

The  
Official  
Journal  
of the  
Organization

The Hoboken  
**H**istorical  
Museum  
Newsletter

OF  
BY  
And FOR  
Museum  
Members.

Published monthly

Hoboken, NJ Tuesday, September 8, 1987

Vol. I, No. 8

#### MUSEUM TABLE AT FAIR

The Museum's table at the River City Fair for the two days took in a total of \$455.00! Much higher than last year.

A big help selling T-shirts and handling new memberships while battling the heat were: Jeanne West Valentin, Greg Timminga, Geri Fallo, Ginger Fenner, Joyce Tatom, John DePalma, Doris China, Cristine Andre, Michael Goldfine, Betty DeMarco and Hugh Kilmer.

#### SPECIAL MENTION FOR \$ DONATIONS

We want to thank the many members, and some new members as well, who have recently donated to the Museum beyond the amount of the membership dues. As of August 20th, special thanks to: Edwin J. Chius, Laura A. Finamore, and Ruth Walker, all of Hoboken; Mark Kennedy, of New Orleans, Judith S. Stewart, of Union City; and especially to Mr. and Mrs. Ross London of Hoboken for their generous donation of \$250.00.

#### VIDEOS OF BENEFIT AT MAXWELL'S

Before we can proceed to edit the videotapes of that wonderful musical benefit at Maxwell's two months ago we would like to receive more of the Band Release forms we sent out to all the musicians who performed that weekend. What we've seen so far of the tapes looks good. As of now the complete footage is available for copying, but we'd love to assemble it into finished form.

#### MUSEUM HAS A GREAT MONTH

The Museum did very well this past month, adding over \$850. in all to our treasury, from new and renewal memberships, the sale of prints, postcards, and T-shirts (not only at the River City Fair, but also from our table set up weekly in Church Square Park for the Wednesday night series of music) and donations.

However, we cannot rest on our financial laurels. The next three meetings will be crucial to the preparation of the Museum's 2nd Annual Exhibit on the History of Theatre in November. Please try to make these meetings if you can - we can use all the help we can get.

#### BENEFIT TO SAVE LOEW'S THEATRE

Speaking of theatres, as you probably know, that grand old movie palace the Loew's in Jersey City is threatened with demolition. In Hoboken at the Beat 'n' Path on Friday, September 18, there will be a musical benefit featuring six bands and some individual performers organized by Joey George of 77 Sunset Strip to save the beautiful and historic 3,300 seat theatre, the first to be built expressly for talking motion pictures. This worthwhile event will run from 6 p.m. until 2 a.m.

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# The Story of the Theatre

in Hoboken



By Jim Hans

## EARLY THEATRE ACTIVITIES

Evidence of theatrical life in Hoboken dates from around 1864-1865. The city's population made a tremendous jump at that time. Over 10,000 people moved into the growing city between 1860 and 1870. Since the population by 1870 had swelled from 9,000 to 20,247, one can see that more than half the people in Hoboken were new in town. Social clubs were formed and theatre activities were very much a part of these social organizations, of which there were many. One of the first with any type of theatre dates to the early days of the Deutscher (German) Club. (The name was changed to the Union Club during World War I.) Shortly after taking possession of its new building on the corner of Hudson and Sixth Streets in 1863-64, the Club organized a dramatic committee, which gave a private theatrical performance every month. Among the audience of over 200 members were many prominent citizens of German descent, including Dr. Hans Kudlich, one of the founders of The Hoboken Academy; Hon. Carl Schurz; and William Steinway, of piano fame. (For many years, Steinway & Sons of New York City ran full-page ads in the directories of Jersey

City-Hoboken.) Through the years numerous productions were staged here and many notable performers, speakers and the like drew large audiences to these events, dedicated to promoting the intellectual interests of the members.

For many years, the Union Club stage complete with scenery, could be used for theatrical events of any description. In a 1930's brochure it is mentioned that an RCA amplification system had been installed, with outlets in various parts of the building. The ballroom could seat 400 and accommodate about 1000 for dance affairs.

Among the other outstanding social organizations in Hoboken that utilized an auditorium or stage for their regular festivities were the Quartette Club, one of the foremost singing societies in the state, which was located at 1009-1015 Washington Street; the Columbia Club at 11th and Bloomfield Streets; and the Hoboken Elks Lodge at 1005-1007 Washington Street. Other organizations and societies would sometimes use the Old Fellows Hall or one of the local school buildings to stage their productions.

The Columbia Club, organized in 1890, moved into their new clubhouse on 11th Street late in 1892. The entertainment branch of the club was highly regarded from the time of its organization, and, "has covered itself with glory." It was reported in 1906, "Of late years the dramatic bee has done quite some buzzing, with the result that the club has to-day a regularly organized dramatic society, possessed of all the earmarks of the professional

article. Performances are given at stated times, and are usually of a very high order, owing to the fact that histrionic ability has been discovered which places the quality of the performances high above the average amateur effort." In this club, as with most social clubs of the times, women were not allowed as members, but participated in other ways and were welcome as friends of the members. "It is in connection with the Dramatic

Society that the ladies are called into action and prominence. (To speak advisedly, for the Columbia Club is composed of the gender male), for what comedy would be complete without its French maid or Irish servant girl, not to mention the frail being with the blonde locks who sighs out her love (after many exciting adventures) upon the manly breast of the handsome leading man."\*

\*"The Irving", October, 1906, A Hoboken monthly music magazine.



TYROLIAN PERFORMERS AT THE GERMAN CLUB (UNION CLUB), HOBOKEN, 1889

(To be continued in succeeding issues)

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\*Foste

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

# THE HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Vol. I, No. 8

September 1987

Editor . . . . . Jim Hans

Assistant Editor . . . . . Mary Manhardt

Staff Writer . . . . . Sean Devney

Production . . . . . Nick Parslow

Newsletter Mailing Address . . .

605 Jefferson St., Hoboken

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Subscription Rates

Free to Museum Members

## NOTICE

Our next meeting is Tuesday,  
September 8, at 7:30 p.m.  
precisely, until about 9:30 p.m.  
All members are invited and  
potential new members are always  
welcome to sit in without

obligation. The date on the  
masthead of this newsletter will  
correspond with our monthly  
meetings, which are held in the  
early part of each month at the  
Clam Broth House on Newark  
Street.

## HOBOKEN TERMINAL FESTIVAL

One of Hoboken's largest festivals  
takes place on Saturday, September  
26 - the Annual Lackawanna Terminal  
Train Festival. More than 50,000  
people turned out last year,  
according to NJ Transit, train  
buffs and general public alike.  
The Museum will be setting up there  
again this year, probably outside  
in the Lackawanna Plaza along with  
similar groups. There will be  
entertainment, free train rides,  
ethnic foods, boat rides, crafts,  
railroad displays and much more.  
The Festival begins about 10:30  
a.m. and goes until dusk. Please  
pass the word, and we hope to see  
you there.