

Alternate Giving Ideas

The Wildwood Historical Society, Inc. and the Boyer Museum were made possible through the contributions of many individuals in our community.

The gifts you make today help preserve the memories of the past. Please consider the Historical Society in your will.

Friends of the Wildwood Historical Society, Inc.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

Membership Class	
<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$200.
<input type="checkbox"/> Business	\$50.
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$50.
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	\$25.
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$15.
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$10.
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$5.

Renewal **New**

Please check membership class and enclose fee with application.

Wildwood Historical Society, Inc.

George F. Boyer Museum
 3907 Pacific Avenue
 Wildwood, NJ 08260
 (609) 523-0277

E-Mail: wildwoodhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com

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Wildwood Historical Society, Inc.



The George F. Boyer Museum

Issue #24

The Wildwoods By-The-Sea, New Jersey

Fall, 2009

*... a message from
the President*

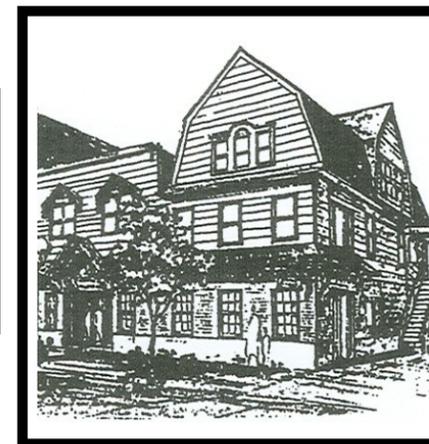


Summer's come and gone and now we make ready for the holidays. Keep in mind that we are on our winter schedule, open Thursday, Friday and Saturday, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The museum hosted several thousand visitors this past season, and collected some very unusual artifacts. We invite you to visit and see what your local museum has to offer.

In addition, we continue to catalog and up-grade the way our collections of photos are stored. Most of the 1960 Wildwood property photos have been scanned. When that project is completed, we hope to start on a series of photos from North Wildwood taken in the early 1980s. In this way they can be stored on a compact disk and then be made available for visitors to view.

Our Board of Directors is presently recruiting members to serve on our Board. Do you have any special talents that could benefit the museum? Do you know your way around a computer? Do you have any helpful book-keeping knowledge, or other professional skills? Our members have been known to paint, do minor electrical or plumbing work, or just be there to assist at functions. If you think you might be interested in donating some time for a very worthy cause, please call me at the museum.

On a rather sad note, for those of you familiar with the museum's official greeter, "Buddy," we are sad to report that he passed away this summer at the advanced age of 15. We miss him and extend our sympathy to his master and our manager Bob Bright.



**Preserving the
history and memories
of the Wildwoods . . .**

**The
Wildwood Historical
Society, Inc.**



*We extend a sincere
"Thank You" to those who
continue to contribute to
our new building fund and
we are grateful for the
generosity of all that came
forward to help in our
cause. We could never
have done it without so
many caring people.*

In closing, our Board and Staff of the Wildwood Historical Society extend the best of this holiday season to you and yours. Our wish for you for the New Year is to live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, and enjoy life.

Anna M. Vinci, President

Lucky Club - 1960



Then!

4716 Atlantic Avenue, Wildwood, NJ

Condos - 2009



Now!

We are always looking for new members to help preserve Wildwood's history. Now is the time to renew your membership. If you have done so already, we thank you. Because of rising costs of maintenance and utilities, donations are welcome, too! Membership dues help to cover the cost of mailing, notices, newsletters and notification of special events.

MEMBERSHIP

Wildwood Historical Society, Inc.
 George F. Boyer Museum
 3907 Pacific Avenue
 Wildwood, New Jersey 08260
 (609) 523-0277



Wildwood High School 1952 South Jersey Champs

Seated left to right: B. Tamini, W. Hall, B. Osborne, G. Cottman, J. MacDonald, J. Craven. Standing left to right: B. Johnson, P. Palmer, D. Breslin, R. Nordaby, C. Salter, B. Deaver, B. Penkethman, P. Hettenbach, D. DeWeese. Photo courtesy of Meredith Trede and the Louise Jacoby Estate, WHS, Class of 1954.



Curator's Corner

by Bob Scully

Special thanks to **Amy Russo Coleman** who brought us the photos we needed for the "Russo Family Tree." The tree hung in Russo's Restaurant for many years until the restaurant was demolished. It now hangs in the museum. The **Ray Gibbs** family, formerly of North Wildwood, stopped in and dropped off ink blotters with William H. Bright Company advertisements on them. Does anyone remember what blotters were used for????

At the 50+ Wildwood High School Reunion last month, **Don Springer** (WHS -1957) presented the museum with a CD of the "Dischords" band when they played on the Ted Mack Amateur Hour in 1956. **Joan Bransfield Graham** gave us a series of documents and photos among which was a group photo of the Class of 1962. If anyone can help name the students in the photo, we would appreciate your help.

Helene Stretz Krisciunas gave us a collection of lifeguard photos and of all things, a ribbon won by **Ed Stretz** for live goldfish eating at the Emerald Room. **Marion Stolnabb Young** gave us class reunion photos for WHS Class of 1945. **Karla Svard Frederick** dropped off a photo of Charles Stolnabb and Clarence Malley with a 500 pound tuna.

A couple of really neat acquisitions include an ice cream push cart given to us by the **Redding Family**. The cart was used by Ed "Pop" Redding who sold ice-cream on the beach for many years to the delight of children and adults alike. Another item was a bumper car brought in by **Robert Baita** from North Jersey. He worked on the boardwalk on Fun Pier during the 1970s, and told us this is the exact kind of car he worked on. He continues to visit the Wildwoods with his family every summer. Stop in to take a look and maybe take a photo "driving" our newly acquired bumper car.

It seems in 1918, a young lady by the name of **Mary Ladd Paterson** won a framed bowling award at the Wildwood Crest Bowling Alley (located in Crest Pier). Last month that award was directed to us by her granddaughter, **Barbara Swoboda** of Shillington, PA. It also contains a silver certificate and photos of the alleys and the manager. Who remembers bowling alleys at Crest Pier?

.....until next time

Visit our gift shop!



Available are books, VHS tapes and DVDs dealing with the history of the Wildwoods. Come in and browse around. A particular "bargain" is the "Wildwood by-the-sea" book for \$20. This historical pictorial of the boardwalk is the last printing. Why not stop in and look around. You

Proceeds benefit the Museum
Also available by mail -
Call for shipping and handling charges
Call (609) 523-0277

might find something for yourself or a gift for the



FIRST KISS!

Pictured here are **Maria Mattera** of **Gus' Pizza** in Wildwood, and **Bill Markee** of Wildwood. The photo was taken in about 1962. Photo courtesy **Maria Mattera**



Was **Hattie's Coffee Pot** Wildwood's answer to "Starbuck's" or maybe the forerunner? We came across this 1960 photo in our archives. The property was located at 343 West Spicer Avenue.

HOURS

Closed all National Holidays and Sundays

SUMMER HOURS

Monday thru Saturday, 9:00 - 2:00 PM

WINTER HOURS

Thursday thru Saturday, 9:00 - 2:00 PM

2009 Executive Board

President	Anna M. Vinci
Vice President	Phyllis Bethel
Vice President	Doug Ford
Treasurer	Mary Ellen Shields
Secretary	Larry Lillo
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Alexander Brannen	Anthony Canzano
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Anna M. Vinci, Editor

Historian/Manager - Robert Bright

The Tom Cat

"Do you remember a place called 'The Tom Cat' on West Rio Grande Avenue?" This was the question I posed in our last newsletter, and these are some of the responses:

All the way from California, **Jerry Winberger** wrote, "And who wouldn't remember the Tom Cat (or, as it was commonly referred to, 'The Cat')? I graduated in 1959 and at that time the Tom Cat was the center of activity for nearly everyone. Whether it was a football game, a basketball game, or the weekly dance at the Crest Pier. You could always count on the place filling up about 45 minutes to an hour after the event ended."

Don Grosse (WHS-1957) from Edgewater, Florida said "The Tom Cat wasn't just a teenage hang out. It was a way of life. We knew after every sporting event, the dances and the movies, we would end up there. I fell in love at least six times at the Tom Cat. Every time we got a new car, we would head for the Tom Cat to show it off. In my case, a '54 black Buick Roadmaster convertible. Two of the waitresses I remember most were Mrs. Moe (*Marguerite Bixler*) and Bobbi Grassi. Tommy Taylor, the owner was one of the guys. In 1957, our basketball team won South Jersey and Tommy treated us all to a trip to see a basketball game and a night on the town. I continued my association with the Tom Cat for many years after graduation and will always have those 'good old memories'.

From Cape May, **Loy Ehlers** wrote that "In November of 1954 **Helen Hansen** (WHS-1956) first met Loy Ehlers (CMHS 1956) at the Tom Cat after a game. They married after college and will celebrate their 49th wedding anniversary this November 25. The Tom Cat was the social center for all high school students after any school event. Everyone rushed there after a game to try and get a seat in one of the booths. They had the best hamburgers in town for a quarter. Adults went through the day for coffee breaks, lunch and to tease the owner, Mr. Tom Taylor. It was just about everybody's favorite place during the 1950s."



The Tom Cat Restaurant - 1960

437 West Rio Grande Avenue, Wildwood

NOTE: By the time this photo was taken, the top of the "Cat" was missing. If anyone has a photo with the complete cat intact, please e-mail the photo to us, or stop in the office and we will scan and return it to you. This photo from Wildwood Historical Society Archives.

Bob Paterson from Wildwood Crest said, "Do I remember the TOM CAT! WOW, what a busy place that was in the 50s and 60s. We drove there every Friday and Saturday night in my '49 Chevy, stick shift, no radio, no ash tray and no carpeting on the floor. Talk about a stripped down car, that was it! But the Tom Cat was the place where everybody met and cruised up and down Pacific Avenue with stops at the Tom Cat to see friends. Great burgers, shakes, sodas and the best waitress was Betty Hill from Anglesea. How did she put up with all of us teenagers all those years? Glad to see the Tom Cat open again. Hope it's successful. It was a fun place with many memories for many people."

From Cape May, **Jim Monaghan** (WHS-1958) wrote, "I'm reminded of Yogi Berra's quote, 'nobody goes there anymore. It's too crowded'. Well, in the fifties, everybody went to the Tom Cat, and it was very crowded. Before we could drive, we'd walk all the way from North Wildwood and back again just to get a burger and fries. That the girls went there too, had nothing at all to do with it."

.....and there you have it - memories of the Tom Cat. Again, thank you for responding. *A. Vinci, Editor*



Fabulous 50's

When Wildwood celebrates "The Fabulous 50s weekend" in October, I am reminded of the summers of the 1950s when Wildwood hosted some of the most popular entertainment in the nation.

The following ad was taken from a 1958 local newspaper. This is just a sampling of the entertainers that came to our little island.

Names like Tony Bennett, Frankie Laine, Liberace and various singing groups made Wildwood the place to visit.

BEN MARTIN'S

BOLERO

Oak and Atlantic Avenues
Let the Stars Get in Your Eyes!

— ★ —

APPEARING THIS SUMMER

Johnny Mathis - Sam Cooke
The Andrew Sisters - Connie Francis
Jaye Brothers - Buddy Hackett
Fisher and Marks - Louis Gordon
The Treniers
AND A HOST OF OTHER STARS!

— ★ —