

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Celebration Planned for 100th Anniversary of World's Largest Reinforced Concrete Railroad Bridge

NICHOLSON, PA – Clear your calendars! On September 11-12-13, 2015, Nicholson will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Nicholson Bridge, also known as the Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct or the Tunkhannock Viaduct. Built by the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad (DL&W), construction on the Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct began in 1912 and its completion, dedication, and ready for use took place on November 6, 1915. Abraham Burton Cohen was the project designer and George G. Ray was the chief engineer. Nicholson is a small rural town nestled in Wyoming County and the Endless Mountains of Northeastern Pennsylvania; only about 21 miles north of Scranton on Route 11.

This engineering marvel was part of a larger project, called the Clarks Summit-Hallstead Cutoff, built to shorten the DL&W main rail line from Scranton, PA to Binghamton, NY by 3.6 miles, lessen the steep grades, and straighten the rail line. The entire Cut-off, sometimes referred to as the Pennsylvania or Nicholson Cut-off, was built with two sets of tracks to allow for trains going north and south at the same time. This shortened route cost approximately \$12 million but saved considerable travel time between the two cities. In 2014, \$12,000,000 of 1915 dollars would be \$280,575,445.55 (<http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>). The Nicholson Bridge itself cost \$1,735,000 to build, which would be \$40,566,533.17 in 2014.

In 1975, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) designated the Nicholson Bridge as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark due to its significant contribution to the development of the United States and to the profession of civil engineering. On April 11, 1977, this construction and engineering feat was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (#77001203) due to its national architectural, engineering, and transportation significance.

Additionally, the viaduct was documented by the Historic American Engineering Record, which was established in 1969 by an agreement by the National Park Service, the ASCE, and the Library of Congress to document historic sites and structures related to engineering and industry.

There will be plenty to do in Nicholson and the surrounding region, with events for the celebration currently being planned. Information is available at <http://www.nicholsonbridge100th.com>, including a Google map showing area accommodations. As a reminder, the schedule is subject to change, so check back for updates, which will include events and activities as they get confirmed.

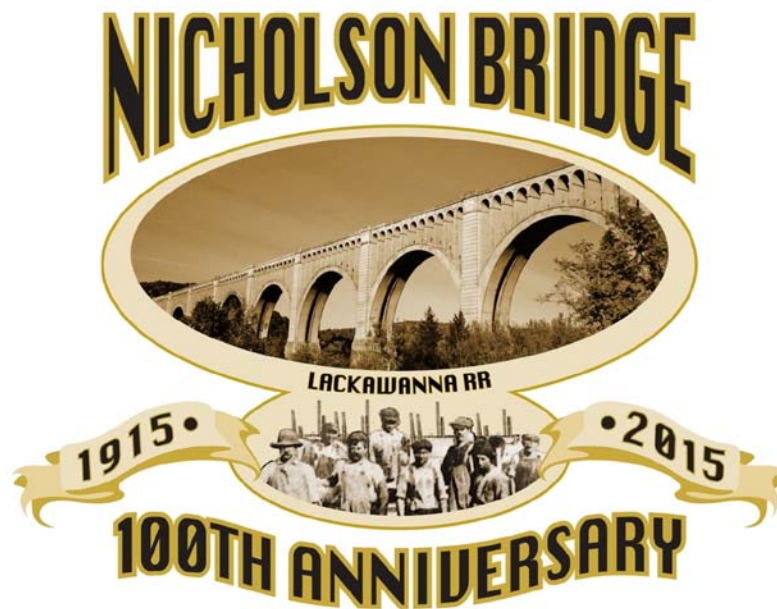
For starters, the celebration will begin Friday, September 11, 2015, night. Marion Sweet, Nicholson Heritage Association Chair, exclaims, "We are excited to celebrate our Bridge's 100th anniversary and look forward to working with our neighbors, area historical groups, and the railroad community to ensure this milestone celebration is unforgettable!"

Then, on Saturday, September 12, 2015, the official program will take place in the morning, a parade in the afternoon, and Main Street will be closed all day for entertainment, food, and History on Main Street, where area historical groups have been invited to show off their items! Additionally, the Association is working on walking historical tours for both weekend days. "We will work together as a community to celebrate this important event and local businesses are geared up for the celebratory weekend," says Lisa Mihalina, Nicholson Business & Professional Association President.

Finally, on Sunday, September 13, 2015, the Nicholson Women's Club will organize their annual Bridge Day, where crafts, vendors, and food will be available on Main Street. Michelle Herron, President of the Nicholson Women's Club, stated, "The Nicholson Women's Club has been having extra committee meetings each month to prepare for the big event. We are expanding the entertainment and attractions available on Sunday and want to have something for the entire family. We are excited and eager to make this the best Bridge Day ever."

Two grants from the Wyoming County Room Tax Fund and the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau will be used to market and promote the event and replace deteriorated signs that welcome visitors as they drive into Nicholson. "Promoting this once-in-lifetime event will be key," affirms Josh Stull, Grants Committee Chair, "and this grant will help ensure that we can effectively spread the word." Nicholson Borough Council member, Christian Zeme, says, "The County Room Tax Fund Grant to replace our aged Welcome Signs will bring a fresh look to our town and I'm thrilled that the Borough received the grant."

The logo by George Penyak of Scranton was chosen as the winner by the Association to commemorate the anniversary and celebration. Congratulations George!



Visitors could see other area attractions or even stay longer than the planned three days of events to see the Martins Creek Viaduct (also called the Kingsley Bridge) in Kingsley; the Viaduct Valley Way Scenic Byway (which runs from Tunkhannock to Lanesboro through Nicholson); the Starrucca Viaduct in Lanesboro; the Steamtown National Historic Site, the Anthracite Heritage Museum and Iron Furnaces, the Electric City Trolley Museum, all in Scranton; and numerous other historical sites and activities to do in the Endless Mountains. See endless options at the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau website: <http://www.endlessmountains.org/activities/5>.

Jean Ruhf, Executive Director for the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau, was, "delighted to announce that Nicholson received two grants in connection with the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the Nicholson Bridge. I look forward to working with the Nicholson Heritage Association and the entire community on this historic milestone."

Besides spearheading this celebration, the Nicholson Heritage Association meets regularly to discuss and work on initiatives that include the Nicholson Tourism Center at the Historic DL&W Railroad Station, the Viaduct Valley Way Scenic Byway, and purchasing U.S. flags for local businesses. The next Nicholson Heritage Association meeting will take place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, January 28, 2015, at the First Presbyterian Church, 65 State Street, in Nicholson. For updates, please visit <http://www.nicholsonheritage.org> or visit them on Facebook and Twitter.