



A S O U R C E O F I N F O R M A T I O N F R O M T H E L H V

## LHVA Helps Preserve Ice Industry History

By Dominic Keating

The rapid development of the anthracite coal industry in Northeastern Pennsylvania in the last half of the nineteenth century made Tobyhanna one of the Eastern seaboard's leading producers of ice. By 1895, the Tobyhanna and Lehigh Lumber Co. had clear-cut the entire 2,000 foot Pocono Mountain elevation where the small village is located. A great deal of that timber went to Lackawanna County as mine props. With no future in the local logging industry due to the deforestation, Tobyhanna's residents began cutting ice on the man-made lakes where the saw mills once stood.

Because of the size of the enormous ice houses (500 feet long) used to store the ice harvest, and the favorable location on the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad mainline to New York City, each summer day saw an average of 60 railcars of ice travel out of the Monroe County village. However, by 1952, the conversion to mechanical refrigerators ended ice house operations in Tobyhanna.

In 1994, Bill Leonard Sr., who had worked in the ice houses as a young man, rebuilt an ice house on Mill Pond #1 to commemorate Coolbaugh Township's Bicentennial celebration. Sadly, Mr. Leonard died suddenly before that event. A successful ice harvest was conducted in his honor with his collection of vintage ice harvesting tools, and his family continues the

tradition each year. The 2006 Ice Harvest is scheduled for 9 am on Saturday, January 14, 2006.



*Ice harvesting in the 1890s.*

In partnership with Steamtown National Historic Site, the Coolbaugh Township Historical Association, and the Pocono Mountain Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, the Lackawanna Heritage Valley helps Mill Pond #1 Ice House tell its story. In 2002, LHVA and Steamtown NHS moved a 1908 wooden boxcar to the site for restoration. Since then, LHVA volunteers conduct tours of the site for passengers aboard the

Steamtown NHS' Scranton to Tobyhanna steam train excursions. The one-half-mile walk from the beautifully restored Tobyhanna train station to the Ice House uses trails that were once rail beds leading to the lakes. The excursions also offer the "Village Walk Tour" where recollections of life in Tobyhanna are capped-off by a visit to the beautiful church of St. Ann.

Steamtown NHS is offering its Tobyhanna excursions in October. Please see "All Aboard" on page two for more information.

*Dominic Keating is a dedicated Mill Pond #1 Ice House volunteer, a member of the Heritage Interpretive Partnership, the Lackawanna County Transportation Council, a key staff member on LHVA/Steamtown trains to Tobyhanna, and a supporter of many local history activities.*

## Highlighted Events throughout the Lackawanna Heritage Valley:

### Annual Dunmore Cemetery Walking Tours

Sun, Oct 16 & 23 at 2 pm  
Just in time for Halloween! Call for reservations.  
Lackawanna Historical Society  
Info: (570) 344-3841

### Polkafest

Oct 21 to 23  
A three-day festival with live polka bands, dancing, and ethnic food. Live broadcast on WVIA-TV on Saturday from 8-9 pm. Tickets: Fri. \$8, Sat. \$25 (all day), Sun. \$8.  
Three-day pass is \$35.  
Scranton Cultural Center  
N. Washington Ave, Scranton  
Info: (570) 344-111



### Remember Johnny Mitchell Day

Sun, Oct 23  
Full day of events including free exhibits, a performance by Agnes Cummings, and a remembrance ceremony at the Mitchell gravesite.  
Call for times and ticket information.  
McDade Park, Bald Mountain Rd, Scranton  
Info: (570) 963-4804

### "Cut the Rug"

Thurs, Oct 27 from 6 to 8 pm  
The historic rug in the library of the Scranton Cultural Center must be replaced. Patrons can "Cut the Rug" and take home a piece of history. The night includes sips, dips and dancing! Tickets: \$50 each.  
Scranton Cultural Center  
N. Washington Ave., Scranton  
Info: (570) 344-1111

### "The Crucible"

Oct 27 to 30  
Arthur Miller's classic play presented by the University of Scranton Players in partnership with "Scranton Reads." University of Scranton  
Linden St., Scranton  
Info: (570) 941-6358

### "A History of Scranton: Selections from Collection of the Lackawanna Historical Society"

Sun, Oct 30  
Lecture, "A History of Scranton," by guest curator Cheryl Kashuba from 1 to 2 pm. Public Reception and debut of Exhibit from 2 to 4 pm. Call for locations.  
Hope Horn Gallery  
Linden St. & Jefferson Ave., Scranton  
Info: (570) 941-4214

Visit [www.visitnepa.org](http://www.visitnepa.org)  
for a complete listing of regional events.

# Did YOU KNOW?

The Stourbridge Lion's trial run in Honesdale on August 8, 1829 was the first steam locomotive to operate in America.

During the reign of King Coal, Scranton was considered a "railroad town." Five major steam railroads and two electric interurban trolley lines converged or passed through Scranton.

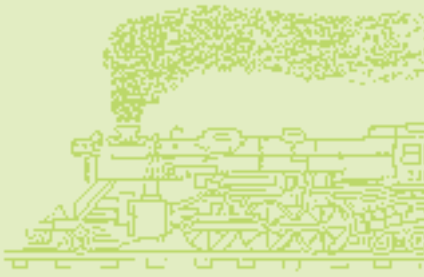
By 1920, the Lackawanna Valley's railroads employed more than 5,000 people.

For more information about Scranton's steam railroading history, click on

[www.nps.gov/stea](http://www.nps.gov/stea)

[www.northeast.railfan.net/scranton.html](http://www.northeast.railfan.net/scranton.html)

[www.bridge-line.org/blhs/blhsv0509.html](http://www.bridge-line.org/blhs/blhsv0509.html)



## Feature Partner:

### All Aboard!

The Pocono Mountains are showing off their fall fashions, and the steam trains from Steamtown National Historic Site can take you to the show. Few heritage areas can boast of having a national park in their midst, and fewer still have one as dynamic as Steamtown NHS. Since 1995, the sixty-acre site has showcased the tremendous influence that steam railroading had both on our local heritage and on America's rise as an industrial power. Experience the past as you ride in a historic passenger train car to your choice of two popular Fall Foliage destinations:



#### *Tobyhanna Excursion*

The 54-mile round trip excursions from Scranton to quaint village of Tobyhanna are set for Saturday, October 15, Sunday, October 23, and Saturday, October 29, and include either the "Village Walk Tour" or the "Ice House Tour." The train departs Scranton at 11:00 am with expected return at 3:15 pm. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$20 for those 62 and over, and \$15 for children 6-12 (under 6 requires a ticket at no charge). First class car tickets are \$50 per rider (limited seating).

#### *Moscow Excursions*

The Scranton to Moscow ride is a lovely 26-mile round trip offered on Sunday, October 16, Saturday, October 22, and Sunday, October 30. Passengers can tour the Moscow train station and watch the locomotive's re-coupling for its return to Scranton. The train departs at 1:00 pm. with expected return at 3:00 pm. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$13 for those 62 and over, and \$10 for children 6-12 (under 6 requires a ticket at no charge). First class car tickets are \$30 per rider (limited seating).

All train rides depart from Steamtown National Historic Site's boarding platform. Located in downtown Scranton, Steamtown NHS is open daily from 9 am to 5 pm. Call (570) 340-5200, toll free (888) 693-9391, or visit the web site at [www.nps.gov/stea](http://www.nps.gov/stea) for ticketing information or directions.

## In the News

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

On October 20, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council will honor two members of the Lackawanna County Conservation District at an awards ceremony at the Woodlands Inn and Resort. **William Lange**, director of the LCCD for 35 years, will receive the Thomas P. Shelburne Environmental Leadership Award, a lifetime achievement award. **Ernest Keller**, a 20-year employee of the LCCD, will receive an Environmental Partnership Award for his leadership, accomplishments, and commitment to environmental excellence.



William Lange



Ernest Keller

The Lackawanna Heritage Valley has partnered with the LCCD on several important projects, and congratulates Bill and Ernie on this special recognition of their work.

## LACKAWANNA Heritage Valley

A State and National Heritage Area



LACKAWANNA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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