

LHS PROGRAMS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Wednesday, January 15, 1986, 8:00 PM - The LHS will present a musical program, featuring Dr. Andre J. M. Prevos. The program traces the history and development of "The Blues in America" with Dr. Prevos performing pieces illustrating his talk. A native of France, Dr. Prevos is Assistant Professor of French and Spanish at the Worthington Scranton Penn State Campus.

Wednesday, February 19, 1986, 8:00 PM - Dr. Theodore L. Zawistowski, Instructor of Sociology at the Worthington Scranton Penn state Campus, will present a slide lecture entitled, "Maintaining Ethnic Consciousness." Dr. Zawistowski has been editor of the bi-lingual Polish weekly, Straz, since 1973.

Wednesday, March 19, 1986, 8:00 PM - Dr. Donald Miller, Professor of History at Lafayette College in Easton will present a slide lecture entitled, "The Industrial Revolution in the Anthracite Region." Dr. Miller's program was part of Lafayette College's "Anthracite Symposium" held in Easton during the month of September, 1985.

CATLIN HOUSE NEWS

GRANT AWARDED - The LHS has been awarded a grant from the Scranton Area Foundation to help us publish a post-card history of Scranton architecture and life. The book, called Greetings from Scranton, was researched and written by newly-elected Board member, Jack Hiddlestone. The book, which contains pictures and histories of almost every Scranton landmark (some in color!) will be available in early 1986.

REGIONAL GRANT AWARDED - The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has awarded a regional grant to three area organizations which have been working collaboratively to begin a program of conservation and duplication of the photographic artifacts in their archives: The Lackawanna Historical Society, the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society, and the Scranton Anthracite Museum. The LHS will use its portion of the grant to restore and print a collection of 110 "glass-plate negatives" which have recently been discovered in storage. The positive prints will be available for viewing in early 1986.

VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE - Do you like to meet new people, get "out of the house," learn a new skill, or practice old skills? If so, the LHS Volunteer Committee may be just what you are looking for. The LHS currently needs dedicated persons to help guide group tours, work on museum inventory, and to catalog the photograph archives. Do not worry because you may have never worked in a museum before; we will train you! Volunteers at the Catlin House come from all walks of life, cover all age groups, and possess a variety of interests. Just an hour or two per week "donated" by each volunteer can make the difference between completing an important project or letting it "hang."
If you would like to become a Catlin House volunteer, call Society Director, Dorothy Allen, at 344-3841.

PROGRAM - DECEMBER, 1985

Wednesday, December 4, 1985 - The Catlin House, 8:00 PM

The annual LHS Christmas program will feature a musical performance by Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Haefield-Mordann of Waverly. Mrs. Haefield-Mordann is an accomplished guitarist, and Rev. Tom, who holds a Ph.D. in art history, has recently joined the Board of Trustees of the LHS. A refreshment and social hour will follow the program. Members are encouraged to invite a guest!

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

THE CHRISTMAS TREE - According to German legends, the first Christmas tree was an evergreen that sprang from the stump of a large oak tree which Saint Boniface had cut down in the eighth century. Prior to the introduction of the Christian religion in Germany, the native people had practiced a pagan religion which, among other things, held that oak trees were sacred because they were dwelling places of pagan gods. When Saint Boniface chopped down the oak tree, it symbolized that the old pagan beliefs were banished. As the tree grew, with its pointed top reaching skyward, Saint Boniface is reputed to have told his people that, "It is the sign of endless life, for its leaves are evergreen." Decorated Christmas trees became popular in Europe in the seventeenth century, and the tradition was brought to America with European immigration. An early reference to a Christmas tree in the United States is the Diary of Matthew Zahm of Lancaster (Lancaster County Historical Society Proceedings, Vol. 47, page 64): "Sally & our Thos. & Wm. Hensel was out for Christmas trees, on the hill at Kendrick's saw mill." The year was 1821.

BOUGHS OF HOLLY - During the Roman celebration honoring Saturn, the Roman god of Agriculture, which fell in late December, pagans decorated their homes with greens and gave each other holly boughs as a symbol of friendship. Early Christians, to avoid persecution, hung holly wreaths on their doors to hide their beliefs from the Romans. As time passed, the Christians adopted the custom, and the practice spread to all parts of Europe and then to the United States.

MISTLETOE - The original symbol of the mistletoe as a sign of peace seems to have arisen in various countries simultaneously. In early Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries, mistletoe was hung over entryways. When people who were at war with one another passed beneath the mistletoe, they were supposed to greet as friends, leaving their weapons outside. It was common at that time to kiss the other person's cheek as a sign of friendship; perhaps the modern romantic custom is derived from this.

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS - The custom of hanging stockings has an Eastern European origin. In 300 AD, the city of Myra in Asia Minor was under the spiritual leadership of a Bishop Nikolai (who later became known as Saint Nicholas.) Legend tells us that the kind bishop learned of the plight of a poor man who could not afford dowries for his daughters. At that time, it was considered absolutely necessary to provide a daughter with a dowry to assure that she marry well. The bishop, knowing that the father was too proud to accept money as a gift, devised a plan. One night, Bishop Nikolai rode his horse past the man's house, stopped, and threw three bags of gold coins through an open window. One of the bags of gold, legend

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