREE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

A two story brick Colonial style building located on the corner of Maple Street and Monument Square in the lovely town of Montrose houses the County Library on the first floor and the Historical Society library and museum on the second floor. The building was erected in 1907 through the influence and generosity of Francis R. Cope of Philadelphia and Montrose. Organized in 1890, the Historical Society and Library Assoc. now have 953 members who pay annual dues of only \$4.00. The Museum is open Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and has a good research library and genealogical collection as well as several rooms full of pioneer and antique relics, artifacts and exhibits illustrating Susquehanna County's history. Two part-time persons staff the museum: Mrs. Kathlene Kurosky, curator and Mrs. Marion Baker, librarian. While only one annual meeting is held in April, a Historical Committee of 24 members meets monthly with Mrs. Eleanor McKeage as Chairman and Mrs. Mary Morgan as secretary-treasurer. Visitors are always welcome; call 278-1881.

## WYOMING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This is a new and young organization which is struggling to get going and obtain local support. A Historical Society and Library was originally established in Tunkhannock in 1892; the Library remains as a busy institution but the museum collection was later scattered and the Historical Society dissolved. Following the U.S. Bi-Centennial celebrations, a group of interested citizens reorganized the Society in April 1977 and now have 125 members who pay \$5.00 individual dues, \$8.00 family dues

and \$25.00 supporting dues. Program meetings have been held four times annually and a board of 15 members meets quarterly. In April of this year the Tunkhannock Area School District donated the old Harrison Street Primary School, a two story brick structure at the corner of Harrison and Bridge Streets in Tunkhannock to the Society. They are now eagerly engaged in the process of renovating the building for a museum and library. Officers of the Society and Mrs. Jean Brewer, president; George Gay, vice president; Mrs. Barbara Walters, recording secretary; Mrs. Paula Radwanski, corresponding secretary and Lewis Cavalier, treasurer. For information contact Mrs. Brewer at the Wyoming County Court House in Tunkhannock.

### LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized in 1886 soon after the creation of Lackawanna County, this Society was a struggling organization for many years, housed in crowded quarters in the County Court House and the Everhart Museum. Finally through the generosity of George H. Catlin, a wealthy Scranton banker, his home was bequeathed to the Society in 1942 and has been our headquarters ever since. Located at 232 Monroe Avenue in Scranton, this handsome three story brick and stucco residence built in 1912 in English Tudor style, now houses a beautiful historic house museum with Victorian furnishings and a good research library pertaining to the history of northeastern Pennsylvania as well as historic exhibits on the second and third floors. The Society has 332 members who pay annual dues of \$10 for individuals and families, \$20 contributing and \$30 sustaining memberships. A Board of 27 Trustees meets bi-monthly, a bulletin is published bi-monthly and an interesting series of evening program meetings is held monthly from September to May. The house is staffed by two employees: William P. Lewis, executive director, and Mrs. June Wech, hostess-secretary. A live-in couple Mr. and Mrs. James McLane, care for the house and grounds. The Catlin House is open to the public free Monday thru Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. all year. Call 344-3841. Dr. John L. Earl III is the president.

### ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

The Architectural Heritage Association of Northeastern Pennsylvania is a new organization, having been organized in 1976 to create an awareness of this area's rich architectural heritage. The group now has 160 members

directed by a Board of 12 members who meet bi-monthly and serves as an advocacy group actively promoting the preservation and conservation of historic buildings and districts in Scranton and Lackawanna County. They maintain an office at 426 Spruce St., Scranton, published a monthly newsletter, conduct walking tours, give slide presentations and act as an information clearinghouse. Membership dues are \$10 for individuals, \$20 families and \$30 for patrons. Officers of the Association are: John Cognetti, president; Dr. Melvin Wolk, vice president; Ms. Patricia King, secretary and Ms. Paula Horlacher, treasurer. For information call 342-8312.

### CARBONDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Interested citizens of Carbondale formed this Society in 1975 and have since sought local support for a museum and library. They now have 50 members and a Board of five members who meet monthly and are actively involved in a project with the Y.M.C.A. to restore the original Delaware and Hudson Gravity Railroad Shops where a museum will be located. Membership dues are \$10 for individuals and families. Paul Starzer is the President and Mason Essif is the secretary-treasurer.

### MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This Society maintains a historic museum in the Daniel Stroud Family Mansion at the corner of Main and Ninth Streets in Stroudsburg which is open Tuesday and Thursday afternoon 1-4 p.m. The three story stone house was built in 1795 by the founder of Stroudsburg. The Society was founded in 1921, has 462 members and four volunteer hostesses. Mrs. Horace Walters is the curator. They are cooperating with a local Committee to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of General Sullivan's March with events to be held June 15, 16, 17.

### PIKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This Society has a museum on the second floor of the Library and Community House, corner of Broad and Harford Streets, Milford, Pa. They were organized in 1930, have 150 members who pay \$3.00 annual dues and are open Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday afternoons 1-4 p.m. Ernest Chamberlin is the president and George Perry the curator. They also restored a one room Schoolhouse nearby which is open daily May to October 1-4 p.m. and is a very popular tourist attraction. George Fluhr is the official Pike County Historian.

Wm. P. Lewis

## LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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232 MONROE AVENUE  
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