



October, 2010

OUR NEW WEBSITE

The Asbury Park Historical Society's new website will be launched in early October. Created by Asbury Park's Knockout Graphics, the same company that produced the city's website, it will provide users with up-to-date information regarding the society's upcoming special events, monthly meetings, our newsletter, and an on-line membership sign-up. In addition, it will provide its members and users with information about the society's efforts and successes regarding historic preservation in the City of Asbury Park, a history of the City, and photographs and pictures of landmark buildings and sites. An APHS store, selling all of the society's merchandise, including T-shirts, sweatshirts, holiday ornaments, and books about Asbury Park will be launched before the end of the year. Please visit us at APHistoricalSociety.org

SAVE THE DATE

The Asbury Park Historical Society Holiday Party
Sunday, December 5, 2010 from 4 - 7 PM
Cocktails & Hors d'Oeuvres
Signature Drinks/Specially Priced
Hotel Tides
408 Seventh Avenue
Donation \$25 Cash Bar
Festive Dress Encouraged

The Historic S.S. MORRO CASTLE

The first-ever commemorative monument to the ill-fated S.S. Morro Castle was dedicated by the Asbury Park Historical Society last year (2009) on Sept. 8- the 75th anniversary of the maritime disaster.

The black marble monument, funded through donations and fundraisers, is on a grassy strip just south of Convention Hall and is the first-known monument erected to commemorate this important maritime disaster.

"An annual commemoration of this terrible tragedy will now be held every Sept. 8 at the monument. For more information, visit our web site annually in August," Historical Society President Don Stine said.

The SS Morro Castle was a luxury cruise ship of the 1930s that made runs between New York City and Havana, Cuba and provided a popular vacation for tourists- both young and old.

In the early morning hours of Saturday, 8 September 1934, en route from Havana to New York, the ship caught fire off the coast of the New Jersey shore and burned, killing a total of 137 passengers and crew members.

First-responders from southern Monmouth County responded to the event and helped rescue survivors from rough seas and also bring the dead to shore.

The still-burning ship eventually beached herself near Convention Hall in Asbury Park and became a major tourist attraction until it was towed away for scrap several months later.

The devastating fire aboard the Morro Castle was a catalyst for improved shipboard fire safety. Today, the use of fire retardant materials, automatic fire doors, ship-wide fire alarms, and greater attention to fire drills and life boat procedures is a direct result of the Morro Castle disaster.

There is much material on the Morro Castle on the Internet and we urge you to learn more about this historic event and we welcome people to visit the monument.



Local historian, Gary Crawford, reads the names of 137 victims of the Morro Castle tragedy at this year's annual September 8 Commemoration ceremony sponsored by the Asbury Park Historical Society

THE HISTORIC BARONET THEATRE

The historic Baronet Theatre, originally the Ocean Theatre built in 1913, on Fourth Avenue in Asbury Park had its last curtain call on Wednesday, Sept. 22, as wrecking crews razed the theatre because of safety concerns.



City fire and code officials said the theatre's roof had collapsed and that the exterior walls were cracking, buckling, and in danger of collapse.

City officials determined the theatre was an eminent safety hazard and issued the order to have it razed. Officials said the structure had gone beyond the point where any repairs could have remedied the structural problems.

Several workers for the waterfront redeveloper, Asbury Partners, removed four old movie projectors from the small upper projectionist's loft at the theatre. The workers also saved the original marquee and some reels of film.

The projectors were so heavy they needed to be removed using some of the wrecking equipment.

Asbury Park historian Helen Pike said she never thought that many of the Asbury Park images in her book "*Asbury Park's Glory Days*" would be vanishing at such an alarming rate.

"Never did I imagine my book would become a photographic archive of the city's lost architectural touchstones. Once the Fast Lane and Asbury Lanes go, that side of Fourth Avenue will be a canvas as blank as in the days of founder James A. Bradley.

"My fervent hope is that whatever comes next is as iconic and as culturally valuable to the greater Asbury Park community as what's been lost," she said.

The art-deco-style Baronet Theatre, at 205 Fourth Avenue, opened in 1913 as the Ocean Theatre and was owned by Harry Rockefeller.

It was purchased and renovated by local theatre mogul Walter Reade in 1953 and the current marquee on the theatre is from Reade's New York City theatre of the same name, once on 57 Street. Reade moved the original New York City marquee to Asbury Park when he sold the theatre.

The theatre seated 546 in recliner seats and had a stage with proscenium arch.

The Baronet was one of only a few hundred single-screen theatres remaining in the country. The only other similar theatre in this area is the Bradley Beach Cinema.

Walter Burns and Maurice Roberson purchased the theatre in 1986 and tried to restore and reopen it. Asbury Partners purchased the old theatre three years ago.



THE BOARDWALK ART SHOW

August 22, 2010 was the Historical Society's 5th annual Art Show on the Boardwalk. Unfortunately the weather didn't cooperate and winds and rains caused an early closing.

TRUSTEES:

Don Stine, President, Archives/Artifacts & Exhibitions,
Special Events

Celia Morrissette, Vice-President, Fundraising,
Special Events

Mary Damato, Treasurer, Budget/Finance/Treasurer

Dolly Sternesky, Secretary, Newsletter

Johna Karpinski, Historic Preservation/Sites & Buildings.
Special Events

Gail Holy, Website

Teddy Chomko, Marketing & Merchandising

Robert Thoman, Marketing & Merchandising

Lynn Wyckoff, Fundraising

Sonja OBrian, Membership

James Henry, Legal/Grants/Government Relations

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Asbury Park Historical Society is to advance the understanding, appreciation, preservation and restoration of anything of historical value to the City of Asbury Park, New Jersey through:

- the collection, preservation, restoration, exhibition and archiving of artifacts and documents related to the founding and continuing evolution of the City of Asbury Park;
- the restoration and preservation of landmarks, buildings and sites that exemplify the City's historically diverse character and standing as a premiere New Jersey shore resort;
- the development and presentation of educational, entertainment and social programs that highlight significant aspects of the City's history as a center of life, culture and business on the New Jersey shore; and
- the researching, drafting and publication of historic or new articles, journals, books or newsletters, and the development and production of audio and/or video recordings that document life in the City of Asbury Park.



ASBURY PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

P.O. Box 543

Asbury Park, New Jersey 07712

732-869-HIST

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

OCCUPATION: (optional): _____

What projects or activities would you like to see APHS pursue?

In what ways would you like to participate in the Historical Society?

You may volunteer for one of our committees by checking a category below.
You will be contacted upon receipt of your application.

Membership _____ Budget & Finance _____ Archives & Artifacts/Museum _____

Website & Media _____ Market, Fundraising, Special Events & Programs

Committee _____ Grants, Resources & Government Relations Committee _____

Historic Preservation Committee _____

Annual Dues (Please check one)

Single \$20 _____ Seniors 65 & older \$15 _____ Family \$25 _____

Donation only \$ _____ Thank you.

Make check payable to: Asbury Park Historical Society and mail to address above.

Signature _____ Date _____