

Paterson Silk Strike Centennial Conference 1913-2013



William Paterson University of New Jersey

May 20 and 21, 2013

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Conference Program at a Glance

Day Two (Tuesday, May 21, 2013) – Tours Day

9:00 am

DEPARTURE FROM WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

9:15 - 10:15 am

TOUR OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MUSEUM / BOTTO HOUSE NATIONAL LANDMARK (HALEDON)

The American Labor Museum is housed in the 1908 Botto House National Landmark. The Botto House was built for and owned by Italian immigrant and silk mill worker, Pietro Botto and his wife Maria. From the balcony of the Botto House in 1913, labor union organizers of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) addressed as many as 20,000 silk mill workers who were on strike for an eight-hour workday. Because it served as a haven for free speech and assembly for these laborers, the Botto House was placed on the State and National Register of Historic Sites in 1975. In 1982, the Botto House became a National Landmark when the United States Department of the Interior placed it on the nation's most distinguished roster of historic sites. Since 1983, it has been open to the public as a museum dedicated to the history and contemporary issues of workers, the workplace, and organized labor with special attention to the ethnicity of working people.

10:45 - 11:45 am

TOUR OF THE PATERSON GREAT FALLS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Paterson Great Falls is a new unit of the National Park Service that is open to visitors for self-guided outdoor activities and tours. Here you will find a National Natural Landmark, the Great Falls of the Passaic River. The Great Falls National Historic Landmark District still contains many of the mills that symbolize Paterson and the city's contributions to America's development and growth. As you walk through the District, you can take in the buildings' architecture, and imagine the entire area teeming with activity as the mills turned out their wide variety of products.

12:00 - 12:30 pm

TOUR OF THE PATERSON MUSEUM

The Paterson Museum was organized in 1925 by the City of Paterson Library 's Board of Trustees. The museum began its operations in the assembly room of the Danforth Public Library with a display of natural history items that had been donated to the library by local residents. Over the years, the museum's collections grew in size and scope, and additional space was needed for exhibitions. This need was met in 1982, when the restoration of the Thomas Rogers Locomotive Erecting Shop (1873) was completed. The museum's new location, in close proximity to the nationally famous Great Falls of Passaic, provides a unique backdrop for its exhibits. From its inception, the Paterson Museum has stressed the educational aspects of its interpretive exhibits. A major strength of the museum lies in its varied collections, including local archaeology, history, and mineralogy. Paterson has been a birthplace and springboard to many innovators and inventors. The museum relates to the history of Paterson by showing its evolution as a machinery and textile center, the "Silk City," locomotive manufacturing, Colt arms, and the unique Holland submarines.

12:30 - 1:45 pm

LUNCH

In the Great Falls Historic District.

2:00 - 3:00 pm

TOUR OF PASSAIC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY / LAMBERT CASTLE MUSEUM

"The Castle," a well-known landmark in Northern New Jersey, is located on Garret Mountain overlooking the City of Paterson. Catholina Lambert, an English immigrant who made his fortune in the silk industry, built the Castle in 1892-93. In 1934, the Passaic County Historical Society was granted permission to establish a museum and library in the building. Several years later the Park Commission found it necessary to demolish the Gallery Wing that had been constructed in 1896; however, the Society continues to operate a museum and library in the original structure. The New Jersey and National Registers of Historical Places awarded the Castle Landmark Designation in 1976. During May Lambert Castle will be offering an exhibit on the Paterson Silk Strike revealing the stories behind the struggle on both sides.

3:30 - 4:30 pm

TOUR OF MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM (MONTCLAIR)

Our tour will focus on the exhibit "Oscar Bluemner's America: Picturing Paterson, New Jersey." It was typical of American Modernist painter Oscar Bluemner (1867-1938) to neglect Paterson's most picturesque natural feature, the striking waterfall that is now the centerpiece of America's newest national park, in favor of the gritty surroundings of factories and workmen's cottages in the industrial city. Paterson, for this artist, was above all identified with "the intimate landscape of our common surroundings," "the portions of towns where the laboring people exist," and the democratic essence of America. Paterson was an especially favored subject for Bluemner in the years between 1910 and 1917, the period for all 29 pieces in this exhibition, which covers the same moment in art and social history as the original Armory Show.

5:00 pm

RETURN TO WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS