

# THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ASBURY PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**JOIN UP OR  
RENEW YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP!**

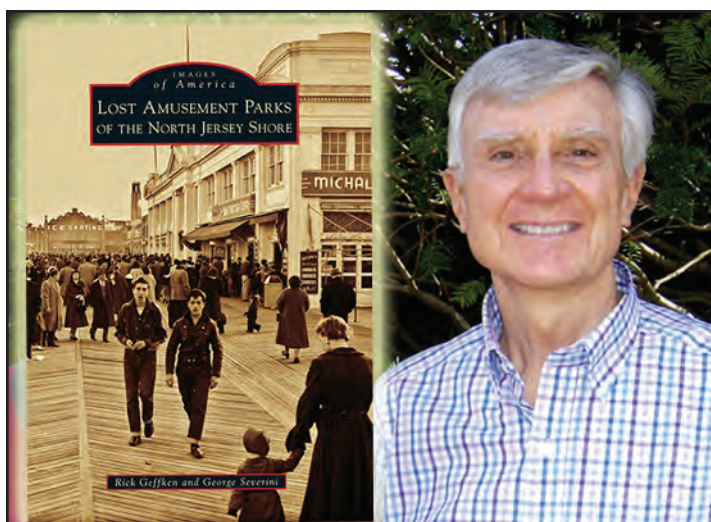
See Page 4 for Details!

*Where the Past  
Meets the Future*

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## Winter is NO “Off Season” for the APHS!



### ***‘Lost’ Boardwalks Reclaimed, During Our Annual Meeting!***

A year of exciting new projects and an enhanced presence in the community are on the agenda for 2019, as the Asbury Park Historical Society welcomes all members of the public to its annual Reorganization Meeting, hosted at the **Asbury Park Public Library** (First and Grand Avenues in AP), and scheduled for 7 pm on Thursday, January 17.

As has been the custom for the first monthly meeting of the calendar year, the Society will elect officers to its board of directors, welcome new members (with on-site sign ups available), offer complimentary refreshments to attendees, and present a special guest speaker for the occasion. In addition to keynoting the new year ahead, we are pleased to take a fascinating look back — courtesy of author and historian **Rick Geffken** (pictured above).

In *Lost Amusement Parks of the North Jersey Shore*, Geffken and photo curator George Severini tell the story, in words and compelling pictures, of the waterfront treasures that once attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors to our local towns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Accompanied by a slide-show of images from the book, Geffken will take his audience on a journey to many of these long-gone pavilions, public places and palaces of amusement — not just in Asbury Park, but in Bradley Beach, Long Branch and other communities. (Cont. on page 4)

### ***A Museum Grows on the Asbury Park Boardwalk!***

The idea of a museum dedicated to the history of Asbury Park has long been a dream for many current and former residents of the city...and here at the changeover to the new year, that dream has taken a significant step closer to becoming a reality, as Historical Society trustee **Kay Harris** prepares to introduce **The Asbury Park Museum** with a special limited-time “pop up” exhibit on the famous boardwalk!

Hosted inside the **Fifth Avenue Pavilion** at 1200 Ocean Avenue (the storefront location occupied by Bettie’s Bombshells boutique in the spring and summer months) — and scheduled to open its door to the public on December 13 — the exhibit has been made possible by a generous offer from waterfront management company **Madison Marquette**, who have allowed off-season use of the site through mid-March of 2019. Conceived as a way to debut the name and concept of the AP Museum in conjunction with such wintertime attractions as the Holiday Bazaar and Light of Day concerts, it’s the first in a planned series of temporary installations, to be hosted at locations throughout the city, with the long-term goal being the establishment of a permanent Asbury Park Museum in the seasons to come.

An author, educator, curator of vintage photographs and proprietor of the boardwalk-based business **Asbury Galleria**, Kay has assembled a team of volunteers (Continued on page 4)



*Kay Harris with a poster of Ray,  
Goodman & Brown, the R&B  
hitmakers who traced their roots to  
Asbury’s West Side music scene.*



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## A Song of Summer (and a wish for brighter skies ahead)



Wet weather and wild winds may have dampened much of the festivities during the annual **Oysterfest** event presented by the city's Chamber of Commerce — but for every stormy site where the Historical Society pitched its tent, there were successful activities that took place under pleasantly sunny summertime skies. Among the best received was the Society's seasonal fundraiser event, **Art on the Boardwalk**, which returned for a 14th colorful edition on August 26 (following a postponement from the previous week due to, you guessed it, wild weather). Special Events chair **Teddy Chomko** and volunteers welcomed repeat participants and new faces for the outdoor sale of unique handmade artworks and craft items — while APHS secretary and trustee **Susan Rosenberg** staked out table space at a new public venue, the Music Mondays series of free open-air concerts in **Springwood Park** (or, as in the case of one rained-out but still rollicking show by Louis Prima Jr., inside the city's Transportation Center!)



The 100th anniversary of US involvement in the First World War — and the connection of “The War to End All Wars” to the Asbury Park community — was the theme on Sunday, November 11, as the Society presented a special program at the **Asbury Park Public Library** in observance of Armistice Day and Veterans Day. **Peggy Dellinger** of the Ocean Township Historical Museum (pictured) spoke about the area's contribution to the war effort, in which Asbury Park native Private Harold Daley (for whom the city's VFW Post is named in honor) was among those who gave his life. Following the talk, the audience took in a screening of the Oscar winning 1930 feature film, *All Quiet on the Western Front*.



Meanwhile at the **Stephen Crane House**, APHS trustee **Frank D'Alessandro**'s summertime “Bite at the Opera” screening series moved to Thursday evenings (an accommodation to the realities of seasonal parking in increasingly popular Asbury Park) — and welcomed a pair of “command performances” from special guest vocalist **Claire Anastasia Taylor** (at left, in a playfully posed “duet” with Mr. D). The 17 year old soprano from Ocean Township — a senior at Red Bank Regional High School, and a recent Governors Award recipient who's worked with the esteemed director Eli Villanueva — entertained our Lecture Room audience with some beautifully sung selections that ranged from classics by Puccini and Brahms, to latter-day pop standards by ABBA. In addition to honoring the late Metro Lyric Opera founder Era Tognoli, Frank welcomed several first-time attendees (and numerous regulars) with home-cooked post-show dinners, provided illuminating background to the filmed operas...and even furnished some laughs, courtesy of operatic parodies from Sid Caesar and Bugs Bunny!



On a chilly Tuesday morning in October, members of the Brick Township chapter of the nationwide **Questers** organization paid a repeat visit to our historic Asbury Park home at 508 Fourth Avenue. The ladies conducted their monthly meeting, enjoyed a slideshow lecture by APHS trustee Frank D'Alessandro on the life of Stephen Crane, and got a look at some of the many in-progress improvements to the house that marked its 140th anniversary in 2018. A reminder that tour group visits to the Stephen Crane House are available by appointment...and that individuals and small groups can feel free to stop in during regular weekly Open House hours, Sundays from 12 to 2 pm!

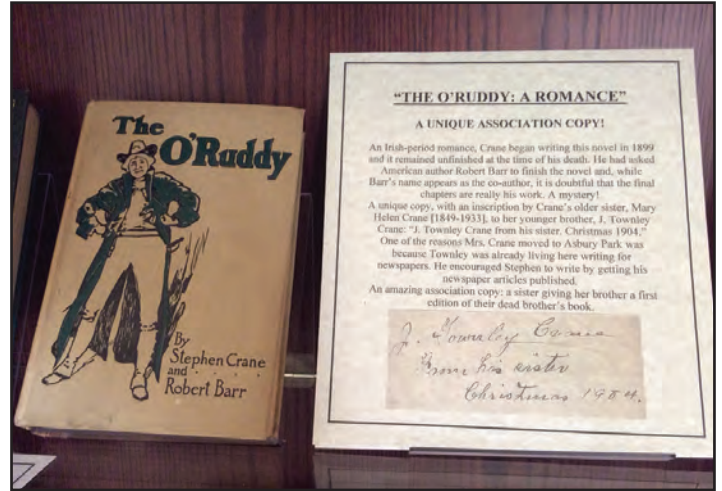


Follow the Asbury Park Historical Society and The Stephen Crane House on Facebook

## The Best of the Season...and the New Year Ahead!



Following the monthly Historical Society meeting on November 15, the trustees drew the winning entry in the annual 50/50 raffle fundraiser. **Andy Skokos** of Jackson was the purchaser of the pay-day ticket, and is pictured at right accepting a check for \$742.50 from APHS president **Don Stine**. The Society extends its heartfelt thanks to all those who supported the annual effort, proceeds from which play an instrumental role in our own slate of special events, as well as the ongoing upkeep of our Crane House headquarters.



The ongoing renovation of the second-floor library at the Stephen Crane House continues apace; a project that's involved the restoration of the original plastering, a new ceiling, updated electrical work, and the installation of a custom lighted bookcase for the display of Stephen Crane's published works. APHS president and rare book dealer **Don Stine** has assembled a collection of vintage volumes by the celebrated 19th century American author, many of them in first editions. It was the acquisition of a lesser-known work — the posthumously published "Irish romance" *The O'Ruddy*, completed by Robert Barr — that proved to be an unexpected find, as the inside cover carried a Christmas dedication to Stephen's older brother (and first employer) J. Townley Crane Jr., from his sister (Mary Helen "Nellie" Crane Van Nortwick). A gift from one Crane sibling to another, in remembrance of their deceased younger brother — and a pleasingly serendipitous addition to the storied house that had been part of all their lives.



On December 2, the **New York City Holiday Christmas Lights Tour** set sail once more from Fireman's Park in Ocean Grove, with the annual "fun"raiser (a co-presentation of the APHS and the **Ocean Grove Historical Society**) offering a busload of participants a guided tour of several Manhattan sites in their full seasonal glory. Included were the Macy's building, Bryant Park, Wall Street, Fifth and Sixth Avenues, the Winter Garden, and of course the tree at Rockefeller Center. A three-course luncheon was also included with the tour reservation, while trustee **Teddy Chomko** served as skipper for the sold-out afternoon and evening of shopping, sightseeing, and trekking the lights fantastic!



Our collection box runneth over already, as the Crane House once again proudly participates as a drop-off location for the **Asbury Park Toy Drive**, the annual charitable effort coordinated by city police officer **Connie Breech**. There are still other opportunities to donate a new, unwrapped toy during our upcoming public-welcome events in December (see page 4 for program details) — or contact [asburyparktoydrive.com](http://asburyparktoydrive.com) for additional info on how to brighten a local child's holiday here in 2018!



# Free Public Events at the Stephen Crane House

On SATURDAY, December 8, Asbury Park Mayor Emeritus **Ed Johnson** wrapped up his Fall 2018 slate of free "Lights! Camera! Politics!" film screening events, with the 1935 Hollywood comedy *Ruggles of Red Gap*. The theme was "New Frontiers" — and the tale of a proper British butler (Charles Laughton) who finds himself in the employ of a rather unpolished American couple was a hit with our audience of classic film buffs.

There's still time to bring a new, unwrapped toy as a donation to the **Asbury Park Toy Drive** — and watch this space for news on Mayor Ed's next slate of films for Spring 2019!



On SUNDAY, December 16, a holiday tradition continues on Fourth Avenue, as the 17th annual edition of *Season's Readings from the Crane House* caps off the season in heartwarming style. Crane House host **Frank D'Alessandro** and friends invite one and all for a round of seasonal refreshments, storytelling, Yuletide singalongs and other surprises, with free admission to the 3 pm program (and an invitation to donate to the **Asbury Park Toy Drive**)!

Follow the Stephen Crane House on Facebook, check Asbury Park's weekly Coaster newspaper, or join our mailing list, for updates on additional free film screenings and other events in January, February and March of 2019!

## MEETING (From page 1)

A trustee of the Shrewsbury Historical Society and the co-author of *The Story of Shrewsbury Revisited, 1965-2015*, Geffken has brought this and other popular presentations on historical topics to libraries, schools and organizations throughout the Garden State. The retired U.S. Army officer, Hewlett-Packard executive and educator will be on hand to autograph copies of *Lost Amusement Parks* (Arcadia/ History Press), available for purchase at the event.

According to president Don Stine, "The Asbury Park Historical Society is very proud of the advances made on restoring the Stephen Crane House...and for more information on our recent accomplishments and future goals, please be our guest at the annual reorganization meeting on January 17."

"The Board of Trustees is actively looking for people to to participate in the Society's various committees, and independent, self-created ideas are welcome," adds Stine. "Events and fundraising are priorities! Get involved... there's more than enough to do!"

## MUSEUM (From page 1)

that include music historians **Charlie and Pam Horner** of Classic Urban Harmony LLC. Much of the materials on display will be drawn from an acclaimed traveling exhibit celebrating the rich heritage of the city's West Side, with a focus on the jazz, gospel and R&B sounds that pre-dated and influenced Bruce Springsteen and his contemporaries. Other items on display will be drawn from the collections of Kay Harris and the Historical Society, with the project also welcoming loans of large photos, posters and other memorabilia.

An official opening reception for the exhibit is planned for the afternoon of Saturday, December 22, beginning at 3 pm. Regular hours for the winter will be from noon to 6 pm on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, with Saturday schedule from noon to 8 pm. Also in the planning stages are several special events featuring guest speakers, live music and more.

The Asbury Park Museum welcomes volunteers to assist in the set up and operation of the space, or to serve as docents during storefront hours. The input, ideas and energy of any or all persons with a passion for Asbury Park and its amazing history are of course welcome at all times, so contact Kay Harris at [kayharrismck@msn.com](mailto:kayharrismck@msn.com) to discuss how you can be part of this ambitious (and long overdue) project as it takes shape!

## The Asbury Park Historical Society

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**Join up or renew your membership today!**

contact **Kay Harris**, Membership Chair, at [kayharrismck@msn.com](mailto:kayharrismck@msn.com)

*Your generous donations of funds, historical materials and period furnishings are greatly appreciated for our community programs!*

Donations via PayPal to [antichay@gmail.com](mailto:antichay@gmail.com)

Call the Crane House at 732-361-0189 or address correspondence to:

Asbury Park Historical Society c/o Stephen Crane House, 508 Fourth Ave., Asbury Park, NJ 07712

