The Official Journal of the Organization

The Hoboken Historical Museum

Newsletter

OF BY And FOR MuSeum MemberS.

MARCH 1989 HOBOKEN, N.J. VOLUME 2, NO. 25

NEXT MAJOR EXHIBIT PLANNED

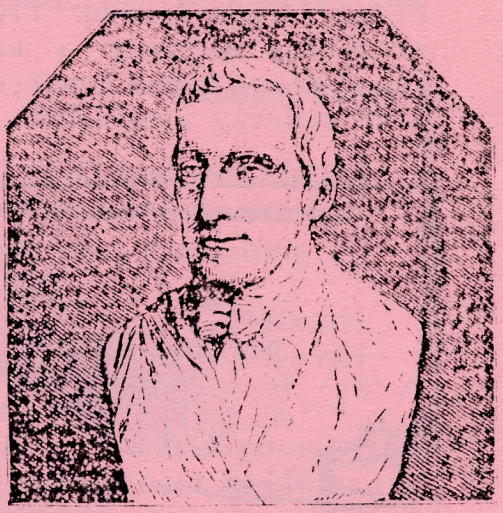
As you may know, we were turned down in our grant application to the County for a Frank Sinatra exhibit. We chose to postpone the project when Mr. Sinatra did not respond to our request for material. Vice President Bob Foster volunteered to curate the Museum's fourth exhbition, "The Hoboken Shipyards", and an exhibit on Hoboken Transportation was our second choice. Now, under present circumstances, Bob is burdened with other work. In order to take the time to do it right, he feels the opening of "Shipyards" will have to take place Nov. of 1990 instead of November 1989.

As our archives have little material on Hoboken's shipyards and transportation, a major exhibition on either of these topics would entail a great deal of new research and borrowing from other collections. Unless someone comes up with another idea and wishes to undertake organizing the exhibit, I am prepared to offer the following suggestion: "Hoboken Landmarks and Historical Highlights."

Jim Hans
President

TRIBUTE TO JOHN STEVENS

One such aspect of Hoboken's history has recently come to mind that would be ideal to present in November: The life and achievements of John Stevens (c. 1794-1838), engineer, inventor, founder of the city of Hoboken, and petitioner for the first American patent law two hundred years ago next April.



COL. JOHN STEVENS.

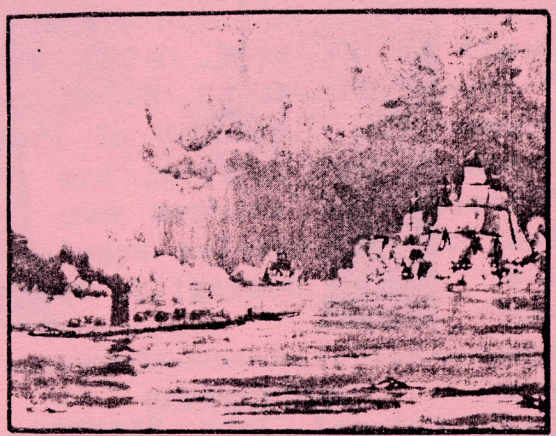
Colonel John Stevens, who was also called "the father of the American railroad," worked on the application of steam to

transportation during most of his lifetime.

The Colonel and his two sons, Robert L. and Edwin A. (founder of Stevens Institute), will forever rank among the greatest of the world's pioneer engineers.

In developing their major projects in the early days, it was necessary for them to invent many objects of detail which in themselves were of no small importance. Thus, when Col. John Stevens invented the tubular steam boiler, and applied the principle of the screw to the marine propeller in order to carry out his experiments in steam navigation, there was no patent protection in this country, and so, on his petition, the U.S. Patent Law of April 10, 1790 was legislated.

In 1841 John Stevens' son, Robert L., entered into negotiations with the United States government for the first armor-plated floating artillery battery--a battle-ship--which began construction here shortly afterward.



The Stevens Ironclad

In 1813 John Stevens had designed the ironclad ship which embodied the design of the Civil War Monitor, and which was the first ironclad ever under construction.

Anyone wishing to help with a John Stevens presentation, planned for November, please call Jim Hans at the Museum office, 653-7392.

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HISTORIAN REGISTRAR NAMED

Paul Lippman, Trustee and Production Editor of the **Newsletter**, has been appointed to the position of Historian Registrar of the Hoboken Historical Museum. His duties are to keep inventory records of all Museum property and to oversee procedures for accessing gifts, purchases, and loans to the Museum of objects and archival material.

He expects to use his computer for this purpose so that at all times the Museum has documentation of all its objects and historic records.

Anyone who wishes to assist him may reach him at 656-5278.

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BOOK REPORT

In the January issue of the New Jersey Historical Commission Newsletter there is a review of the book **George B. McClellan: The Young Napoleon**, by Stephen W. Sears. Civil War Union General McClellan lived for a time in Hoboken in



MAJOR General George B. McClellan. Photo by Mathew Brady.

the 1860s while he was superintendent of the "Stevens Battery," an ironclad war vessel bequeathed to the State by Edwin A. Stevens. The giant iron monster had lay incomplete at its Hoboken shipyard since the early 1840s.

Reviewer William Wright records that McClellan was "one of the outstanding Civil War generals, the man who took over the Union army after the first battle of Bull Run and molded it into a strong fighting force, but was reluctant to use it in battle."

In 1864 McClellan ran unsuccessfully for President against Abraham Lincoln. In 1877 the General was elected governor of New Jersey.

His son of the same name became a journalist in New York City, was elected to Congress as a Democrat in 1895, and became mayor of New York in 1903.

Today a descendant of the General lives in Hoboken, an Honorary Member of the Museum, and Professor of Humanities at Stevens, James McClellan.

The book, published in 1988 by Ticknor & Fields, 383 Orange St., New Haven, CT 06511, has 481 pages, illustrations, maps, index, and bibliography, $25.

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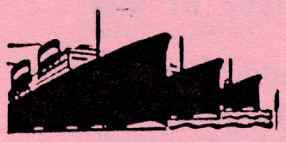
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201-963-3833
FAX: 201-963-3934

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



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MUSEUM HOURS 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. WEEKDAYS

PLEASE Take Notice

Our next meeting is Wednesday, March 15 at 7:30 PM in 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.

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CORRECTIONS

In our last issue we omitted reporting the re-election of our faithful Treasurer, Gerard Lisa, to that post for another year. We congratulate him.

A typographical error appeared in the article on "A Seaman's Belongings." The sentence in error should have read: In 1892 Thingvalla's (steamship line) fleet comprised of four large steamers...

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MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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Production Editor Paul Lippman
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