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**Summer 2015** 

#### SCRANTON'S OTHER TROLLEY

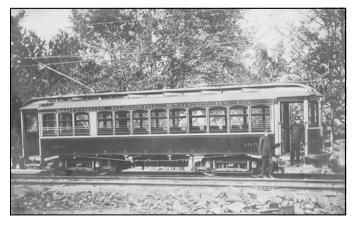
Charles P. Kumpas

The first successful trolley system in America started in Scranton on November 30, 1886, so by 1907 city residents were accustomed to seeing and riding the Scranton Railway Company trolleys regularly. The Scranton Railway Company was a successful system in the Lackawanna Valley, with expanded routes from Forest City to Duryea. But, it did not serve the Second and Third Wards of Scranton, north of Providence Square, a populous section of the City.

The road through the "Notch" where it meets Chinchilla was a franchise of the Northern Boulevard Company which operated it as a toll road.

Imagine what the Scranton citizens thought when they saw a new trolley in downtown Scranton on July 1, 1907, different in looks and size. It was a car of the Scranton, Montrose and Binghamton Railroad Co., commonly called the "Northern Electric". It was a new company, and July 1 was its initial run. It was an interurban system, built to carry passengers between cities, rather than within a city. The Northern Electric was initially built to run between Scranton and Dalton, and eventually was extended to Montrose. By the time it reached Montrose it had several corporate names, but it was always known as the Northern Electric.

In comparison with the Scranton cars that were smaller in size, colored blue and white, and utilitarian inside with rattan seats, the Northern Electric was a longer car, to carry passengers a longer distance, colored Tuscan Red and Cream, upholstered in deep red plush fabric, a ceiling of Nile Green with gold stripes, cherry stained mahogany furnishings, and the rear had a smoking compartment. Later, with



the longer runs to Montrose, newer cars had onboard toilet facilities.

"Interurban Fever" was spreading across the country, with new systems appearing to carry passengers between cities. The Northern Electric system was slowly developed to serve the Abingtons. Much of the food, produce, and milk sold in Scranton and around the Lackawanna Valley came from farms of the Abingtons, but it was a long, slow journey, primarily by wagons. Also, the development in the many small towns of the Abingtons was slow due to the poor transportation network. There was a great need for updated transportation to the Abingtons and beyond.

The proposed builders of the new system envisioned a system that would go into downtown Scranton. In 1904 they secured the "paper" trolley franchises of the Dalton Street Railway Co. and the Factoryville & Tunkhannock Railway Co. to obtain right-of-ways to the Scranton city line in Chinchilla. But the remainder of the route to Scranton and down West Market Street was controlled by the Northern Boulevard Company (originally the dence & Abington Turnpike & Plank Road Co.).

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### A Word from the President...

#### Hello Everyone,

Welcome Summer!!! We have waited a long time and huddled through a cold, cold winter to get here, but now is the time to open windows at night and enjoy the outdoors.

A great way to do the latter, and at the same time benefit the Lackawanna Historical Society, is to attend the Historic House Tour in the Hill this month. Scheduled for Sunday, June 28th you can take in the beauty and history of Scranton's Hill Section throughout the day. This year we are presenting several sites that you will definitely enjoy. I also encourage everyone to come out on the preceding Friday evening to meet the homeowners at the Historic House Tour in the Hill Pre-tour Celebration. This is a wonderful way to kick off the event and meet not only the homeowners but also this year's program chair Christine Posly and new author Jack Shean.

Read further inside this issue of the newsletter to get all the details on this and other LHS programs.

Stay well and see you on the trolley!

Regards, Michael Gilmartin

#### Have you renewed your 2015 Membership?

**About Membership...** Membership privileges include unlimited access to the Society library, 10% discount in our bookstore, advance notice, special discounts and invitations to all Society activities, 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

<u>LACKAWANNA H</u>	<u>HSTORICAL SC</u>	CIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM
☐ Student \$1	10 NAME	
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☐ Family \$4	45 ADDRESS	
☐ Contributing \$7	75	
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#### The Lackawanna Historical Society 2015

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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, and membership dues. Regular hours are Tuesday through Friday 10 am to 5 pm and Saturdays noon to 3 pm.

The Lackawanna Historical Society Journal is published by the Lackawanna Historical Society, 232 Monroe Avenue, Scranton, PA 18510 Tel. (570) 344-3841. Address questions to lackawannahistory@gmail.com

Members of the Society receive this publication. Membership contributions are \$35 and up for Individuals, \$45 for Families, and \$125 for Organizations. Special Silver and Gold Corporate memberships are available.

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## In the Catlin House...

#### 150 Years, 150 Objects

The Lackawanna Historical Society is pleased to announce the start of an exhibit series entitled "150 Year, 150 Objects," a bimonthly exhibit celebrating Scranton's Sesquicentennial. This new exhibit will highlight various themes from the city's history, beginning in May and June with Scranton's founding families and early industries. Later topics will include women, government, labor, trolleys, recreation and entertainment, commerce, military, healthcare and public services, and ethnicity. Each exhibit will be on display at the Society's headquarters, the Catlin House for two months. A virtual exhibit will also be created on the Society's Facebook page. Stop by or visit the Facebook page soon to check out this exciting exhibit!

#### NEW MEMBERS

#### **Student**

Michael Shimko, Taylor

#### Individual

Eric Skelton, Dupont Brad Congelio, Scranton Jeanne Gerlach, Scranton



In Memory of Mary S, Rayburn

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus Michael & Nada Gilmartin Sarah Jane McHale

## DINE LACKAWANNA



Dine Lackawanna is a popular success!

This fundraiser is hosted each month at a different local restaurant, and gives you the chance to enjoy a fabulous meal chosen from a great menu at one of the area's premiere dining locations, and a portion of night's proceeds benefit LHS.

Hope to see you there!

NEXT UP:

**July 15** 

#### Palazzo 53

53 South Main Street, Pittston 570-299-7571

August 19

#### State Street Grill

114 South State Street, Clarks Summit 570-585-5590 September 16

#### Pettinato's Restaurant

78 Dundaff Street, Carbondale 570-282-5860

Like us on Facebook or check our website for future dates!



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## Let's Get Wired!!!

Work continues to move forward at the Catlin House. All mechanical demolition and installation has been completed in preparation for the new heating/air conditioning system, and work is started on rewiring the entire house! Once all electrical rehabilitation work is completed, the mechanical contractor will return to power up the new system! The staff, volunteers and visitors will

then enjoy a brighter, more comfortable Catlin House, and the storage and display of all on-site collections will be improved significantly with temperature and humidity control and overall stabilization. To date we have raised \$366,882.81



Anonymous
Dorrance Belin
Valerie Bertinelli
Joseph F. Cimini
Elaine Carroll,
In Memory of Birdie Carroll

Bill & Bridget Conlogue
Friends of LHS, In Memory of
Arlene Devereaux O'Hara
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#### Watts (\$100-\$499) continued

Scott & Libby Lynett

Phillip & Kathleen McCarthy

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Sharleen & Dennis Martin Midlantic Engineering Inc.

NE Detachment Marine Corps League

James Nicholas Jim & Alice Noone John & Jennifer Ochman Ann Marie O'Hara Vera Jean Pace Joseph Pascoe

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Leni Piasky

PNC Bank

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Thanks to everyone for supporting this project. If you have not yet made your pledge or know someone who wants to support the project, please use the form on page 11.

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Continued from page 1

Trolley planners negotiated with the Northern Boulevard Co. for the right-of-way with no success. Eventually, they bought the Northern Boulevard Co. to acquire the right-of-way. Then, to get from Providence Square to downtown Scranton, they negotiated with the Scranton Railway Co. The agreement allowed them to connect with the Railway tracks at the Square and then use the Railway tracks to downtown Scranton, a distance of 2.33 miles. From that connection point to the Northern Electric terminal at 227 Wyoming Ave. they could not pick up or discharge any other passengers. They paid Scranton Railway a percentage of the fares boarding in Scranton from the city line to Providence Square. The Northern Electric trackage on West Market Street was in the middle of the road, as seen in this image.



The Scranton Railway agreement also allowed special runs on their tracks for special reasons, and the Northern Electric would pay special fees. These included milk in the early morning hours, to milk dairies in West Scranton, and runs to coal facilities, especially to a coal breaker in Bull's Head, to get coal for its power plant near Dalton.

At the time of the initial run in 1907, there was no Mulberry Street bridge, which was built in 1911. To get into the downtown, Scranton Railway cars coming down Providence Road had to turn left onto Carbon/Olive Street (a busy road with an active railroad crossing, with delays experienced) to Penn Ave., turn right onto Penn Ave., and into the city. Returning, Carbon/Olive Street was again used to get to Providence Road. The Northern Electric had to use the same route. It then went to Linden Street, to Wyoming Ave. It often went one-half block further across Wyoming Ave. to a Scranton Railway freight terminal building,

behind the Post Office building, to discharge or load passengers, and sometimes get packages. The trolley would then move out to Wyoming Ave., and then proceed north to Northern Electric trackage.

After the Mulberry Street bridge was built in 1911, the trolleys would come from Providence Road, over the bridge, turn onto Franklin Ave., to Linden and to Wyoming Ave. In 1929, a new routing agreement with the Scranton Railway was made, with cars crossing the bridge, turning onto Franklin Ave. to Lackawanna Ave. to Wyoming Ave. to the terminal. At this time, it was moved across the street, sharing its waiting room with a Trailways Bus Co. affiliate.

The ride to upper West Market St. was a very popular ride, especially for commuters. It was called the "23 School" route, and was very busy, especially during the morning and evening rush hours. Downtown Scranton was also the business, entertainment and retailing center of the county at the time which helped attract passengers. The Northern Electric based its ticket charge on "zones". The ride from downtown to "23 School" was 5 cents, to Chinchilla 10 cents, to Clarks Summit 15 cents, and so forth.

Abington riders of the Northern Electric would not only take the ride to Scranton or from downtown to North Scranton. People who wished to travel to the other towns it served in the Abingtons and beyond would also take it. In fact, the accessibility offered by this trolley helped to build the suburbs in Clarks Summit, Dalton, and beyond. Also, to attract passengers, especially on the weekends when business traveling would be down, the company built two amusement parks. One was in Clarks Summit near Grove Street called "Northern Electric Park" containing 12 acres, and was very popular until 1924 when it had a fire, and was sold. It featured a roller coaster, dancing pavilion, merry-go-round, ferris wheel, and stands for food and games of chance.

The second park was at Lake Winola, featuring a waterfront, boat rides, and also a dance pavilion, merry-go-round, ferris wheel, and food stands.

As with all interurban trolley routes in the country, the increasing use of personal cars had an adverse effect on ridership. Increased truck traffic hurt the trolley's package and milk hauling business. The company went into receivership January

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31, 1929 because of declining revenue, and started reducing the length of its route, eventually cutting back from Montrose to Factoryville. In January 1931 it closed its amusement park at Lake Winola.

The Courts ordered the first termination of the Northern Electric service on July 20, 1931. A group of former employees decided to form a cooperative to run trolley service between Factoryville and Scranton in October 1931, and operations began December 17, 1931. Unfortunately, it was to last only nine months.

With the original franchise agreement with the Scranton City Council, it deeded ownership of a length of West Market Street to the City, retaining ownership of its trackage. Later, the company sold more of its property in upper West Market Street and the area of the Notch to the city line to the State, keeping its trackage rights.

In 1932 the Pennsylvania Highway Department decided to rebuild that road area and upper West Market Street, which was the trolley's direct route into the City. Intersecting highways were planned, merging with Route 6 coming from Carbondale. This area eventually became the North Scranton traffic circle, the first traffic circle in Pennsylvania.

The cooperative was faced with the expense of moving its trolley bridge over Leggetts Creek,

realigning its trackage in that area, and down West Market Street. The original franchise agreement with the City made the Northern Electric responsible for the expense of the proposed track work. They told the City that they could not afford the expense.

Mayor E.B. Jermyn ordered the City's legal department to declare they were in default of the original franchise requirements, and ordered the track closed. On September 21, 1932, Scranton City policemen put up track barriers on the trackage at the city line with Chinchilla. With the loss of its route into downtown Scranton, the company ceased operations.

Litigation was commenced over the closure, lasting several years. An appeal even made its way to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Eastern District, which said the City's action was wrong. But, the decision came too late. The final scrapping of the Northern Electric cars came in 1934, and its land was sold. This ended an interesting chapter in Scranton and Lackawanna County history.

#### Sources:

- 1) *Northern Electric Railway* by Thomas F. Flanaghan, 1980
- 2) The Northern Electric by Norm Brauer, 1987
- 3) Reference archives of the Electric City Trolley Museum.

## **Guided Downtown Walking Tours**

Once again the Lackawanna Historical Society will offer guided walking tours of Downtown Scranton at 11 am on Saturdays during the summer. These free tours will focus on the architecture and history of some of the city's beautiful buildings. Tours will focus on different sections of the downtown, including a new tour focusing on architecture of the Lower Hill section of Scranton. The Lackawanna Historical Society is also partnering with POSH @ the Scranton Club again this year for a special discount for tour participants.

#### **Upcoming Tour Dates**

June 27: corner of Linden St. & Jefferson Ave.

July 11: corner of Wyoming Ave. & Linden St.

July 18: corner of Linden St. & N. Washington Ave.

July 25: corner of N. Washington Ave. & Vine St.

Aug. 1: corner of Linden St. & Jefferson Ave.

**Aug. 8:** corner of N. Washington Ave. & Vine St.

Aug. 15: corner of Wyoming Ave. & Linden St.

Aug. 22: corner of N. Washington Ave. & Vine St.

Aug. 29: corner of Linden St. & N. Washington Ave.

Sept. 12: corner of Linden St. & N. Washington Ave.

**Sept. 19:** corner of Linden St. & Jefferson Ave.

**Sept. 26:** corner of N. Washington Ave. & Vine St.

First Friday evening tours will also be offered at 6:30 pm on July 3, August 7 & September 4. For additional tour dates and stating points call the Society at 570-344-3841 PAGE 8 VOLUME 45, NO. 3

### **Society Happenings**

#### Civil War Roundtable



Tom Jordon outlines the wartime contributions of General Wesley Merritt

The Lackawanna Historical Society continues to host the Scranton Civil War Roundtable in partnership with the Confederation of Union Generals (COUG). The Roundtable meets monthly at the Catlin House, and is open to anyone with an interest in the Civil War era 1861-1865. In April, COUG member Tom Jordon portrayed General Wesley Merritt and in June the group conducted its first roundtable focus discussion. Discussions will continue through the summer months with formal presentations scheduled to resume in the Fall. Upcoming presentations will include Cpt. Emory Upton by Don Holdridge on **September 8** and Victorian Mourning customs on **October 12** and a book discussion of **Plenty of Blame to Go Around** by Eric Wittenberg is scheduled for **November 10**.

Yearly membership dues for the Roundtable are \$20 for an individual and \$25 for families.

For more information, to suggest a topic or to make reservations for the next Roundtable meeting, call the Society at 570-344-3841.

#### Historic House Tour in the Hill Tickets on Sale Now

We pleased to announce the **2015 Historic House Tour in the Hill** is set for **Sunday, June 28 from 11 am to 4 pm** and will include several private homes and two local landmarks. This is the eighth time the Society is hosting the Hill House Tour and it has been a great way for us to promote the city's diverse history and highlight its wonderful architecture. Each site on the tour offers an interesting glimpse of the city's history and some of the amazing individuals who lived here.



And this year is no different! Don't miss this exciting opportunity to see some of the Hill's most beautiful homes including: the Collins Residence at 801 Wheeler Avenue; the Myers Residence at 1121 Myrtle Street; the Gray Residence at 935 North Webster Avenue and the Harris Residence at 617 N. Webster Avenue. Participants can also tour the Estate at the University of Scranton and see the recent restoration work at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Free trolley rides will be provided to all sites on the tour throughout the day, and Jack Shean, LHS member and author of the new Arcadia book "Scranton's Hill Section," will be on hand for a book signing. A Pre-Tour Cocktail Party honoring this year's home owners and celebrating the release of Jack Shean's book will be hosted by Art and Tara Russo on Friday, June 26 at 7 pm at 970 Ridge Ave. Mr. Russo recently renovated the old factory into a series of loft apartments.

Tour tickets can be purchased in advance for \$25 or on the day of the tour for \$30.

The cost of the Pre-Tour Party is \$45 and reservations are appreciated.

If you want to come to both the Friday evening and Sunday tour, consider purchasing a combo ticket for \$60

Call us at 570-344-3841 or stop by the Catlin House to get your tickets soon!

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### **Upcoming Events**

## Children's Day at the Catlin House

On Saturday, July 11 from Noon to 3 pm the LHS will present its annual children's day. Our volunteers Ann Marie O'Hara, Juliana Piccini, Leni Piasky and Joanne Kavulich are busy planning exciting games, crafts and activities for children of all ages. Come join us at the Catlin House for an afternoon of fun including pony rides and surprise guests!

### **AUGUST EVENTS**

The Lackawanna Historical Society is excited to announce that on **August 13 at 7 pm** we will be joining forces with the Scranton Club to host a **Speakeasy**. Members and friends are invited to join us for a roaring good time with specialty 1920's themed cocktails, delectable hors

d'oeuvres and live music! Reservations are required to learn the secret password for admittance and 1920's period dress is encouraged. Cost is \$50 but LHS members pay \$40. Don't miss the fun, call now to join us.

#### **Attention Baseball Fans!!**



Join us for a night of Rail-Riders baseball when the LHS is the Community Organization of the Night on August 20 at 7pm.

We would like to secure Infield Box reserved seating but, in order to do so, must to have a minimum attendance. So in order to have an accurate count, we need to hear from you. If you are interested in joining us for a night of fun, please call the Society at 570-344-3841 no later than August 7 to reserve your place.

## Rossetti Family Presents Readers' Theater

On June 20 and August 22 at 8 pm veteran regional actor Robert Hughes will perform Jason Miller's *Barrymore's Ghost* as a "Readers Theatre." The performance is hosted by the Rossetti Family Trust and will be held at a newly-constructed outdoor theater at the Rossetti home at 1005 Vine Street, Scranton.

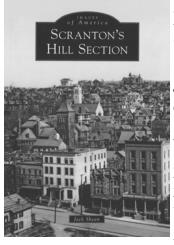
Barrymore' Ghost opens up the life of the legendary actor John Barrymore in a unique, theatrical manner. Mr. Barrymore is presented as a ghost haunting a theater where a play is being rehearsed. The play has wit, terror, agony, and hope, as viewers watch a mythological character exploring the truths and deceptions of his extraordinary life. Playwright Jason Miller succeeds not only in dramatizing the life of Barrymore, he suggests insights into his life as well, adding more dimension to the play. Proceeds from the performance which is produced by Fr. Mark Rossetti will benefit the Society. Tickets including wine and hors d'oeuvres are \$15. Call 570-344-3841 for reservations.

#### **ROCKY GLEN PARK RETURNS!**

Pippin Pictures presents Rocky Glen Part 2

Join us on August 8 at 1 pm in the theater at Steamtown National Historic Site for the debut of a new documentary about Rocky Glen amusement park. The film has been produced by Pippin Pictures as a followup to their 2009 work that traced the park's beginnings to its demise. The success of the first production stirred more interest in the popular local park. Part 2 includes interviews with former employees, Sterling family members, park enthusiasts, as well as new footage of rides and activities at the Rocky Glen. The screening is open to the public at no cost and will be followed by reception at the Electric City Trolley Museum.

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#### NEW ARCADIA BOOK ON SCRANTON'S HILL

Congratulations to LHS volunteer Jack Shean on the recent publication of his first book "Scranton's Hill Section" by Arcadia Press. Jack has been a Society member since he was an elementary school student and has always shown great interest in local history. He volunteered last summer as part of his senior service requirements at Holy Cross High

School and continued his service this year by assisting us with Hill House Tour plans. Jack will be entering the Schreyer Honors College at Penn State this fall and we wish him continued success!

# "You Live Here; You Should Know This!"



Congratulations to this year's champions
Marnie Azzarelli, Lawrence Pugliese
and Margo & Dominick Azzarelli
who will have exclusive bragging rights
for one whole year of holding the status of
Local Lackawanna History Legends of Lore!





The June 12th Antiques Expo preview party at Four Points by the Sheraton hosted by Ros-Al Floral, Antiques and Events was a wonderful success and raised more than \$500 for the Society. Plans are already underway

to hold a holiday themed show in November once again to benefit the LHS!

#### **GRANTS RECEIVED**

In May, the society was notified that it had been approved for a General Operating Support Grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in the amount of \$4000.

#### SAVE THE DATE!

The Society is planning its Annual Dinner for **Thursday, October 8** at the Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel. As part of

Scranton
Sesquicentennial
celebration, this
year's dinner will
honor Scranton's
mayors and their
contributions to
the city.

Please join us to meet and honor

these men and their work.
Invitations are coming soon!



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#### "Let's Get Wired!"

Commit now to keep the Catlin House wired!

The cost of the Catlin House Electrical and HVAC upgrades is \$523,180. Please join us in taking care of one of the area's architectural treasures and make your commitment today.

Make your pledge today by using this form. Make check payable to the LHS Restoration Fund and return to:

Lackawanna Historical Society 232 Monroe Avenue Scranton, PA 18510

LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY Capital Campaign Pledge Form						
I am pleased to support the Lackawanna Historical Society with my contribution indicated below to upgrade the Catlin House electrical and HVAC systems:						
Please <b>Print</b>			Levels of Giving			
Name(s)			☐ Amps	\$3000 and over		
			Ohms	\$1000 - \$2999		
Address			Joules	\$500 - \$999		
			☐ Watts	\$100 - \$499		
City	State	Zip Code	☐ Volts	under \$100		
Phone (day)	Phor	ne (evening)	The Lackawanna Historical Society is a 501 (C) 3 organization. All contributions are tax deductible in accordance with Pennsylvania state law.			

Your check is your receipt.

## In Appreciation

Email

Below are just a sampling of the many businesses who contribute to the LHS on a regular basis. Whether they have donated items for raffle baskets, assisted with program set up, supplied a food donation for a special event or participated in Dine Lackawanna, they were there when we needed them and we are very appreciative for their continued interest and involvement. Please help us thank them by supporting these and all the businesses who help us!

Café Classico Olde Brook Inn POSH at the Scranton Club State Street Grill Stirnas Sidels Tiffanys Tap & Grill Accentuate Catering Carl Von Luger Montage The Leonard Nada & Co. Bella Faccias Market Street Grill Six East Restaurant Blu Wasabi Carmens at the Radisson Texas Roadhouse **Body and Soul** Epicurean Coopers Seafood Over the Moon Scranton Wilkes Barre RailRiders **Brooklyn Pub** Live with It **Duffy Accessories Bethel Woods** Back Yard Ale House

LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY 232 MONROE AVENUE SCRANTON, PA 18510

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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#### UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

FRI., JUNE 26, 7 PM HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR IN THE HILL PREVIEW COCKTAIL PARTY (see pg. 8)

Hosted by Art & Tara Russo at 970 Ridge Ave., Scranton

Sun., June 28, 11 am Historic House Tour in the Hill (see pg. 8)

SAT., JULY 11, NOON *CHILDREN'S DAY* at the Catlin House (see pg. 9)

WED., JULY 15 DINE LACKAWANNA AT PALAZZO 53

SAT., AUG 8, 1 PM "ROCKY GLEN PART 2" DOCUMENTARY PREMIERE (see pg. 9)

at Steamtown National Historic Site

THURS., Aug. 13, 7 PM SPEAKEASY at the Scranton Club (see pg. 9)

WED., AUG 19 DINE LACKAWANNA AT STATE STREET GRILL

Thurs., Aug 20, 7 pm LHS Community Organization Night at RailRiders Game (see pg. 9)

SAT., AUG 22, 8 PM "BARRYMORE'S GHOST" at the Rossetti Home (see pg. 9)

WED., SEPT 16 DINE LACKAWANNA AT PETTINATO'S

WED., SEPT. 30, TBA LIZABETH SCOTT FILM FESTIVAL at the Circle Drive-In (details TBA)

Look inside for Summer Downtown Walking Tour schedule (page 7) and upcoming Civil War Roundtable topics (page 8).

Visit our website at <u>www.lackawannahistory.org</u> and like us on Facebook for up-to-date listings of all activities!