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Spring 2020

“Living” History!

A Note from the LHS Staff

Whenever anyone comes into the office at the Catlin House and asks, “What’s new?”

we always respond with a joke that history happens every day.

Well, we are certainly living through historic times now!

As we continue to adjust to the changes wrought by COVID-19, we are working to provide you, our members, with interesting and educational local history programs and to document this never before moment in history. The LHS staff has been busy updating our online presence and developing new efforts to continue our mission to document, preserve and interpret Lackawanna County history.

Since you can’t come to us, we started bringing our programming to you! Every Friday you can watch a live historical lecture via Zoom. Check your email or our Facebook page for the meeting links and information about upcoming topics.

If you have children who are home from school, our “Story of Scranton” local history curriculum guide has been posted on our website. Geared for middle school students, the curriculum includes a text booklet outlining the history of Scranton, along with some discussion questions and activities to get you started, and a list of additional online resources. There’s even a coloring book of historic Scranton images! Find it online here: <http://www.lackawannahistory.org/LocalHistoryCurriculum.html>

We are most excited about our COVID-19 archive, a digital initiative to capture history as it happens. In researching the 1918 influenza outbreak, we found that there was not a lot of information about daily life, like how people felt or how the community interacted. While we’re working from home and practicing social distancing, this is an excellent opportunity to create a journal or capture your reflections about your experience with the coronavirus. We have created two surveys, one for adults and one for students, or you can simply upload informal reflections from Facebook posts, Instagram photos, or even scans of a handwritten journal or letters. So far, more than 135 people have responded.

Add your story here: <http://www.lackawannahistory.org/LHSCovid19ArchiveCollecting.html>

We were sorry to cancel some of our favorite spring events, like the pysanky workshop and Civil War ball, and other events – a recycling program by Joyce Hatala and “For the Least of Them,” a play about Father Curran– have been postponed, but please know we will continue our work and plan more programs, online and hopefully in person when we can all come together again safely. Updates will be posted as soon as we are able to make a schedule.

Stay well and enjoy the Spring,
Mary Ann, Sarah and Olivia

The Lackawanna Historical Society 2020

A Word from the President...

Hello Everyone,

As I write to you today during the Covid-19 pandemic, the governor of our state has shuttered all nonessential businesses and organizations and a short time later issued a stay at home order to further the benefits of social distancing. Through it all in the past month we strive to be positive, engaged and supportive of family and friends. Social media has become the great connector of people and organizations as we remain in our homes or six feet apart. What a difficult time for us all.

It is because of what we are faced with that I want to especially thank our staff, Mary Ann, Sarah and Olivia, for keeping us both informed and entertained as we work through these challenging and uncertain times. They have created interesting and educational ways to keep people involved sometimes with the contributions of other people as well. Their endeavors further the mission and values of the Lackawanna Historical Society. We have the good fortune as an organization to benefit from many people who share their time, talents and financial resources that allow us to continue playing a contributing role in our community.

Above all stay well, stay safe and remain involved.

*Sincerely yours,
Michael Gilmartin*

Don't forget to renew your 2020 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

LACKAWANNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$10	NAME	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$35		
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$45	ADDRESS	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	\$75		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$150		
<input type="checkbox"/> Silver	\$250	TELEPHONE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gold	\$500		
<input type="checkbox"/> Platinum	\$1000	EMAIL	_____

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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 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Catlin Memorial Trust, Lackawanna County, and membership dues. Regular hours are Tues. - Fri. 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, Gold, and Platinum levels of memberships are also available.

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At the Catlin House...

Thank You!

Earlier this year the LHS received a note from longtime volunteer Joanne Kavulich notifying us that she could no longer donate her time. We are truly saddened to learn this but certainly understand that sometimes our lives take a different path. Joanne dedicated countless hours at the Catlin House each month to assist us in keeping our membership database up-to-date and was one of our most excellent tour guides, offering tours not only of the Catlin House but also guided downtown walking tours each summer. As a retired teacher, Joanne was especially skilled at providing tours for our youngest visitors and was instrumental in planning and implementing our annual Children's Day event. We will miss Joanne and her husband, Steve who often accompanied her to our programs and events. Both are treasured LHS members and friends. We thank them for their service and support and wish them nothing but the best.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Individual

Carol Hess, Covington Twp.

Mike Kashmer, Tenafly NJ

Paul Kowalski, Moscow

Virginia Marker, Springbrook Twp.

Gerard O'Malley, Clarks Summit

Gayle Williams, Clayton NC

Family

Earle Derry, S. Abington Twp.

Susanne Green, Dalton

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The Scranton Times, Scranton

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Platinum Level

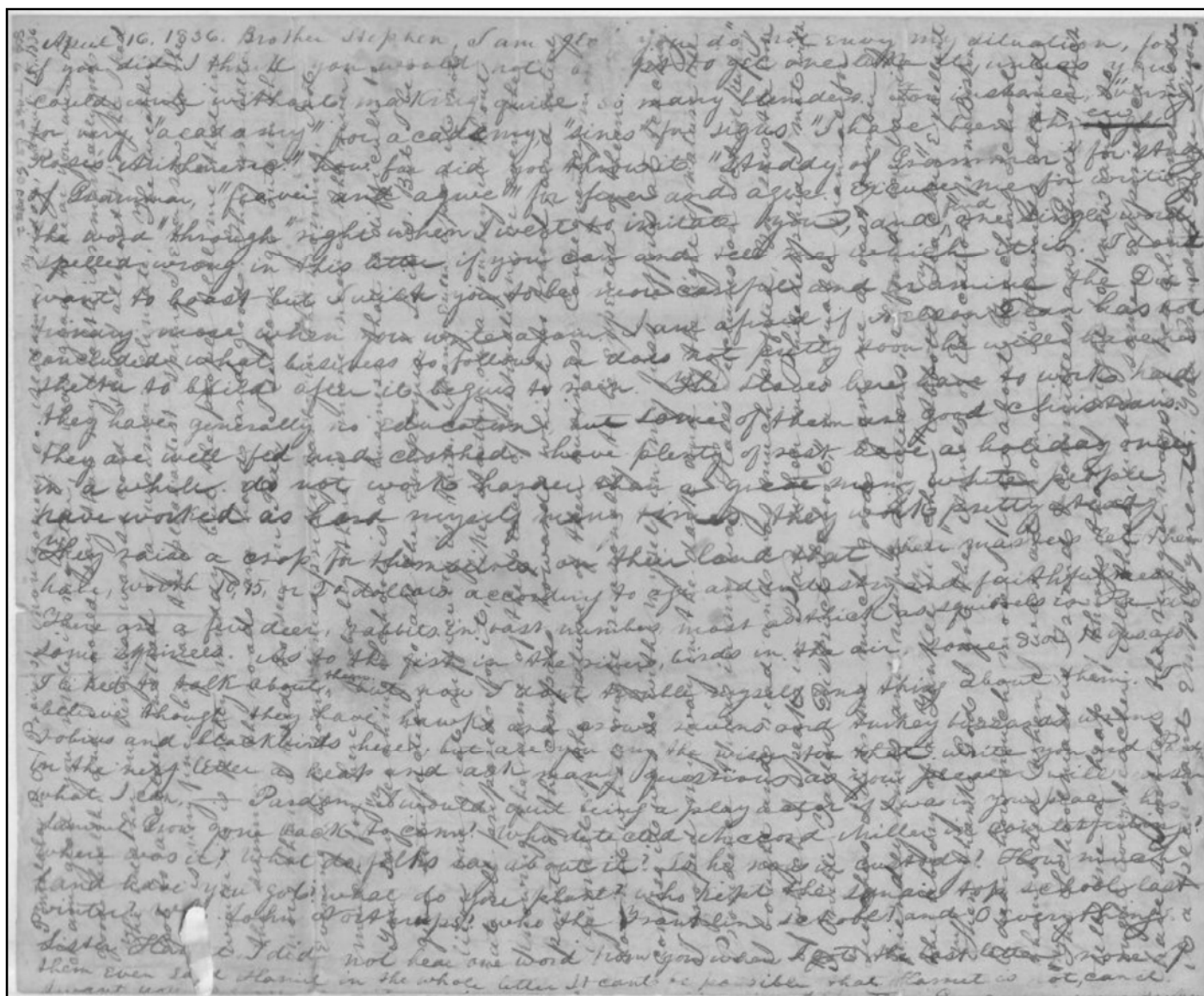


Silver Level Members



Dear Family

By: Dennis Martin



Crosswritten letter sent to Isaac Tillinghast, 1836, page 1

It can be fun to read someone else's mail, especially if the format is as interesting as the contents. The Lackawanna Historical Society has recently accepted such a letter for its collection. The letter is crosswritten, and seemed to be on two sheets but, as it was transcribed, it became obvious that the original was a single sheet as one sentence was split over two of the present sheets. The letter was transcribed by Society Volunteer

Scott Martin. Using the resources of the Historical Society, we were able to develop more information about the writer and his family.

The letter is actually several letters written over several days. Each letter has its own designee. To accommodate this much writing, after filling one side of a page, the page was turned ninety degrees and written in the other direction. One sheet even has two additional diagonals superimposed on this writ-

ing. The transcriber expressed doubt that the readers could easily read these letters. Finally discovering a sheet that has a return address along with a salutation and date at the top, we decided that we had a reasonable place to start the letter and we present excerpts of the contents of these letters.

The letter, dated April 11, 1836, was addressed to Isaac Tillinghast at the Abington Center Post Office in Luzerne County, State of Pennsylvania. Abington Center is now known as Waverly and Lackawanna County had not yet been created. This post office served a large area of people who would go to the post office to pick up their mail. There is no stamp on the letter as the recipient would pay the postage. The return address was the Pintlala Post Office. Pintlala was (and still is) a rural town just south of Montgomery, Alabama. The writer's name is George. His parents are Isaac and Ruth. He is the oldest child with Steven, Pardon and Harriet siblings in decreasing order of age.

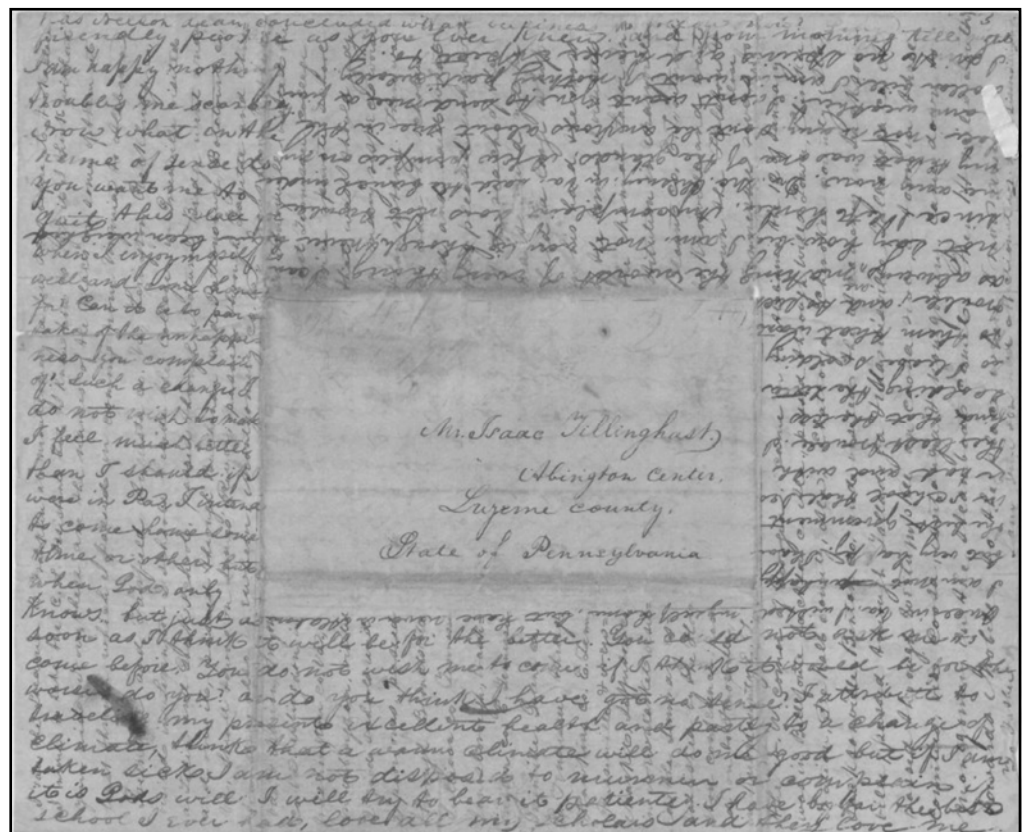
The recipient's name and address in the middle of a sheet had been common before then as postage was charged by the sheet and an envelope would count as a separate sheet, doubling the postage amount. In 1827, the postage amount was changed to a per ounce basis and two sheets and an envelope might have counted as one unit. However, the writer worked very hard to keep the number of sheets few as the distance traveled would make a letter much more expensive. From Alabama as this letter traveled, the six cents per ounce would be increased to twenty-five cents per ounce - a significant amount of money in those days.

ty-five cents per ounce - a significant amount of money in those days.

George was born in Exeter RI on August 1, 1817. He would have been eighteen when he wrote this letter. His brother Stephen was born in Hampton CN on May 24, 1820 and would have been fifteen. Father Isaac was also born in Exeter on November 30, 1792. The family moved to the Abingtons in 1831. Younger sister Harriet is also mentioned.

The main body of the letter reads:
Pint Lala P. O. / Pinchona [Creek] Montgomery Co. Friday April 15, 1836 I am glad you wrote in my letter, so very good to hear you were in good health and I would say that my health is remarkably good. The weather in Virginia was so cold that I almost thought I had got to a colder instead of a warmer climate. The weather here is very fine by far it is the pleasantest spring I ever saw. In the winter it is pretty muddy but the people tell me that in the summer the roads are hard and

Continued on page 9



Crosswritten letter sent to Isaac Tillinghast, 1836, page 2

100 Years of Goose Pond Boy Scout Camp

Goose Pond Boy Scout Camp near Lake Wallenpaupack is the 4th oldest continuously running Boy Scout camp in the country. Under the direction of Donald Gulick, the founder of the Scranton Boy Scout Council, the first camp activities took place in 1919 at Bidwell's Pond off Goose Pond Road. Known as "the Chief," directed the Boy Scouts in Scranton for 34 years, sharing his knowledge and love of the outdoors and often acting as a surrogate parent with his wife Charlotte for thousands of scouts under his charge. He reportedly told a friend that "boy engineering would pay bigger dividends than civil engineering in the future." When Goose Pond camp was purchased in 1920, one of the Chief's first tasks was to lay out a baseball field to pass along his favorite hobby to the scouts. The Chief died in 1956 and is buried in Forest Hills Cemetery in Dunmore.

"Good old days, Good times I remember...."

Goose Pond Scout Reservation

100th Anniversary Celebration

"YOU" are invited! Put on your camping shoes and hike, bike, drive, or "fly like an eagle" (or goose) – just "come on down" for an afternoon and evening to rekindle YOUR Scouting friendships and camping memories!!

SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2020 – at the "Pond"

FEE: No Charge (Donations gladly accepted!)

RSVP in the Scout Shop; or by calling 570-207-1227, ext. 222
or by emailing: scoutshop@nepabsa.org

Leave your name/s and let us know if you are staying for dinner!

Uniforms NOT REQUIRED – but, wear one if you have one!

For the past hundred years, the Goose Pond camp has welcomed campers for summer camp sessions and other programs, like the voyager program, designed for older scouts who have obtained the majority of the merit badges offered through the normal program. The camp also supports other events such as Order of the Arrow Ordeal weekends, Cub Scout programs, Venturing programs, council leadership courses, the annual winter Klondike Derby, and a high and low Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience (COPE) Course throughout the Spring, Summer, and fall seasons.

Well, it's almost here!...2020 – the 100th Anniversary of our beloved Goose Pond!

Founded in 1920, it is hard to believe that we have been running a Scout summer camp at this small slice of paradise for one whole century – 507 acres surrounding a 43-acre pristine glacial lake!

"Goose Pond is the 4th oldest continuously running Boy Scout camp in the nation!"

For 100 years our campers have gone home with memories to last a lifetime.

Come, help us celebrate as we honor our past and continue the adventure on into the next century!

HERE IS A PREVIEW OF OUR JAM-PACKED PROGRAM:

12 Noon – Gates open; visitor's welcome; registration open; gathering period; camp program areas open; concessions available in the dining hall

2:00 p.m. – Opening on Parade Field; sky diver; flag ceremony; welcome & rededication

2:30 – 6:00 p.m. – Open House – Program areas open; numerous historical displays; trading post open (100th Anniversary items available); interview recording taking place; historical timeline; Goose Pond Hall of Fame; time capsule; silent auction; flea market for Scout items; branding; tomahawk & knife throwing; OA Native American cultural display by Lowwapanew Lodge members; commemorative tree planting; documentary viewing party; Dan Beard Cabin ribbon cutting; and much, much more

Tours – Beginning at the administration building every 30 minutes

Affinity gatherings – 3:00 – 3:30 PM: Camp Staff; 3:30 – 4:00 PM: Order of the Arrow @ OA Site; 4:00 – 4:30 PM: Wood Badge; 4:30 – 5:00 PM: NYLT / Great Medicine

5:45 – 6:00 p.m. – Colors on the Parade Field; vespers

6:00 – 7:30 p.m. – Dinner in the dining hall (*donations encouraged*)

8:00 – 9:00 p.m. – Closing campfire; memorable program; slide show; Eagle on his Chest; Fireworks; campfire ashes



BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA®

Nancy's Corner

Metropolitan Opera Signs South Scranton Singing Star

Lillian Ventimiglia, daughter of a South Scranton baker, who long ago decided she wanted to become a Metropolitan Opera star, last night achieved her goal after four years of tedious training.

Tiny, brunette and 20 years old, Miss Ventimiglia now is known as Lillian Raymondi. She has been singing ever since she was old enough to talk, her mother, Mrs. Mark Ventimiglia, 1129 Meadow Avenue, said last night.

It was the first news her mother had that her daughter had been accepted for stardom with the Metropolitan.

"I'm so thrilled I just don't know what to say, but it's wonderful," she told *The Tribune*.

Edward Johnson, director general of the Metropolitan, announced he had engaged Miss Ventimiglia for the coming season following her approval at recent auditions. She was among 11 new singers added to the opera's talent list.

The Scranton girl, who sang her way through Technical High School, began to study in earnest in 1938 for an operatic career. In that year she won a scholarship offered by Mme. Frances Alda, former Metropolitan star, living in New York.

Miss Ventimiglia left here to live in New York with Mme. Alda, working strenuously for two years



Lillian Ventimiglia . . . gets contract

before her debut with the Montreal Opera Company in the role of Ynold in "Pelleas and Melisande." Last June she sang the leading role in "The Second Hurricane," on a coast-to-coast broadcast promoting War Bonds.

South Scranton in 1925 and later gave up her Italian name choosing to use Lillian instead. She was a child prodigy on piano and performed at the Masonic Temple at age 5 before moving to New York to study at Juilliard. After graduating, she married composer Sal Oliver and eventually gave up piano to pursue a successful singing career, performing with many big band legends of the 1950s including Count Basie and Louis Armstrong. However, this was not correct. Yes Lillian Ventimiglia, who died in 1996, was a famous singer from Scranton, but she was NOT the opera singer.

As Mr. Flannery explained in his September 19th column a few weeks later, there were actually two women named Lillian Ventimiglia from Scranton who found fame in NY: the piano prodigy explained above, and the woman described in the 1942 article. Hard to believe that there could be two Scranton natives with the same name who achieved such fame but its true!

NOTE: The Lackawanna Historical Society is pleased to offer Nancy's Corner celebrating our musical history and dedicated in memory of LHS member and friend Nancy Farkas. Nancy was a true lover of the arts, especially music, and we hope that by sharing stories about our rich musical heritage, we will honor her memory and inspire others

This October 6, 1942 *Scranton Tribune* article was recently discovered in the LHS files. When we tried to learn more about Miss Raymondi, an interesting story was revealed.

In August 29, 1996, Joe Flannery, well-known Times columnist noted the passing of former Metropolitan Opera singer Lillian Raymondi who, he reported, at the time of her death was known as Lillian Clark, member of the popular singing group the Clark Sisters. She was born Autilia Ventimiglia in

DINE LACKAWANNA

Numerous restaurants support LHS through participation in Dine Lackawanna. During this time of social distancing although we can't gather for a meal in their establishments, we don't have to miss out on the aromas and tastes of the cuisine each offers. We can satisfy our taste buds by supporting them through requests for delivery or purchases of gift cards.

Abingtons

Camelot ~ Formosa ~ The Nyx ~ State Street Grill ~ The New Café ~ Armetta's

UpValley

Kol at Hotel Anthracite ~ Frank's Place ~ JW's Pub ~ Tiffany's ~ Pasquale's

Mid-Valley

Colarusso's Coal Fired Pizza ~ Nosh ~ Texas Roadhouse ~ Jon Pierre's ~ Café Colarusso

Scranton

Ale Mary's ~ AV ~ Backyard Ale House ~ Café Classico ~ Carmen's ~ La Cucina ~ Mansour's
Market Street Grill ~ Pizza by Pappa's ~ POSH ~ Stirna's ~ Sidel's ~ Terra Preta Prime ~ Trax

Down Valley

Marzoni's ~ Dooley's Pub

Dunmore/North Pocono

3 Jacks Burgers ~ Van Brunt Grill ~ Olde Brooke Inn

Thank you for your support!



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We would like to extend a huge **THANK YOU**
to **Lamar Advertising**,
our Dine Lackawanna media sponsor.
We greatly appreciate the carefully-sited
& cleverly designed billboards that they donate each month.

Thank you for all that do you for the LHS!

Continued from page 5

good. They are better now than I used to see in Pa, I seldom go out in the evening but sometimes very early in the morning. Not much fog here probably there is more near the river

You say teaching school is a business that is difficult to get satisfaction to all the employees. So it is. But I believe one great difficulty is many enter upon it not at all prepared for it, like starting on a journey without knowing the name of the place of destination or even the point of the compass toward which to start and entirely ignorant of the nature of their business. Consequently what ought reasonably be expected of themselves. I confess it was so with myself in my first efforts at teaching I groped my way in the dark and by the light of nature all Providence. I knew in my way Hall's Lectures on School

keeping I bought and read and was much profited, You saw the book of which I speak in Pa, when in Philadelphia I met with "F. Orville Taylors District School," a valuable manual for teaches. It did me much good, gave me a vast number of friendly hints and useful directions. I found one back in the library of a Yankee Teacher "Abbott's Teacher" excellent. I then thank God I got the "Annals of Education" from Boston. ? how much more I know about Teaching School than I did when I was at home. I afterwards obtained "The Schoolmaster's Friends & Committeeman's Guide," which tells me a heap of things that I ought to know and so ought every teacher. All these wise sayings and experiences have smoothed the rugged ways of teaching and made it a pleasant employment. Your ? George Tillinghast.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT

We are pleased to report that our members and friends rose to the recent Donation Match Challenge presented by LHS member Scott Herring. On the onset of this crisis, Scott took immediate action because he values our work and wanted to ensure our continued success. So when he offered to match any donations we received up to \$1000, we found we were able to meet his challenge and raise more than \$2200 in less than one week! Thanks to John Farkas, Jr., John Farkas, Ella Rayburn, Chris Posly, Leni Piaskey, Chester Kulesa, Richard Fitzsimmons, and Richard Jenkins for their contributions and continued support.

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

LHS announces Student Photography Workshop

In response to schools closing for the year due to coronavirus, the Society will host a photography workshop, supported by funding from the Margaretta Briggs Foundation, with the goal of creating a visual archive of how Lackawanna County looks under quarantine. The workshop, which will begin in May and run through September, will give aspiring photographers a chance to document their neighborhoods during this historic time. Students will be invited to participate from every school district in Lackawanna County and receive a small stipend to support their work. Students will be encouraged to share their perception of how the quarantine can best be expressed through photographic images.

Scranton Times photojournalist Jake Danna Stevens, will instruct the students, over the internet and/or telephone in a three-part course. Instruction will be offered before, during and after and include a critique of completed work. Students will learn photojournalistic/documentary methods and techniques and will be asked to submit candid photos only, no staging or editing allowed. Submitted work can include scenic, pictorial and detail photos of how things look during the coronavirus quarantine. Photos will be displayed as part of an online gallery and promoted through local media outlets. Students will share copyright of their photos with the LHS, and their work will become part of the Society's permanent collection.

In Memoriam



Richard "Skip" Bovard

Richard "Skip" Bovard passed away on March 7, 2020. Skip was appointed a Trustee of the Lackawanna Historical Society in 1993. In 1996 he was elected to serve as 2nd Vice President of the Society and eventually rose to position of 1st Vice President, which he held until 2011. His leadership and support to the LHS helped the organization thrive.

With then President Alan Sweeney, he assisted in revising the organizational By-Laws and participated in all of our fundraising programs. Including a very successful wine tasting that he co-chaired with his wife Jane at the Scranton Country Club in 1998. He also helped the LHS improve our finances in assisting with income development goals and working with fellow trustees improve our investment strategies.

In 2013, when Skip informed the Board that he could no longer actively serve as a Trustee, he was unanimously elected to the Emeritus position. Although in recent years he spent much time away from NEPA, he remained informed and often checked in when he was in the neighborhood. He was a true gentleman and will be greatly missed.



Aileen S. Freeman

The Lackawanna Historical Society lost another good friend this year when lifetime member Aileen Sallom Freeman (Mrs. Murray Fox Freeman), passed away on January 18. Her obituary states that "during her 90 years, she led an exciting and varied life – from distinguished and accomplished artist, to china shop owner, historian, author, public utility manager, newspaper reporter, and author..."

Aileen's marriage to Murray Fox Freeman, the great-great-grandson of one of the founders of Lackawanna County, A. H. Winton, would pique her initial interest in local history resulting in 8 books. Her first book, *AH Winton*, was written in 1977 and chronicled the story of Lackawanna County and the role the Winton's played in its founding. In 1978, the book would be reprinted in the Scranton Times. In 2000, she assisted the Society and Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce as author of *Lackawanna County, An Illustrated History*. She continued writing local history well into this century recounting with such diverse topics as the story of the Jessup family's missionary activities in the Middle East and a book about Northeastern Pennsylvania's role in electing Abraham Lincoln. In 2014 she detailed the story of Alice Winton Freeman's (Aileen's mother-in-law) Scranton wedding and trip to Egypt including a photo from the family's collection showing Alice at the tomb of King Tutankhamun just before it was opened by famed explorer Howard Carter.

Aileen continued to stay in touch with the Society with periodic telephone calls to share a memory or recount an interesting local history tidbit that she discovered in her research. She was a wonderful person whose enthusiasm for all things local history made you want to learn more. We will miss her.

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Skip Bovard

Ellie Axford

Ella Rayburn

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

In Memory of Aileen Freeman

Gayle Williams

In Memory of The Honorable James Munley

Sarah Piccini

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

In Memory of Mike Delfino

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

In Memory of Nancy Farkas

John Farkas

John Farkas, Jr.

Richard Fitzsimmons

In Memory of Connie Magistro

Leni Piasky

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

In Memory of John Gallone

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

In Memory of Mary Schemel

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

In Memory of Matthew Beckage

Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

In Memory of Phyllis Passero

Mike Passero

In Memory of Julia Savakinus

Ann McGrath

Mike Passero

*Contributions to the Lackawanna Historical Society in the name of individuals are placed in a Memorial Fund and are not used for general operations. To contribute in the name of an individual, please send check payable to the Society with the name and address of person(s) for whom memorial is made.
All contributions to the Lackawanna Historical Society are tax deductible to the fullest extent that the law provides.*

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all without having to meet a census taker.

Complete now using your phone, tablet or computer

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VIRTUAL HAPPENINGS

As we make our way through the new normal, we will continue to offer a variety of online activities. Please make note of them and stay tuned to email blasts, Facebook posts, and website updates for schedule and topic announcements.

- **LACKAWANNA PAST TIMES** every Friday at 2 pm via Zoom meetings
Upcoming topics include Suffrage by Sarah Piccini on April 24 and a greeting from General Winfield Scott by John Hart on May 1
- **GENEALOGY FORUM** on Wednesday, April 29 at 1 pm via Zoom meetings
Local genealogists are invited to join us to share ideas, research tips, and local resources
To Join Zoom Meeting go to: https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78734513643?pwd=Dc_7p3igTF4
or use Meeting ID: 787 3451 3643 Password: 043563
- **FUTURE PROGRAMS** dates will be announced for the postponed play about Fr. Curran and his role in the 1902 Anthracite Strike “For the Least of Them”, summer downtown walking tours, and postponed lecture on the “History of Recycling” by Joyce Hatala and much, much more!

Visit www.lackawannahistory.org and like us on Facebook for up-to-date listings of all activities!

Are you receiving History *BYTES*?

Please send your email address to lackawannahistory@gmail.com to make sure you are on the list.