

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

- April 17 ANNUAL CLEAN UP DAY
CATLIN HOUSE 10:00AM (RAIN DATE: APRIL 24)
- 25 FATHER JOSEPH MURGAS: RADIO'S FORGOTTEN GENIUS
VIDEO AND PRESENTATION BY THE SLOVAK HERITAGE SOCIETY
OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
CATLIN HOUSE 2:00PM
- May 1 A TASTE OF HISTORY
FUND RAISER \$20 PER PERSON
CATLIN HOUSE 7:00 PM TO 9:00 PM
- May 7 PA COAL COMPANY GRAVITY RAILROAD MARKER DEDICATION
DUNMORE 4:00 PM . CALL THE SOCIETY FOR DETAILS.
- May 15 ANNUAL PLACES OF WORSHIP TOUR IN MOSCOW AND ELMHURST
USE REGISTRATION FORM ON PAGE 3. FEE: NON-MEMBERS \$15 MEMBERS \$12
DEPART CATLIN HOUSE AT 9:30 AM
- May 26 ANNUAL DINNER: GARY HINES AS GIFFORD PINCHOT
FEE: \$30 PER PERSON
HOLIDAY INN IN DUNMORE

Note: Beginning January 1, 1999, the Lackawanna Historical Society will charge a \$2 non-member admission fee for Programs presented at the Catlin House.

THE LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
at THE GEORGE H. CATLIN HOUSE
232 MONROE AVENUE
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18510

MR. & MRS. ALAN SWEENEY
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SCRANTON, PA. 18509

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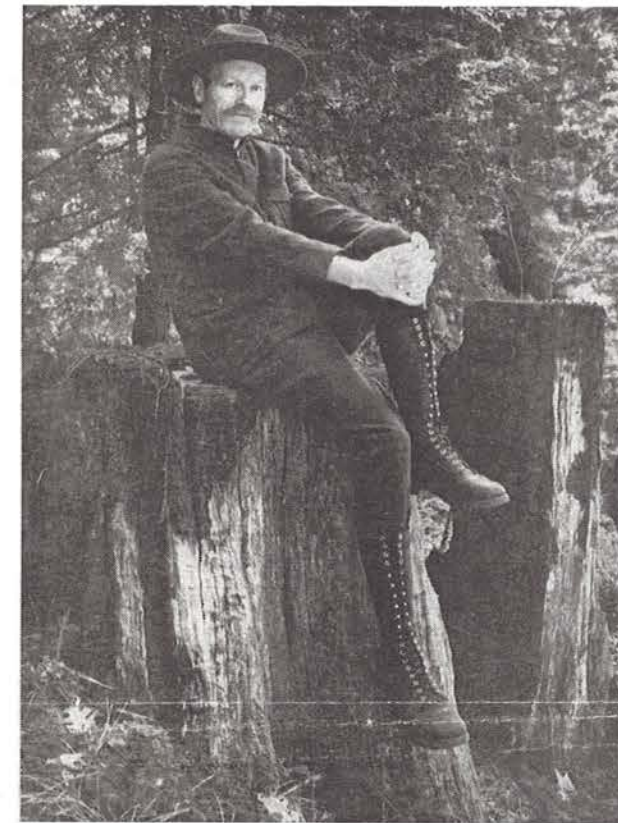
The LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

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Gifford Pinchot From The Other Side

On May 26, 1999 at the Holiday Inn in Dunmore, the Lackawanna Historical Society will present Gary Hines in his one-man play, *Gifford Pinchot, From the Other Side* as the main program at the Annual Dinner.

Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the Forest Service, was an instrumental force behind the forestry movement in the United States. Many of the conservation policies implemented during Theodore Roosevelt's administration were influenced by Pinchot's advice and close friendship with the President. He wrote several books during his life, and much of Hines' performance is drawn from his final work, *Breaking New Ground*, completed just prior to his death in 1946.

Gary Hines is the Deputy Director of Grey Towers National Historic Landmark administered by the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The Annual Dinner is scheduled to start at 6:30 pm. Dinner will be served at 7:00 pm and Mr. Hines presentation will begin after dinner. Invitations will be mailed soon so mark your calendar and plan to join us for this special event.

- photograph by William Todd Baxter

LACKAWANNA STATE PARK HAS ENDURING HISTORY BY LINDA M. SCOTT

Many vehicles traveling on Route 407 on any given day, will turn into the Lackawanna State Park. Approximately 300,000 to 400,000 people use the park, but how many have ever stopped to reflect on the history of the land and how the state park came into being?

Nearly 100 years before the park was opened, a group of local farmers in the area, with an interest in race horses, gathered together and formed the Maitland Fair and Driving Park Company in 1895 and created a fairgrounds on land that is now occupied by the state park. People arrived from Binghamton, NY and locally, from Scranton, at the Dalton D.L. & W. Railroad Station to visit the grounds. The fair grounds remained in existence until 1907.

The highway, which today runs through the state park, follows

an old Indian trail that ran from the Lackawanna Valley to the New York state line. The area along the highway was originally known as Carpenterstown, after a family who resided there.

It seems difficult to imagine that an entire town once stood where today there is only a post office, lake, and highway, but this area was once the home of Wallsville Corners.

Ezra Bassett, Benton Township's first settler, arrived here from Plainfield, Connecticut and settled in an area known as Prickly Ash Flats which is now Lackawanna Lake. Another early settler, Ezra Wall, built a tavern there in 1825, and in 1829 he added a post office and store. Wallsville is named after him.

The Wallsville Post Office opened in 1850 and closed in 1903 when rural delivery was started in Dalton.

Mark Whaling operated a blacksmith shop in the area and Benjamin Spencer built a grist mill where the dam stands today. Mr. Spencer ran the mill for ten years and then turned it over to Samuel States who continued to operate it for another 50 years.

Eleanor Sheard and Bernice Turley, who lived at Wallsville Corners for a time during their childhood, recalled a popular swimming hole, that was once located near the present dam.

Frances Hopper Ridgeway, a direct descendant of the Hopper family recalled her school days at the Alyesworth Schoolhouse, where she attended grades one through eight. Students would continue their education at Dalton or Clarks Summit.

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The Society's Bookstore

Recently the Society has uncovered several duplicate limited edition copies of three historical publications. These titles are now available for purchase at the Catlin House and include.

FOLLOWING THE CONNECTICUT TRAIL

by Fletcher Weyburn
Published by the Anthracite Press Company in 1932, this 178 page book offers an account of the early settlement of Northeast Pa. Follow the trail of county pioneers as they settled in the vast region of PA between the Delaware River and the Susquehanna Valley and their contribution to the growth and prosperity of the Lackawanna Valley.

Softcover \$8.50

HENRY MARTIN BOISE 1837-1903

various authors
Published in 1904. Compilation of biographical tributes.

Hardcover \$25.00

HISTORY OF THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF SCRANTON

Issued by authority of the Board of Directors, Published in 1906. This 192 page book relates the history of Scranton's First National Bank, incorporated 1863, and includes photographs and illustrations.

Hardcover \$25.00



For a complete list of items for sale, contact the Society at (570) 344-3841. Prices listed above are non-member prices and do not include tax.

ABOUT MEMBERSHIP

Yes, I am interested in supporting the Lackawanna Historical Society through my 1999 membership.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing | \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$150 | | |

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Membership benefits include unlimited use of the Society's research facility, quarterly newsletter, discount on items sold through the Society, advanced notice and admission to all programs and lectures, and special discounts on annual events. Make check payable to the Lackawanna Historical Society and send to 232 Monroe Avenue, Scranton, PA 18510. Membership is run on a yearly basis from January through December and is renewable every January.

*PAST DUE MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Membership renewals were due February 15, 1999. To date 350 members have renewed... have you?

The Lackawanna Historical Society 1998-99

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Eileen Pocius *2nd Vice President*
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The Lackawanna Historical Society is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization which is dedicated to keeping vital the history of Lackawanna County. It is supported in part by the Catlin Memorial Trust, Lackawanna County, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and membership dues.

The *Lackawanna Historical Society Journal* is published by The Lackawanna Historical Society, 232 Monroe Avenue, Scranton, Pa. 18510. Tel. (570) 344-3841.

Members of the Society receive this publication. Membership contributions are \$22 and up for individuals, \$30 for families, and \$125 for organizations.

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LACKAWANNA STATE PARK

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The Methodist Episcopal Church was started at the old Aylesworth School in 1830. Residents of Wallsville Corners used the school-house until a proper church could be constructed. The church was completed in 1867 at a cost of \$1,600, on land donated by Leonard Hopfer. It remained in use for several years but was torn down after enrollment declined.

Today, the only evidence of these early settlers is a small cemetery located near the park office. The cemetery was associated with the Methodist church and several members of the Hopfer family are buried there. It is also the final resting place of Reverend Jacob Koehler, founder of the Scranton State School for the Deaf. As the Wallsville community developed, its residents saw a strong need for a public park and decided to build it on the site of the Maitland Fair and Driving Park and Wallsville Corners. Robert Y. Moffat, Sr. a well known coal company owner sold over 500 acres of land to use for the new park. Before he sold it, Moffat used the land for several company homes.

The Lackawanna State Park developed as part of Project 70, a bond project to acquire recreational lands and Project 500, which provided funding for various facilities.

As the park was constructed many of the homes within Wallsville Corners were demolished. According to Gerald Frost, Superintendent of the Lackawanna State Park, only four of the original homes are still standing.

Palumbo's, a well known restaurant was also purchased as part of the park project. It remained in existence, but had to relocate when the lake was built. The Inn of the

Abington's now occupies the site where Palumbo's once stood.

When 100 acres were cleared for the Lackawanna Lake, three burial plots with tombstones were discovered and had to be removed for reburial in Fleetville. The first burial was marked as the final resting place of Ezra Royal Bassett. The grave of Ezra Bassett Hall, aged one year and six months, was marked by a second tombstone. The third marker was unreadable.

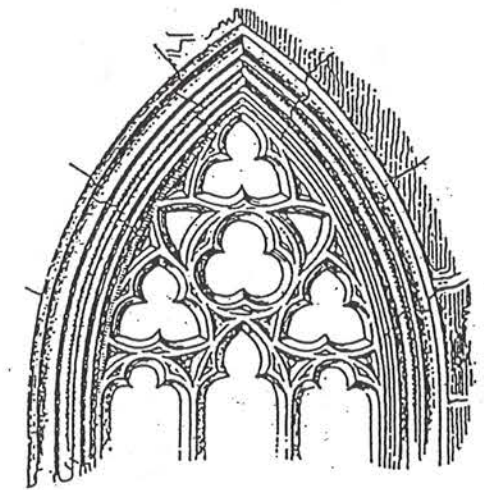
Construction of the state park was begun in 1968 and completed in 1972 at a cost of \$4.67 million. June 8, 1972 marked the dedication of the new park. Robert W. Pettinato, then Lackawanna County Commissioner, served as master of ceremonies and Dr. Maurice Goddard, Secretary Department of Environmental Resources, delivered the dedication address.

Just twenty days after opening, the new park had to close to correct problems with the sewage system. It opened a second time on August 3, 1972.

The campground was completed in 1975 and today there are 96 sites for tents and trailers. The camping season runs from the second Friday in April to the third Sunday in October.

Summer activities include swimming, fishing, boating, picnicing and hiking on more than five miles of trails. Ice skating, cross country skiing, ice fishing, and sleigh riding are popular winter activities.

The area that once occupied the Maitland Fair and Driving Park has come a long way but still serves as an excellent recreational facility to the community. *Note from the editor: The above article was taken from a paper prepared by Linda M. Scott, Keystone College, La Plume, Pa.*



7th Annual Places of Worship

Join the Lackawanna Historical Society on May 15, 1999 for the 7th Annual Places of Worship Tour. This year, the Society plans to focus on places of worship in Moscow and Elmhurst including:

The Elmhurst Presbyterian Church
St. Catherine's Roman Catholic Church
The United Methodist Church of Moscow
St. Gregory's Academy
St. Eulalia's Roman Catholic Church
Temple Hessed at Lake Scranton

Historical background will be provided by each church and architectural styles and designs will be discussed by local Architect Joseph DeScipio.

Members \$12
Non-Members \$15

(Price includes bus transportation and boxed lunch)

Space is limited, so reserve early. Reservations must be made by May 11, 1999 through the Lackawanna Historical Society.

PLACES OF WORSHIP TOUR 1999 REGISTRATION FORM

Please detach and return with your payment to:
Lackawanna Historical Society
232 Monroe Avenue
Scranton PA 18510

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Number of persons attending:
____LHS Members \$12 ____Non-members \$15

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____