

NOTICE: NOMINATIONS

A list of nominees for Officers and Trustees of the Hoboken Historical Museum for 1988 will be drawn up by the membership at our next meeting at the Clam Broth House, Monday, December 7, for voting upon in January. Additional nominations may be submitted by mail.

THE CURTAIN RISES ONCE AGAIN ON HOBOKEN'S THEATRICAL GLORY

The tenors sang the good old songs, the burlesque beauties pranced and the villain twirled his moustache once again, at the opening night festivities of the Hoboken Historical Museum's second annual exhibition, "The History of Theatre, Vaudeville and Movies in Hoboken," Friday, November 20.

Hundreds poured into Hoboken City Hall to enjoy three floors of live entertainment, exhibits, refreshments, video, and film. The evening's program began with the unveiling of a portrait in oils of Hoboken's inimitable mayor, Tom Vezzetti.

Entertainment different from that usually offered by Hoboken's City Council took place in its chambers on the first floor. Video clips of movies in which Hoboken appeared or was mentioned were displayed, along with an interview with a Hoboken vaudevillian. Three short turn-of-the-century films of Hoboken were screened.

Display cases on the second floor of City Hall exhibited photographs and mementos of Hoboken's Fabian, U.S. Empire, Rialto, and other theaters of the past, enlivened by period costumes of bygone vaudeville acts and dramas. A wooden cutout figure of an usher rescued from the old Fabian theater once again advised people that "The balcony is closed"

Other second-floor exhibits included a series of city maps that located just about every one of Hoboken's music halls, cabarets, and

theaters, with color photographs showing how their sites look today. And paired on one wall were the restored 1851 map of Hoboken rediscovered in the municipal storerooms, and a huge portrait of a Hoboken blackface minstrel group.

Also on the second floor was a refreshment table with food and drink donated by these Hoboken delis: Arak's, Fiore's, Lisa's, and Vito's; also the Ali Baba restaurant, Hoboken Farm Boy, Garden Wine and Liquor, Alvin Wine & Liquor, Hoboken Produce, and Foodtown of Hoboken. Free bags of popcorn added to the theatrical atmosphere.

City Hall's cavernous third floor echoed to the sounds of continuous entertainment that went on for more than three hours before an enthusiastic SRO audience.

Three 19th-century skits performed by members of the Hoboken Theater Company started the show, featuring "The Anatomical Tragedian" hamming it up, "Only a Shop Girl" bringing tears to the eye, and "Lodgings to Let" bringing out the belly laughs.

Sam Tenner, a Hoboken vaudevillian of the 1920s who rose from his sick bed to prove that the show must go on, jested through amazing rope tricks next, followed by tenor Stephen Nuding, accompanied by Barry Kloda, beautifully performing songs by Stephen Foster, a one-time Hoboken resident.

Lace Productions followed with a dramatic short play about the return of a Civil War soldier with a surprise ending. The house was brought down by Hobokenite Bob Kelly who delivered a rousing reading of "Casey at the Bat" and splendid old Irish songs including "Danny Boy" and "Mother McCrae."

To a tape recording of her own narration, Kristiana Vervoordt danced and, yes, roller-skated, her choreographed portrait of dancing living and working in Hoboken. The Hoboken Theater Company followed with a

reprise of their three skits.

Franklin D Roosevelt, Humphrey Bogart, Jack Benny, and other figures of the 1930s and 40s appeared on stage in the person of comedian-impressionist J. T. Lawlor.

Feathers fluttering and sequins glittering Joan Torino and the Jersey Tomatoes brought a different kind of burlesque to City Hall--the real thing--as they pranced through dance routines Hoboken hasn't seen for decades, bumps, grinds, chewing gum and all.

An elegant change of pace took stage next, as Hoboken's own Renaissance Singers presented a program of songs ranging from spirituals to madrigals in a magnificent display of musicianship.

Winding up the evening's entertainment was a dramatic reading of a scene from a play staged by the Renegade Theater Company.

John Parrott opened and closed the entertainment with blues and ragtime on the piano.

Museum President Jim Hans reports that \$165 in donations were collected, and new memberships totalling \$100 in dues were signed up at the opening, which in every respect can be regarded as a great success for the Hoboken Historical Museum.

MOVIE-MAKERS LEAVE A THANK-YOU TO HOBOKEN

A letter from the producers of the latest movie to be filmed in Hoboken, "Crossing Delancey," addressed to Mayor Tom Vezzetti, informed him that they are donating to the Museum props used in the scenes staged on Washington St., plus \$250 in cash.

The props and set dressing items, which will be on view in the Museum's new theater exhibition, include the "New Day Books" sign

that transformed the old Rudolph's Millinery shop into a Manhattan bookstore. The donor is Midwest Film Distributors, Inc. of New York, to whom we give our thanks.

Another movie filmed in Hoboken is "Orphans," a Lorimar Productions feature. One of the scenes takes place in the large waiting room of the Erie-Lackawanna terminal, with a wide shot that beautifully displays the space. Another finds the characters on Washington St., entering a restaurant that Hobokenites will recognize as a veterinarian's office in restaurant clothing. The restaurant's interior is Arthur's Steak House, where Albert Finney performs a nifty soft-shoe on its familiar linoleum floor.

When you see "Orphans," don't be fooled by the characters' insistence that it's all taking place in Newark!

The week of November 16 brought other filming to Hoboken. This occasion was a commercial for an Exxon automotive lubricant. The 1100 block of Garden Street was the setting and on-camera spokesman for Exxon was John Madden, former coach of the football Oakland Raiders.

Hoboken television viewers can catch glimpses of our streets in commercials, but they must be quick-eyed to do so. Filming or taping that seems to tie up one Hoboken street or another for days at a time often results in only a few fleeting seconds on screen. But there nevertheless is something about Hoboken that attracts the producers.

WINDOW DISPLAY STOPS TRAFFIC

The Museum's window display on Newark Street between Hudson and Court Streets previewed our new theatrical exhibition. It was a big hit among Hoboken pedestrians, stopping even those in a hurry to catch a PATH train. The display was on view from November 1 through 22.

*Kierman
Mr. B. Melvin Kierman
825 Hudson St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030

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Editor. Jim Hans
Assistant Editor. . . Mary Manhardt
Staff Writer. Sean Devney
Production Editor . . . Paul Lippman

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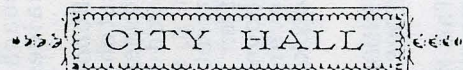
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Free to Museum members.

NOTICE

Our next meeting is Monday,
December 7, at 7:30 P.M., 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