



LHS

The Lackawanna Historical Society Journal

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Summer 2023

If These Walls Could Talk

A History of the Home of James Clark and Robert Grindle

By: James Clark and Terry Bonifanti

1914 was a banner year for Clarks Green. The Northern Electric Street Railway trolley, which made Clarks Green a streetcar suburb in 1907, was carrying commuters to Scranton from the Abingtons every half hour. Then, on May 5, 1914, the Borough (population 279) was

incorporated. Right around the same time, Frederick A. Hintermister started building his new house at 412 Main Avenue.

Hintermister, son of Swiss immigrant John Hintermister of Ithaca (owner of the Ithaca Piano & Organ Co.) arrived in Scranton in 1889, where he worked in the piano business (as a dealer and tuner). In 1912, he became the sole representative in the area for the Edison Phonograph

company, selling the Edison Diamond Disk phonograph. At one point, he had stores in Scranton, Wilkes-Barre and Clarks Summit — the latter sold only music discs. Hintermister was also recognized nationally as a bridge and whist player.

In 1911, Hintermister paid \$552.50 for an apple orchard at the top of a steep hill on the border between Clarks Summit and Clarks Green. Three very elderly apple trees from the orchard still stand in a yard neighboring 412 Main Avenue.

The architect of the house is unknown. Books of house plans proliferated at the time; and Scranton was undergoing a building boom, so big-name architects worked here off and on. It is also possible that Frederick Hintermister's association with Thomas Edison (a personal friend, per Hintermister's great-

grandson, Howard Hintermeister, Jr.) led him to the designer of his house. At any rate, the result was an unusual design of which Frederick was proud — he signed the basement floor with his initials, "FAH" and "1914."



Home of Frederick Hintermister, ca. 1915

The style is Prairie Box, an offshoot of the Prairie Style which also relates to the more common American Foursquare style. Most Prairie Box houses are two and a half stories, with a hip roof; full width porch; and a central dormer which lights an open attic over two full floors. This house has one full floor, with a full width porch recessed under the main roof; and four dormers, facing each direction, and

extending flush with

the first floor exterior wall (or the front edge of the porch). The dormers are wide, comprising the bedrooms and occupying about 40% of the width of the house on each of its faces. Entry to the porch is from wide steps at each end; tapered square columns provide support. The 45 foot square structure is wood frame with stucco below and wood shakes on the dormers, with a poured concrete foundation. The front steps were also poured concrete. The house's dormers and roofs when built were sheathed with unpainted wood shakes (the total roof surface is 9,000 square feet). Known locally as The Pagoda House because of its flaring rooflines on two levels, its pyramidal hip roof with wide curved eaves is surmounted by four flared hip roofs over the dormers which meet at its center. Since the valleys between the dormer hip roofs also meet at that

Cont. on pg. 6

A Word from the President...

Hello Everyone,

As we begin our busy summer season, I wanted to take a moment to provide an update on the Dunmore Historical Society's closure. In March of 2022, the Dunmore Historical Society's remaining officers and members decided that the organization was going to cease operations due to a declining membership. Phil Sardo of the Dunmore Historical Society contacted us to begin planning the dissolution which according to the DHS articles of incorporation called for any existing assets to be turned over to the Lackawanna Historical Society. Phil Sardo and DHS President Michael Williams, Secretary Cassandra Morelli-Kolatis, and Treasurer Dan Schreffler worked with LHS trustees and staff to inventory the collections, contact donors to offer returns of materials if they wished, and determine what could be done with the headquarters building on Barton St in Dunmore. The committee agreed that the building should be sold once the collections were transferred and the caretakers/tenants vacated. LHS Trustee and Collections Chair Ella Rayburn, worked closely with Dan Schreffler and Phil Sardo to review and transfer the collection last summer. In the Fall, Dunmore Historical Society presented LHS with a check from the sale of the building which has been placed in a restricted account. A final check was presented in May representing the remaining balance of the DHS accounts. While we were sad to see Dunmore Historical Society come to an end, we are very grateful to them for including us in their dissolution plan and commend Dan, Phil and their fellow trustees for their efforts to see that the history is not forgotten.

Please enjoy the summer weather, be well and stay involved.

Sincerely Yours,
Michael Gilmartin President

Why not invite a friend to join!

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	_____

The Lackawanna Historical Society 2023

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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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Thanks for your Support...



History Makers:
The LHS Legacy Society

We are delighted to recognize our first group of History Makers who recently stopped by the Catlin House for a group picture. Included are LHS Executive Director, Mary Ann Savakinus, President Michael Gilmartin, and the 2023 History Makers: Dalida Walton, Ella Rayburn and John Farkas. Missing from photo is History Maker Richard Leonori.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



Individual

Cathy Kochis, Madison Twp.
 Joseph Nardelli, Jessup
 Amy Walsh, Scranton
 Chris Walsh, Alexandria VA

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Cyndie Price:
 Evadne Evans & Family

In Memory of JoAnn H. Castellino:
 Robert & Mary Ann Savakinus

Contributions made in the name of individuals are placed in a Memorial Fund and are not used for general operations. To make a memorial donation, 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.

LIVING HISTORY PROGRAM



Throwback Thursdays

at the **CIRCLE Drive In THEATRE**



June 22

\$9 Adult \$7 Child



July 27



August 17

Gate opens at 7pm

Welcome NET Credit Union Members!

LHS is proud to be a NET Credit Union Preferred Partner Group, allowing credit union members to become LHS members and LHS members to become credit unions members. Welcome to these new members:



Chad Anuszewski, Peckville
David Aronica, Dunmore
Marc Austin & Megan Arvonio, Jefferson Twp.
John Barbero, Lake Ariel
Steven Beatty, Bear Creek Twp.
Becky Belotti, Avoca
John Blake, Jermyn
Allison Boogertman, Tafton
Ellis Booth, Blakely
Steven Brace, Mountain Top
Michael Brin, Dallas
Lindsay Burak, Peckville
Dillon Burnside, Clifford Twp.
Logan Cahill, Hawley
Michelle Caldwell, Honesdale
Steven Carbonaro, S. Abington
Kathryn Chapman, Moscow
Anthony Ciambriello, Greenfield
Vernon Clearwater, Clarks Summit
Joann Dacunto, East Stroudsburg
Joshua Davis, Kingston
Corey Degilio, Jessup
Tyler Delaney, Lakeville
Jerrid Dinnen, Moscow
Cassidy Dorson, Jermyn
Jaimee Lynn Dupras, Nanticoke
Michael Evanusa, Moosic
Lavern Farley-Vantassel, Union Dale
Jason Fashauer, Mayfield
Howard Flower, Gouldsboro
Peter Fraone, Lords Valley
Bernard Fryer, Dunmore
John Garrity, Plymouth
Jacob Gay, Dalton
Carmine Gigliotti, Union Dale
Rodney Gilbert, East Stroudsburg

Eliza Gilner, Pittston
Edward Golembeski, Factoryville
Jennifer Gratkowski, Throop
Elizabeth Gropper, Hawley
Robert Grunza, Jessup
Michelle Guarneri, Wilkes-Barre
Heather Guzzon, Nicholson
Erica Haefele, Dickson City
Sean Patrick Hatton, Jefferson Twp.
Eugene Hopkins, Throop
Kasey Huber, West Pittston
John Paul Jeffers, Old Forge
Janet Jones, Plymouth
Lisa Kinter, Tunkhannock
Matthew Knecht, Covington Twp.
Erica Kobetitsch, Madison Twp.
Michael Korman, S. Abington Twp.
Adam Kovaleski, Plymouth
Joseph Kudrich, Archbald
Joseph Lavelle, Moosic
Nicholas Lucke, Hamlin
Michael Lukeski, Newfoundland
James Maloney, Scranton
Donna McCormick, Beach Lake
John Michael McKean, Hawley
Judson Mead, Pittston
Mark Mecca, Hop Bottom
Paul Memo, Peckville
Bridget Miles, Thompson
Patricia Miller, Dalton
Robert Morris, Nanticoke
Erica Orrick, Carbondale
Angela Osenkowski, Plains
Justine Partington, Nanticoke
Jared Paulin, Lake Ariel
David Peterson, Dunmore

Ann Marie Pulman, Archbald
Laurance Reagan, Clarks Summit
Tyler Reither, Cresco
Michael Rencavage, Dallas
Dawn Richards, Dalton
Richard Riehl, Dalton
Jaime Rosar, Dunmore
Louis Roscioli, Pittston Twp.
Paul Rumensky, Dickson City
Timothy Seaman, Olyphant

Richard Sendrick, Mountain Top
Paul Sennefelder, Newfoundland
Thomas Sheehan, Waymart
John Shefler, Tunkhannock
Olivia Sokolowsky, Avoca
Theron Solomon, Hanover Twp.
Charles Swezy, Covington Twp.
Yvonne Teta, Milford
Robert Tricarico, S. Abington Twp.

Richard Tucker, Avoca
Alex Valentin, Lake Ariel
John Voyton, Hunlock Creek
Jerome Walkowiak, West Wyoming
Sean Welsh, Scranton
Dakota Williams, Carbondale
Richard Williams, Thompson
Walter Woehrle, Moscow
Adam Young, Hawley
Jacob Zega, Milford

WINSTON CHURCHILL

Join us at the Catlin House on Wednesday June 14 when Vince Benedetto, President of the Churchill Society of Pennsylvania shares his favorite things about Winston Churchill and provides an overview of the Churchill Society.



Trustee News

Don't Forget to Vote: Please join us on Wednesday June 14, directly before the Winston Churchill program at 7 pm to vote on following by-law revisions:

- add the Platinum Membership category;
- make the By-Laws Committee a standing committee;
- revise "Article VII – Meetings" to address meetings of the society;
- allow meetings to be conducted virtually;
- allow electronic voting when appropriate
- re-insert the dissolution clause into the By-Laws, and providing for the disposition of items.

Stepping Down: In May the LHS was sorry to receive a letter of resignation from Trustee **Elizabeth Boeth**. Liz joined the board in 2018 but due to family and career obligations at this time cannot devote much time to the Society. We will miss her but know she will continue to be an active Society member. We wish her the best.

WORLD POLIO DAY PROJECT:

The Rotary Club of Scranton and the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine will join forces in recognition of World Polio Day which is Tuesday, October 24, 2023. To promote World Polio Day, they would like to conduct interviews with both polio survivors and local residents who lived through the polio scare - as well as retired physicians and nurses who treated polio victims while serving on the front-lines during the polio epidemic in the US. To share your story, contact Joe Riccardo at (570) 591-0166 or (570) 207-3515



Nancy's Corner

A bit of whimsy for this edition of Nancy's Corner with this Summertime advertisement from the Poli in the July 25, 1923 issue of the Tribune. Not only could you hear brand new songs from *Scranton's Own* "Four Miners" (formerly the Electric City Quartet), but you could listen in a venue that is 20 degrees cooler than the street!

POLI'S

Twenty Degrees Cooler Than the Street.
Three Shows Daily.

DOROTHY RUSSELL
Only Daughter of the Late Lillian Russell
—IN—
"My Evening Star"

THE "FOUR MINERS"
Formerly the Electric City Quartet,
Scranton's Own Talented Singers,
With Some Brand New Songs.

ALBERT HORLICK & CO.
In a Sprightly Russian Dance Number
AND OTHER ACTS.

A Big Special Photoplay,
"Wonders of the Sea"
A Picture of Thrills and Spectacular Action.

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.

Lackawanna Historical Society & The Greenhouse Project

Present the 2023 Historic Homes & Secret Gardens Tour

BEYOND THE HILL

ENJOY THE HOMES & GARDENS
OF THE ABINGTONS



Purchase tickets in Scranton at The Catlin House, 232 Monroe Ave., The Greenhouse Project, 200 Arthur Ave., or Nada & Co, 1440 Capouse Ave. or in Clark Summit at the Gathering Place, 304 S State St., or online at <https://lackawanna-historical-society.ticketleap.com/beyondthehill/>

- June 25, 10 am to 4 pm -

Tickets: \$30 in advance or \$35 on the day of the tour
(Special Group Offer: Buy 7 tickets, get an 8th one free!)

2023 Tour Sites

Trinity Lutheran Church, The Home of James Clark and Robert Grindle, the Home of Adam and Tori Donahue, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Camayd Residence, the Bohlin Residence and the Fetcher/Voltzow Residence *plus 3 secret gardens!*

Thanks to our Sponsors: Peoples Security Bank & Trust

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Cont. from pg. 1

point, there is an eight-way intersection. The second floor rooms are full height except for walk-in closets at each corner. First floor ceilings are 9 feet. Six or eight over one windows are grouped together in bands; the glass is original.

A local legend about The Pagoda House turns out to be at least partly true. The French doors flanking the living room fireplace which open onto a sharp dropoff were intended, according to local folklore, to give access to a wheelchair ramp to the driveway to accommodate a child who died before the house was finished; so the ramp was never built. It turns out there was a disabled son, but he was a grown man when the house was built; he was confined to a bed, not a wheelchair; and he lived another 30 years. Frederick Hintermister had a son, (Howard), who was crippled by arthritis and bed-bound by the time the house was built. His story was told in Brian Fulton's Scranton Times-Tribune article of October 10, 2020: "75 Years Ago - Howard Hintermister, 'the man with the golden smile,' dead at 59." The ramp was never built because, based on how the family handled Howard's mobility at their next house, it was unnecessary. They simply backed a specially adapted truck up to the French doors.

Frederick Hintermister sold the house in 1920 for \$9,000 to John Maxwell Kendall and his wife, Myrtis. Hintermister had just purchased the rectory at St. Luke's Church (244 Wyoming Avenue in Scranton where a garden now grows) to expand his shop, and he may have needed funding; also, he had been widowed since 1906, his children were grown, and it may have been too isolated for his son Howard. The 1920 census, after the house was sold, shows Frederick Hintermister and his two younger sons (aged 33 and 22) living together on Clark Avenue in Clarks Summit. After renting in Clarks Summit for a few years, Frederick, in 1924, built 1711 Quincy Avenue in Dunmore for his

younger son; and designed that house to be suitable for Howard. The family continued living there until 2004.

The lot next door to the Clarks Green house, 406 Main Avenue, was split from 412 in 1920 and sold to Frederick Hintermister's long-time friends of Scott McMurtries, who moved to the Abingtons with Hintermeister, and who remained here after he left; and whose daughter Marion McMurtrie Curtis lived there until 1988 when she bequeathed the house to Pudge Adcroft. Marion Curtis is the source for several stories about 412 Main Avenue. Frederick Hintermister died in 1934, and is buried at Hickory Grove cemetery.

John Maxwell Kendall was an immigrant from Cornwall, England, and began his career in 1902 chauffeuring Scranton resident Cyrus Jones around the US and Europe. Jones was the founder of the Grand Union Tea Company, which became Grand Union Supermarkets. Jones left Scranton about 1914, and set Kendall up in business as a Ford dealer (per Kendall's granddaughter, Helen Kendall Elder). The dealership later became Kendall-Sandone, until Kendall's association ended in 1921. It is believed Kendall added the garage to 412 Main Avenue.

It appears that the Kendall family rented the house before they bought it. Joe Oliver, son of the owners between 1952 and 1993, has in his possession a postcard of the house with this handwriting on the back: "Sunday Aug 15, 1920. Kendle [sic] residence, formerly Sign of the Apple Bough." Since the postcard indicating residence is dated before the deed, John Kendall may have been renting the house prior to buying. Another old story about this house is that during the early years, a tearoom named "Sign of the Apple Bough" was operated here: it must have been during the late 1910s after the Hintermistors moved out, and before the Kendalls moved in.

The Kendalls wintered in Florida. He unwisely put

all his money in the “Miami land scam” and lost the house in 1926 (again, per his granddaughter). The family moved to Syracuse, NY, where the Kendalls’ daughter had found work.

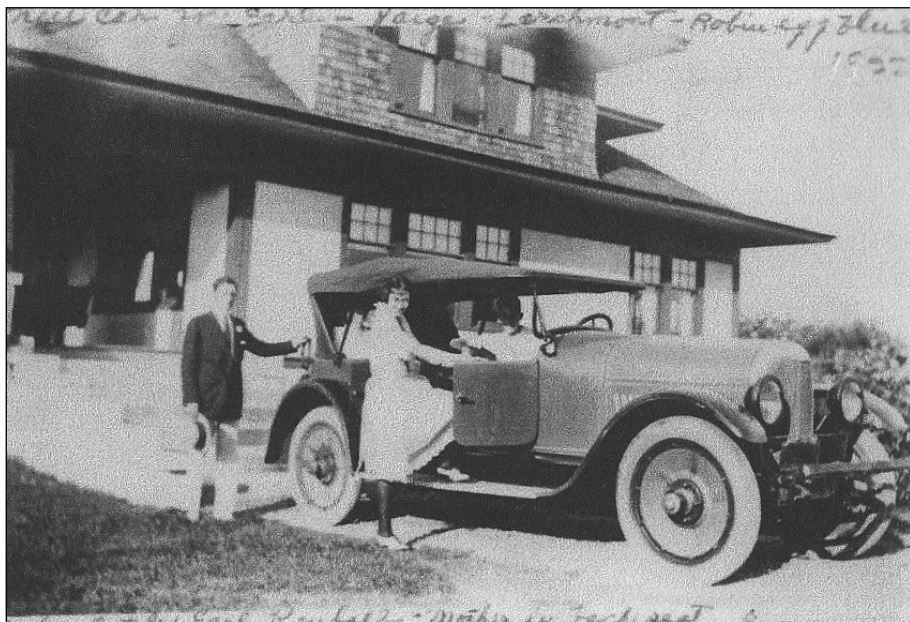
The house was sold to Ida and Matthew Knoble in 1926. Knoble worked as a salesman for Pure Oil in Dickson City, represented the local legislative district in Harrisburg from 1939 to 1942 (when he lost re-election), and was finally an oil distributor. Born in 1878, he graduated from Woods Business College in Scranton, and later served in the U. S. Army (as a cook) for the 1916 Mexican Expedition. He was a clerk at the post office, and President of the Abington Republican Club. Matthew Knoble was also, per a 1927 newspaper article, a friend of Howard Hintermister. He died in 1962 (Ida in 1952); they are buried at Shady Lane Cemetery.

The Knobles sold the house in 1946 to George and Charlotte Harris (Harris Hub Bed & Spring Co., a large manufacturer of beds based in Illinois. Harris Hub built a plant on Davis Street in Scranton in 1946). Harris belonged (after 1952) to Glen Oak Country Club, and the Madison Avenue Temple. They sold the house in 1952 for \$25,000, just prior to divorcing. George Harris died in 2007, and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

William and Jeanne Oliver bought the house in 1952. A partner at Oliver, Price & Rhodes, he served in the Navy and had a lifelong love of sailing. She was a WAVE during World War II, when they met in Washington, D.C. They had the house painted red, with yellow under the eaves, after a family vote in which Jeanne Oliver voted Yes and the rest of the family voted No. The Olivers replaced the poured concrete front and back steps with bluestone. They spent every warm month at their home at Lake Winola, so this house was landscaped for low maintenance. The current residents, the fifth owners, bought 412 Main Avenue from Jeanne Oliver in 1993.

Today, an elliptical bluestone path anchors the front garden on the steeply sloping site. The ellipse highlights tree and herbaceous peonies, which bloom from mid-May to mid-June. The central ellipse and borders are framed with dark green and red foliage, which also provide screening from the street. The fountain is a bronze Urli from India. Twelve-foot-wide bluestone steps lead to the front door.

The house, now painted gray with shades of blue gray, is sited well back on the half-acre lot, leaving a shallow rear garden backing up on the Clarks Green cemetery. Another stone ellipse surrounding a central lawn sets off beds of hydrangeas, day lilies, hellebores, bleeding heart, ligularia and Solomon’s seal. The



The Kendall family: John and daughter Dorothy, with wife Myrtis and son Earl inside the car, ca 1922

fountain sits among peonies and acanthus. Honey locust trees and wisteria shade the terrace. The bamboo are the Rufa variety. The landscaping was designed to provide interest from the breakfast area; a private seating and dining terrace; and to hide the cemetery fence.

The four-season garden room runs the 45-foot width of the house. Mr. and Mrs. Harris enclosed the front porch to create this room. They also incorporated the back porch into the kitchen, converted one of the bedrooms into a second floor bath, and remodeled the first floor bath. The original design included five bedrooms on the second floor, one bath on the main floor, and a servant’s bedroom and bath in the basement (per the 1950 census, the Harrises had a live-in maid). The present owners built a library/media room and bath downstairs, and constructed the current kitchen.

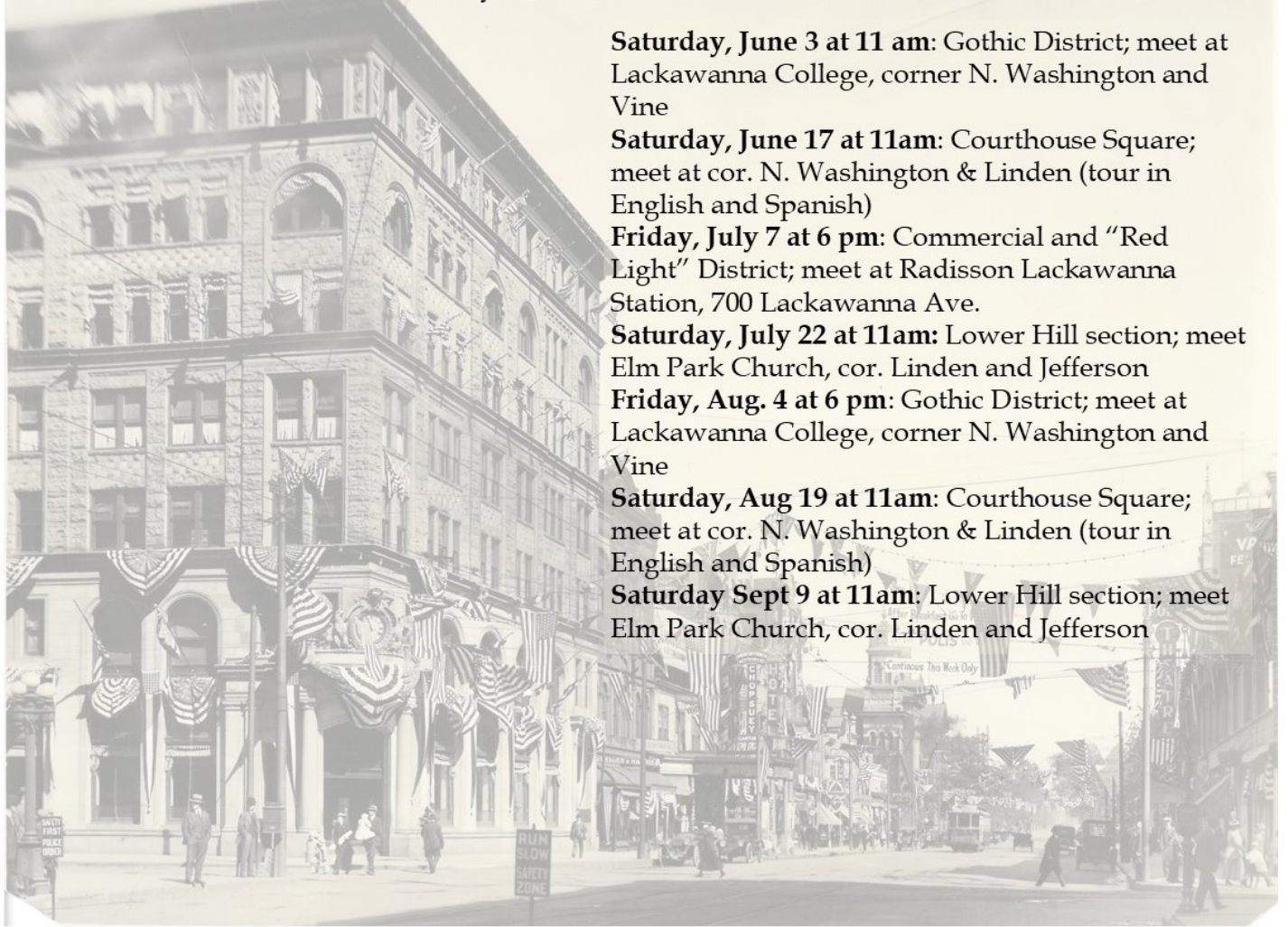
The first floor is an open plan, with wide openings and pocket doors between the main rooms. The interior decor is a blend of early 19th century French and American furniture, Asian artifacts, Persian rugs, a few midcentury modern pieces, and upholstered chairs and sofas from the 1920s. Standing at either end of the living room, one is surrounded by windows on four sides. The lamps in front of the fireplace were crafted from amethyst geodes. Books from the owners’ careers in publishing and bookselling fill the built-in and custom bookcases. A collection of Japanese Imari porcelain, mostly Fukagawa, is arranged throughout the living room and den. A major work by contemporary French artist Pierre-Marie Brisson hangs on the south wall. Noteworthy moldings surround the ceilings of all three rooms.

The dining room is papered with hand-painted Gracie panels. The sideboard holds a collection of Dorflinger glass.

Architectural Walking Tours Return!

These free guided tours provide local residents and visitors with a chance to learn more about Downtown Scranton's magnificent architecture, and learn more about buildings and neighborhoods you pass every day. This summer we're excited to announce a new partnership with students at Scranton Prep to translate our Courthouse Square tour into Spanish to introduce newer residents to the city, and create connections to build a stronger community.

Take a tour to kick off your First Friday festivities in July or August, or join us on Saturday morning! Call the Society at 570-344-3841 to make a reservation!



Saturday, June 3 at 11 am: Gothic District; meet at Lackawanna College, corner N. Washington and Vine

Saturday, June 17 at 11am: Courthouse Square; meet at cor. N. Washington & Linden (tour in English and Spanish)

Friday, July 7 at 6 pm: Commercial and "Red Light" District; meet at Radisson Lackawanna Station, 700 Lackawanna Ave.

Saturday, July 22 at 11am: Lower Hill section; meet Elm Park Church, cor. Linden and Jefferson

Friday, Aug. 4 at 6 pm: Gothic District; meet at Lackawanna College, corner N. Washington and Vine

Saturday, Aug 19 at 11am: Courthouse Square; meet at cor. N. Washington & Linden (tour in English and Spanish)

Saturday Sept 9 at 11am: Lower Hill section; meet Elm Park Church, cor. Linden and Jefferson

Lackawanna Past Times Continues!

The Society's monthly Zoom local history lecture series continues in June, and then takes a break in July before picking up again in August. Past episodes are available to watch on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@lackawannahistory/videos>

Friday, June 23, 2 pm: *A Sneak Peek of Beyond the Hill*

The Tour Planning Committee members share some details and stories about this year's tour

Friday, August 25, 2 pm: *Voices from the Sanitorium*

Author Amy Walsh discusses her research of West Mountain Sanitorium

The will be no Past Times Program in July.

DINE LACKAWANNA

Enjoy a night out & help support the Society by dining out at supporting locations!

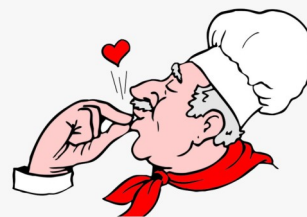


Thanks to Lamar Advertising for its ongoing support of this program.

June 28: **Harvest Seasonal Grill**
7011 Shoppes Blvd, Moosic, (570) 342-3330

July 26: **Tiffany's Tap & Grill**
291 Main St., Eynon (570) 876-0710

August 16: **Sidel's Restaurant**
1202 N Main Ave, Scranton (570) 343-6544



Do you love Local History? Do you Love Baseball?

Then please consider supporting the LHS this Spring when we mark the birthdays of some of our favorite local baseball legends! Purchase your tickets to RailRiders games using the link below and for any tickets sold, the RailRiders will donate \$5 to LHS.

Selected games are set for:

Sunday, April 2 (Hughie Jennings' 154th birthday)
Thursday, May 11 (Nestor Chylak's 101st birthday)
Thursday, July 6 (Steve O'Neill's 132nd birthday)
Saturday, August 12 (Christy Mathewson's 143rd birthday)

Tickets can be purchased online here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc7hwr3r>

GENEALOGY FORUM SUMMER SCHEDULE INCLUDING BEGINNERS' WORKSHOP

The Lackawanna Historical Society's Genealogy Forum will continue through the spring and summer to offer participants guidance on where to go when their family history search in the U.S. has led them back to Europe.

Participants should have completed genealogy research on the U.S. side of the Atlantic and have a good idea of where to look for family members across the pond. Session planners ask that anyone who registers know an approximate place of residence for ancestors in a specific region. Sessions will be held at various Lackawanna County libraries; please call the Society at 570-344-3841 or email lackawannahistory@gmail.com to register.

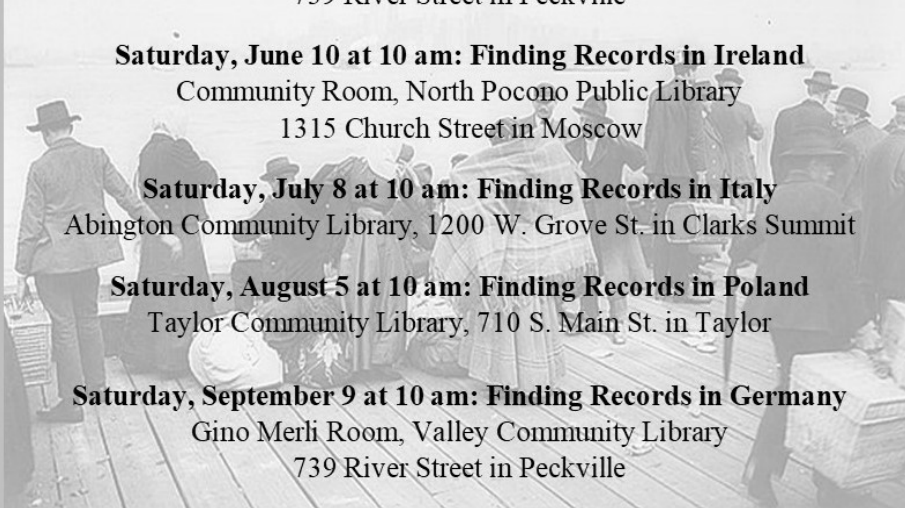
Saturday, May 20 at 10 am: Finding Records in England and Wales
Gino Merli Room, Valley Community Library
739 River Street in Peckville

Saturday, June 10 at 10 am: Finding Records in Ireland
Community Room, North Pocono Public Library
1315 Church Street in Moscow

Saturday, July 8 at 10 am: Finding Records in Italy
Abington Community Library, 1200 W. Grove St. in Clarks Summit

Saturday, August 5 at 10 am: Finding Records in Poland
Taylor Community Library, 710 S. Main St. in Taylor

Saturday, September 9 at 10 am: Finding Records in Germany
Gino Merli Room, Valley Community Library
739 River Street in Peckville



In addition to the regular Forum meetings, the Society will partner with the Albright Memorial Library to host a **Fall Genealogy Workshop for Beginners** on Saturdays October 7, 14, 21, and 28 from 9:30 am. to Noon in the Henkelman Room at the Albright Library. Registration is required and participants must commit to all four sessions. The fee is \$25 for LHS Members and \$35 for Non-Members. The deadline is Friday September 29. Please call or email the Society for details.

BEYOND THE CANVAS WITH RONNIE

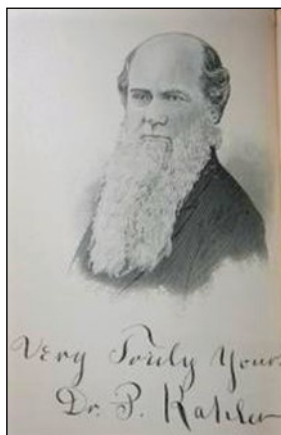
Not my usual “Beyond the Canvas” column, quite different – this time based on something quite exciting that I found on the Internet that relates directly to the early days of Scranton and President Lincoln. I hope you find it interesting.....

--- Ronnie Mead

ABRAHAM LINCOLN’S TROUBLED FEET **SCRANTON TO THE RESCUE!**

BACKGROUND: When Abraham Lincoln was elected President in November 1860, the population of Scranton, PA. was about 30,000 people. Most of those being lower and middle class, working in agricultural and manufacturing fields. I find one of those people to have a particularly interesting story.

History does not tell us all that much about Peter Kahler, “manufacturer of boots and shoes”.



In terms of basic facts, we know he was born in Bavaria in 1827 and that his father served under Napoleon I in the Battle of Waterloo. Peter came to Scranton about 1847/48 establishing himself as a chiropodist and began the manufacture of boots and shoes, based on hygienic principles, in a store basement in Scranton. He was

known to be quite proud of his abilities and sometime around 1860 he became aware of a problem President Lincoln had that was known to the general population – that Lincoln had foot troubles and simply could not find shoes/boots that were comfortable.

It is believed that in 1861 Kahler saw an article in a newspaper about Lincoln’s foot problems, with the statement: “Lincoln’s foot was so abnormally large and awkward of build and covered with corns, bunions, etc., that it seemed impossible for him to get a shoe which he could wear with any degree of comfort”. Kahler was a fan of Lincoln and felt he could make a pair of comfortable shoes for his President. Using nothing but the newspaper diagrams as a guide, he crafted a pair of shoes and sent them to Lincoln as a present from a humble admirer. Lincoln was de-

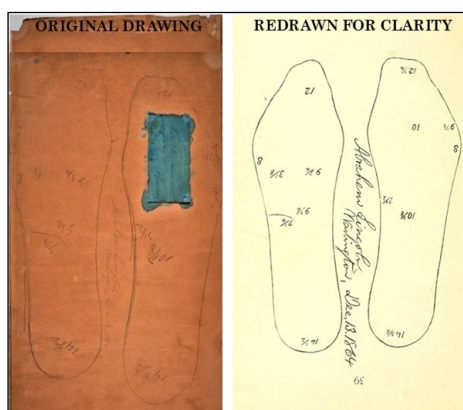
lighted as the shoes fit quite well and sent Kahler a thank you letter of recommendation. Kahler may have been humble, but he was no fool, and published the Presidential letter of recommendation with his advertisements, quickly making him a celebrity shoemaker.



This may have been the very article/drawing that Peter Kahler originally saw about Lincoln’s foot problems. It depicts Lincoln in bed while many people are measuring his boots.

From *New York Illustrated News*, March 5, 1861

During the Civil War Lincoln had a need for additional footwear and sent for Dr. Kahler to attend to him at the White House. When Kahler arrived, the President pulled off his boots, stood on



a sheet of thick brown paper and Dr. Kahler outlined his feet. After the drawing was concluded the President signed and dated it to show his approval. (It was deter-

mined that Pres. Lincoln wore a size 13/14 shoe and that his right foot was half an inch longer than his left foot).

THE INTERNET: I personally am an avid collector – one of the things I collect is Presidential and historical memorabilia. I routinely scour internet on-line auction sites. Recently reading through an on-line auction catalog, I came across a lot titled: “Abraham Lincoln: Signed foot tracing with related signed pass” with the lot consisted of “artifacts related to the fitting and subsequent manufacture of custom-made shoes for Presidential Abraham Lincoln, accomplished by Peter Kahler of Scranton, Pennsylvania”. Specifically, the lot, from the collection of Dr. Blaine Houmes, included the following:



1. A 9" x 13.75" sheet of paper that Lincoln stood on while Kahler traced the outline of his feet in pencil, signed by the President on Dec 13, 1864.
2. A 3" x 1.75" pass reading “Let this man come right in” (signed) A. Lincoln Dec. 12, 1864”.
3. A 10" x 12" mounted album depicting two passes (dated Dec 10 and 12, giving Kahler access to the White House). and a letter, written on Executive Mansion letterhead, dated March 2, 1865, reading: “The pair of French calfskin boots which you so kindly sent to the President and the slippers intended for Mrs. Lincoln have been received and he desires me to express his thanks for the same.” Signed by Lincoln’s personal secretary, John Nicolay.
4. A file of research material.

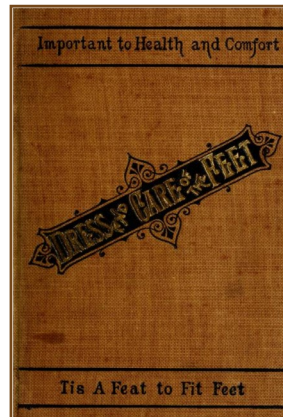
A once in a life time purchasing opportunity, in February 2022 this group sold to an unknown party for \$ 18,125.00 total.

CONCLUSION: Around 1868 Peter Kahler left Scranton for New York City. He opened a store in Manhattan at a prestige address on Broadway, promoting himself as a chiropodist and as an authority on the dress and care of feet, cashing in on his celebrity as a shoe/boot maker for President Lincoln, his son Robert, Vice President Andrew Johnson, F.W. Vanderbilt, W.H. Macy and many other prominent people. At this time, he adopted

the title of: “Doctor Peter Kahler, Official Boot-maker to the President”.

Peter secured a government contract during the Civil War to supply shoes to the Union army. He developed a broad-soled, low-heeled shoe, known as the “government shoe”. His effort paid off as he made enough money to establish Kahler & Son. Kahler and Son was quite successful and he personally accumulated a considerable fortune. Like President Lincoln, he went about New York wearing a stovepipe hat, telling all he met with great pride that he was Lincoln’s shoemaker and always carrying an autographed letter to prove it.

He was one of the first in his field to recognize the need for scientific training for Podiatrists and was a strong advocate for the importance of caring for one’s feet. He equated good foot health with happiness and a sound body.



In 1891, he published a book called “Dress and Care of the Feet” ‘Tis a Great Feat to Fit Feet”, which contained drawings of Lincoln’s feet, showing Lincoln’s signature and the date. The book was freely distributed to customers. Peter Kahler died of Bright’s disease (nephritis) at his summer residence, a farm at Harvey’s Lake, PA., on July 25, 1889, leaving a wife and

two sons. His funeral was July 30th at his home at 230 East Twelfth street in NYC., with the burial at Woodlawn cemetery.

NOTE: In the 1860s a good pair of boots cost an average \$ 12.50 (today’s equivalent would be \$ 400.00). Higher quality boots would have cost about \$20.00, the equivalent being about \$600.00.

P.S. My usual “Beyond the Canvas” column always relates to a painting we have in our collection. Despite this article’s emphasis on something else, it also ties into one of our paintings. We have a painting of a Mr. John Bradley (1862-1936), a Scranton newspaper man of some note. His father, Humphrey (1837-1894) started working for our Peter Kahler in 1857 and may even have assisted in the making of Lincoln’s boots. When Peter Kahler moved to NYC, Humphrey Bradley went into the shoe making business for himself in Scranton and was also quite successful!

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EVENTS & VIRTUAL HAPPENINGS

Wed., June 14, 7 pm (p. 5)

WINSTON CHURCHILL (*By Laws Revisions Vote*) at the Catlin House

Wed., June 28 (p. 9) **DINE LACKAWANNA** @ Harvest Seasonal Grill

Sat., June 17, 11 am (p. 8)

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR Courthouse Square (English/Spanish)

Sat., June 17, SOLD OUT

WYOMING VALLEY GHOST TOURS investigate Catlin House
(Next investigation is scheduled for Friday, September 8)

Thurs., June 22, dusk (p. 3)

THROWBACK THURSDAYS AT THE CIRCLE DRIVE IN

Fri., June 23, 2 pm (p. 8)

PAST TIMES via Zoom: *Beyond the Hill Sneak Peek*

Sun., June 25, 10 am - 4 pm (p. 6)

HISTORIC HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR

Fri., July 7, 6 pm (p. 8)

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR Commercial & "Red Light" District

Sat., July 22, 11 am (p. 8)

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR Lower Hill section

Wed., July 26 (p. 9) **DINE LACKAWANNA** @ Tiffany's Tap and Grill

Thurs., July 27, dusk (p. 3)

THROWBACK THURSDAYS AT THE CIRCLE DRIVE IN

Fri., August 4, 6 pm (p. 8)

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR Gothic District

Sat., Aug 19, 11 am (p. 8)

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR Courthouse Square (English/Spanish)

Thurs., August 17, dusk (p. 3)

THROWBACK THURSDAYS AT THE CIRCLE DRIVE IN

Sun., August 20, 2 pm (p. 3)

Meg Geffken portrays **ELEANOR ROOSEVELT** at the Catlin House

Fri., August 25, 2 pm (p. 8)

PAST TIMES via Zoom: *Voices from the Sanatorium*

Sat., Sept 9, 11 am (p. 8)

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR Lower Hill section

- See page 9 for Genealogy Forum Meeting Schedule -

Email lackawannahistory@gmail.com to receive History BYTES



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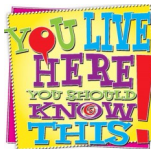
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SAVE THE DATE:

Mark your calendar now for these exciting Fall programs!

You Live Here; You Should Know This!



Our local history game show moves to Fall this year! Join us on Sunday, September 24th to test your local history knowledge. *Details TBA*

Local History Fair

We are returning to the Viewmont Mall on Saturday

September 30th to host a gathering of local history authors, neighboring historical societies and libraries and other like-minded organizations. *Details TBA*

VIEWMONT MALL
A PRESTI PROPERTY

An Evening of Amusements!

We are looking forward to joining our friends at Sidel's Restaurant on October 5th for a new and unique fundraising event. *Details TBA*

