

The
Official
Journal
of the
Organization

The Hoboken
Historical
Museum
Newsletter

OF
BY
And FOR
Museum
Members.

Published Monthly

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Vol. 1, No. 1

INTRODUCTION

by Jim Hans
Director/Curator

Although my recent report on the Museum Opening appeared under the title of Newsletter, this is officially the first issue. It will be published monthly to correspond with our monthly meetings which are held, for the time being, on the first Wednesday of the month at the Clam Broth House. The date on the mast-head will be that of the upcoming monthly meeting.

This is the members' newsletter, so we encourage everyone to make a contribution. We are looking for short articles and information about Hoboken happenings, preferably related to our current and upcoming events and exhibits. Please DO NOT telephone in your information. Send in your typewritten letters and stories to the Assistant Editor, Mary Manhardt, 605 Jefferson Street, Hoboken. If we receive enough material in time for each issue's deadline (the fifteenth of each month), we will expand to eight pages. But to do so we need the input of everyone, on a regular basis. However, we are short staffed at present, so please, no historical inquiries that might require research.

If you wish to help us publish this monthly newsletter and have some time to spare, please let us know. Contact the Museum office during the day at this number: 653-7392.

MUSEUM APPLIES FOR GRANT

The Museum has just filed an application for a grant of \$ 8,100. from the New Jersey Historical Commission. I doubt if we will receive the entire amount, but we hope to be awarded a portion of it. If we are awarded only half of what we asked, we will be most pleased. We will be notified of the Commission's decision sometime in April.

As our grant proposal project, we have chosen an exhibit on the theme: "The History of Theatre, Vaudeville and Motion Pictures in Hoboken." This will be presented at the Museum's second large annual exhibit, opening in the Fall.



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Our space at City Hall will display photographs of old Hoboken theatres and some of their sites today; materials on the well-known performers who played here; advertisements, playbills and other theatre artifacts; and historical information. Videotaped interviews with persons who were involved with Hoboken theatre, vaudeville, and film will be shown at the opening along with a montage of clips from films shot in or referring to Hoboken.

HOBOKEN THEATRICAL SCENE

It is not generally known that for many years Hoboken had a theatrical scene amazingly active for a town of this size. A surprising number of famous performers played Hoboken, the talent and the performances were of the highest calibre, and the public avidly supported a large variety of entertainments.

History of these popular art forms has never before been compiled and presented to the public, and information and artifacts on theatre, vaudeville and film should attract a new and wider audience for the Museum.

Between now and the opening, articles on this interesting subject will be presented here in the newsletter, and then later compiled in booklet form and offered to the public at the November exhibit. Additional photographs, illustrations and updated text will be added at the time of publication.

All members and non-members are welcome to contribute to this inspiring project. Please feel free to offer any information or advise that will help bring it to a successful conclusion.

PASS THE WORD

Although our research will draw material from previously published works, area libraries and photograph collections, it would be great for the Museum to receive additional items for this special exhibit from personal collections here in Hoboken. If all Museum members would be so kind as to ask their friends and neighbors if they have any old Hoboken theatre or movie related items that we could borrow or copy for the show, it would help enormously.

UPCOMING MINI-EXHIBITS

As was done last year, the Museum plans to set up portable display cases at each of the two large annual outdoor festivals: the River City Fair on the Hoboken waterfront in August, and the

Lackawanna Railroad Festival at the train station in September. The Museum will also install several other indoor or outdoor exhibits on the theatre, vaudeville and movies theme, possibly at Stevens Institute, the Hoboken Public Library, and St. Mary Hospital, all in conjunction with, and as publicity for the main exhibit in City Hall. These mini-exhibits will serve as teasers as well as a source of additional contact with the public.

HOBOKEN THEATRES

Years of research have revealed that an astounding number of theatres have been located in Hoboken. Not counting the present Hoboken Cinema at First and Hudson Streets, there were over forty! Here is a list of most of the known theatres and a few music halls. A more complete list, giving their locations and years of operation, will follow in a future issue of the Museum newsletter.

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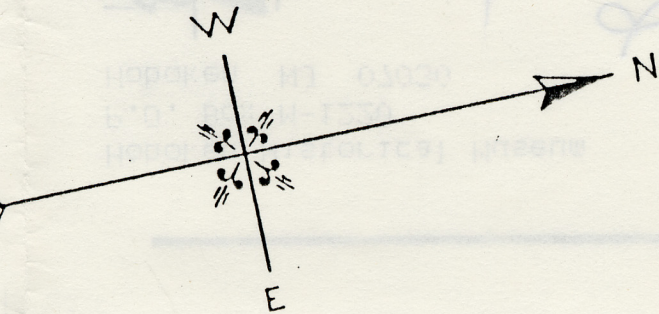
Street.

HOBOKEN THEATRE AND CONCERT HALLS

The Fabian
Rivoli Theatre
Palace Theatre
The Flora
The Orpheum
The Hippodrome
Pastime Theatre
U.S. Theatre
Olympic Picture Parlor
Palace Garden
The Gayety
The Strand
The Manor
14th Street Theatre
Ideal Theatre

RECENT GIFT TO THE MUSEUM

The Museum has just received as a gift four Plat books of the old Hoboken Land and Improvement Co., dating from 1885. These large volumes, greatly used but still in decent condition, show Hoboken titles and property lots, some originally hand drawn. The books were donated by Mrs. J. C. McEnany of St. Michaels, Maryland, via the Hoboken Historical District Commission. She requested only that we copy for her a double page map from one of the volumes, which pertains to Weehawken, and of course we gladly obliged her. These historically valuable books may be viewed on request at the office. If I get a ride to our February 4th meeting, I'll be able to



Street.

ATRES, MOVIE HOUSES CONCERT HALLS

The Empire
The Rialto
The Lyric
The Bishop
Star Nicolette
The Eureka
Hoboken Theatre
The Erie
Liberty Theatre
Jefferson Theatre
The Eldorado
Naples Garden
City Theatre
George Graf's Nicolet
Elysian Summer Garden

Street.

bring two or three of these heavy items along.

I suggest we be prepared to sell the Weehawken volume, or, preferably, trade it for old Hoboken materials, as after examining it closely I saw nothing in it of value to the Hoboken Historical Museum; this is open to discussion.

I believe all small museums would benefit the public in their communities if they would trade or sell off their extraneous items for those that they do concentrate on, particularly in a case like this where the donor does not expect to see his or her gift on display.

CONCERN OF THE PEOPLE

While on the subject of museums, it is interesting to note a passage or two from The Directory of World Museums*:

"The United States has always seen its museums as fundamentally community institutions. In taking this view, it has continued a tradition already established in colonial days, where culture was regarded as the concern of the people as a whole and where any form of elitism tended to be regarded with great suspicion."

And on the subject of museums and their collections, from the same book:

"One might argue that many American museums, among them some of the oldest and most famous, have found themselves in serious financial difficulties, even to the extent of being forced to sell off items from their collections. This problem is not of any great consequence, because most of the paintings and other works of art which are put on to the market to be sold to wealthy American private collectors, who will eventually die and bequeath their collections to public museums and galleries once again, is a process which has been going on for several generations, and is part of the national economy."

*Second Edition, Facts on File, Inc., New York, NY. 1981

COMPLIMENTARY COPY

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THE HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1 February 1987 No. 1

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Subscription Rates

Free to Museum Members

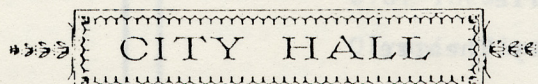
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Mail all Newsletter correspondence to:
Mary Manhardt, 605 Jefferson St.,
Hoboken, NJ 07030

NOTICE

The Hoboken Historical Museum at City Hall will now be open Wednesday evenings (same nights as Public Meetings of the City Council), 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. Weekday hours stay the same: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM



MUSEUM HOURS
9 - 4 P.M.
WEEK DAYS