

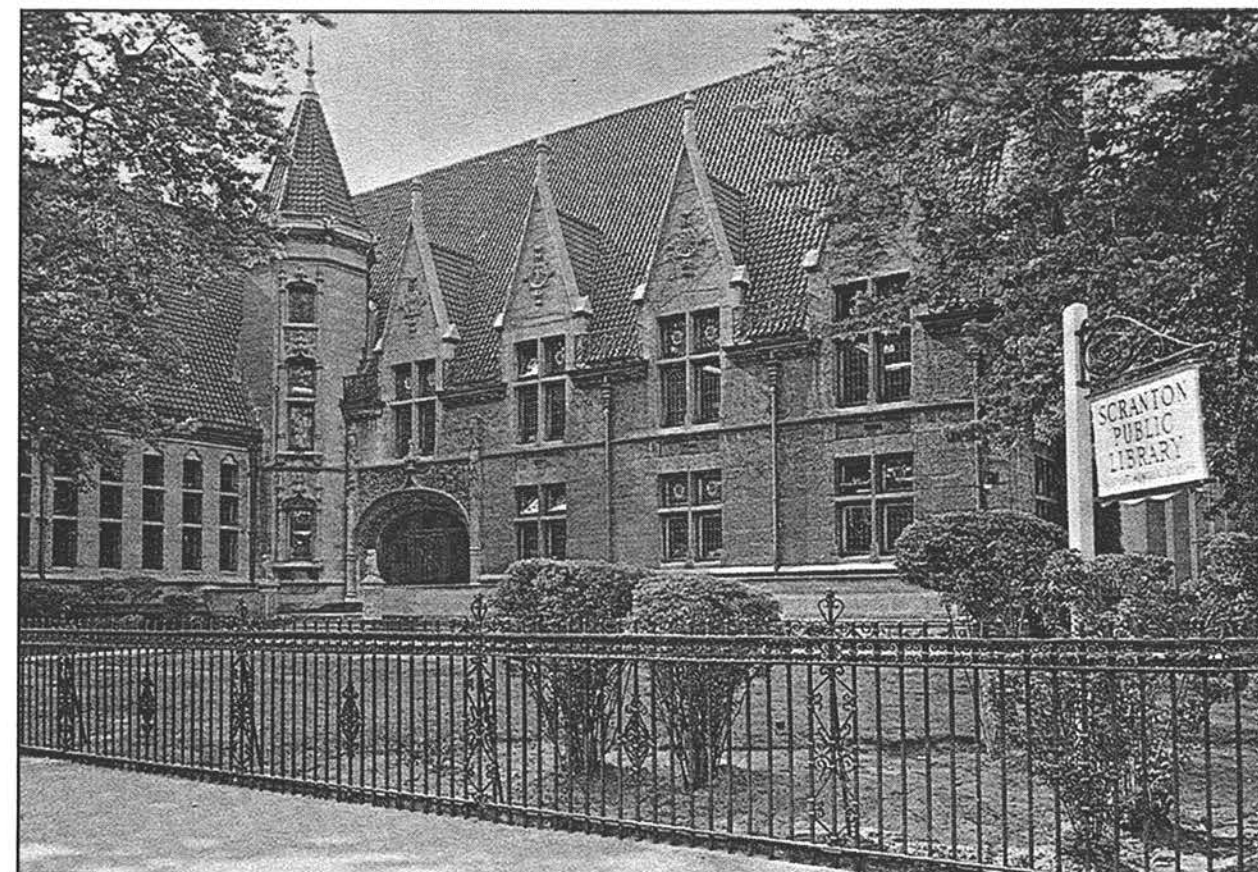
## UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- APR. 30** **CLEAN UP DAY AT THE CATLIN HOUSE**  
VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR WEEDING, RAKING AND GENERAL SPRUCING UP FOR SPRING  
CATLIN HOUSE 9:00 A.M.
- MAY 4** **BOOK DISCUSSION**  
AUTHOR LUCIA DAILEY WILL DISCUSS HER WORK *MINE SEED*,  
A NOVEL ABOUT MINING FROM THE MINER'S PERSPECTIVE,  
WEINBERG MEMORIAL LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON 7:30 P.M. TO 9:30 P.M.
- MAY 15** **SYNAGOGUE TOUR**  
CATLIN HOUSE 9:00 A.M.
- JUNE 19** **HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR OF THE HILL**  
11:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M. TICKET SALES WILL BEGIN SOON.
- JUNE 25 & 26** **HICKORY GROVE CEMETERY: UNDER THE ABINGTON MOON**  
SATURDAY 5:00 P.M., SUNDAY 2:00 P.M. ADDITIONAL DETAILS TBA
- AUGUST 6 & 7** **DUNMORE CEMETERY: UNDER THE LACKAWANNA MOON**  
SATURDAY 5:00 P.M., SUNDAY 2:00 P.M. ADDITIONAL DETAILS TBA

LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
232 MONROE AVENUE  
SCRANTON, PA 18510

Frank J McDonnell  
1218 Delaware Street  
Dunmore, PA

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### Albright Memorial Library: The People's University

by Cheryl A. Kashuba

The first thing you notice about the Albright Memorial Library is the structure itself. Dedicated on May 25, 1893, the late Gothic design follows the architecture of Paris' Musee Cluny, once an abbey that sheltered Bourguignon monks. Like the former abbey after which it is designed, the ornate arches, heavy stone, and black Spanish tile roof invoke a sense of the sacred.

Inside, stained glass windows featuring Renaissance bookbinding designs, the lightness and soaring space form a secular cathedral regarded as one of the finest examples of French Gothic architecture in the United States.

Designed by Buffalo architects Green and Wicks, and built by Conrad Schroeder, this public

jewel grew out of the intention of Joseph J. Albright Jr. and his siblings to erect a memorial in honor of their late parents, Joseph J. and Elizabeth Albright. As Joseph Albright Jr. wrote, in a January 1890 letter to the Scranton Board of Trade, "it was here that their greatest success was achieved, where they are best known and where they made many friends."

All four of the Albright's children donated the land at the corner of Washington Avenue and Vine Street, on which their parents' home sat. It was Joseph Jr. who provided the funds for the library building, taking his intentions beyond the memorial to his parents. He wrote that the family land was "to be held for the pur-



**New Members**

**Student**

**Stephen Howancz, Olyphant**

**Individual**

- Marie Crispino, Scranton**
- Ted Daniels, Scranton**
- Maria Fabricatore-Jahnke, Dunmore**
- Jennifer Jonak, Hyde Park, NY**
- Cheryl Kashuba, Scranton**
- Harriet McAndrew, Peckville**
- Edward Osman, Dalton**
- Mike Sheridan, Olyphant**
- Loretta P. Slowikowski, Factoryville**
- Annette Terry, Simpson**
- Noel Tollok, Scranton**

**Family**

- Mr. and Mrs. Peter Bohlin, Waverly**
- Mr. and Mrs. Alan Craig, High Bridge, NJ**
- Patricia J. Stewart, Bear Creek**

**Contributing**

**Mary Felley, Dalton**

**Reminder!**

**2005 membership renewals were due March 1, 2005.**

**About Membership...** Membership privileges include unlimited access to the Society library, 10% discount in our bookstore, advance notice and invitations to all Society activities, special members-only programs and the quarterly newsletter. Attached is a membership form you can use to renew your membership or give to a friend or neighbor who is interested in joining. Please return it to: The Lackawanna Historical Society at 232 Monroe Avenue, Scranton, PA 18510

**LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM**

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$10	NAME _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25	
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35	ADDRESS _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	\$75	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$150	
<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Corporate	\$250	TELEPHONE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Corporate	\$500	

**The Lackawanna Historical Society 2005-06**

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 Richard Bovard 1st Vice President  
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 Mary Ann Gavern Museum Assistant  
 Marian Yevics Receptionist  
 James Gavern Caretaker  
 Cheryl Kashuba Editor

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 \$25 and up for individuals, \$35 for Families, and \$125 for organizations. Special Silver and Gold Corporate memberships are available.

The Lackawanna Historical Society Journal is printed in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Entire contents copyrighted © 2005 by the Lackawanna Historical Society. Questions or comments can be addressed in writing directly to the Society.

**The Lackawanna Historical Society Fund For the Future**

The Society is grateful to everyone who supported our first annual fund drive campaign this past year. Donations received amounted to \$8,705. These funds will be very helpful to the Society as we continue our mission to preserve and promote the fascinating history of Lackawanna County.

Contributions received since January:  
 Silk Thrower: Tom Horlacher

**Monumental Event in Scranton**

On April 2nd, the Society joined the Delaney Delacy Guard, SVR and the Sons of Union Veterans to celebrate the restoration of the Phil Sheridan Monument with a day of special events including a parade, performance by the 28th Regimental Brass Band of Philadelphia, and traditional Civil War Ball. Although the weather was not cooperative, over 100 people attended, many dressed in period clothing! Special thanks to everyone who worked to make the event a smashing success! Much fun was had by all!

Thanks to:

- ◆ Alan Sweeney and John Hart for coordinating all events
  - ◆ Dunmore Publishing Inc. for all printed material
  - ◆ Jenn and John Ochman for their time and efforts in scheduling and teaching dance lessons, and for promoting the Ball
  - ◆ Stephen Bockmiller and the 28th PA Regimental Brass Band for providing the music and dance calls
  - ◆ Century Club for providing the venue
  - ◆ Robert Savakinus and Tom Cipriano for staffing the registration table
  - ◆ The Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel for providing refreshments
- Program Sponsors were:
- ◆ The Mall at Steamtown
  - ◆ O'Malley and Langan
  - ◆ Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority

**THIS DAY IN HISTORY**

- 1892**  
**23 Apr.** Cornerstone of Elm Park M.E. church laid
- 25 May** Dorflinger glass factory near Honesdale destroyed by fire
- 1894**  
**19 May** Druggist convicted of selling soda water on Sunday
- 21 May** John A. Mears buys A.D. Dean and Alfred Harvey property on Washington Ave. and Spruce St. for \$80,000
- 18 June** John Jermyn awards steel contract for hotel on Wyoming Ave. to Pottsville Steel Co. for \$50,000
- 19 June** E.B. Robinson's brewery damaged \$10,000 by fire
- 1895**  
**11 May** 10,000 people attended Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show at Driving Park
- 1898**  
**April 18** William Jennings Bryan addressed a large gathering at the armory
- April 27** 50,000 people thronged the streets to honor the Thirteenth regiment upon its departure for Mt. Gretna to enter United States service in war against Spain for the liberation of the Cubans
- 1899**  
**30 April** Mrs. Ira Tripp dies at age 81
- 1902**  
**29 May** John Jermyn dies at age 74
- 31 May** John Mitchell refuses to withdraw the order calling out engineers, firemen and pump runners as the great anthracite strike continues
- 1906**  
**28 May** Luna Park opens

**CENTENARIANS**

**Did you know?**

The LHS keeps a file of centenarians. Mary Ann Gavern began the file about 1990, and to date, it contains information on 150 people who lived to age 100 or older. The oldest person listed lived to age 106. Everyone listed in the file has roots in Lackawanna County.



## Ambassadors Sought

The Lackawanna Heritage Valley 2005 Ambassadors Program is set to begin next month. With tour stops at Steamtown National Historic Site, Nay Aug Park, the Scranton Cultural Center, and others, the Program offers an immersion in local history and culture and an opportunity to be a spokesperson for our local treasures.

The Program offers both full and half-day sessions:

FULL DAY	HALF DAY
May 18	May 24
June 29	
July 20	July 26
August 17	
September 21	September 27

To register, please call the Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority at 570-963-6730.



## Mayor Wenzel Seeks Photos, Stories

With a book about the mayors of Scranton in the works, Mayor David Wenzel is looking for photographs and stories about each of the 29 mayors of Scranton, from Howard Snowdon back. The photos should depict some historic event such as a ribbon cutting, meeting of dignitaries, or even disaster sites. Stories may have historic relevance or be just plain entertaining. Anyone wishing to submit photos or stories should contact Mayor Wenzel at the address or phone number listed below:

David Wenzel  
7 Phillips Drive  
Scranton, PA 18505  
(570) 344-7684

## Anthracite Postcard Club

We're happy to assist the Anthracite Postcard Club in extending an invitation to find out more about this group of avid collectors.

Meetings offer the opportunity to collect antique postcards – and a whole lot more. The club holds auctions and presents displays and speakers. Representatives from Lionel Trains, writers, and documentary filmmakers have spoken at meetings.

Members are happy to share their knowledge and interest in a range of local historic items and collectibles, including fire department memorabilia, holiday cards, Northern Electric R.R. memorabilia, mining memorabilia, Scranton Transit items, and Rocky Glenn memorabilia.

The club meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month on the second floor of the Clarks Summit borough hall. Yearly dues are \$7.00 and include a monthly newsletter. Anyone is invited to attend a meeting or to join the club. For more information, contact Mark Boock at 347-6671.

## Mining History Conference Highlights

The Mining History Association will hold its annual conference June 16 through 19 in Scranton. Conference highlights include:

- ◆ Welcoming Reception at the Electric City Trolley Museum; entertainment by Van Wagner
- ◆ Tour of the Lackawanna Coal Mine
- ◆ Pennsylvania Anthracite Heritage Museum
- ◆ A selection of Mining History Presentations, Meals, and Social Activities at the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Center
- ◆ Sunday Tour to the New Jersey Zinc Mining District, including the Sterling Hill Mine and Franklin (fluorescent) Mineral Museums
- ◆ Optional Post-conference Tour on June 20th featuring the Huber Breaker, Avondale Mine Disaster Site, and Eckley Miners Village

For information and Registration contact:  
Johnny Johnson  
2622 Deer Park Road  
Finksburg, Maryland 21048  
Email: johnny@qis.net

The Mining History Association website:  
[www.mininghistoryassociation.org](http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org)

## LHS Volunteer Finds Herstory in History

The people and events of our collective past, the glory days when coal was king and Scranton was the Electric City, the details of time and place that touched our lives and remain tangible in our memories – these are the things over which the LHS and its members have special stewardship.

Now and again, our emersion in our collective past leads deeper into a relationship with our own personal history. This is true for Ann Marie O'Hara, known at the Historical Society as an A-one docent and a walking history book on downtown Scranton. An interest in mourning customs brought Ann Marie to the Catlin house, and the wealth of programs and people has kept her with us.

But an experience some years ago as a non-traditional student at the University of Scranton took her further into the history of community and family than she might have expected.

Ann Marie's family had often told stories of Great Aunt Ella "Nellie" Murray, a Scranton school teacher and suffragette, but it was Susan Poulson's course on women in history that allowed Ann Marie to learn just how significant her family's personal connection to the larger community went.



Intrigued by an elderly aunt's statement that "Aunt Nellie was a suffragette," Ann Marie took her search to the University of Scranton's Weinberg Library, the vertical files of our own Historical Society, and other sources. Soon she uncovered newspaper articles telling of her Aunt Nellie speaking to church groups and participating in other suffrage activities.

An article that appeared in the June 15, 1920 *Scranton Times* had this to say about Aunt Nellie: "She was a student of men and events, deeply interested in the political life of the city and nation. She was one of the prime movers in the suffrage movement. She possessed a remarkable personality, an unusual gift of

## Volunteer Corner

### LHS Welcomes New Volunteers

Moosic resident **Brandon Parlopiano** joins the LHS as a returning volunteer. A Junior History and Education major at the University of Scranton, Brandon hopes to pursue a doctorate in medieval history. Welcome back, Brandon!

New volunteer **Sarah Andres** of Scranton recently graduated from Penn State University with a B.A. in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean studies and in French. Sarah volunteers as a way of exploring museum work to see how it fits as a possible career path. We're pleased to have her join us.

The LHS welcomes the experience and knowledge of Glenburn resident **Ed Osman**. A retired Air Force Lt. Colonel, ED worked as a costumed historical interpreter at Colonial Williamsburg. Ed holds a bachelor's degree from George Washington University and a Master's degree from Troy State, both in International Relations. An avid historian and antiques aficionado, he collects old tools and will catalog the Society's collection of old tools and implements. Welcome Ed!

speech and gave freely of this talent on behalf of the enfranchisement of women."

Ella Murray was not the only member of the family to push ardently for the right to vote. Her sister, Mrs. Agnes V. O'Loughlin, a former Scranton school teacher and resident of Brooklyn, NY, also gained national renown for her suffrage activities.

If the women of Scranton were putting themselves into the nation's political arena, that political arena was also bringing itself to Scranton. On November 20, 1914, between 200 and 250 delegates attended the Woman's Suffrage Convention, held in the grand ballroom of the prominent Hotel Casey. Aunt Nellie's picture appeared in pre-convention news coverage, along with three other local suffragettes.

During the same year, the *Scranton Times* published a photograph of Aunt Nellie. Continued on page 7



## What's New at the Catlin House

### IN THE BOOKSTORE

Reviewed by Cheryl A. Kashuba

#### *Duty is Our Pride: 150 Years of Firefighting in Scranton, PA*

By William Boock, Mulligan Printing \$25.00

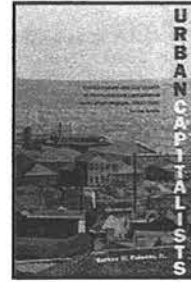
The newest book to chronicle the history of firefighting in Scranton is now on the shelves at the LHS. With 96 pages of photos, some rare, this professionally-designed book includes a yearbook of firefighters themselves, along with the evolution of the fire department over the years.

Photos from the collection of Mark Boock depict fire apparatus, equipment, and memorabilia. Spectacular fire scenes from Scranton's early history include Clarke Brothers store, the Scranton Bicycle Club, the Lyceum Theater, and others. The Saquoit Mill, Parodi Cigar, homes, and schools all fell to the ravages of fire, and Mr. Boock's collection captures them all.

William Boock, a firefighter with Engine 2, shares the passion of his father, Scranton Fire Department photographer Mark Boock, for the department and its great history. This book is selling fast, so get yours while limited supplies last.

#### *Urban Capitalists*

By Burton W. Folsom, Jr.  
The University of Scranton Press \$24.95



This classic of local industrial history presents a sophisticated analysis of the entrepreneurs who built the region's railroads and factories, and the complex web of interconnection between industry and the urban centers that grew around them.

The fortitude and perseverance of men such as George, Seldon, and Joseph Scranton, in the earliest industrial days of the area, shaped a landscape of iron, coal, and railroads. Later men such as William Connell, John Jermyn, and James Archibald, each with a certain character and vision, wrought an environment of urban elitism and a region patently woven into the fabric of not only the nation's but the world's industrial development.

*Urban Capitalists* traces entrepreneurs and city growth in the Lackawanna and Lehigh regions from 1800 to 1920. This second edition includes a revised conclusion. Extensive and detailed, this book takes its place as an essential resource among the literature of industrialization.

## BOOK PROJECTS ANNOUNCED

### *The History of Scranton*

The LHS is proud to announce two new book projects. President Alan Sweeney has teamed with LHS *Journal* editor Cheryl Kashuba and University of Scranton art historian Darlene Miller Lanning to compile a photo history of Scranton. Following Scranton from its earliest days as Slocum Hollow through its early progress, the book will showcase a selection of the more than 6000 photos in the LHS holdings. Part of Arcadia Publishing's *Images of America* series, the book is due out this fall.

### *The Women of Scranton: 1870 to 1945*

In this second project, Cheryl Kashuba pairs with Josephine Dunn, art historian at the University of Scranton, to trace the lives and achievements of the area's women. The city of Scranton, noted for its coal and locomotives, was a thriving industrial city that was home to textile industries, progressive schools, hospitals, and social institutions of all types.

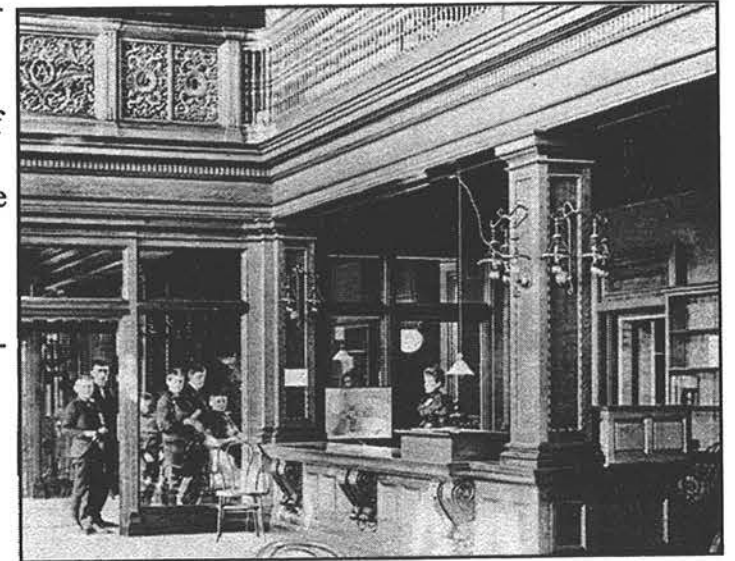
Women played a key role in the shaping of this progressive city, serving as physicians and educators, running businesses, working in industries and retail shops, and tending to all manner of social needs.

Yet the remarkable facts that make up the history of women in Scranton remain largely unknown. *The Women of Scranton* will tell their history in photographs. The book is due to be published by Arcadia Publishing in the winter of 2006.

secular cathedral has had its mission: "By making accessible the civilizing elements of culture, you allow untutored people to climb that ladder of success themselves," Finnerty says.

In an age when we have lost faith in ourselves, our fellows, even our public education, it's important to carefully steward the money that people work so hard to provide. Jack Finnerty believes firmly in the idea of a people's university. A sacred transaction occurs when we use what's inside "to somehow become more fully human."

Thanks to the vision of Joseph Albright and the commitment of Jack Finnerty and his staff, the Albright Memorial Library stands as a noteworthy example of architecture, a memorial to two of Scranton's most important citizens, and a continuing element in American democratic culture. Within its stone walls, beyond its ornate door, among its stacks, there is ample space for the human mind to soar.



Continued from page 3

*ton Times* conducted a poll to determine the position that local women took on enfranchisement. On May 23, 1914, the newspaper reported that 2,661 women had responded, and 2,430 of them were in favor of equal franchise. The *Times* estimated that its readership included at least 50,000 women of voting age daily.

The position of local women reflected a wide-spread view. Every county in the state was represented at the Convention. Accounts of the convention, Ann Marie says, focused on rousing speeches and reports of successful organization practices, and Pennsylvania was seen as the best organized state in the nation. Edward O'Laughlin, husband of Nellie's sister Agnes, worked on the campaign of William Randolph Hearst, who pledged aid to the women of New York in their fight for the right to vote.

Not everyone in the nation or the city supported the suffrage movement, however. Suffragettes were thought by many to be unladylike, and there was a

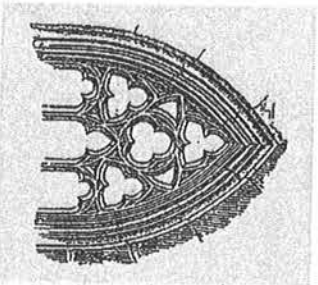
general fear that the vote would take women out of the home and contribute to the demise of culture.

Locally, the anti-suffrage league was rumored to have the support of brewers and certain local politicians. When the women convened in the city, they were denied the right to use the lawn surrounding the courthouse. Mayor G.B. Jermyn did, however, deliver a welcome address to the convention delegates, and Aunt Agnes, billed as an ardent suffrage advocate, spoke to the group. Upon her death some years later, Agnes O'Laughlin's obituary appeared in the *New York Times*.

The newspaper photos and details have become a part of Ann Marie O'Hara's personal history. Her research became what she terms a family event, drawing special delight of a surviving aunt, and enthusiasm for the younger generations who will carry on the lore that is such an important part of the history of their family, of Scranton, and of the nation as well.



## Places of Worship Tour



Mark your calendar for Sunday, May 15 when this year's Places of Worship tour visits area synagogues.

The day begins at 9:00 with *The Synagogues: History and Function* talk, given by Rabbi Benny Rapoport.

The bus leaves the Catlin House at 9:30 a.m. Temple Israel in Scranton, Temple Israel in Dunmore, Beth Shalom in Scranton (exterior only), and Temple Hessed in Scranton are featured stops on the tour. The bus returns to the Catlin House at noon for a kosher lunch.

After lunch, Albert Barry will conduct a lecture and offer a viewing of his documentary film *The Lost Wooden Synagogues of Eastern Europe*.

The film tells the story of the synagogues before World War II and their subsequent history. Once numbering over 1000, only a handful of the structures remain today.

The documentary has won awards at five film festivals and has received rave reviews from many, including Elie Wiesel, Professor Yaffa Eliach at the Jewish Museum of Florida.

An independent film maker and award-winning graphic designer, Mr. Barry was a photojournalist whose work has appeared in *Time* and *Life* magazines, as well as other publications.

In addition, Mr. Barry has built scale models of many of the synagogues and has donated them to the Judaica Collection at Florida Atlantic University Libraries in Boca Raton, Florida, where they are on permanent display.

He has researched his subject for the past forty years, appeared in a four-part series on public television, and lectures around the country.

His May 15th lecture will run about 20 minutes. The film, narrated by Theodore Bikel, will run about 48 minutes.

The cost of the day's events is \$12.00 for LHS members, \$15.00 for non-members, and \$6.00 for the lunch only. Please make your reservations with the LHS by May 2.

### Preparations Underway for Historic House Tour

Be sure to set aside Sunday, June 19 to join us as we tour historic homes in the Hill. On the list of sites this year:

The Carlisle House, 544 Jefferson Ave, owner Paul Mansour

The Phillips House, 543 Clay Ave, owners Mark and Mimi Phillips

The Melberger House, 815 N. Webster Ave, owners Ruth and Clifford Melberger

The Garvey House, 919 N. Irving Ave, owners Joe and Fran Garvey

The Davis House, 801 N. Irving Ave, owners Jennifer and Bill Davis

St. Matthews United Lutheran Church, 425 Jefferson Ave, is this year's house of worship.

*If you would like to place an ad in the Tour Program, please call the Society for information.*

### *Past Players find a Home with the Society*

When Society volunteers Julie Esty and Christine Schaefer conducted the wildly-successful tour of Dunmore Cemetery last year, they never dreamed that their work would continue to evolve into several interpretive pieces. But much to everyone's joy, their work did continue and they have found a true home at the Society. Their enthusiasm and undying interest in local history was evident at the March Program, *Women of Scranton: The Famous, Not-so Famous and Infamous*.

Two shows were presented to sold out audiences, who were impressed not only with the stories of the women but by the dedication of the performers and the work they put into researching and scripting each piece. We are grateful to all of our Past Players who continue to work with the Society to plan new presentations and to bring history to life!

*Past Players* at the March program included: Julie, Bill & Megan Esty, Christine Schaefer, Margo, Marie & Dominic Azzarelli, Joan Glowinski, Joanne Bogdanovicz, Jennifer Ochman, and Christine & Jack Schaefer.



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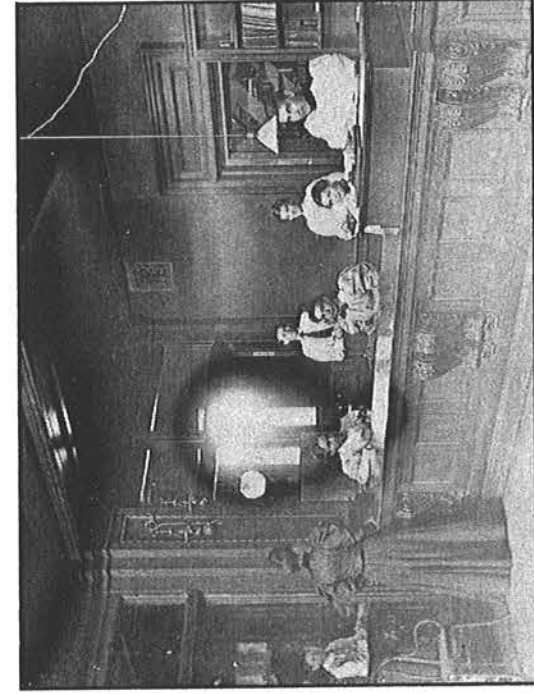
pose of a public library for the benefit of the citizens and residents of the City of Scranton and vicinity.” Originally setting the cost between \$50,000 and \$75,000, Joseph Jr. ended up spending \$125,000 for what he termed “a suitable building.” Although a wealthy man, by the end of his life, the philanthropic endeavors of Joseph Jr. emptied his coffers.

Renowned landscaper Frederick Law Olmstead designed the grounds that skirt this gem of medieval architecture, and the library opened to the public on June 1, 1893. It will celebrate 112 years of service this year.

When Jack Finnerty, library Director, first came to work at the Albright as a 15 year old part-time employee, he recognized the sacred flavor of the Gothic design. But several years of reflection on the nature of this hallowed space brought him to believe that it was in the collections themselves, more than the structure, where the sacredness resided. Within the collection lies what Finnerty calls “the written dialogue of human kind,” and within that dialogue lies a record of the thinking mind of human beings.

Albright left it up to the city of Scranton to furnish the library with books. Records of donations show gifts from prominent citizens such as William Smith and the Scranton family, a collection of mining-related materials, and materials obtained from other libraries. At the end of its first five years, the building housed 35,000 to 40,000 items.

During the nearly-20 years of Mr. Finnerty’s directorship, holdings have expanded to include music CDs, videos, DVDs, and books on tape. In more recent years, Mr. Finnerty has come to believe that Joseph Al-bright Jr. “would view the sacred thing as the utility” of the place and its materials. Albright’s himself writes that “the motives prompting” the establishment of the library include “to provide a suitable literary and educational element not heretofore supplied, for the elevation of the people of all classes who may desire to avail themselves of the privileges conferred.”



Public libraries, Finnerty explains, are uniquely American. The way they’re structured in this country is still unique, and they embody the essence of democracy. “If you’re going to empower every citizen with the vote to elect leaders,” Finnerty says, “you have to provide for equal resources. Those resources are a necessary prerequisite for democratic government.”

In that sense, the public library becomes very much the people’s university, making available the ideas and information necessary for the elevation of citizens that Albright intended.

“It would be a mistake to say that everybody who comes here comes to read more deeply into Shakespeare and Moby Dick,” Finnerty says. People rely on library materials to make comparisons on their next new car, of-

ten using computers to do that comparison. In the days of Black Lung, miners had to prove employment in the mines. There were no employment records, so many relied upon old city directories, which listed employment positions as well as street addresses. Today, the library provides tax forms and the use of computers. Last year 43,000 people made use of 25 computers. That figure was up 25 percent over the previous year.

“It doesn’t matter that you were born in poverty and ignorance,” Finnerty says. From its earliest days, this

*My source of great benefit  
to the people of Scranton  
young and old is all her  
future history in mine  
Very Respectfully Yours  
Wm. W. Smith  
Marie H. Archbald  
Henry C. Albricht  
Joseph Goldblatt*

Part of the letter from the Albright Children  
to the Scranton Board of Trade, January 24, 1890