

The
Official
Journal
of the
Organization

The Hoboken Historical Museum Newsletter

OF
BY
And FOR
Museum
Members.

Published monthly

Hoboken, NJ

Monday, November 2, 1987

Vol. 1, No. 10

MUSEUM OPENING

MUSEUM TO HAVE ITS 2ND ANNUAL OPENING NOVEMBER 20TH.

Our exhibition space at Hoboken City Hall on the first and second floors will display, starting Friday November 20, a great many interesting items on the theme: "The History of the Theatre, Vaudeville, and Motion Pictures in Hoboken." Gathered together for the first time ever will be photographs of some of the old theatres, materials on the well-known performers who played here, advertisements, playbills, and other Hoboken theatre artifacts, and historical information.

Troupers from Hoboken's theatrical past will provide continuous live entertainment on City Hall's third floor starting at 5:30 pm on opening night of the exhibition.

Videotaped interviews with persons who were involved in the theatre or vaudeville will be shown at the opening along with a montage of clips from films shot in or referring to Hoboken.

Hoboken's theatres featured such classic vaudeville headliners as Weber & Fields, and in the late 1920's earned a national reputation as a theatrical phenomenon that rivaled New York's Broadway. At Hoboken's Rialto theatre stage plays directed by Christopher Morley attracted theatre-goers who arrived by ferry and the Hudson Tubes and thronged the little city.

After the Crash of 1929, Hoboken's entertainment life dimmed, and the 1960's saw the last theatre, the Fabian, close.

RARE HOBOKEN FILM FOOTAGE

Acquired recently from the motion picture archives of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. was historic film footage of Hoboken that was taken by such pioneer movie companies as Thomas Edison and the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company. These short films purchased by the Hoboken Historical Museum with the help of a grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission will also be screened at the Museum on opening night and at various other times during the course of a year that the new exhibit will be on view.

For Museum members who might miss the showing of this Hoboken footage or who will want to see it again, it will be screened at one of our monthly meetings at the Clam Broth House.

(Continued on next page)



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REVIEW OF 3 FILMS TO BE SCREENED OPENING NIGHT

1. Church "Our Lady of Grace," Hoboken

Photographed November 25, 1902 by cameraman Robert K. Bonine, American Mutoscope & Biograph Company. 76 ft of film. The camera position was across the street from the church. The film shows many persons emerging through the large doors. From a different camera position, still more members of the congregation are photographed leaving the church. At one time, a milk truck passes between the camera and the congregation.

Source: Kemp R. Niver, "Early Motion Pictures, The Paper Print Collection in the Library of Congress," Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 1985.

2. S.S. "Deutschland" leaving her dock in Hoboken, ©Edison, June 25, 1902.

A large seagoing liner leaves a pier in Hoboken. 26 ft of film. The starboard quarterdeck area is visible in the foreground. A group of people lining the rail waves to a larger group of people on the deck in the background. As the ship moves from the dock, the camera begins to pan, taking in all of the dock area and a sign that reads "Hamburg-American Line." Two harbor tugs are in the water at the end of the pier 22.

Source: Ibid., p. 283.



at 5:30 P.M.

(opening night only).

MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT FURNISHED BY PERRY ROBINSON AND FRIENDS

3. Audience leaving theatre, Hoboken, N.J.

Thomas A. Edison, Inc. Released by George Kleine [190-?]

At Museum Newsletter presstime this film had not been viewed by us, but a short summary of the film was uncovered in our research: [The footage] "shows several men and women leaving a theatre. Includes scenes of pedestrian traffic in front of the theatre and a billboard announcing Edward H. Favor."

The Hoboken theatre in question could be the Empire on Hudson Street between 1st and 2nd Streets which opened in 1902 or the Gaiety, uptown on Washington Street next to the Elks Club, which opened about 1909, or perhaps another theatre in Hoboken like the Lyric down by Hudson Place. Whatever, it is sure to be recognizable and quite interesting. These films are not to be missed, as they will surely be enjoyed by all.

Source: Rita Horwitz, Harriet Harrison, Wendy White, "The George Kleine Collection of Early Motion Pictures in the Library of Congress, a Catalog," Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 1980, p.7.

1851 MAP OF "JERSEY CITY, HOBOKEN, AND THE SURROUNDING SUBURBS" ON DISPLAY AFTER RESTORATION

One of the very fragile maps uncovered in the City Hall vaults a few months ago has been given a tender loving restoration and can now be handled in a somewhat normal fashion. The 1851 map which shows the layout of the streets and many places of interest back before Hoboken became a city, is now on permanent display at the Museum. This was made possible by those who donated to our map fund and by all the many people who attended the Musical Benefit at Maxwell's last June. The fate of the video tapes that were taken of that special weekend event will be decided upon in the near future.

NEW READERS THIS ISSUE

For several months now, we have been swamped with requests from people to be put on our mailing list. Unfortunately we have been backlogged with work, and have not had the time and personnel to send everyone information about the Museum or even a complementary copy of the Newsletter.

However, because of our plan to announce the Museum's 2nd Annual Exhibit and because our financial situation has greatly improved, we are now able with this issue to send out additional newsletters to people who have expressed an interest in the museum.

If you are one of the interested people added to our mailing list, you will receive for a short period of time, without any obligation, complementary copies of our Newsletter, which appears towards the end of each month to remind our members of the date of the monthly meeting and to present other Museum-related news items and articles of interest.

Our meetings are held at the beginning of each month, except July, when we take a summer break from our routine, and skip a monthly meeting and a Newsletter as well.

Naturally the number of copies that we can give away is limited. We must support the Museum through memberships, donations, foundation grants and the like. Last year we started the Museum on a shoestring; now we have over 150 paid members on our roster, and were awarded a \$5,500. grant. We are growing. Please grow with us.

Yes, we are pleased with the progress the organization has made in just one year. Satisfied? Well, that's a different story. For this is just the beginning. And, being the beginning, it's the most exciting time to join us. So, if the idea of a Hoboken Historical Museum appeals to you, if you wish it success and want it to continue to grow, and if you think you would enjoy receiving its official journal, the Newsletter, you can very substantially help by becoming a member and sharing with us the adventure of our common future.

Thanks for lending your support

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL

653-7392

CORRESPONDENCE FROM MEMBER

Charter Member Irmgard Erny, whose mother was an avid theatregoer in Hoboken, recently renewed her membership (with a donation to the Museum) and enclosed a note suggesting that we should put more emphasis on Hoboken's history prior to the speakeasy era. Her family has been in Hoboken since 1849! And in the same house with the original handwritten deed dating from 1867!

We would agree with Irmgard; the early days of Hoboken are most interesting and we will cover them extensively in due time.

Hoboken was a small village when her family moved here, only a part of the Township of North Bergen. But that year it was made a separate township through an act of the Legislature.

There was no electricity at that time. Gas for lighting was first supplied to the county by the Jersey City Gas Light Company, which was incorporated in 1849. Later it became the Jersey City and Hoboken Gas Light Company. Before the year 1845 the Village of Hoboken consisted of from 50 to 100 houses, a quaint place of but little importance. But after 1845 the efforts of Edwin A. Stevens, Hoboken's principle land owner (and later the man responsible for founding of Stevens Institute) caused the Village to increase in population more than 100 per cent. He built several rows of houses, and also sold lots to other parties, who soon built houses on them. It soon became clear that the Village of Hoboken would continue to grow and thrive, with its convenience to New York and desirability as a picturesque residential location.

When leaving
this Theatre
Please Turn
The Seat Up.

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Hoboken NJ 07030

THE HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1, No. 10

© November 1987

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605 Jefferson St, Hoboken, NJ 07030

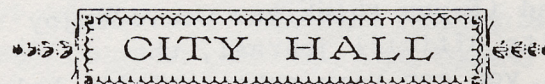
Subscription Rate:
Free to Museum members.

NOTICE

Our next meeting is Monday, November 2,
at 7:00 P.M. (not 7:30), until about
9:00, at the Clam Broth House on Newark
Street in Hoboken. All members are
invited, and potential new members and
guests are always welcome to sit in

without obligation. The date on the
masthead of this newsletter will always
correspond to the date of our monthly
meeting, which are held in the early
part of each month.

HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM



MUSEUM HOURS

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
weekdays

6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
wednesday evenings