

Plein air

is an opportunity to immerse yourself into a dynamic scene, filter it through your unique point of view – and translate it into art.

Explore the Lukens Historic District, a 14-acre area designated as a National Historic Landmark District.

- Lukens Historic District, lined with Sycamore trees on First Avenue, offers greenery and displays of steel products such as a narrow-gauge locomotive, a submarine sonarsphere, and a steel trident that was brought from the 9/11 site in New York.
- The historic homesteads include Terracina, a rare intact example of County Gothic, and Graystone Mansion, a stately stone homestead built in the American Collegiate Gothic style.
- A study in contrast is the 18th-century homestead, Brandywine Manor, which overlooks the abandoned 120" mill, built in 1943 by the U.S. Navy.



National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum
50 South 1st Ave., Coatesville, PA 19320
610-384-9282
steelmuseum.org

Take your art
to a new level.

Capture a moment in time...

The motto of the plein air artist should be "have easel, will travel." The constant need to find new painting sites is answered in a region of Coatesville that tells the story of Chester County's early iron and steel industry. Explore the landmarks illustrated here including Primitive Hall, and the ironmaster's home at Hibernia County Park. Discover the streetscapes of Coatesville with its ubiquitous views of towering smokestacks and its clusters of old steel mill buildings. As the map indicates, the region has inspired generations of artists.



Embrace Plein Air

Explore the Lukens Historic District

Inspiration found here!

Looking for inspiration? There is plenty to see in the Lukens Historic District in Coatesville.

The expansive grounds offer plein air painters a range of subject matter, from the popular “rust & decay” of industrial sites, to historic homesteads surrounded by old trees and original plantings.

The 100-year-old weeping beech tree, with its mass of gnarly branches, is one crowning example.

The Artists of The Past

Many of the artists whose work is illustrated here were part of an art movement that called for a renewed appreciation for America’s great industrial past.

Several of these artists — renowned for a highly controlled method of painting called precisionism — found their subjects in Coatesville.

Klaus Grutzka (1922 - 2011)

The German-born industrial artist spent the latter part of his long career in Lancaster, but focused his precisionist style on capturing steel mill complexes. Most of the sites look very different today, which is one reason why the National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum has one of the largest collections of Grutzka’s paintings.

Charles Demuth (1883-1935)

Demuth was a graduate of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (PAFA). He began painting industrial scenes in the precisionist style after he returned from Paris and settled in his hometown of Lancaster. The painting shown below is titled the “End of the Parade, Coatesville, Pa.” (1920).

Ralston Crawford (1906–1978)

Crawford grew up in Buffalo, N.Y. and came to Pennsylvania to study at PAFA and at the Barnes Foundation.

Crawford painted Lukens steel mill during the Depression. His “Steel Foundry, Coatesville, Pa.” took over a year to complete in 1937.



Hibernia County Park
(1 Park Rd., Coatesville)

Harriet Huston
(from RT 30 bridge)



Ralston Crawford
(from RT 30)



Lukens Executive Office Building
Loretta Englerth
(50 S. 1st Ave.)



Steelworkers' Memorial
(50 S. 1st Ave.)



Greystone Mansion
(52 S. 1st Ave.)



Klaus Grutzka
(from 395 Charles St.)



Klaus Grutzka
(from Maple Ave.)

Klaus Grutzka
(from 300 Strode Ave.)



Terracina
Loretta Englerth
(76 S. 1st Ave.)



Klaus Grutzka
(from 200 1st Ave.)



Brandywine Mansion
Loretta Englerth
(106 S. 1st Ave.)



Charles Demuth
(from 1st Ave.)



Primitive Hall
(830 N. Chatham Rd.
West Grove)