



January, February, March 2015

## Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Asbury Park Historical Society was held on Thursday, January 15th at the Asbury Park Public Library. A full agenda was presented by Society President, Don Stine. The society's events from 2014 (almost too many to mention!) included:

The listing of the Stephen Crane House (SCH) on the NJ Registry of Historic Places

A successful fund-raising campaign to purchase the Stephen Crane House

In conjunction with the Historical Society of Ocean Grove, a bus trip to the 9-11 Memorial and Museum and walking tour of lower Manhattan

50/50 Raffle

Improved Internet presence

A promotional table in the Grand Arcade and at Oysterfest

Participation in Monmouth County Archive Day

Kate Mellina's Lecture: *The History of the Asbury Park Boardwalk*

Annual Boardwalk Art Show

The New Year got off to a harmonious start with Pam and Charlie Horner's exhibits which showcased the city's West Side music scene. The first exhibit was featured at the upstairs



The Stephen Crane House, 508 Fourth Avenue

gallery of *Heaven Art and Antiques* to coincide with the Light of Day music festival from January 11th-19th. An expanded version of the show was later held at Monmouth University's Pollack Gallery throughout the month of February.

Other projects for 2015 include: pursuing a New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) inquiry into the 2013 theft of the decorative copper panels which once graced the city's Convention Hall, a fund raising campaign for the restoration of the Turf Club sign and additional events and presentations which would feature the history of Asbury Park.

Trustee Susan Rosenberg, co-chair with David Sobotka of the Historic Preservation Committee, presented an illustrated lecture on the SCH (built in c. 1878), which included a biography of the writer, a brief family history, the deed search, subsequent modifications to

the property and the process for listing it on the NJ Registry of Historic Places.

The committee for the registry application consisted of Susan, David, Tom Chesek, the present resident of the SCH and Werner Baumgartner, City Historian. The entire application process took 2 years, with an additional 6 months after the application was submitted.

The SCH was discovered to be one of the boyhood homes of Stephen Crane (and the only existing former residence of the author remaining in the US) by Tom Hayes, when he purchased it in 1995. Hayes owned it until 2001, when he sold it to its present owner, Frank D'Alessandro for \$105,000.00. Frank has offered it to the APHS for the price of \$1.00.

All current trustees on the ballot (Mary Damato, Kay Harris, and Susan Rosenberg) were re-elected. Frank D'Alessandro was newly elected as a trustee. The proposed changes to the by-laws were accepted. As always, special thanks to Trustee Teddy Chomko for providing delicious refreshments for the meeting!

## **Asbury Park's Springwood Avenue Harmony: Celebrating the West Side's Unique Musical Legacy**

Charlie and Pam Horner, music historians, co-founders of Classic Urban Harmonies ([www.classicurbanharmony.net](http://www.classicurbanharmony.net)) and certified experts in vocal harmony music by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio have lovingly gathered many historical artifacts which tell the fascinating and rich musical history of the city's West Side. These items include memorabilia from their personal collection, photographs from the collection of Madonna Carter Jackson and personal effects from the collection of the late Bobby Thomas. The exhibit covered jazz, gospel and R&B music, and also highlighted black radio, record labels,

record stores and Springwood Avenue nightclubs and theaters. "This is the first, and probably only, exhibit of its kind ever presented to the public and I urge everyone to stop by and see an important part of Asbury Park's rich musical heritage that is often overlooked," Historical Society President Don Stine said.

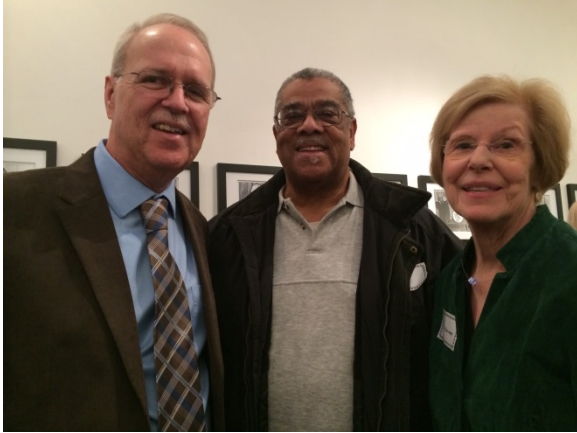


R to L: Billy Brown, a friend with AP Councilwoman Yvonne Clayton and Ronald Coleman at opening reception, *Heaven Art and Antiques* gallery

The exhibit first opened in the upstairs gallery of *Heaven Art and Antiques*, 721 Cookman Avenue, from Jan. 11th through Jan. 19th concurrent with Asbury Park's annual *Light of Day* concert series.

An expanded version of the exhibit was displayed at the Pollack Gallery of Monmouth University for the entire month of February. An opening reception, held on the evening of Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, was free to the public and featured wine and hors-d'oeuvres. In addition to the many visitors, the Tee Tones (shown below), a vocal harmony group from Brooklyn, closed the party with performances of many of the hit songs of the era.





Charlie and Pam Horner with Dorian Parreott

On Wednesday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, Charlie gave a multimedia presentation about the people and places featured in the exhibit at the Pollack Theater. Charlie's presentation, as well as the two opening receptions for the exhibit, had an additional social benefit. They were attended by many guests who had performed in a Springwood Avenue vocal group or were the family member of a performer. Many in attendance had the opportunity to unite with old friends who had not been seen for many years, as well as relive cherished memories of their youth.

(All photos thoughtfully provided by Susan Rosenberg)

## **Turf Club Sign to be Restored- FOR FREE!**

Three cheers for Allied Environmental Signage of Farmingdale, which has offered to restore the iconic sign from the Turf Club for *free*!

"I thought I could help out. Somebody should do it and I have the facilities," company president Kevin White said earlier this week.

The historical society was permitted to remove the sign several years ago.

White said he saw an article in the Asbury Park Press about the society's attempt to restore the sign and thought he could do the job. According to White, an early examination shows that the sign has been repainted about four times and he is trying to determine its

original color. He also believes it was built in the late 1950s or early 1960s.

Did the Yates Sign Company, his family's earlier business, build the Turf Club sign?

"I don't think so. But that it not an issue, we have built many signs like this," he said.

White, a Belmar native, has personal memories of the Turf Club:

"I was in an adult softball league around 1980 and after games we used to hang out in the Turf Club. Many in the league were African-Americans. The Turf Club was still open. It was one of the few places left standing."

The restored Turf Club sign will be lit for the first time at the "Asbury Park's West Side Music Legacy" exhibit to be held at the Monmouth County Historical Association Museum, 70 Court Street in Freehold this spring. The exhibit, put together by *Classic Urban Harmony*, focuses on Asbury Park's jazz, vocal harmony ("Doo-Wop"), R&B, and gospel music scene. It is expected that the sign will then return to Asbury Park and hang in the Senior Citizens' Center, located directly across the street from the Turf Club site.

"The historical society really appreciates Kevin's commitment and it shows that people, even if they are not from Asbury Park, still have a commitment to this city... and that only helps make our job easier," society President Don Stine said.



Kevin White (right) with employee Kevin Pesapane prepares the Turf Club sign for restoration (photo: Don Stine)

**Trustees**

Don Stine, President, Archives/Artifacts & Exhibitions  
James Henry, Vice President, Legal Affairs  
Susan Rosenberg, Secretary  
Mary Damato, Treasurer, Budget/Finance  
Frank D’Alessandro, Fund Raising  
Eileen Chapman, Special Events  
Teddy Chomko, Special Events  
Kay Harris, Membership  
Jennifer Schulman, Website  
David Sobotka, Historic Preservation/Sites and Buildings

---

**SHARE YOUR LOVE OF HISTORY WITH OTHERS!**

Asbury Park Historical Society Membership  
P.O. Box 543 Asbury Park, New Jersey 07712  
(732)869-HIST [www.APHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.APHistoricalSociety.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please join one of our committees by circling a category below. You will be contacted upon receipt of your membership application.**

Archive/Artifacts & Exhibitions                      Budget/Finance/Treasurer  
Fundraising    Historic Preservations: Sites & Buildings  
Legal/Grants/Government Relations                      Membership  
Website  
Special Events    Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Dues** (dues paid in Oct., Nov., Dec. are good for the following year)

Senior (age 65 and up) \$15.00      Individual \$25.00      Family \$35.00

Corporate \$150.00      Benefactor \$500.00

**Renewal?** Yes No

Donation only \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Thank you!      PayPal: [antichay@gmail.com](mailto:antichay@gmail.com)

Please make checks payable to the “Asbury Park Historical Society”

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_      **Date** \_\_\_\_\_