

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ASBURY PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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See Page 6 for Details!

*Where the Past
Meets the Future*

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A 'Monumental' Campaign to Preserve & Protect



The statue of Founder James A. Bradley, which once held a metal ruler in its right hand, is among the city landmarks being given special attention in a campaign involving the Historical Society.

They've long been a presence in our lives, whether we notice them or not, as we go about our daily business or enjoy the many local attractions that vie for our attention. But at a time when many of our nation's publicly displayed statues and monuments have come under intense new scrutiny, the spotlight is directed at a trio of landmarks in the city — and an initiative that teams the Asbury Park Historical Society with Rumson-based **Monument Conservation Partners**. *Continued on Page 4*

Everybody on the Bus, for City Lights Tour of NYC!

Returning by popular demand after a one-year hiatus, the **City Lights Tour** is now accepting reservations for a bus excursion that sets sail to holiday-season points of interest in New York City on **Sunday, December 3**. Co-sponsored by the Asbury Park Historical Society and the Historical Society of Ocean Grove, the trip has traditionally offered participants a group tour of Rockefeller Center in all its seasonal glory, as well as major store displays, the Holiday Bazaar at Bryant Park, and many other sites around the island of Manhattan. A total of 30 spots are available on a first-come, first-served basis, for the day trip that also includes a full sit-down lunch; full details are still to be announced, so stay tuned to our website or Facebook page for updated information, and make reservations by calling **(848)667-3432**.



Last Chance for Tickets to Our Annual 50/50 Drawing!

You have to be in it to win it! Tickets are still on sale for the Asbury Park Historical Society's annual 50/50 raffle, to be drawn at our meeting on November 16, 2017. We are looking to ramp up ticket sales to help sustain the operations of the APHS, so if you can help sell tickets (or know someone who can), please contact Susan Rosenberg at susanrosenberg10@gmail.com. You can also buy your own tickets through the mail!

Tickets are \$5 each, or a book of five for \$20. Just send a check made out to the APHS for the number of tickets you want to purchase, and we will mail the entry stubs to you. Mail check to: **APHS/Stephen Crane House, 508 Fourth Ave., Asbury Park, NJ 07712**. Please be sure to include your name, address and telephone number — and ask your friends, relatives, or business associates if they would like to participate. We can always use the support!

Visit Our Website at www.aphistoricalociety.org

Themes from A Summer Place, 2017



It was a great day to be strolling the famous Asbury Park waterfront on August 20...and another successful edition of **Art on the Boardwalk**, the summertime art fair and sale organized by APHS trustee **Teddy Chomko**. Our 12th annual fundraiser event saw some of the Shore's most creative people...including APHS member **Ray Sternesky** (above left, with the Carousel painting that became our masthead logo)...pitch their tents along the boards for a day that brought plenty of sales, plenty of



smiles, and over \$1,500 toward the ongoing programs and operations of the Historical Society, along with book and merchandise sales, 50/50 chances, and some always-welcome walk-by donations from the public! The creative energy wasn't confined to the boards, either, as Society member **Jerry Scarano** (above right) took to the award-winning beach to craft a sandcastle exclusively for the occasion!



From wedding shoots to ghost hunters and everything in between, the historic Stephen Crane House has served as an intriguing backdrop to video projects of all kinds...and on July 13, a crew from Maryland-based **Celli Films** joined **Pam and Charlie Horner** of Classic Urban Harmony, when Charlie interviewed **Caleb "CJ" Morris** as part of a work-in-progress documentary on the vintage music of Asbury Park's Springwood Avenue scene. The son of the late gospel performer, promoter and disc jockey **Arthur Morris** shared stories of his dad (the legendary "Mayor of the West Side") with the avid music historians and collectors who are also currently preparing a book on the city's classic jazz, gospel and R&B legacy, in collaboration with photo curator **Madonna Carter Jackson**.



Historical Society trustee and **Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce** First Vice President **Jennifer Schulman** is pictured third from left (with Ryan Hacker, Jay Hacker and Jay Chaitania Hertz) at the 2017 **Oysterfest**, the event that extends the season for open-air fun past Labor Day each September...and which moved to Bradley Park this year for its ninth annual edition. The APHS was on site during the "three glorious, sunny days" of the festival, which expanded to see the food purveyors, merchants and organizations joined by kid-friendly rides and games; a craft beer tent, and an outdoor band stage — because as the Chamber's Sylvia Sylvia-Cioffi put it, "nothing says you're in Asbury Park better than the sound of live music!"

A 'monumental' campaign to preserve and protect

Continued from page 1

Recently, Historical Society president **Don Stine** joined APHS member and history buff **Russ McIver** and professional monument conservationist **Douglas Distefano** in a close-up look at the three public structures — the city's **Civil War memorial** at the intersection of Grand and Cookman Avenues; the statue of **James A. Bradley** located in Bradley Park (across Ocean Avenue from Convention Hall), and the bust of **John F. Kennedy** in Kennedy Park between Cookman and Lake Avenues.

In a story that appeared in *The Coaster* newspaper, Stine observed that "This is city-owned property," adding that the partners are "looking for the permission and ability and maybe equipment" such as cherry-picker lifts, to conduct thorough inspections of the structures, as well as determine the potential costs involved in restoring them.

"The city should not let its monuments fall into disrepair, obviously," Stine said, adding that the partners hope to enlist the support of veterans groups, military re-enactors, and the county government.

Particular emphasis is being placed on the restoration of the monument to the Union soldiers of the Civil War (or "War of Rebellion," as the inscription reads) — the oldest of the three properties, and one that occupies a small memorial park boasting twin cannons that were once housed on the USS *Cricket*, the flagship used by General Ulysses S. Grant when he patrolled the Ohio River.

McIver, an Allenhurst resident who is working with the **Monmouth County Historical Commission** to prepare a historical tour of Asbury Park in 2018, explained that the downtown monument "deserves some attention. It honors the Civil War and veterans, but it's a historical artifact in and of itself. It's worthy of restoration."

Originally installed in 1893 for Memorial Day, the statue has outlasted nearly every local building of its era; weathering over 120 years of harsh winters and epic storms as it stood sentry over an ever-changing downtown landscape. Monument Conservation principal Distefano, who became involved about six months ago when he approached the City Council and was redirected to the APHS, expressed concern about the statue's present condition, explaining that repair "really needs to get done; there are cracks and we're worried about freezing."



The historians suggested that a proper inspection and reinforcement be conducted with city equipment, and recommended the replacement of such stopgap measures as a plastic chain currently linking the granite pillars that surround the cannons.

Dedicated in 1921 during the city's 50th anniversary year, and crafted by New York-based Roman Bronze Works, the sculpted figure of Asbury Park's famous founder remains highly visible to the throngs of visitors who attend the many fairs, festivals and civic events that take place beneath its gaze. It has also stood as a figure of controversy within recent months, drawing criticism from area residents who feel that it represents the segregationist policies espoused by the wealthy 19th century landowner and industrialist (see page 5 for the *Society's* official statement on the monument).



Noting that the statue's 100th anniversary is fast approaching, McIver observed that "it's kind of neglected...there are weeds around it, and the marble needs to be cleaned." Stine added that he would like to see beach-

front developers Madison Marquette involved in its upkeep.

Installed in 1964, the JFK bust bears the stylized touch of its designer **Fritz Cleary**, the late artist, educator, and amateur historian who wrote the "Shore Pioneers" columns for the Asbury Park Press.



Distefano said that the repair and restoration effort presents a perfect private/public partnership model, as well as an opportunity to enlist the funding assistance of the local business community.

McIver added the monuments should be cleaned and restored, but not made to look brand new. Keeping them in good repair could discourage incidents of vandalism, such as occurred recently with a WWI monument in Belmar — and ultimately, the renewed attention would serve to illuminate "something that people should know about and care about."

Read more at <http://thecoaster.net/wordpress/city-historical-monuments-under-review/#SXWLT0PWHiFJabLG.99>

Springsteen Collection is a go-to resource, for All Things Bruce and more



Left: APHS trustee and Center for American Music director Eileen Chapman displays a rare copy of a 1965 student newspaper from Middletown High School, in which 15 year old Steve Van Zandt is featured with his teen band, The Mates. Right: a street signpost marks the crossroads of E Street and 10th Ave, outside the Archive at Monmouth U.

Story/photos by Susan Rosenberg, Trustee/ Newsletter Ed.

Recently, a researcher from Jigsaw Productions of New York emailed the Historical Society, requesting Asbury Park Press articles from the 1970s and other archival materials on Bruce Springsteen for a documentary project.

There was no doubt that this was a job for **Eileen Chapman**, who in addition to being a member of our board of trustees is also an Asbury Park City Councilwoman *and* the director of the **Bruce Springsteen Archives** and **Center for American Music** at Monmouth University. As she had done with so many prior requests, the historian who oversees the ever-growing Special Collection of Bruce-related materials was able to retrieve, scan and send the information digitally.

Whether online or in person, students, scholars and Bruce fans come from all over the country and the world to research the life and work of The Boss, in the historical resource that originated at the Asbury Park Public Library. In the early 2000s, when print music publications were becoming scarce, *Backstreets* magazine editor **Christopher Phillips** reached out to fans asking for books, newspapers, magazines, and photographs to fill in the gaps. In 2004, the **Friends of the Bruce Springsteen Collection** was founded to ensure that his legacy was preserved and made available to researchers.

The collection of 35,000 items encompasses all aspects of Bruce's career, including printed articles, books, photographs, letters, and clippings; historic memorabilia; posters; recordings and film. Last year, the collection moved to a home of its own on Monmouth's West Long Branch, NJ campus, where Eileen has long served as an administrator of the university's Center for the Arts program. In January 2017, The Springsteen Archives expanded its purview to include the Center for American Music.

As Eileen states, "The Center will be the destination for stimulating academic discourse and discussion, and will provide entertainment, knowledge, and insight into the works of Bruce Springsteen and other legendary figures of American music."

Researchers may call (732) 571-3512 or email echapman@monmouth.edu to schedule an appointment at the Center, weekdays between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. More information can be found at: bruce.springsteenspecialcollection.nexxtblog.com or www.friendsofthespringsteencollection.org.

During August's art show event, those of us working the Historical Society table couldn't help but ask this boardwalk visitor about his distinctive tattoo. "Tillie" of course is the famed icon of the city's waterfront; one based on the figure that once represented George Tilyou's original Steeplechase Park in Coney Island (as legend has it, a caricature of George's brother), and familiar to millions as the face of Palace Amusements.



According to **John Fragale** of Bayville, he had the tattoo designed and applied in 2012 by ink artist Desmond Mooney, Toms River.

Why? Mr. Fragale's parents had owned the Tastee Sub Shop in Allenhurst from 1965-1985, and he hung out in Asbury Park. It's about his memories!

Themes from A Summer Place, 2017



On the afternoon of Saturday, September 16, the nonprofit **Asbury Angels Foundation** took to the boardwalk to induct nine gone-but-not-forgotten figures from the city's rich and diverse musical history into the virtual hall of fame co-founded by promoter and musician **Tony Pallagrosi** (above left, at mic) in 2011. Asbury Park Councilwoman and Historical Society trustee **Eileen Chapman** was among the speakers who introduced the Class of 2017, and dedicated boardwalk bench plaques for:

- **Jules Aerts**, longtime sound engineer best known for his work with Bob Dylan;
- **Faye Gade**, owner of the influential modern rock station WHTG-FM;
- **Tim Hauser**, onetime city resident and founder of the Grammy-winning vocal group The Manhattan Transfer;
- **Margaret "Maggie the Cat" Hogan**, legendary nightclub proprietor whose groundbreaking lesbian bar the **Chez-L Lounge** was part of a landmark court case in the 1960s (the original wooden sign from the Chez-L can be

seen on display at our Crane House headquarters);

- **Wilhelmina "Baby" Mack**, Asbury's first African-American vaudeville star;
- **Herbert "Tony" Maples**, member of West Side vocal groups the Ray Dots and the V-Eights;
- **G. Howard Scott**, longtime Convention Hall organist;
- **Sam Siciliano**, Doo Wop singer, songwriter, arranger, and producer who served for years as vice president in charge of advertising at the Asbury Park Press;
- **Tommy Tucker**, big band leader of the 1930s and 40s known for a residency at the Berkeley-Carteret Hotel.

Music historians and APHS members **Charlie and Pam Horner** took an active interest in this year's nomination process; recommending and lobbying for the inclusion of Maples, Mack and Siciliano. The Asbury Angels Foundation is currently considering new nominees with an Asbury Park connection for its Class of '18, and interested fans can contact journalist and Springsteen authority **Jean Mikle** at jean@asburyangels.com.

An official statement from the Historical Society

Recently, there has been discussion in Asbury Park about the value of retaining the 97-year-old statue of our city's founder, James A. Bradley, in the park at the eastern end of Sunset Park. That six-block-long glorious stretch of green was donated to the people of Asbury Park by Mr. Bradley himself.

In recognition of that, our trustees would like to reiterate the words found in our 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, NJ..."

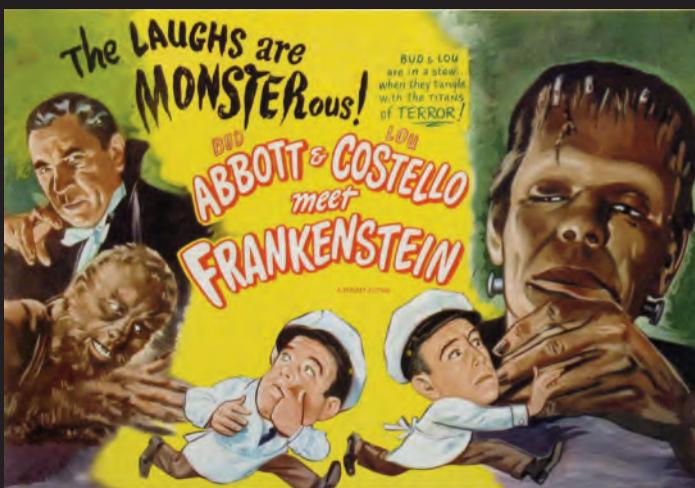
Although he was a visionary in many ways, there can be no doubt that our city's Founder, like so many people of his day

(he was born in 1830), was shortsighted and wrong in his advocacy of segregation. Mr. Bradley's planning of a great little city will never erase the hurtful positions he espoused or the words he spoke. Like all of us, he too had feet of clay. Yet he never waged a traitorous war against the United States of America, never condoned slavery, or "owned" another human being.

We should never turn a blind eye to the shortcomings of Mr. Bradley or any other historical figure, but openly acknowledge them. The trustees of the Asbury Park Historical Society wish to go on record in complete opposition to the removal of the statue of the flawed but brilliant Founder of Asbury Park.

Free public events at the Stephen Crane House

SAT. OCT. 7: Asbury Park Mayor Emeritus **Ed Johnson** (pictured at right, with former NY Post film critic Lou Lumenick) opens a new series of "Lights! Camera! Politics!" events with a look at "Revolution: People and Power," when Marlon Brando stars as a famed Mexican revolutionary in Elia Kazan's 1952 production of *Viva Zapata!* The film screens free of charge at 3 pm, with doors opening 2:30.



SUN. OCT. 15: Our annual Halloween program honors a Legendary Local son of Asbury Park — comedy great **Bud Abbott** — with a horror-larious double bill of comedies co-starring **Lou Costello**. The fun starts at 3 pm with the *Haunted House* episode of the team's 1950s TV series, and continues in a spooky vein with the 1948 classic *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*, plus a special tribute to "The greatest straight man of all time."

SAT. NOV. 4: "Lights! Camera! Politics!" continues in a revolutionary vein, with a free screening of a rarely seen British feature from 2014, the comedy-drama *Pride*.

Based on a true story from the 1984 miners' strike, the film depicts the unlikely but successful alliance between members of the LGBT community and the striking workers. Screens at 3 pm, with doors opening 2:30.

SUN. NOV. 19: Our annual birthday-month salute to **Stephen Crane** boasts the return of **The Arbutus Theater of the Air**, in a new "radio play" adaptation (details TBA) from one of Crane's works. A short film presentation is also on the agenda, for the event that commences at 3 pm, with doors opening 2:30.

SAT. DEC. 2: Asbury Park Mayor Emeritus **Ed Johnson** concludes the "Lights! Camera! Politics!" series, with *The Reign of Terror*, a 1949 Hollywood feature that combined top talent (including star Robert Cummings, director Anthony Mann) with a modest budget, for a thrilling adventure set in the bloody aftermath of the French Revolution. The film screens at 3 pm, and doors open 2:30.

SUN. DEC. 17: Crane House host **Frank D'Alessandro** presents the 2017 edition of our traditional *Season's Reading: A Crane House Christmas*, an afternoon of stories, verse and song in celebration of the holidays that begins at 3 pm, with doors opening 2:30.

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

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

Donations via PayPal to antichay@gmail.com

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

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