

The LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bulletin

Open:
Tuesday - Friday
10 - 4:30
Saturday: 10 - 12

Closed:
Sunday & Monday



CATLIN HOUSE
Home of the Historical Society
232 Monroe Ave., Scranton, Pa.

January - February 1967

YESTERDAY'S NEWSPAPERS

The Lackawanna Historical Society has an excellent collection of bound volumes of local newspapers. Issues from shortly before the Civil War to the beginning of World War I are kept on the third floor of the Catlin House. Issues covering the 1917 to 1938 period are stored in the basement. If you have time on your hands and are muscular enough to do some weight lifting, for the volumes are quite heavy, you may find it fascinating to leaf through the old newspapers and read items that once had a sense of immediacy, but now are merely part of a time that was. Here are some random excerpts:

(An advertisement in The Scranton Republican, Thursday, January 1, 1857)

Minooka! Minooka!! - The most enchanting spot in the Lackawanna Valley is that chosen as the site of the new Village of Minooka. It is two miles south of Scranton on the lands of the National Anthracite Coal Company, and commands an unobstructed view of Scranton, Providence, Hyde Park, Bellevue [sic] and Taylorsville, as well as of the extensive works of the various Coal, Iron and Rail Road Companies in this part of the valley.

A map of the town may be seen at the office of Messrs. LATHROPE & JONES at Scranton, who are authorized to sell as lot agents.

D. D. BIRNEY
President, National Anthracite Coal Co.

In January, 1921, Toots and Casper were trying to decide what to name their baby. They eventually named him "Buttercup." Now, 46 years later, the

comic strip is still running in the newspapers; and Buttercup is still a baby.

Francis X. Bushman, the silent screen star, and his leading lady, Beverly Bayne, appeared in person at the Poli Theater in January, 1921. The Poli, where all the great vaudeville stars appeared, was located in the 200 block of Wyoming Avenue. It is now known as the Comerford.

The annual auto show opened at the Armory on January 31, 1921. None of the following cars, which were displayed at the 1921 show, are manufactured now:

Scripts-Booth; Locomobile; Peerless; Mercer; Moon; Maxwell; Chandler; Packard; Nash; Briscoe; Winton; Reo; Oakland; Daniels; Cole; Stephens; Gardner; Kissel; Jordan; Willys-Knight.

Local auto dealers who were involved with the auto show were:

Joe Curt; Fred Warner; Oscar Schnell; Don Betterly; George L. Smeal; Harold B. Chrisler; Fred Barnitz; F. J. Miller; G. W. Slocum; and Harold Conrad.

In February, 1925, the Academy Theater, which once stood on Wyoming Avenue across the street from St. Luke's Church, was a busy place. Professional theatrical companies were "on the road" in those days, and Scranton was one of their regular stops. Rudolph Friml's musical, "Rose Marie," played at the Academy, with Irene Pavloska of the Chicago Opera Company in the title role. Seat prices ranged from 75¢ to \$3.00. One of the immortals of the operatic world,

Geraldine Farrar, was seen as "Carmen" at the Academy on February 27.

The Academy was also used by local drama and musical groups, and the following singers appeared in Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta, "Pinafore," on February 16, 17, and 18:

Helen O'Neill McKenna; Marita Dean; Mildred Cossmans; John Burnett; Edward May; Joseph Keating; Thomas Collins; Peter Walsh; and George Brust. The performance was directed by Frank J. Daniel. The accompanist was Mae Smith Lynott.

Radio was a very popular, and new, form of entertainment in February, 1925. One of the most listened to of local groups was The Four Rounders, featuring singers Eddie McManus and Bob Reilly, with Howard White at the piano, and Milton Protheroe playing the banjo. They were heard over station WQAN (now WEJL).

FEBRUARY MEETING

On Tuesday, February 28, 1967, the featured speaker will be Professor George Winterstein, who will discuss the history of local drama groups. Now director of the Drama Department at Keystone Junior College, Mr. Winterstein is eminently qualified to speak on the chosen topic, for he has had a wealth of experience as a director of local drama groups. In the course of his career he had directed scores of plays for The Jewish Community Center, The Footlights Guild, the YWCA, and the Wilkes-Barre Little Theatre. He was formerly a member of the Speech and Drama Department at Marywood College.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Dr. John O. MacLean – Immediate past president of the Lackawanna Historical Society, Dr. MacLean, is a native of Nova Scotia. After graduating from Dalhousie Medical College in Halifax, he interned at Victoria General Hospital in the same city. He came to Scranton in 1924, and was Chief Resident Physician at the Scranton State Hospital. This was followed by private practice and a sixteen-year period as Chief Surgeon at Moses Taylor Hospital. He was also Assistant Chief Surgeon for the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad. He is currently engaged in private practice. Dr. MacLean is a member of the Lackawanna Medical Society, the Pennsylvania Medical Society, the American Medical Society, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, and the Kiwanis Club. He is also a 33rd degree Mason.

Miss Margaret Briggs – A member of the Board of Trustees since 1942, Miss Briggs is currently chairman of the House Committee. She is a past president of Family Welfare Service of Lackawanna County, and a past president of The Century Club. She serves on the advisory boards of The Welfare Council, and The Visiting Nurse Association. Miss Briggs' family has deep roots in the Scranton area. Early in the 19th Century, her great-great grandfather, Job Briggs, accompanied by his six brothers, drove an ox team from Providence, Rhode Island, and settled on farms in Keyser Valley.

Mrs. T. Archer Morgan – After graduation from college, Mrs. Morgan was Woman's Editor and Assistant Drama Critic for the Philadelphia North American. She came to Scranton as the bride of a mining engineer who died prematurely following surgery. She then taught English at Technical High School, and later married T. Archer Morgan, who for many years had been Treasurer of the Lackawanna Historical Society. She was invited to become a member of the Board of Trustees following Mr. Morgan's death. She has served as president of The Century Club, and on the advisory boards of the Scranton Community Concert Association, the Scranton Philharmonic Orchestra, Keystone Junior College, the Everhart Museum Association, and Westminster Presbyterian Church.

ARTIFACT CORNER

A recent gift to the Historical Society is a beautifully carved mahogany double-desk [circa 1875] which once belonged to John Jermyn, and for many years was in George B. Jermyn's lovely home, "Hilltop," at 616 North Webster Avenue. It was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Philip Christian. Mrs. Christian is a granddaughter of the late George B. Jermyn.

Standing on top of the Jermyn desk is a model of the "Spitfire," the first engine used on the D. L. & W. Railroad. The model was made in the D. L. & W. Keyser Valley shops by Jacob Hofmeister of 716 River Street. It was presented to the Society in 1951 on the occasion of the Lackawanna's Centennial.

The old Lackawanna Railroad station once stood in the 100 block of Lackawanna Avenue. In 1908 the present station was opened to the public, and the person who purchased the first ticket in the new station was George B. Jermyn. Mr. Jermyn was very proud of this fact and had the ticket framed, along with his check for the ticket and an affidavit signed by the ticket agent. We are proud to have this artifact also; it is an interesting and fitting companion to the Jermyn desk and the "Spitfire."

NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to announce that sixty-nine new members joined the Lackawanna Historical Society since November 1, 1966, and only regret that space does not permit the listing of their names.

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232 MONROE AVENUE
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18510



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