

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Wednesday, May 13, 1981 — Catlin House - 6:30 P.M.

Our Annual Dinner Meeting and the Installation of Officers will be held at the Catlin House on Wednesday evening May 13 at 6:30 o'clock with the usual delicious roast beef dinner catered by the Dippre. The program will be a slide illustrated lecture given by Roger Moss, executive director of the Athenaeum, a historic museum and research library in Philadelphia. His lecture entitled "From Candles to Kilowatts" - is an interesting study of lighting in the 19th century. Mr. Moss is a native of Ohio, a graduate of the Universities of Ohio and Delaware and serves as the treasurer of the Victorian Society of America, a director of the Historic House Association of America, on the Boards of Cliveden and Hariton, historic houses in the Philadelphia area as well as his position at the Athenaeum. He has lectured and written widely on historic subjects and is the author of a recent book "A Century of Color - Exterior Decorations on American Buildings 1820-1920". We are fortunate to have him coming to our meeting which will be held in connection with National Historic Preservation Week. Reservations for the dinner and program which will be \$7.50 per person may be made by calling Catlin House 344-3841.

CATLIN HOUSE NEWS

During recent months we have had a steady flow of visitors and researchers coming into the Catlin House. Our guest register shows we had 165 in January 276 in February, 307 in March and 586 in April! Groups come thru the House regularly including 8 groups in February, 8 in March and 10 in April. Among these groups were Scranton Schools Gifted Programs, Girl and Boy Scout and Cub Scout groups, University of Scranton History classes, D.A.R. programs, South Abington and Dunmore Elementary School classes, University of Scranton History Day tours, White Beauty Resort tours and the Canal Society of New Jersey as well as researchers from Rhode Island, Boston and South Wales. Singers Guild of Scranton will hold a reception here on May 3. The Executive Director has given historic talks in Factoryville, Dalton and Moscow recently as well as attending the Opening of new Exhibits at the Anthracite Museums in Scranton and Ashland and the William Penn's Legacy Conference in Philadelphia. Our February, March and April program meetings were very well attended and we now have over 400 members in our Society.

All officers of the Board of Trustees were reelected at our April meeting and will be installed during the May dinner meeting. They are: Dr. John L. Earl, president; Atty. Kenneth A. Rhodes, first vice president; George A. Broadbent, second vice president; Miss Jane Dakin, third vice president; Miss Florence Gillespie, secretary, Albert F. Fries, treasurer and Everett D. Thomas, assistant treasurer. We are deeply indebted to these persons for their faithful service. In addition ten Trustees were elected to serve for three year terms; They are Mrs. Albert G. Isaacs, Mrs. T. Archer Morgan, Miss Marie S. Smith, Atty. George Houck, Atty. Paul H. Price, Atty. Joseph Cimini, W. Kenneth Moffat, Thomas Horlacher and Mrs. Edgar Collins. At a recent Trustees meeting, a budget of \$38,000 was adopted to run our Society for the 1981-82 year. Trustees will meet again on Wednesday, June 10.

JAMES ARCHBALD AND HIS FAMILY

James Archbald, a civil engineer and early railroad builder in the Lackawanna Valley, was one of those remarkable individuals who came to America as a European emigrant and made a significant contribution



to the industrial development of this area during the 19th century.

Born in Ayreshire on the west coast of Scotland in the year 1793 the son of James and Mary Ann Woodrow Archbald, he grew up on his father's sheep farm on Little Cumbray Isle. At the age of 14 he emigrated to America with his parents who settled on a farm in the Mohawk Valley at Auriesville, Montgomery County, near Amsterdam, N.Y. His education training was limited but he was fortunate to have Scottish parents who had superior literary and cultural tastes.

In 1817 when the construction of the Erie Canal commenced, James Archbald now 24, secured a job as a contractor and built that portion of the Canal which passed thru his father's farm. John B. Jervis, the Canal's Chief Engineer, was so well pleased with the work done by the young man that he offered him a position on his engineering corps. When the Erie Canal was completed in 1825, Mr. Jervis was next given the job of building the Delaware and Hudson Canal from Honesdale, Pa. to Kingston, N.Y. and the Gravity Railroad from Carbondale to Honesdale as well. (Port Jervis, N.Y. was named for him) Jervis gave Archbald a job as an engineer on a division of that canal.

In 1829 when the D. & H. Canal and Railroad were completed and the coal mines opened, our subject located in Carbondale where he was elected the Superintendent of the D. & H. Canal Co. Carbondale was then a new and growing settlement and here he made his home for the next 28 years. During that time he made several improvements to the Gravity Railroad and extended it south to a mining village called White Oak Run, which in honor was renamed "Archbald".

When in 1847 the Pennsylvania Coal Co. began building a gravity road from Pittston to Hawley, Mr. Archbald was chosen as the Engineer. He personally surveyed the entire 47 mile route and supervised its construction. So well did he engineer the road, which began at Pittston and ran thru Scranton, Dunmore, over the Moosic Mountain to Mt. Cobb and Lake Ariel, that the route needed only 13 stationary steam engines to draw the loaded coal cars up the inclined planes and then with the maximum use of natural land contours, the cars coasted most of the rest of the way to the Canal at Hawley. This Gravity road operated from 1850 to 1885 and was a monument to Archbald's ingenuity.

When Carbondale was incorporated as a City in 1851, the citizens to show their respect and attachment to him elected Archbald as the First Mayor, which office he filled for four successive one year terms. In 1854 Mr. Archbald was chosen as the Vice President of the Michigan Southern and Indiana Northern Railroad and during a two year stay in the West, he built a railroad from Toledo, Ohio to Indianapolis.

Meanwhile the iron and coal industries at Scranton were growing rapidly as was traffic on the newly built Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad. In 1856 the Directors of the D. L. & W. called Mr. Archbald to serve as the General Agent and Chief Engineer of their road. Accordingly he located in Scranton and superintended the building of yet another railroad, the Lackawanna and Bloomsburg, later the Southern Division of the D. L. He continued in the service of the D. L. for the remainder of his life, "enjoying the entire confidence and affection of the Railroad managers and employees." He died at his home in Scranton August 26, 1870 at the age of 75, after having been identified for 45 years with the development of two great coal companies, the Delaware and Hudson and the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western. It was said of him that "the simplicity of his character, the purity of



his life and the uprightness of his dealings, made his name an honored and highly respected one". He was a great reader, an ardent admirer of poetry, could recite lengthy quotations from Burns and Byron and a musician as well.

His home and family life were likewise worthy of note. In 1832 Mr. Archbald married Sarah Augusta Frothingham born in 1805 the daughter of Major Thomas and Elizabeth Frost Frothingham of Sand Lake, N.Y. Her father had served as a Major in the Revolutionary War and as a Senator in the New York Legislature. The Archbalds lived in Carbondale where their seven children were born until 1857 when they moved to Scranton. Here Mr. Archbald built a handsome new residence that same year. It was, as pictured on the front of the Bulletin, a large brick house designed in Victorian Italianate style and stood on a wide lot at the corner of Monroe Ave. and Ridge Row, adjacent to the present Catlin House. It remained there as a family residence for many years and was razed about 1925; the site is now a parking lot for the University of Scranton students.

James and Sarah Archbald were the parents of seven children, viz. James, Mary, Augusta, Thomas and Robert W. plus a son who died in infancy and a daughter Elizabeth who died at age 12. Augusta never married and lived at home and Thomas became a railroad contractor at Corning, N.Y. The lives of the other three James, Mary & Robert W. will be noted in detail.

1. **James Archbald** born 1838 and died 1910 was graduated from Union College and served as a Captain during the Civil War. Like his father, he became the Chief Engineer of the D. L. & W. Railroad, serving in that capacity from 1870 until 1899. He engineered the extension of the D.L. from Binghamton to Buffalo, N.Y. Later he made surveys for railroads in West Virginia and Mississippi and was involved in the paving of many of Scranton's streets. He married Maria H. Albright 1841-1915 the daughter of Joseph J. Albright of Scranton. They lived in a large home at 424 Jefferson Avenue and were the parents of six children as follows: James, a coal operator at Pottsville, Pa.; Joseph who lived in Buffalo, N.Y. Elizabeth who married Atty. John C. Kerr of Englewood, N.J.; Thomas a Presbyterian clergyman; Augusta who married John H. Brooks, a prominent Scranton stock broker and Ruth who married Halstead Little a banker in Englewood, N.J. and who is still living at age 97. Jennie who was the wife of Rev. Thomas Archbald above, was an early Girl Scout leader in Scranton and in her honor "Camp Archbald" the Scranton Girl Scout summer camp near Brooklyn, Pa. was named. Mary Brooks one of the daughters of Augusta Brooks above, married A. Whitney Griswold, who served as President of Yale University.

2. **Mary W. Archbald** born 1840 and died 1902 married George H. Catlin 1845-1936. He became a prominent Scranton banker, serving as one of the organizers and Vice President of the Third National Bank for 65 years. They lived in her parents home on Ridge Row and had no children. After her death he married again to Helen Walsh and in 1912 they built the Catlin House which they generously bequeathed to the Lackawanna Historical Society.

3. **Hon. Robert Woodrow Archbald** born 1848 and died 1926 was graduated from Yale University and admitted to the Bar in 1873. He was elected to serve as a Judge in the Courts of Lackawanna County in 1885 where he presided with distinction until 1901 when he was appointed as the First Federal Judge of the U.S. District Court, serving there until 1913, a total of 28 years on the Bench. Judge Archbald was a nature lover and deeply interested in this Historical Society. He married Elizabeth Cannon 1850-1923 of Oxford, N.Y. and they lived at 236 Monroe Avenue in a large home adjacent to the Catlin House. They were the parents of three children: Robert W. Anna and Hugh Archbald.

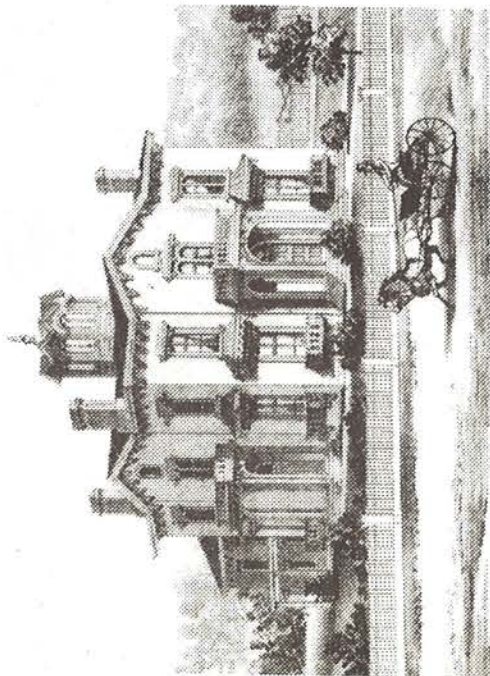
Most of the members of this prominent and interesting family lie buried in the Dunmore Cemetery under a large monument of red Scottish granite. The family were all strong Presbyterians in their religious faith. This is a brief record of a significant family whose members made lasting contributions to the life of this area and though there are no descendants now living in this county, the family name lives on in the Borough of Archbald, Camp Archbald and Archbald Street in Scranton.

William P. Lewis

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## LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CATLIN HOUSE  
232 MONROE AVENUE  
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18510



Residence of James Archbald