The Official Journal of the Organization

The Hoboken Historical Museum Newsletter

OF BY And FOR Museum Members.

JUNE 1991 HOBOKEN, NJ No. 50

Historic Hoboken buildings exhibited at Liberty State Park

Bob Foster, Hoboken Historical Museum's curator of exhibitions, has assembled a photographic showing of Hudson County buildings that are on the National Register of Historic Places. It will be on display in the restored former NJ Central Railroad Terminal in Liberty State Park now through Labor Day, Sept. 2, open to the public, free, Monday through Friday, 10am to 5pm.

Among Hoboken buildings that are displayed are Holy Innocents Church, Hoboken City Hall, Erie-Lackawanna Terminal, Jefferson Trust building, and the seven municipal fire houses on the National Register (ONE OF WHICH IS SHOWN ON PAGE 2). Included are recent photographs as well as color enlargements reproduced from period post cards.

The Museum thanks Debra Kinderwatter, history specialist for Liberty State Park, for making our participation possible.

Preview of our new "Hoboken History" quarterly magazine

The bad news is that this is the final issue of the Museum Newsletter.

The good news is that this newsletter is being replaced in September with the first issue of the Museum's new and expanded magazine *Hoboken History*.

The new publication will appear quarterly. It will have more and larger pages and give you an even better and more informative look at the fascinating past of our colorful city. There will be more pictures, more text, more subjects, along with news of Museum activities. Our new format will enable us to cover our favorite subject — Hoboken — in all of its richness of people, places, and events, life and cultural diversity.

The new, improved magazine is a reward to those who renewed their memberships in the Museum even in the face of higher cost. CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Preserving the Future by Honoring the Past



Hoboken's re-opened fire house will be featured at Liberty Park historic structures exhibition.

The historic fire house on Washington Street, just below 14th Street, is one of the Hoboken landmarks whose portraits will be seen in the exhibition of Hudson County's most historic buildings now through Labor Day at the restored railroad terminal in Liberty State Park.

The fire house, recently restored and reopened after a fire, had this picture taken about 1898 when the Chief could show off his new horseless carriage. Here we see proud members of Engine Company No. 2 in front of their building, erected in 1880 by the Stevens family, who contributed the land. The Stevens family insisted that the structure be set back from the building line so that passers-by would be spared the perils of expectoration by the firemen who characteristically of the period vigorously and continuously chewed tobacco. The risk is gone, but the fire house is still recessed several feet.

The building is the first in Hoboken to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and has been carefully restored to its original external appearance, though the modern inside has facilities for the firemen that never existed back in tobacco-chewing days.

THE NEW MAGAZINE *HOBOKEN HISTORY* (FROM P.1)

The larger format will enable us to use more illustrations, more attractive and readable typography, and permit us to treat Hoboken history in the depth and detail that we know our members will appreciate and enjoy. The editors expect that every issue will be a treasured keepsake for anyone interested in Hoboken's lively history.

The Museum's President, Jim Hans, is Research Director of *Hoboken History*, drawing upon the Museum's holdings and his own personal knowledge and archives. Editor is Museum Trustee Paul Lippman, and Associate Editor is Museum Recording Secretary Barbara Lippman. The magazine will also draw upon the community knowledge, Hoboken life experience, and contributions of members of the Museum and residents of Hoboken, "Born & Raised" and recently arrived.



To give you an idea of what to expect, here are some of the fascinating people, places, and events that we will write about:

"The Great Mechanical Wonder of Hoboken," the giant elevator that raised and lowered street cars and horse-drawn vehicles between Hoboken and Jersey City Heights on their way to and from the ferries to New York and which was a unique transportation marvel for more than half a century.

Catch the Trolleys You Missed. A network of clanging, rumbling trolley cars once rolled along Hoboken's streets — and you could ride one the length of the city for a nickel. Some of their rails are still visible and so are many of their curbside poles. Hoboken's first horse car line was New Jersey's first, and the elevated cable railway that ran above what is now Observer Highway as early as 1886 was America's first. *Hoboken History* will recapture those great days.

"Heaven, Hell, or Hoboken." The slogan of America's AEF of World War I because millions of Doughboys sailed off for France from Hoboken to the "War to End All Wars." You'll read about Hoboken's historic role in that

great conflict, a role that changed the character of our city forever.

"Sybil's Cave," a grotto on the waterfront which was opened in 1836 and regionally famous for its natural spring of excellent drinking water, claimed to be of great medicinal value, now lost to view in the cliff above Sinatra Drive. On what was once River Walk, Sybil's Cave attracted visitors from all over, and was the locale of a crime that inspired Edgar Allen Poe's famous detective story, *The Mystery of Marie Roget.*

Stevens Castle, a familiar landmark to millions who ferried across the Hudson for generations. It was the home of the Stevens family for many years, once serving as a dormitory for Stevens Institute students, among them the artist Alexander Calder who became famous for his "mobile" sculptures.

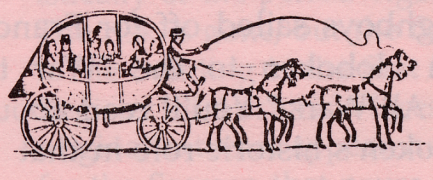
The village of Hoboken. Travel back another 100 years to the fashionable 1830s and 1840s when Hoboken was a quaint village of tiny cottages with white picket fences and picturesque willows and stately elms. When Washington Street was a plank road, ended at 8th Street and branched north through the Elysian Fields to Clinton Street and beyond, all the way to Hackensack as the Bergen Turnpike, created years earlier by John Stevens and his associates.

Read about Hoboken when it was visited by literary figures such as Charles Dickens, William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, Daniel Webster, Robert Sands, Fanny Kemble, and poet Fitz-Greene Halleck; and when it was home to Steven Foster.



FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

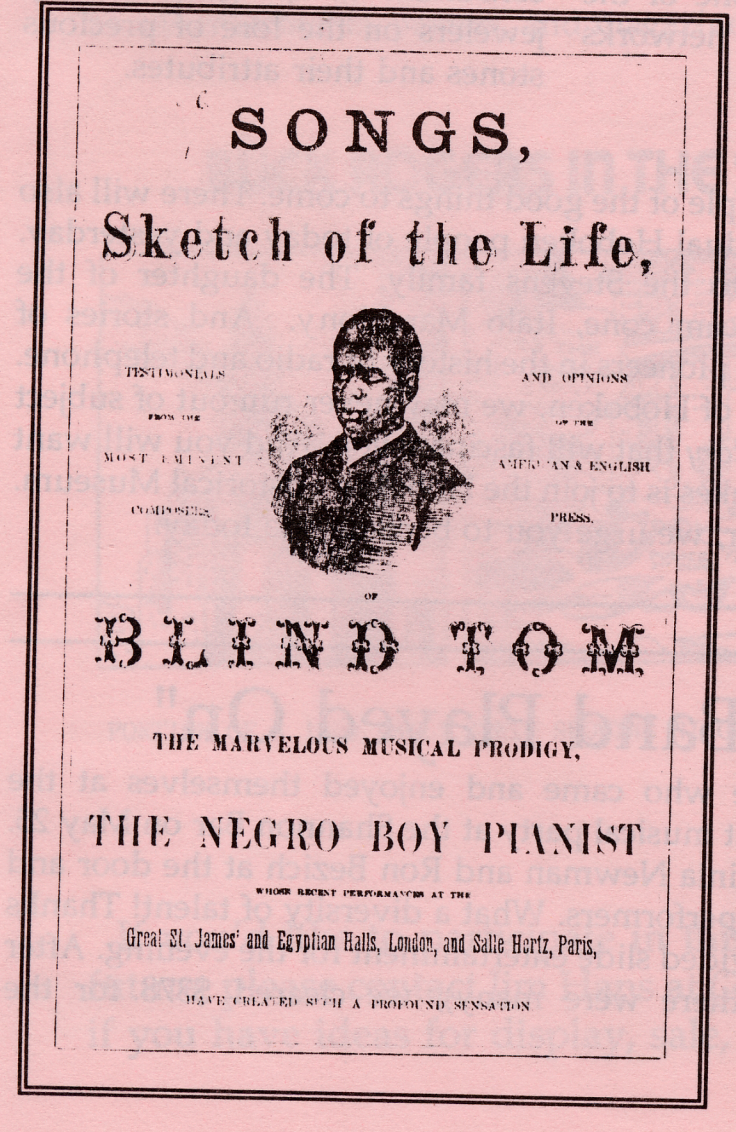
The Great Hoboken Pier Fire
The first and totally unplanned transformation of Hoboken's waterfront: its great fire at the turn of the Century which destroyed four piers and many ships, and killed 215 people.



"Hoebuck" and the King's army. You'll be able to find out about Hoboken during the Revolutionary War when the wealthy New York merchant William Bayard entertained the colonials while New York City fell into the hands of the British.



Hobuck During the Revolution. Before It Was Burned by the Patriots.



Blind Tom. Tom Bethune was a remarkable 19th-Century musician whose parents had been slaves in Georgia. A pianist and composer, he performed to great acclaim in Europe and the USA after the Civil War. He lived in Hoboken until his death in 1908.

Sam Patch. You'll meet this nationally famous daredevil who accomplished his astounding feats in Hoboken and is still an American legend.

Made in Hoboken. Read about Hoboken in its industrial heyday of the 1930s and 1940s when our city was home to more than 200 different industries that manufactured an endless variety of goods that were shipped to every corner of the globe from the Hoboken hub of one of the greatest transportation networks on land and sea.

Hoboken, the Cradle of American Yachting, where Commodore John Cox Stevens organized the New York Yacht Club, the first in America. Stevens' yacht, the America, gave its name to international yachting's most famous trophy, the America's Cup.

George Frederick Kunz, "The Stone Man". The longtime Hoboken resident who was America's foremost gemologist and consultant to the great Tiffany jewelers on the lore of precious stones and their attributes.

And this is just a sample of the good things to come. There will also be stories about individual Hoboken people of today and yesterday. Local people related to the Stevens family. The daughter of the inventor of the ice cream cone, Italo Marchiony. And stories of Hobokenites who were pioneers in the history of radio and telephone.

So rich is the history of Hoboken, we may never run out of subject matter for *Hoboken History* that will fascinate you. And you will want to subscribe, for all it takes is to join the Hoboken Historical Museum. If you're not a member, we urge you to become one today.

...and the Band Played On"

We thank everyone who came and enjoyed themselves at the Museum's mini-benefit musical party at the Shannon Bar on May 25. Special thanks to Virginia Newman and Ron Bezich at the door and all the musicians and performers. What a diversity of talent! Thanks also to those who provided slide entertainment for the evening. After expenses (of which there were many), we cleared $378 for the Museum.

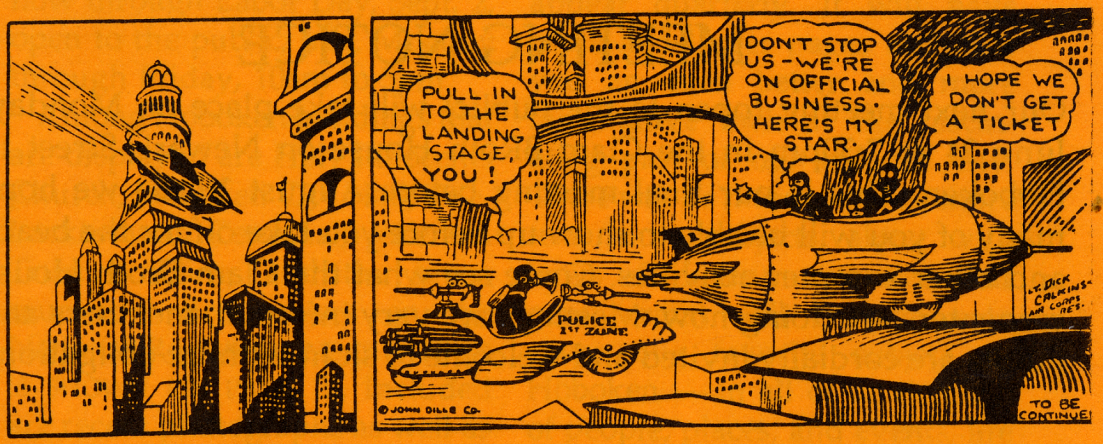
HISTORY OF THE FUTURE:
What the past thought our world would be like

"History of the Future" is the thought-stimulating title of the Museum's next benefit event, scheduled for September. It will focus on predictions of our era as made by writers and artists of decades before our own time. And a view of the future as we see it now.

We invite architects to submit their visions of the future to be shown at our exhibit. We extend the same offer to holographers and other artists in this three-dimensional laser medium. And to costume designers who want to model their visions of what the world will wear a century or more from now.

On display and on sale at the event will be large Sunday newspaper comic pages of "Buck Rogers in the 25th Century," and other examples of yesterday's ideas of what tomorrow would be like, such as advertisements, posters, and magazine covers.

BUCK ROGERS IN THE 25th CENTURY



PORTION OF A 1929 DAILY STRIP SHOWING NIAGARA, CAPITAL OF NORTH AMERICA

If you'd like to participate in this backward look at the future, please contact Jim Hans at (201) 653-7393, especially if you have ideas for display, sale, or performance.

Hoboken Historical Museum
P.O. Box M-1220
Hoboken NJ 07030



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CITY HALL

WASHINGTON AND FIRST STS. HOBOKEN, N.J.

MEETING NOTICE

Our next meeting (open to the public) will take place on Monday, June 24 at 7:30pm in the Clam BRoth House on Newark Street in Hoboken. This is our final meeting before August 19. So we hope many of you will be able to show up before you take off for the beach and other summer activities. Come see what the Clam Broth House carpenters are doing now. Meetings are very informal, members and guests are cordially invited and welcome to sit in without obligation.

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Editor Jim Hans
Typesetting The Lippmans
Production: Jim Hans
Virginia Newman
Office Phone: (201) 653-7392
Mailing Address: PO Box M-1220,
Hoboken, NJ 07030

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