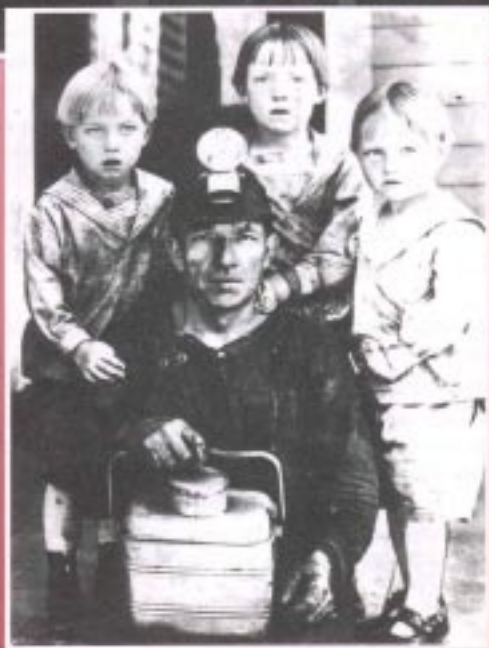


The "Great Strike"

*A 100th Anniversary Commemoration
of the 1902 Anthracite Coal Strike*



October 25-26, 2002



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The Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902 is among the most significant events in American labor and industrial history. At a time when Pennsylvania's anthracite commanded a significant share of the American energy market, one hundred and fifty thousand mineworkers struck in May 1902, demanding higher wages, union recognition, shorter workdays and other concessions from coal operators. President Theodore Roosevelt established the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission to adjudicate a settlement. Following five months of striking and violence, mineworkers—represented by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA)—agreed to return to work in November 1902, as the Commission commenced its hearings at the Lackawanna County Courthouse in Scranton.

Attorney Clarence Darrow, representing the mineworkers, argued, "they [coal operators] are fighting for slavery. We are fighting for freedom. They are fighting for the rule of man over man, for despotism, for darkness, for the past. We are striving to build up man." Coal operators, represented by former U.S. Attorney General Wayne MacVeagh, brought witnesses such as George Baer, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, who argued that "the rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men of property to whom God has given control of the property rights of this country."

Five hundred witnesses provided fifty-six volumes of testimony and described meager living conditions in company towns, unsafe working conditions, and child labor. In March 1903, the Commission granted a ten percent pay increase, a nine-hour-workday, new rules for the weighing of coal, and established the Anthracite Board of Conciliation to adjudicate operator-worker disputes. Though the UMWA did not gain recognition, the settlement represented a partial victory for mineworkers. It also set the stage for Progressive Era reforms in labor-management relations.

Sponsored by numerous statewide, regional, and local organizations, the 100th Anniversary Commemoration of the "Great Strike" recognizes the historical significance of the events of 1902. Open to the public, the events include state historical marker dedications and dinner with a keynote address on Friday, October 25, 2002, and a public history symposium on Saturday, October 26, 2002.

State Historical Marker Dedications Friday, October 25, 2002

2:00 p.m. Courthouse Square, Scranton, Lackawanna County.
State Historical Marker dedication commemorating the 1902 Anthracite Coal Strike and the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt. The Commission held its public hearings in the Lackawanna County Courthouse.

4:00 p.m. Coaldale, Schuylkill County.
State Historical Marker dedication commemorating a coal miners' march during the 1900 Anthracite Coal Strike led by Mary Harris "Mother" Jones.

6:30 p.m. Pennsylvania Labor History Society Awards Dinner,
St. Michael's Church, Shenandoah, Schuylkill County.
Keynote Speaker: Rev. Robert Cornell, author of *The Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902*, Professor Emeritus, St. Norbert College, DePere, Wisconsin, and former U.S. Congressman.

Entertainment by the Donegal Weavers.

For the convenience of conference registrants, bus transportation will be provided to the historical marker dedications and dinner from the Comfort Inn/Econo Lodge parking lot, Exit 165B of I-81, Wilkes-Barre. Buses will depart for Scranton at 1:00 p.m., continue to Coaldale, then Shenandoah, and return to the Comfort Inn/Econo Lodge parking lot by 10:30 p.m.

Public History Symposium Saturday, October 26, 2002 Conference Center Luzerne County Community College, Nanticoke

8:15 a.m. Registration/Coffee/Booksigning—Coal Region
Book Nook

9:00 a.m. Welcome
Brent D. Glass, Executive Director,
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Charles McCollester, President, Pennsylvania
Labor History Society
Jesse C. Teitelbaum, Executive Director, Luzerne
County Historical Society

- 9:15-
10:00 a.m. **The Anthracite Region in 1902.**
Robert Janosov, Luzerne County Community College
- 10:15-
11:45 a.m. **Panel: "The Contested Workplace: Issues at
the Heart of the Great Strike"**
Thomas Dublin, SUNY, Binghamton
Robert Wolensky, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Richard Healey, University of Portsmouth, United
Kingdom
Chair: Harold Aurand, Penn State Hazleton
- 11:45 a.m.-
1:00 p.m. **Lunch/Booksigning—Coal Region Book Nook**
- 1:00-
1:45 p.m. **"John Mitchell and the Great Strike: A Century
Later"**
Joseph Gowaskie, Rider University.
- 2:00-
3:30 p.m. **Panel: "Perspectives on the Great Strike"**
Lance Metz, National Canal Museum
Joseph McKerns, Ohio State University
Michael Workman, University of West Virginia
Chair: Elizabeth Ricketts, Indiana University of
Pennsylvania
- 3:45-
4:30 p.m. **The Great Strike in Historical Perspective**
Melvyn Dubofsky, SUNY, Binghamton
- 4:30-
5:00 p.m. **Conclusion: Public comments and dialogue
on the 1902 Anthracite Coal Strike**
Moderator: Brent D. Glass, PHMC

The Public History Symposium will be followed by the opening of an exhibit on "The Great Strike," and reception at the Anthracite Heritage Museum, McDade Park, Scranton, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Registration

Space is limited. Early registration is encouraged.

Full Registration

Includes 10/25 bus transportation to marker dedications and dinner, 10/25 dinner; 10/26 public history symposium/lunch*, evening museum exhibit opening.

\$60 _____

10/25 Registration Only

Bus transportation to marker dedications

\$10 _____

Dinner and keynote address

\$20 _____

10/26 Registration Only*

Public History Symposium

\$10 _____

Public History Symposium w/lunch

Exhibit opening and reception.

\$20 _____

Total Enclosed _____

* includes one copy of symposium proceedings.

Mail form and payment to Luzerne County Historical Society, 49 South Franklin Street, Wilkes Barre, PA 18701. Make checks payable to Luzerne County Historical Society.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone number _____

E-mail address _____

Registration Deadline is October 11.

The following hotels in the Wilkes-Barre area will provide a special conference rate. Registrants are encouraged to contact the hotels directly for reservation information.

Comfort Inn, Exit 165B of I-81 (570) 823-0500

Econo Lodge, Exit 165B of I-81 (570) 823-0600

Holiday Inn, Exit 170B of I-81 (570) 824-8901

Sponsoring Organizations

- Luzerne County Community College
- Luzerne County Historical Society
- Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
Commission and the Anthracite Museum
Complex
- Pennsylvania Humanities Council
- Pennsylvania Labor History Society

Supporting Organizations

- Borough of Coaldale
- City of Scranton
- Coal Region Book Nook
- Delaware and Lehigh National and
State Heritage Corridor
- Greater Shenandoah Area Historical Society
- History Alive!
- Lackawanna County Historical Society
- Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority
- Luzerne County Tourist Promotion Agency
- Marywood University
- National Canal Museum
- Pennsylvania AFL-CIO
- Pennsylvania State Education Association
- Schuylkill County Historical Society
- Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area
- Times-Shamrock, Inc.
- United Mine Workers of America



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