The Official Journal of the Organization

The Hoboken Historical Museum Newsletter

OF BY And FOR Museum Members.

VOLUME 2, NO. 28 HOBOKEN, N.J. JUNE 1989

NEXT EXHIBIT: HISTORY AND LANDMARKS

Scheduled to open in November at City Hall, the next major exhibition of the Hoboken Historical Museum will focus on present-day and past landmarks and historical events dating back to 1609, when Henry Hudson and his shore party from his vessel "Half Moon" landed at what is now Castle Point in Hoboken.

Many existing Hoboken landmarks are tangible reminders of the past, and are linked to the development of Hudson County and the State, and in some cases with the nation as a whole. Hoboken has a record number of "firsts" in New Jersey and in the country (more than thirty at last count!), related to transportation, manufacturing, education, technology, architecture, and housing, to name a few.

A number of "firsts" for the nation and the world are related to the Hoboken Ferry Company, which started with a rowboat in 1775 and was, until 1967, the oldest continuous ferry service in the United States. John Stevens, founder of Hoboken, started the first steam ferry in the world. It was placed into regular service between Hoboken and Vesey Street, Manhattan, on September 10, 1811.

The classic ferryboat as it came to be was born in Hoboken. Robert L. Stevens, a son of John, was the originator of the standard ferryboat design, with its overhanging main deck, its fenders, and its ferry slips constructed of flexible pilings into which the vessel would dock by controlled collision.

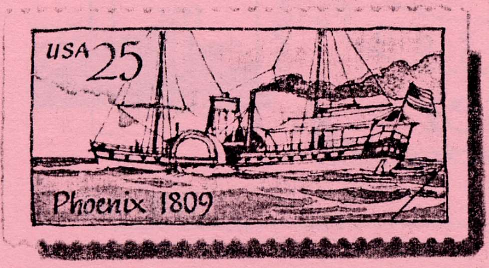
He also made Hoboken the home of the first inverted-T profile rail, which superseded the flat "strap" rail used until that time by railroads. The American "T" design is still used on railroads throughout the world. In addition to the "Stevens Rail," as it was first called, he also designed the now common hook-headed railroad spike still in use today.

From the inventive genius of the Stevens family of engineers, Hoboken gained a unique distinction. Another son, Edwin A., founder of Stevens Institute, conferred further fame upon Hoboken. He was born at Castle Point in 1795 and was associated with his father and Robert L. Stevens in engineering feats which astonished the world. He devised metal armor for ships of war and invented the air-tight fireroom, later a standard design for every steam-powered naval vessel. He also designed a plow used in this country by farmers for many years and known as the Stevens plow.

In 1808, with the assistance of his son Robert, John Stevens built the side-wheel steamboat "Phoenix." On June 8, 1809, it became the world's first sea-

Robert L. Stevens.

going steam vessel. A 25-cent stamp (one of a set of five steamboat stamps) was recently issued by the United States Postal Service picturing the Phoenix.



United States Postal Service postage stamp

In 1825 John Stevens, sometimes called "The Father of the American Railroad," constructed a circular length of track on his estate in Hoboken and operated on it "the first locomotive in America driven by steam upon a track." The *New York Evening Post* at the time reported it in an article given here as found in the Troy (N.Y.) *Sentinel*, May 16, 1826:

"...Mr. Stevens of Hoboken..., with a spirit that deserves all praise, has had a steam carriage built as an experiment. It has just been completed, and the editor of this paper was among the hundreds of persons who on Saturday last, crossed over from New York to Hoboken, for the purpose of witnessing its operation. Mr. Stevens had previously built a railway on a small scale. It forms a circle perhaps 35 or 40 rods in circumference. On this railway the carriage was placed, and was carried round by the power of steam at the rate of five or six miles an hour."

The presentation of these and other historical highlights and landmarks in the form of pictures, artifacts, and information at the Museum's space in City Hall, beginning in November and running for about a year, should generate a good deal of interest among the public and create pride in our community.

However, a great deal of work needs to be done to assemble and mount the exhibition. Therefore we ask for help from the public, from our readership, and from our members.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

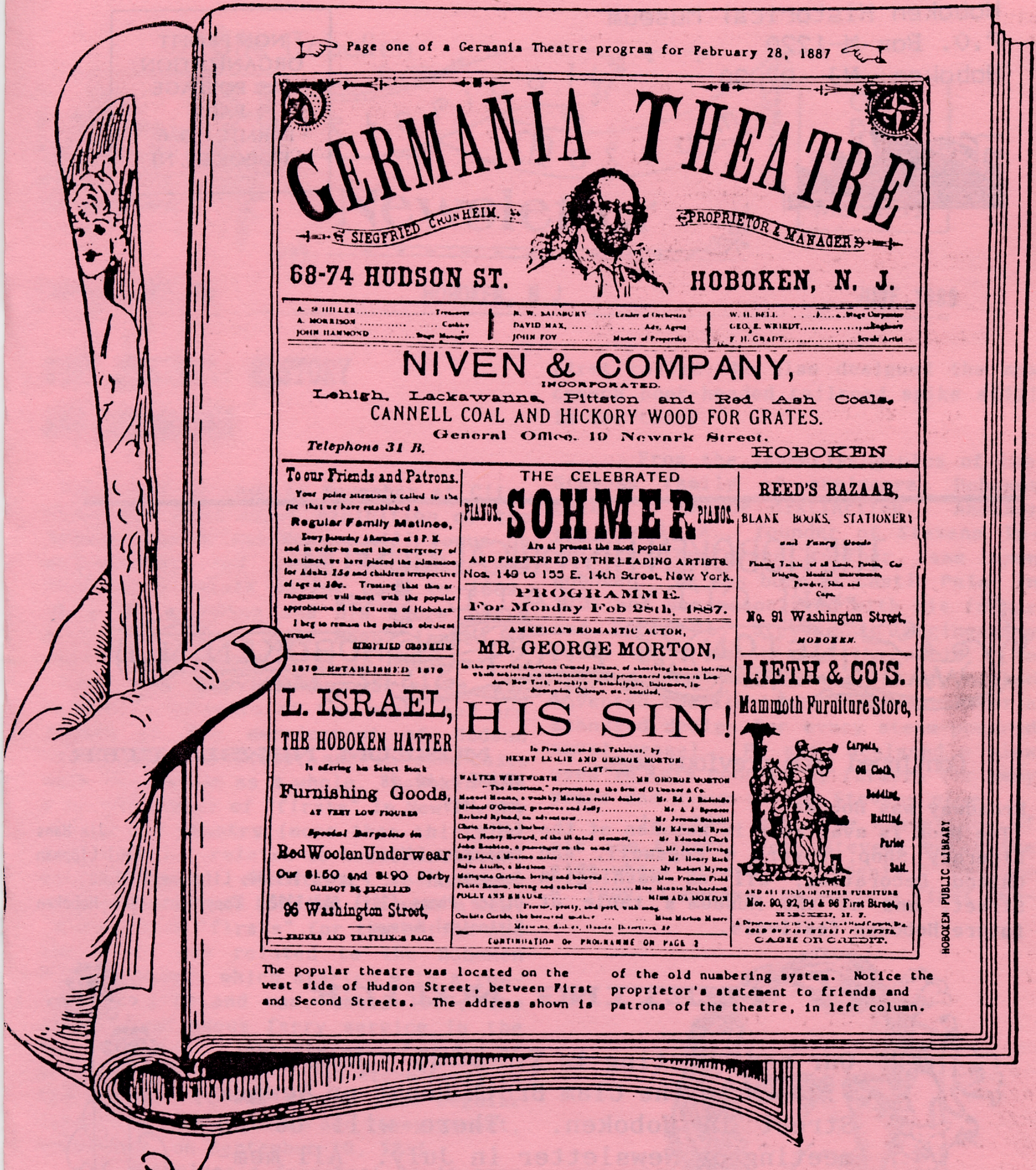
Contributors are needed to assemble historical information, photographs, advertisements, old maps, prints and engravings, etc. concerning these places in Hoboken:

1. Stevens Center building, site of the original Stevens Castle atop Castle Point on the Stevens campus.
2. Sibyl's Cave, or its present site on River Road (formerly River Walk), and the locale of the murder that inspired Edgar Allen Poe's story "The Mystery of Marie Roget."
3. Castle Point and River Road (Sinatra Drive).
4. Stevens Gatehouse, Sixth Street near River Street.
5. Stevens Administration Building, Fifth Street between River and Hudson Streets.
6. Elysian Park, today's remmnant of the Elysian Fields, site of the first baseball game played under regular rules, in 1846.
7. Site of the Stevens experimental railroad, near Newark Street between Hudson and Court Streets.
8. 84 Washington Street, formerly the Hoboken Bank for Savings.
9. Hudson United Bank, formerly Hudson Trust Building, Newark and Hudson Streets.
10. The Assembly of Exempt Firemen, 213 Bloomfield Street.
11. The Clock Tower, formerly Keuffel & Esser Building, 301 Jefferson Street.
12. Hoboken waterfront between First and Fourth Streets.
13. Former Lipton Tea building, at 15th and Hudson Streets.
14. Willow Terrace, between Willow and Clinton Street and Sixth and Seventh Streets.
15. Martha Institute building, Sixth Street and Park Avenue.
16. Erie-Lackawanna Railroad Terminal.
17. Hoboken Land & Improvement Company building, One Newark Street.
18. Stephen Foster House, 601 Bloomfield Street.

Although this list represents a great deal of historic Hoboken, it is not complete. Over the years much research has been completed on most of these places and a great deal of information is on file at the Museum. However, the archives need to be rewritten and updated, reproduced, and put into form for exhibition. Additional photographs must be taken, captions written and other work needs to be done.

If any of our readers have some spare time over the next few months to devote to any of the projects on the list, please contact Jim Hans during the day at 653-7392. Your help will be appreciated and in return you will gain a greater appreciation of the community.

Page one of a Germania Theatre program for February 28, 1887



GERMANIA THEATRE

SIEGFRIED GRUNHEIM, PROPRIETOR & MANAGER

68-74 HUDSON ST. HOBOKEN, N. J.

A. SCHILLER .... Treasurer
A. MORRISON .... Cashier
JOHN HAMMOND .... Stage Manager
R. W. SALSBURY .... Leader of Orchestra
DAVID MAX, ... Adv. Agent
JOHN FOY .... Master of Properties
W. H. BELL .... Stage Carpenter
GEO. E. WRIKDT .... Engineer
F. H. GRADT .... Scenic Artist

NIVEN & COMPANY,
INCORPORATED.
Lehigh, Lackawanna, Pittston and Red Ash Coals.
CANNELL COAL AND HICKORY WOOD FOR GRATES.
General Office, 10 Newark Street.
Telephone 31 B. HOBOKEN

To our Friends and Patrons.

Your polite attention is called to the fact that we have established a

Regular Family Matinee,

Every Saturday Afternoon at 2 P. M. and in order to meet the emergency of the times, we have placed the admission for Adults 15c and children irrespective of age at 10c. Trusting that this arrangement will meet with the popular approbation of the citizens of Hoboken.

I beg to remain the publics obedient servant.

SIEGFRIED GRUNHEIM.

1870 ESTABLISHED 1870

L. ISRAEL,
THE HOBOKEN HATTER
Is offering his Select Stock
Furnishing Goods,
AT VERY LOW FIGURES
Special Bargains in
Red Woolen Underwear
Our $1.50 and $1.90 Derby
CANNOT BE EXCELLED
96 Washington Street,
TRUNKS AND TRAVELLING BAGS.

THE CELEBRATED
PIANOS. **SOHMER** PIANOS.
Are at present the most popular
AND PREFERRED BY THE LEADING ARTISTS.
Nos. 149 to 155 E. 14th Street, New York.

PROGRAMME
For Monday Feb 28th, 1887.

AMERICA'S ROMANTIC ACTOR,
MR. GEORGE MORTON,

HIS SIN!

In Five Acts and Six Tableaux, by
HENRY LESLIE AND GEORGE MORTON.
——CAST——
WALTER WENTWORTH .... MR GEORGE MORTON
POLLY ANN KRAUSE .... MISS ADA MORTON

CONTINUATION OF PROGRAMME ON PAGE 2

REED'S BAZAAR,
BLANK BOOKS, STATIONERY
and Fancy Goods
Powder, Shot and Caps.
No. 91 Washington Street,
HOBOKEN.

LIETH & CO'S.
Mammoth Furniture Store,
Carpets,
Oil Cloth,
Bedding,
Matting,
Parlor
Suit.
AND ALL KINDS OF OTHER FURNITURE
Nos. 90, 92, 94 & 96 First Street,
HOBOKEN, N. J.
SOLD ON EASY WEEKLY PAYMENTS
CASH OR CREDIT.

HOBOKEN PUBLIC LIBRARY

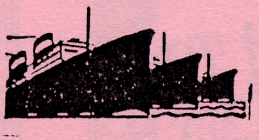
The popular theatre was located on the west side of Hudson Street, between First and Second Streets. The address shown is of the old numbering system. Notice the proprietor's statement to friends and patrons of the theatre, in left column.

NEW BOOK ON HOBOKEN

Just published by the Hoboken Historical Museum is Volume II of "The History of the Theatre, Vaudeville and Movies in Hoboken." Volume I described some of the more than 50 theatres that at different times thrived in the "Mile Square" city, with a complete list and their locations. Volume II goes on to present a history of the entertainment industry in Hoboken from its origins to the end of the 19th Century. It contains 32 large pages and many illustrations from 19th century sources.

The book was exhaustively researched and written by Museum President Jim Hans, who combed a century of periodicals, theatrical programs, newspapers, and other sources to present a colorful and detailed portrait of one of America's most lively theatrical communities. Through its pages march a colorful procession of theatre managers, drama critics, entertainers and promoters, including P. T. Barnum, Weber & Fields, and audiences that consumed prodigious quantities of beer and "segars" back when

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



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THE HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

CITY HALL

WASHINGTON AND FIRST STS. HOBOKEN, N.J.

Continued from previous page.

Broadway was Hoboken.

The book is available in Hoboken at the Literary Shop, Rogers & Cogswell, and United Decorating, all on Washington Street, and at the Museum's table at future Hoboken festivals.

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MEETING NOTICE

Our next meeting is **Tuesday**, June 20 at 7:30 PM in the Clam Broth House on Newark Street in Hoboken. There will be no meeting or Newsletter in July. All members and non-members are invited to attend without obligation.

MUSIC IN THE PARK

A different band will be playing free to the public every Wednesday night in the bandstand at Church Square Park from June 21 to September 6th. A list of who will be performing this year will be available at the Museum's table in the park. Museum membership forms and the two Hoboken Theatre booklets will also be available at our table on those twelve Wednesday nights.