

HOBOKEN HISTORY



Hetty Green,
Hoboken's
Witch
of Wall Street,
with her dog,
Dewey,
in 1908

The Magazine of the Hoboken Historical Museum
HOBOKEN NJ NUMBER 11 1994

HOBOKEN HISTORY

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DISCOVERING HOBOKEN Through Its Architecture

In June, the Joseph F. Brandt middle school and the Museum held a party to celebrate the culmination of our 15-week Arts-in-Education pilot program titled *A Sense of Place: Discovering Hoboken Through its Architecture*.

A highlight was the cutting of a large sheet cake with a line drawing of the Spanish Seventh Day Adventist Church at Bloomfield and 9th, drawn by Jose Garcia, who was a Brandt 8th grade student, now at Hoboken High.

Lynn Fusco's 6th and 8th grade architecture class displayed models of Hoboken buildings, including City Hall, the Brandt school, the Park Avenue Synagogue, Stevens Tower, a turn-of-the-century apartment house, a brownstone, and a firehouse. Kathy Temple's 5th grade class exhibited projects exploring how buildings can be made. And Projected Images showed early films from the Museum's collection.

A journal was distributed including the students' photographs and writings about Hoboken and other places visited. Anyone interested in having a copy, please call Lynne at the number below.

The program was made possible by a grant from the Hudson County Department of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, which has recommended funding it again for the 1994-5 school year. The Museum will seek to raise funds to match the grant. Members willing to help locate funding are asked to call Lynne.

LYNNE SHAPIRO 653-6392 (PHONE OR FAX)
[Lynne Shapiro has been the leader, planner, and organizer of this program. Well done, Lynne.]

TIME-PIECES FIXES THE CLOCK

The City Hall clock has been resurfaced and repaired through the Time-Pieces project, a collaborative effort of the Museum, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Jakob-Solter Studio, local artists, and Sign Design.

To celebrate, Time-Pieces held a gathering in November at the Jefferson Trust Gallery. Food was served, courtesy of Amanda's, Cafe Louis, Caffe Roma, East L.A., and Oneial's Bar & Restaurant; juice shakes and coffee were courtesy of Café Martinique and Empire Coffee & Tea Co. The work of three local sculptors (McKevin Shaughnessy, Tyler Smith, and Robert Pfitzenmeier) was on display, along with architectural models by Charles Lee. The highlight was the newly restored and *working* City Hall clock.

Time-Pieces has also restored the neon clock in the City Hall lobby.

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Hoboken Memories

by Edward M. Stuart

I grew up in Hoboken, residing, for the first ten or so years of my life, in the first floor apartment to the right of the entry to 518 Hudson Street. In the 1940s, late in World War II, we moved to 422 Hudson on the corner of Fifth, directly across from the park.

One of the most memorable features of 518 Hudson was the tubular brass banisters on the front stoop, which required almost daily polishing. My bedroom was in the rear, overlooking a back yard that was enclosed by a high wooden fence. A door in the fence opened onto Court Street – or what we always referred to as "the alley." On hot summer nights, when my bedroom window was wide open, I would drift off to sleep listening to the clamor of the bowling lanes on Sixth Street wafting down the alley, along with the intermittent aroma of beer.

Once a week, the alley would resound with the metallic thunder of the steel-tired wheels of horse-drawn garbage carts rumbling over the cobblestones. The carts were vee-shaped, two-wheeled wagons pulled by a single horse; and I simply do not remember the garbage being collected by any more modern means,

although I am sure that by the 1950s trucks were used.

Also, right through the 1940s, other horse-drawn wagons carrying milk, ice, or fresh fruits and vegetables were a common sight. But, of course the pace was slower then, and the streets were much less heavily trafficked.

Cookie's Candy

As I grew old enough to wander beyond the immediate neighborhood, my most frequent destination was a candy store on the west side of Washington Street a couple of doors up from Sixth. It was run by a middle-aged couple whose name was Cook. We referred to the store as Cooks' even though there was a sign over the entrance that read, "Cookie's." There we would turn in the empty soda bottles we scavenged from a variety of locations, collect the deposit, and purchase a fresh, cold soda which would be consumed on the spot.

Also at Cooks', I would spend my allowance on

Edward Stuart on Hudson Street in 1940



model airplane kits. The parts in these kits were pre-shaped, solid wood and most of them, particularly the wings and the tail surfaces, required a considerable amount of sandpapering if you expected to achieve any degree of realism. I was too young and far too impatient to do more than a token job of sanding. I was just happy to get all (or most) of the parts glued together somewhat in conformity with the instructions.

Quick Stickum

The assembly process was not something you dawdled over either because you used a highly aromatic "banana glue" that Cooks' sold in small brown bottles. Once uncorked, this glue became highly viscous in a matter of minutes. Also, re-corking a once-opened bottle would immediately seal the cork in the neck of the bottle for all time, making an extra supply of bottles of glue mandatory.

Mrs. Cook always kept a prominent space

available in the store window to display her customers' finished models, and each was accompanied with a small card identifying the craftsman. The physical appearance of the model made no difference to Mrs. Cook. If you submitted it, no matter how shoddy it looked or how unrealistically it was painted, she would put it in the window for all to see and you became a contestant for a monthly prize. Needless to say, I never won anything, but my name and handiwork in Cooks' window was certainly my first claim to fame.

Another favorite store, this one having a soda fountain and a long counter with padded stools, was the Louis Sherry ice cream store on the northeast corner of Fifth and Washington. It was here that I was first introduced to mixed drinks such as lemon, lime, or cherry Cokes. Later, Umland's, on the opposite side of Washington Street, became equally popular.

In marked contrast with today's vehicular congestion, the photograph here shows myself playing on the sidewalk in front of 518 Hudson in

1940. In the background, looking north along Hudson to past Sixth (and even acknowledging that it was probably a Saturday or Sunday) there is absolutely no traffic on the street and only two cars are visible parked at the curb!

Ravioli and Italian Bread

On errands for my mother, I would frequently be sent to Terminello's Market, a few doors down from Fifth. Terminello's was basically a fruit and vegetables store, but I would go there primarily for their excellent ravioli and Italian bread. Also, I remember that there used to be a series of outstanding bakeries strung along Washington Street like precious jewels.

In those days, you could travel the full length of Washington Street on a little green jitney for a nickel, and, as your horizons expanded, you could wait on any corner for the maroon and cream-colored No. 63 Public Service bus which would whisk you off to 42nd Street in Manhattan.

When we moved to 422 Hudson Street, where I was to live until I left Hoboken in 1958, my bedroom was in the front of the house, on the third

floor directly over the stoop. Thus, the vistas though my bedroom window improved dramatically from the backyard fence and the rear of buildings across the alley at 518, to the green trees of the park and, in winter when the trees were bare, to the Hudson River and the New York skyline.

The Metropolitan Life Clock

On cold, clear nights, I could sit up in bed and check the time on a lighted clock on a Manhattan office building across the river. And, when the *Nieuw Amsterdam* would sometimes sail at midnight from the pier directly in line with my window, I would lie there, listening to the deep moan of her pre-departure whistle, and wonder about all the exotic ports she would visit before she returned once more to Hoboken.

The park across from 422 Hudson had not changed very much over the years, at least as the area between Hudson Street and the walkway in line with River Street is concerned. The playing field area, however, in my youth, was a large dust bowl with sparse areas of grass around its edges. It was dominated on the park side by a large concrete

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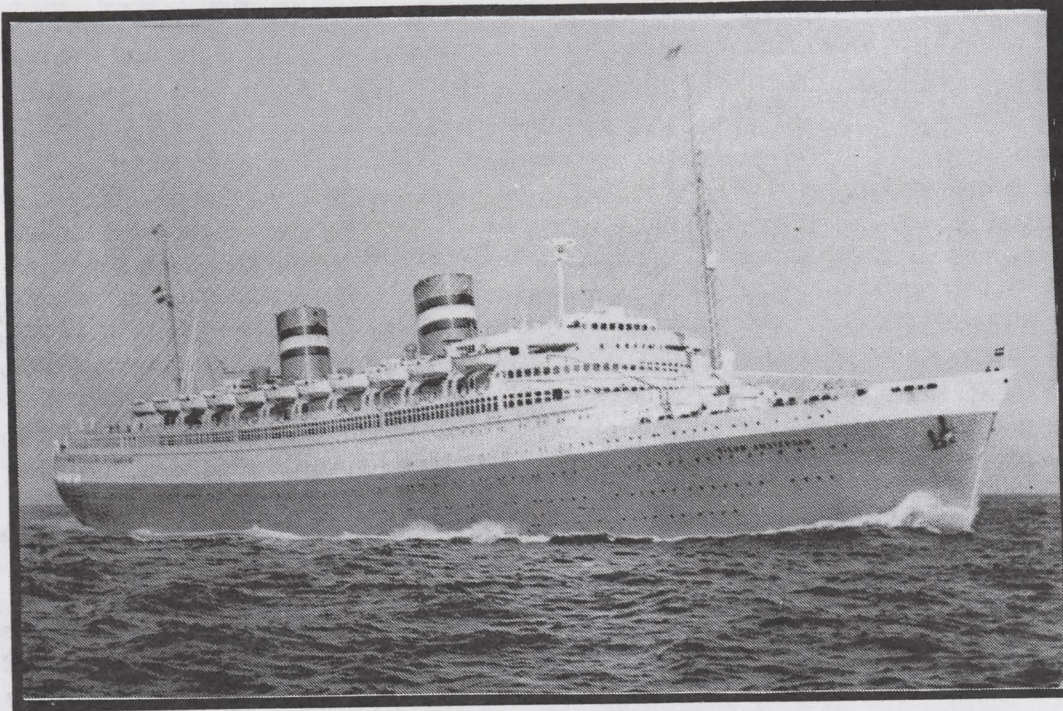
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The Holland-America Line ship *Nieuw Amsterdam*



bandstand which, although gone now, still often makes me wonder what the scene was like the last time it was used as a bandstand.

Lemon, Lime, and Peppermint

The playing field was bordered on the south and the east by a long concrete wall which, as I recall, was about shoulder-high to me at that time. When walking the family dog, I would often linger for sometimes an hour or more leaning on that wall and gazing out at the ever-changing spectacle on the Holland-America pier and on the ever-busy Hudson. I was always enthralled by the well-dressed crowds and the parade of shiny cars that would gather for the sailing or arrival of one of the liners – particularly the giant, beautifully proportioned *Nieuw Amsterdam* with its black hull, its sparkling white superstructure, and its two massive yellow, green, and white-striped smokestacks which always reminded me of lemon, lime, and peppermint Lifesavers.

From that vantage point in the park one Sunday afternoon after the end of World War II, I witnessed what will always be one of the most distressing scenes of my life. The *Nieuw Amsterdam*, then still painted its wartime gray, was unloading hundreds upon hundreds of wooden caskets containing the remains of American troops

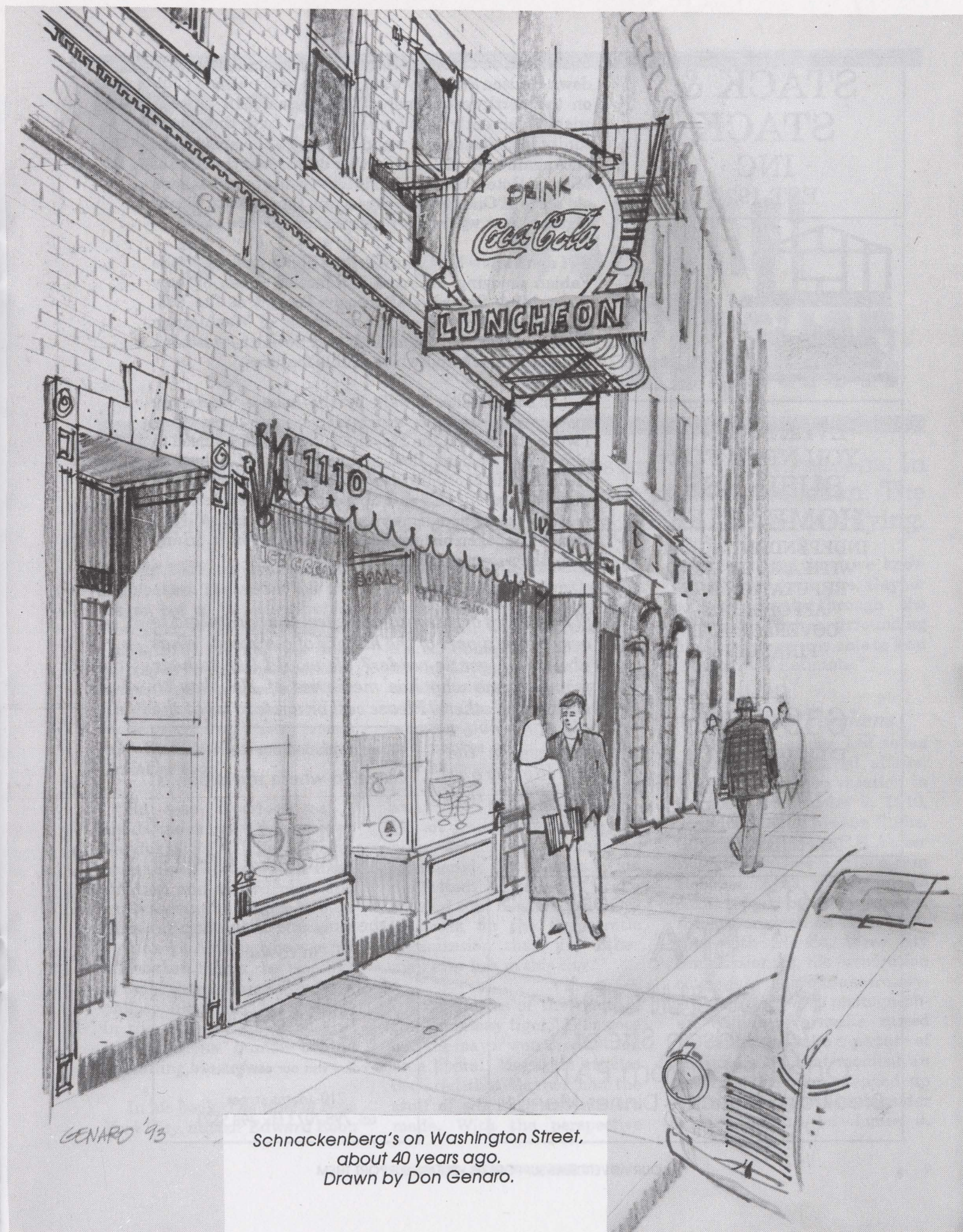
killed in Europe. Waiting to take them away was a virtual sea of Army ambulances covering the entire pier parking area and extending, in seemingly endless rows, up Shore Road as far as the eye could see.

Carnival Time

Besides being the platform from which I viewed the world and the site of dusty baseball and touch football games, the park's playing field each year provided a sure sign that school was ending and summer was arriving when Saints Peter & Paul Church would use it as the site of its annual carnival. Then, for a week, it was filled with a noisy, brightly lighted array of rides, games of skill, and trailers dispensing sausage-and-pepper sandwiches, frozen custard, candied apples, and cotton candy.

Revisiting the Past

I visit Hoboken fairly often now, sometimes going to Our Lady of Grace church where, as a young boy, I attended 7am mass with my parents and sister each Sunday; travelling up Fifth Street from Willow Avenue as I did so many afternoons coming home from school at Stevens Hoboken Academy; and having dinner at Helmers' where my

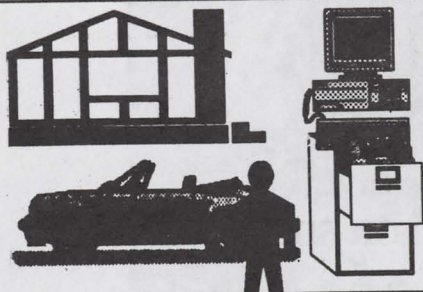


Schnackenberg's on Washington Street,
about 40 years ago.
Drawn by Don Genaro.

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uncle used to dine regularly. On occasion, I will walk down Hudson Street by what used to be the Union Club on the northwest corner of Sixth, past 518 (always wishing fervently that I will someday have the opportunity to go inside and wander through the apartment once again) and 422, and further down, past the sites of Meyers' Hotel and the Grand Hotel; going to my father's old office at One Newark Street and then over to Washington Street where the Fabian Theater once stood.

I don't know how many Friday nights I spent at the Fabian enjoying first-run Technicolor films, or how many rainy Saturday afternoons I spent at the U.S. Theater, which was on the east side of Washington Street midway between Sixth and Seventh, watching less-select black-and-white double features.

On some visits, I walk by the houses where my mother resided as a little girl and as a young woman, or I will roam around the Stevens campus where I used to play. It is obvious that my nostalgia for a bygone Hoboken will continue to grow rather than diminish as the years go by, and as I approach the age of sixty, I realize that, although my memories do not yet qualify as ancient Hoboken history, they are not far from it. In any case, they seem worth sharing.

[The editors of this magazine feel that nostalgia is very much a part of the history of our town. What about you, gentle reader? We would like to hear from anyone who has memories of Hoboken to share with others. Please call or write to us at the number or address on the inside front cover of this magazine.]



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The day a mayor was shot in Hoboken

People come to Hoboken from many places and for many reasons. In the case described in this article, two people came to Hoboken. The reason for one of them was unexpected and the result was terrifying.

Back in 1910, a mayor got shot in Hoboken. The victim was the mayor not of Hoboken, but of New York, William Jay Gaynor [1851-1913]. Gaynor has been portrayed as "the most cantankerous man ever to rule his city, his temper tantrums said to make even Peter Stuyvesant and Fiorello LaGuardia look like altar boys."

He was described as a handsome man, with a graying Vandyke beard and sharp eyes under black eyebrows. He liked children and adored pigs, and while serving as a judge he once threw an inkwell at a man in open court. Although he was not a Hoboken mayor, he was like some of them. Gaynor was of a philosophical bent, read widely in the classics, and concealed his malicious humor behind unsmiling blue eyes.

In his book, *The Epic of New York City*, author Edward Robb

Ellis writes: "After taking office as Mayor, Gaynor gave the back of his hand to Tammany Hall politicians, who had put him there. Concerned only with having his own way and, incidentally, with making New York a better city, Gaynor lashed out on every side. During the first two months of his administration he saved taxpayers about \$700,000 by pulling politicians away from the public trough. He cut other city expenses. He killed boards and bureaus he considered superfluous. One disgusted Tammany brave snarled that Gaynor 'did more to break up the Democratic organization than any other man ever has in this city.'

"Regardless of the roars of the Tammany tiger," Ellis goes on, "the mayor won a reputation as a liberal. Magazine articles declared that Gaynor had the stuff of which Presidents are made. With the perspective

granted us by time, we know that this was not true. Gaynor couldn't break through the stalemate of forces surrounding him, and never was able to lead the Board of Estimate."

The Plot Thickens

After having worked seven months on municipal affairs, Gaynor decided to vacation in Europe. On August 9, 1910, accompanied by his son Rufus, Gaynor boarded the S.S. *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse* at its pier in Hoboken. A natty dresser, his outfit topped by a black derby, the mayor stood on deck, chatting with friends, three city commissioners, his corporation counsel, and his male secretary. A New York *World* photographer, William Warnecke, raised his camera to take a picture of the group. At that moment an untidy little man stepped up behind the mayor. This intruder turned out to be James J.



Gallagher, who had been fired from his job in the New York City docks department and who blamed the mayor for his trouble. Gallagher pressed a gun to the back of Gaynor's neck. He pulled the trigger. The bullet entered behind the mayor's right ear. Gaynor later wrote to his sister:

My next consciousness was of a terrible metallic roar in my head. It filled my head, which seemed as though it would burst open. It swelled to the highest pitch, then fell, and then rose again, and so alternated until it subsided into a continuous buzz. It was sickening, but my stomach did not give way. I was meanwhile entirely sightless. I do not think I fell, for when I became conscious, I was on my feet. I suppose that saved me from falling, and they were supporting me. My sight gradually returned, so that after a while I could see the deck and the outlines of the crowd around me. I became conscious that I was choking. Blood was coming from my mouth and nose and I tried all I could to swallow it so those around me would not see it. But I found I

Mayor Gaynor posed for a picture aboard a ship in Hoboken. The photographer readied his camera. A man stepped behind the mayor and fired a shot. A moment later, the camera clicked.

could not swallow and then knew my throat was hurt. It seemed as though it was dislocated. I struggled to breathe through my mouth, but could not, and thought I was dying of strangulation. I kept thinking all the time the best thing to do. I was not a bit afraid to die if that was God's will of me. I said to myself just as well now as a few years from now. No one who contemplates the immensity of Almighty God, and of His universe and His works, and realizes what an atom he is in it all, can fear to die in this flesh, yea, even though it were true that he is dissolved forever into the infinity of matter and mind from which he came. In some way I happened to close my mouth tight and found I breathed perfectly through my nose. I then believed I could keep from smothering. But I kept choking and my mouth kept opening to cast out the blood. But much of it went down into my stomach.

The *World* photographer, who clicked his camera two or three seconds after the would-be assassin fired, got one of the most notable pictures in journalistic history. Blood gushed down the mayor's beard.

More blood mottled his neck and dripped onto the front of his neat suit. At the time the *World's* city editor was Charles E. Chapin, a brilliant but cynical man, who later murdered his own wife. When Warnecke's print was developed in the *World* office, Chapin grabbed it and exulted, "What a wonderful thing! Look! Blood all over him – and exclusive too!"

To St. Mary Hospital

Aboard the liner in Hoboken, "Big Bill" Edwards, the New York street-cleaning commissioner and a former Princeton football player, grabbed Gallagher and held him until the police arrived. The mayor was urged to lie down on the deck, but refused. He couldn't bear to have people see him in this horrible condition. He was led to his stateroom and lifted into bed. Because he was choking, they had to prop him up. The ship's doctor washed Gaynor's face and beard and bandaged his wound. An ambulance came to take the mayor to St. Mary Hospital. He remained there for about three weeks. Until recently, on display in the St. Mary lobby was a plaque donated by the Gaynor family to thank the hospital for its care, but today nothing of it remains but the four holes of its

mounting bolts.

Haggard but Crusty

When Mayor Gaynor returned to New York's City Hall on October 3, a crowd gathered to cheer him. Although the mayor looked haggard, he was as crusty as ever. Hearing an officious policeman bellowing at people around his car, Gaynor poked his head out a window and snapped, "None of that, now!, None of that!" The next day the mayor resumed his habit of walking from his Brooklyn home across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall and then back again in the evening. But surgeons had been unable to extract the bullet from his throat, and he was a sick man the rest of his life in 1913. When he didn't want to talk about an unpleasant subject, Gaynor would croak, "Sorry, can't talk today. This fish hook in my throat is bothering me." His temper, always brittle, now shattered at the slightest touch.

George Brinton McClellan, Jr., a mayor of New York and son of Civil War General George B. McClellan who was for a while a resident of Hoboken at 108 River Street, wrote about Gaynor in his memoirs:

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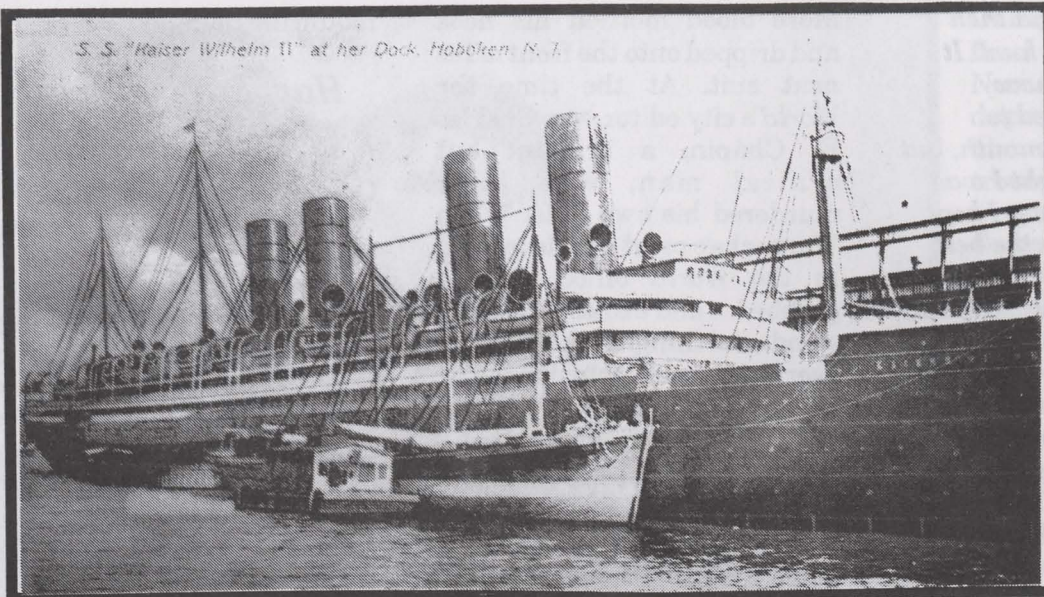
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SS Kaiser Wilhelm II
at her dock in
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I doubt if Gaynor was ever quite normal, certainly not after he was shot at the base of his brain by a lunatic. I was told by an employee of the Harriman Night and Day Bank that about two o'clock one morning a bearded face appeared at the window, and the owner asked him to cash a check for ten dollars. The employee recognized the mayor and cashed the check. Whereupon the mayor, evidently intending to return the courtesy, said, "Wouldn't you like to feel the bullet in my throat? If you stick your finger into my mouth you will be able to do so." He seemed rather hurt when my informant pol-

itely declined to accept his offer. I was told that during the last months of his life Gaynor was in the habit of appearing at City Hall at all hours of the night, routing out the night watchman, and sitting for hours in his office with his eyes fixed on vacancy.

Gaynor had grandiose plans for New York, never carried out. Irked by congestion on Fifth Avenue, Gaynor proposed that a new north-south thoroughfare be cut through midtown Manhattan between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. It would be 100 feet wide and stretch from 8th Street to the southern edge of Central Park at 59th Street. His

idea made development of Hoboken's waterfront seem to be as simple as repainting a park bench. But unlike Hoboken, his proposal did not raise much opposition or support, and eventually simply faded out.

But Gaynor did succeed in accomplishing a great deal. He drew up contracts for building new subway routes, instituted a new system of improved food inspection, and waged a battle against infant mortality. On September 4, 1913, the exhausted mayor boarded the steamship *Baltic* for a restful ocean voyage. Six days later, 200 miles from Liverpool, Mayor Gaynor finally succumbed to the bullet fired into his body in Hoboken.



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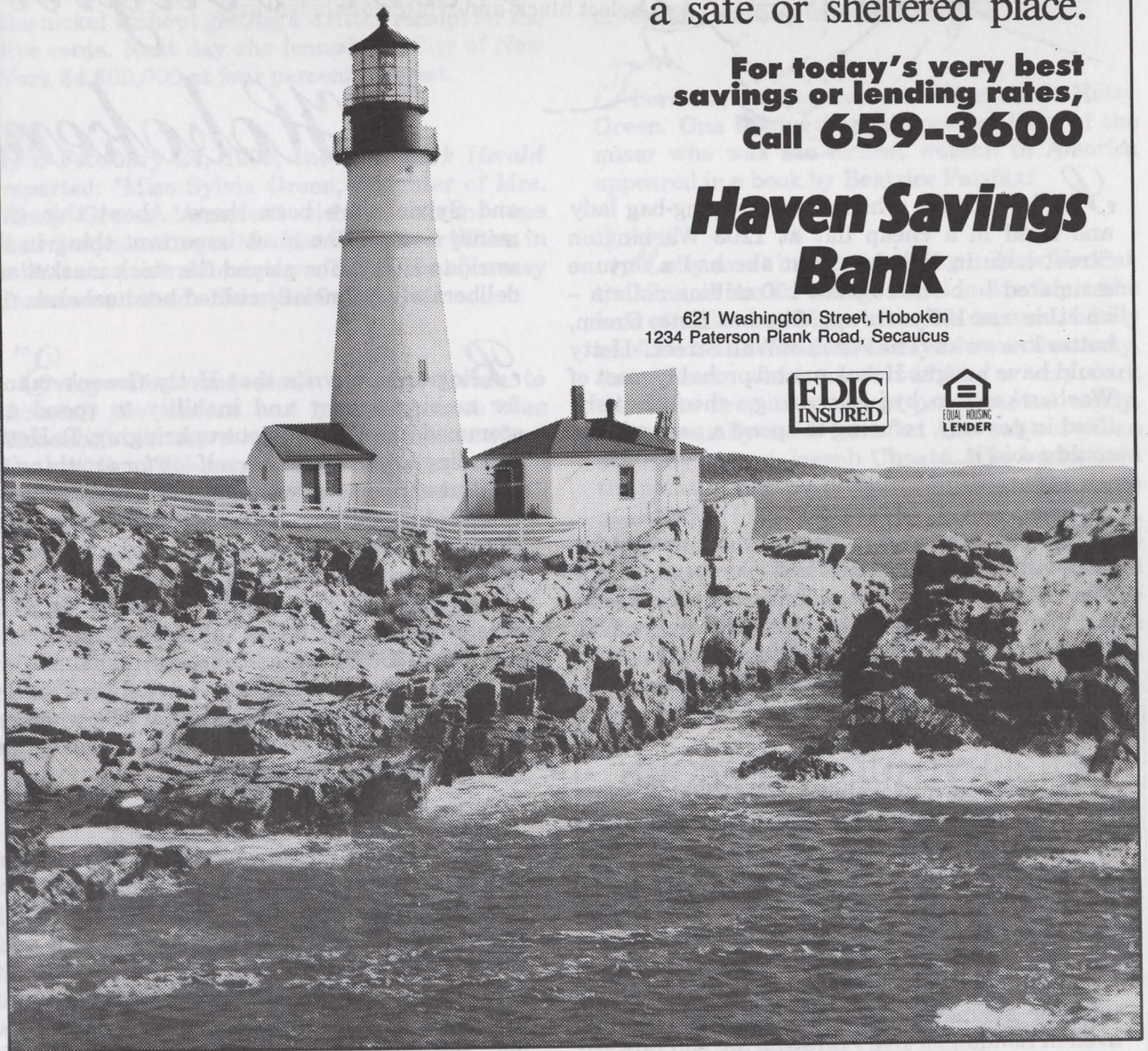
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The woman who could have bought Hoboken

*S*he looked like a homeless shopping-bag lady and lived in a cheap flat at 1203 Washington Street here in Hoboken. But she had a fortune estimated to be more than 100 million dollars – and this was 100 years ago. She was Hetty Green, better known as "The Witch of Wall Street." Hetty could have bought Hoboken and probably most of Weehawken, too, by just writing a check. But she lived in poverty, refusing to spend a penny if she could avoid it.

*H*etty Green lived in Hoboken, off and on, for more than 20 years around the turn of the century, moving from one flat to another if she could find one cheaper. Hetty was such a compulsive miser, she allowed her son to lose part of a leg when he was a boy by refusing to pay for medical treatment.

*S*he was born November 21, 1835 in New Bedford, Massachusetts to Abby Slocum Howland and Edward Mott Robinson, Quakers. Her father left her four million dollars when he died. She added to it by marrying a millionaire, Edward Henry Green of Bellows Falls, Vermont, in 1867.

*A*fter her marriage, Hetty and her husband lived in London for five years and her son Edward

and Sylvia were born there. About this time money became the most important thing in the world to Hetty. She played the stock market and deliberately financially ruined her husband.

*B*iographers write that Hetty Green's mania for making money and inability to spend any stemmed from her religious upbringing. To Hetty, spending anything on herself (or for anything for comfort or pleasure) was sinful. She dressed in old clothes to look poor so that merchants would charge her less for food and clothing. And when she came to Hoboken from London she rented a three-room flat for \$19.00 a month at 1203 Washington Street in the "Yellow Flats." Later she moved to 1309 Bloomfield Street, and at one time or another lived in almost every Yellow Flat she could find for less than the original \$19, when her annual income was more than five million dollars (no income tax in those days).

*H*etty did not like anyone to know where she was, so her apartment's doorbell was labeled with the name "C. Dewey." Dewey was her dog, a little Skye terrier. Dewey got Hetty into trouble with Hoboken's dog-license fee. She wouldn't pay it. Two dollars. So Hetty left Hoboken and moved in with a friend in New York. Hoboken didn't miss her. But finally her grown daughter Sylvia paid

the two dollars and Hetty came back to Hoboken.

When Hetty came home to Hoboken from her daily trip to New York's Chemical Bank (where she had free desk space), she usually came by way of the Hoboken Ferry from Barclay Street and took the Washington Street trolley car to 12th Street. One day in January, 1906, she happened to get on the trolley with no money in her purse. She asked the conductor to trust her for the fare, saying that she would pay it in a day or two. True to her word Hetty appeared at the offices of the trolley company a few days later and paid them the nickel she owed them. However, she wouldn't give them the nickel without getting a written receipt for the five cents. Next day she loaned the City of New York \$4,500,000 at four percent interest.

On February 24, 1909, the *New York Herald* reported: "Miss Sylvia Green, daughter of Mrs. Hetty Green, 'America's richest woman,' was married yesterday to Mr. Matthew Astor Wilks, in a little church in Morristown, N.J., after a journey from her mother's Hoboken flat.

"Every effort was made by Mrs. Green to forestall the curious and in consequence even Hoboken's citizens thirsted for information about the wedding. The neighborhood of her apartment house at 1309 Bloomfield St. was surrounded all night, and by sunrise there was a brigade of searchers after news of wedding plans.

"Soon before 9 o'clock a self-possessed young woman in a blue gown hurried down the steps and gave a signal. A one-horse cab, of unpretentious

pattern, was driven to the door and a moment later Mrs. Green, Miss Green, and the young woman in blue entered it so quickly that those accustomed to the financier's slow walk, were astounded by her activity. The venerable horse responded to the crack of the whip and the whole city seemed to move.

"Automobiles, hacks, hansoms, and even delivery wagons joined in the pursuit of the cab. The party arrived at the Lackawanna station for the train, to which a special parlor car had been attached. The three women went quickly from the train shed and as they entered they were warmly greeted by waiting friends."

There are many other anecdotes about Hetty Green. One fascinating glimpse we have of the miser who was the richest woman in America appeared in a book by Beatrice Fairfax:

"Hetty must have been living in New York at the time, at the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn. She held court in the lobby with ladies dressed in frilly muslins. She herself was always dressed in musty, fusty black, which stood out like a very dark chocolate drop in a box of pastel-tinted candy. Hetty usually held forth on the subject of an attorney named Joseph Choate, who had gotten the better of her in a lawsuit. Outside of the pages of Dickens, I had never come across bombazine, black bombazine. It seemed more a state of mind than a material, but Hetty's clothes always looked to be the bombazine of Miss Murdstone, Miss Pipchin, and other grim ladies who come to life from Dickens' pages. [Bombazine is a twisted, corded fabric of silk and cotton or silk and worsted,

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where Hetty
Green lived.*

Postcards
from the
collection
of George
Kirchgessner

popular in Victorian times].

*B*eauty parlors, at that time, did not bloom on practically every city block, and making the best of a woman's appearance had not become one of the nation's great industries. A five-dollar bill would have converted grim Hetty Green into a very handsome old lady – that, and control of her dreadful habit of squinting [perhaps Hetty was too cheap to buy spectacles].

*B*ut there were generous things about her, despite her reputation. For instance, she had the cheapest room in the hotel. It was common knowledge that she paid only 11 dollars a week for it. But her husband, who never appeared in the dining room, had one of the best suites, and her daughter, Miss Sylvia Green, was equally well-housed.

*S*he had other economies than room rent, unappetizing ones. We saw her one night in the dining room pour cream and coffee into a half-pint pitcher, drop in a couple of lumps of sugar, break and butter a hot roll, and jam it into the pitcher with a slice of bacon. With this she corked the pitcher, slipped the mixture under her skirt and left the room. 'For her dog?' we asked. The waiter told us it was for Hetty's daughter. She wasn't coming down that day.

*S*ylvia Green never joined the muslin-clad group that listened to the maternal diatribes against Joseph Choate. The talk might start about the weather, but always slid into the iniquitous behavior of Joseph Choate.

*T*hat summer Hetty's son, Colonel Edward Howland Green, came to visit his mother. There were two salient points about the Colonel: he had a game leg and a roving eye. But his mother sternly shepherded the roving eye as it lingered on the muslin-clad group in the lobby. Despite little attempts on the part of the ladies to make room for the Greens, Hetty never stopped, nor glanced toward her erstwhile acquaintances. She took no chances with her big boy. The Green gift for making money was not to be cluttered up with romance.

*T*he Colonel's private apartment, in the Texas town where he lived, beggared anything New York had to offer in the way of luxury, rumor said. He entertained glamorous actresses and lovely visiting firewomen. Anything asked for could be had at his private bar. Yet, when his mamma descended upon him, he turned the key on his Babylonian splendors, took rooms at the YMCA, put on ready-made clothes, and surpassed great-great-grandfather Howland in parsimony.

⇒

"Once I put the question to the old lady: 'Why do you love your little dog so much, Mrs. Green?' She looked at me out of her curiously puckered eyelids, and answered, 'He doesn't know how rich I am.'"

After Sylvia's marriage, her son Ned refused to live in a cold-water flat in Hoboken, so Hetty gave up the four-room flat at 1309 Bloomfield Street and rented two rooms on the fifth floor of the walk-up apartment house next door (probably 1313 Bloomfield, long since replaced by a newer one-family house). This was at a time when her annual income was more than ten million dollars and when she had ten to twenty million in cash ready for short-term loans.

Hetty's son Ned, after refusing to live with his mother, moved into a house at Five West 90th Street in New York. Some time later Hetty was persuaded to move into the house next door, but soon she returned to Hoboken and took up residence with the caretaker of 1211 Washington Street, whose family was friendly to her ("friendly" to Hetty Green was probably allowing her to live there free).

After suffering several strokes, Hetty Green died July 3, 1916, in a small brownstone house on 90th Street in New York. Ned died in 1936 and Sylvia is reported to have died in 1951.

Probably no one cried when the Witch of Wall Street died.

FURTHER READING: BOYDEN SPARKS AND SAMUEL TAYLOR MOORE, *HETTY GREEN, A WOMAN WHO LOVED MONEY*, DOUBLEDAY, DORAN, 1930.

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Letters to the Museum



My reasons for writing are twofold. First, I want to say how much I loved the issue "Hoboken in Two World Wars." My parents came from Hoboken (Rita McDermott and Charles "Chick" Harper) and I grew up hearing stories about the war and Hoboken. As the family genealogist, I really appreciated the perspective this issue gave me.

Second, your magazine does provide a wonderful forum for a family genealogist. So I was wondering if I may appeal to your readers for information about my family. Every story, every small bit of information, is important.

I am particularly interested in the Haren family (John, James, Elizabeth), the Harpers (but not the milkman), the McDermotts of Ferry Street (Patrick, John, Newcomb), the Neazers, the Radigans, Mary and Nellie Roach. They were all Irish and resided in Hoboken between 1850 and

1973. My father, Chick Harper, worked for Standard Brands for 40 years, but since he is gone, I am unable to get information on his family and growing up in Hoboken.

Lastly, to Mr. Hickey, you mentioned that you were sent to Scotland for a rest before being shipped home. My father was stationed in Scotland and was responsible for sending the GIs home to the US. My mother tells me that whenever he found a kid from Hoboken, he would put them at the top of the list to go home. I sure hope you were one of them.

Thank you again for a great magazine. It never fails to make me smile. Thank you also for allowing me to use it for genealogical purposes. For anyone interested in writing to me, my address is:

462 B Liberty Street
Unit #206
Little Ferry, NJ 07643.

Very truly yours,
Rosemary Harper.



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Liam Benson

I very much enjoyed your Hudson County Goes To War exhibit. Well done! It got me thinking...with the proposed construction between 12th and 14th Streets, should the Museum be conducting any last minute documentation (photos, measurements, etc.) of the old shipyard sites?

I'm also interested in the old shipyards and their layout. And in particular the railroad(s) that served them. (Hoboken Manufacturers Railroad?) Do you know of any good sources (including maps) that cover this? Do you know of a book on the history of the Manufacturers Railroad?

Your exhibit catalog bibliography mentions a book on the history of the Todd Shipyard. Is this in the museum collection, or the Jersey room at the Jersey City Public Library, perhaps?

Thanks in advance,
Jim Robertson.

[1: We have indeed done extensive documentation of the shipyard. 2: Sorry, we don't know of a book on the Manufacturer's Railroad. 3: The Todd Shipyard book is in the Hoboken Public Library. - Ed.]

DONATIONS, continued from inside front cover

Eleven original black and white prints from the German Evangelical Church (Reformed), now the Hoboken Community Church; from Rev. Daniel Meeter.

Booklet, 75th Anniversary (1856 – 1931) of the German Evangelical Church (Reformed), now the Hoboken Community Church; from Rev. Daniel Meeter.

Scrapbook, dated 1947, 20" x 24"; from Michael M. Borelli, Commissioner of Public Safety.

Four mounted group portraits of music and high school groups, pre-World-War I; from the family of Elia Cerrito.

Diploma from Demarest High School, 1925; from the family of Elia Cerrito.

MEMBERSHIPS:

NEW:

Carol O'Donnell; Elliott Schuchardt;
George Peterson & Deirdre Comey; Gloria Foley;
Ben Mayo; Karen Grube; Ciorsdan Conran;
Kathi Vogt; Mr. & Mrs. Howard Reiss;
B. Melvin Kiernan; Vincent J. Kruse; Virginia Stubin; Jeremy I. Silberman..

RENEWED:

Caroline Carlson (2 yr); William H. Atkinson;
Angeline F. Austin; Thomas G. Brundage;
Christopher J. Brunner; Veronica DeLozien;
Maureen Dolan; Davis Dune (2 yr);
James English (2 yr); Peg & Steve Finnerty;
Hank Forrest (2 yr); Daniel Gans (3 yr);
Doug & Lotta Mahoney; Brenda K. Miller;
Elise Sollmann Miller; Jeff Tamarkin;
Anthony L. Romano, Jr.; George Hamburg;
Nancy Q. Sciancalepore; Louis Botto;
Richard P. Widdicombe; Carl H. Willenberg;
Terrence Pranses (2 yr); Virginia Morneault;
John & Carolyn Parchinsky; Richard Kurland;
Vincent M. Mastandrea; Paul C. Kostka;
Eric Hummel & Agnes Rymer; Sada Fretz;
Robert C. Sturken; Lisa Sartori;
Thomas A. Elmo (Lifetime); Erin Sullivan;
Michelle L. Harte (3 yr); Alice Galmann;
Lawrence & Sarita Kelty (2 yr);
Jim Robertson; Hugh Kilmer.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS

The Museum has been growing and planning projects for the future, stretching the talents of our trustees. So I am asking members to let us know what skills they can offer so that we can occasionally call on them for assistance.

Have you a story to tell about Hoboken? Are you willing to be interviewed to have your recollections recorded? Or could you be the interviewer? Have you renovated or decorated a turn-of-the-century house? Are you an architect or curator? A genealogist? A crafts or tradesperson with knowledge of older objects? A writer or reporter? Have you worked in grant writing or fund raising?

If we make a catalog of the skills of our members, I believe it will help us to increase our profile and expand our service to the community.

Please don't hesitate to help the Museum have a more knowledgeable relationship with its members.

Museum Trustee D. Rae

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