Day Tripping - August 2025

I was talking the other day to some friends about Scranton and the history of that city, when I realized that I have not done a day tripping on the architecture of the city. So here we go. This particular trip will involve a driving part, but to really appreciate the buildings, you may need to also do some walking. The information that I am sharing can be found in a booklet called *History Set in Stone A Guide to Downtown Scranton Architecture* published by the Lackawanna Heritage Valley and the Lackawanna Historical Society.

To start with, here is a brief history of the city of Scranton, which is along the Lackawanna River. By the late 1880's Scranton was leading the nation as an industrial center. The rich veins of anthracite coal, iron furnaces, thriving silk mills, and several railroad companies attracked many blue color workers. The cityscape was created by them and many of the prominent families built elegant houses in the tree-lined Hill Section and Green Ridge neighborhoods. Commercial buildings in the Downtown section still maintain a stately scene. The North, South, and West Scranton neighborhoods have a diverse architecture and you will find many amazing religious buildings.Many prominent architects designed and created buildings that were built with quality materials and and still are a marvel to see due to the talent of old-world craftsmanship.

Many of the buildings are still being used, just in different ways - coal company offices are university department offices; a grand railroad station is a full-service hotel; commercial buildings are luxury apartments; old junior high school repurposed as senior living apartments. The old industrial areas are now green spaces and the Lackawanna River is nearly pristine. There are many National Registered Properties through out the city that are recognized for its importance to the area.

Courthouse Square - The area around the Lackawanna County Courthouse has many interesting building. This area is bordered by Wyoming Avenue, Lindon Street, Jefferson Street, and Spruce Street. The courthouse is in the center of this and was originally 2 stories when it was built in 1884. It is in the Romanesque Revival style and used local stones from West Mountain. In 1896, a third story was added with eclectic styles.

There are several memorials and monuments around the square. These are a *Veterans Memorial*; a *Soldiers and Sailors Monument*; *Faith, Hope, and Love* memorial honoring those who served in WWI, WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam War; a *George Washington Monument*; *Pulaski Monument* honoring Casimir Pulaski, who is known as the Father of the American Cavalry; *John Mitchell Monument* who was a leader of the United Mine Workers. The rear of this monument shows mining and family scenes; *Sheridan Monument* for General Philip Sheridan, a Civil War hero; *Thaddeus Kosciusko* who was known as the Father of American Military Engineering because he designed numerous forts during the American Revolution; *Piazza deli'Arte* recognizing individuals who have achieved success in the fields of arts and humanities;Redwing, a sculpture forged by McGregor Architectural Steel in nearby Dunmore; *Ukrainian Memorial* commemorating 1000 year of Ukrainian Christianity; *Christopher Columbus* monument to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Columbus's arrival; *Delaney-DeLacy* Monument honors 2 Civil War Medal of Honor recipients from the area; *Merli-Sarnoski* Monument for 2 WW II recipients from the area.

In addition to these monuments, there is also the *William J. Nealon Federal Courthouse and Post Office* constructed in 1930 in the Neoclassical style with Art Deco details. at 235 Washington St. *The Scranton Electric Building* built in1896 in Beaux Arts style originally was the Scranton Board of Trade, but then sold to Scranton Electric Company i n 1926. They are the ones who put the Electric City landmark on the rooftop sign. at 507 Linden St; *Ad-Lin Building* built in 1896 in a Classical Revival/Commericial style that set it apart from other commercial buildings built at that time. at 600 Linden St; *Grace Hope Mission* is one of the earliest structures and is typical of early commercial buildings. at 243 Adams St; *Stoehr and Foster Building* built in 1923 housed one of the largest furniture stores. Look closely at the

exterior area between the first and second floors to see carvings of furniture-making elves. at 200 Adams Ave; the *Bliss-Davis Building* in gothic style was designed to match the height of the other buildings but the upper levels were never completed. at 150 Adams Ave; Scran*ton Life Building* built in 1916. The mounted eagles on the top symbolize the protection and strength of the insurance company. at 538 Spruce St; *Mears Building* designed in 1896 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style with arched windows and a stone facade, was Scranton's first skyscraper at 150 Washington Ave; *Brooks Building* built in 1891 for a judge. The large bay window entrance allowed them to circumvent the city's sidewalk reservation law and extend the space of the building. at 436 Spruce St; the Rite Aid Building was the first Rite Aid store to open in 1962. The founder of the drug store was a native of Scranton 201 Washington.
Commercial District -The commercial district is bordered by Mifflin Street, Spruce Street, Adams Ave. and Lackawanna Avenue. These buildings were built from 1895 to the early 1920's. They are the *Medallion Garage* (1920) - 140 Adams features 18 terracotta medallion depicting motor vehicles. When the original garage was demolished, the medallions were removed, resorted and have been incorporated int o the new garage facade. The *Connell Building* (1896) - 129 Washington. *Casey Laundry Building* - 515 Center Street. *Scranton National Bank Plaza* (1915) - 101 Washington. *Bosak Bank Building* (1915) - 434 Lackawanna. *Scranton Dry Good* (1897) - 409 Lackawanna. *Place 1* - 117 Wyoming has painted tiles on the facade. *Lewis & Reilly Building* (1924) - 114 Wyoming was one of the first women business owners in Lackawanna County. *Third National Bank Building* (1918) - 120 Wyoming. *The Globe Store*(1908) - 119 Wyoming . *Dime Bank Building* (1871) - 400 Spruce has fine stone work and a heavy cornice. *Hotel Jermyn* (1895) - 326 Spruce once hosted famous groups of the Big Band era including the Dorsey Brothers and Glenn Miller. There is a carving of the Manhattan skyline surrounding the Spruce Street entrance to the Manhattan Room cocktail lounge *Scranton Times* (1926) - 149 Penn. The bronze owls above the main entrances were crafted by Louis Comfort Tiffany Studios. The owls' eyes lit up at night, symbolizing the watchfulness of the press. *Samters Building* (1923) - 101 Penn. *Penn Furniture Building* - 97 Lackawanna.
Penn/ Wyoming District - This area is bordered by Mifflin Avenue, Vine Street, Wyoming Avenue, and Spruce Street. *Bank Towers* (1896) - 321 Spruce includes a unique corner entrance. *Ritz Theater* (1907) - 22 Wyoming was built by vaudeville theater magnate Sylvester Polo as a theater. *St. Luke's Episcopal Church* (1871 - 232 Wyoming in a Goethic Revival style. *St. Peter's Cathedral Complex* (1865, remodeled in 1884) - 300 block Wyoming. *Finch Building* (1899) - 434 Wyoming . *Dickson Works* (1878) - 225 Vine will be familiar to you as the opening montage of the TV show The Office. *Banshee* - 322 Penn is an Irish pub that has various items from previous buildings in Scranton. *300 block Penn Ave* was a commercial stretch for the 19th century residents of Scranton. *GAR Building* (1886) - 305 Linden is an ornate building that originally hosed the Windsor Hotel and Saloon and a Masonic Hall. *St Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church* (1914) - 103 Linden.
Gothic District - Area is bordered by Wyoming Avenue, Olive Street, Adams Avenue, and Mulberry Street. *Central Fire Department* (1905) - 518 Mulberry originally housed horse-drawn engines. *Scranton Municipal Building* (1888) - 340 Washington was built with West Mountain stone. *Chamber of Commerce* (1925) corner of Mulberry and Washington. *Scranton Club* (1906) - 404 Washington was originally a private men's club. *ElksClub* (1914) - 406 Washington was the former fraternal club but is now part of Lackawanna College. *American Legion Koch-Conley Post* (1937) - 415 Washington. *Scranton Cultural Center at the Masonic Temple* (1930) - 420 Washington was designed by architect Raymond Hood a designer of Radio City Music Hall. This building has intricate details and symbolism throughout.You can attend Broadway shows here throughout the year. See ticket schedulehttps://www.ticketsales.com/scranton-cultural-center-tickets/venue?utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=438335306&utm_network=HCTest&msclkid=83caeb82609e1a8b0e168301bb780d02

Scranton School Administration Building (1911) - 425 Washington. *Albright Memorial Library (*1893) - 500 Vine was a gift from Scranton businessman Joseph Albright on his former homestead. It was built to mimic the medieval Cluny Museum in Paris. *Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church* (early 20th century) - 505 Washington. Lackawanna College (1895) was the original Scranton Central High School. Lackawanna County Children's Library (1914) at 520 Vine.

Albright Library

Lower Hill Section - Area is bordered by Adams Street, Olive Street, Mulberry Street, Linden Street.Monroe Ave, Madison Ave. and the Scranton Expressway. The University of Scranton now uses most of the buildings in this area. *Leahy Hal*l (1907) - 243 Jefferson was originally the YWCA but now belongs to the University. *Elm Park United Methodist Church* (1893) - 712 Linden was constructed with the native West Mountain stone. *O'Hara Hall* (1922) - 310 Jefferson was the former headquarters of the Glen Alden Coal Company. *Houlihan McLean Center (1910) was the Emmanuel Baptist Church is now the performing hall for the University. Herold Apartments* (1937) - 618 Mulberry was the first Art Deco apartment building in the US. Legend has it that a Navy veteran worked with the architect to design the building to look like a ship. *Blair House* (1870) - 301 Jefferson was the residence of a banker in 1910 who had it remodeled to add Corinthian columns and a 3rd floor ballroom to accommodate his parties. *St. Matthew's United Evangelical Lutheran Church* (1886) - 425 Jefferson was originally Second Presbyterian. *St. Nicholas Orthodox Church* (1895) - 505 Jefferson was originally the home of a judge. When it was sold, the house was dismantled and the stones were used for the present church. *Lackawanna College Fitness Center* (1941 - 500 Jefferson was the site of the former home of the John Jermyn family. *Woolworth House* (1909) - 520 Jefferson was the home of Charles Sumner Woolworth, one of the founders of the famous five and dime store chain. *Red Cross Building* (1942) - 545 Jefferson was the residence of the lumber dealer Fenwick L. Peck and has been the headquarters for the Red Cross since 1942. *Carlisle House* (1884) - 544 Jefferson was home of a wholesale grocer. The house has a grand scale and elaborate details typical of the era. *Myer David Building* (1957) - 601 Jefferson houses the Jewish Community Center and has a Holocaust memorial. *Century Club* (1914) - 612 Jefferson was a women's cultural and and social center. *Covenant Presbyterian Church* (1904) - 550 Madison has Tiffany windows in the sanctuary. If you go to the church office, they may give you a tour of the sanctuary with the windows. *Smurfit Arts Center* (1906) - 445 Madison. Originally the John Raymond Memorial Universalist Church has a Tiffany mosaic window "Christ the Teacher". *Catlin House* (1912) at 232 Monroe was built for Scranton financier George H. Catlin. The Lackawanna Historical Society received the house as its home in 1942. *Scranton Estate* (1872) - 205 Monroe was the residence of Joseph Hand Scranton.

Industrial Corridor - Along Lackawanna Avenue from Cliff Street to Jefferson Ave. *PG&W Building* (1920) - 135 Jefferson was constructed as the headquarters of the Scranton Gas & Water Company. Fish and dragon carvings on the facade represent the water and fire(heat) provided by the company. *Lackawanna Station* (1907) - 700 Lackawanna was the original headquarters of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad. *Railway Express Agency Building* (1908) - 600 Lackawanna was built for the Railway Express, a national company that moved small shipments of packages and freight over the rail lines. *Laurel Line Freight House* (1903) - 151 Cedar was the original freight house for the Laurel Line Electric Railway. *Scranton Iron Furnaces* (1850) -159 Cedar was the Lackawanna Iron & Coal Company . You can read interpretive panels that tell about the remains of 4 anthracite-fueled blast furnaces. *Mattes Street Signal Tower* (1911) - Cedar was part of an extensive system of nearly 100 signal towers

from Hoboken, NJ to Buffalo, NY. *DL&W Railroad Shops* (1907) - 156 Cedar were built by the railroad to repair steam engines. The stone carvings high on the ends of the buildings give clues about what went on in the shops. *Steamtown National Historic Site* - on Cliff is a National Park with many exhibits, live steam, excursions, and much more. Be sure to get your Senior Pass that costs a 1 time fee of $80 and gets you into all national parks at no additional cost for the rest of your life. *Electric City Trolley Museum* - 300 Cliff is a former silk mill and houses vintage trolley and interpretive exhibits. You can even ride one of the trolleys over the tracks of the famed Laurel Line. *Bridge 60 Signal Tower* (1953) - Cliff consolidated the operations of three other signal towers. *Central Railroad of New Jersey Freight House* (1891) - 601 Lackawanna is a striking brick building and served as the railroad freight house into the 70s.

Engine at Steamtown

I hope you get a chance to visit some of these historic places in Scranton. Also the Lackawanna Historical Society offers Architectural Walking Tours. Bill and I did one years ago and it was interesting. Here is the link to their schedule for the remainder of 2025. https://lackawannahistory.org/EventsCalendar.html
Another resource is the one I used for writing this day tripping : *History Set in Stone* pamphlet that is available as a PDF if you do a search for **History Set in Stone -** lhva.org