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# RAHWAY News Record

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RESTORATION UPDATE  
by Dan Costigan

## Thousands' And Beyond (6th in a series)

A couple of installments ago we traced the roots of the Union County Arts Center restoration to 1962 when a team of volunteers brought the Rahway Theatre's long-side pipe organ back to life ("Moonlight on the Ganges," installment #4).

To complete the picture, we need to pick up on the succession of more recent accomplishments leading up to the present stage of the project.

By the late 1970s, it had begun to look as if the Rahway Theatre on Rahway's Irving Street was not going to survive even as the "budget cinema" it had become. So Robert Balfour, a member of the original organ restoration group who had become that instrument's chief curator, organized a small group to incorporate under the name Rahway Landmarks to raise money to buy the theater.

That goal took until 1984 to accomplish and, at the start of the following year, restoration began in earnest. Conrad Schmitt Studios, a prominent theater-restoration firm in New Berlin, Wisconsin, had agreed to restore the building's lobby areas on a deferred payment basis. Rahway Landmarks volunteers laid the groundwork by wielding sledge-

hammers to remove years of makeshift "improvements" in a once-ornate lobby that had been converted to function primarily as a popcorn-and-soda store.

When Conrad Schmitt began its work, the volunteers moved on to other parts of the building, removing an air-cooling plant from the stage, sprucing up the dressing rooms and making plumbing and heating repairs. Much of the work was to "bring up to code" a building that had been closed to the public since November, 1981.

The following year saw completion of asbestos removal, complete restoration and expansion of the lobby lavatories, installation of the present marquee, relocation and renewal of the balcony fire stairs and construction of a complete new roof.

In January, 1990, Conrad Schmitt Studios reappeared on the scene in the person of painter-decorators Allen Thielen and Robert Whitman to prepare a "test strip" in a representative corner of the auditorium. The purpose was to give an idea of how the whole auditorium would look when finished, and that experimental beginning has since blossomed into the total auditorium restoration now nearing completion.

(Photos are by Arts Center staff photographer Paul Szaboscik.)

## Rahway Volunteer E-Squad laments diminished funding; asks residents' help

The annual fund drive that is the primary source of income supporting the Rahway Volunteer E-Squad is seriously under the previous year. The squad's budget of \$115,000 required to meet the financial operating costs for the ensuing year lies in serious jeopardy because of this shortfall.

Many reasons have been advanced to explain the drop in funding, most having to do with the general state of the economy and New Jersey's tax problems, recently discussed in various reports. These factors, coupled with the need to employ part-time EMTs during the day to bridge a manpower shortage, forced of serious financial problems ahead for the squad.

According to squad president William E. Hering, the program, set up with part-time employees through the squad itself, is a significant savings to the City in general. The squad requested funding for this year in the amount of \$10,000 and the city council managed to come forth with only \$3,000 to fund the emergency project.

"The squad will manage to maintain this effort to protect the Health and Welfare of our citizens. However, some hard decisions must be considered, possibly including grant applications or

whatever it takes to keep the best in EMS alive in our city of Rahway." Anyone who may have overlooked this year's fund drive is asked to send in their donation as soon as possible.

"The first thing that must be done is for the new mayor to convince substantially more Rahway residents to shop in downtown Rahway because it is in their economic interest to do so. Increased patronage by more Rahway residents of our downtown area and by more people from neighboring towns will enhance commercial property values and help to shift the burden of taxation away from homeowners and renters," said the Republican mayoral candidate.

Mayoral candidate Fulcomer said that as soon as the elections are over, he will schedule a meeting with downtown business people and interested organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to reach a consensus on which ideas they are willing to support as an effective program for getting going.

To make sure that the program is pursued earnestly, said Mayor Daniel Martin in presenting the team with a resolution in its honor. "The team brought honor to the community and uplifted the spirit and morale of the residents."

Members of the team include Head Coach Robert Jackson, Assistant Coach Steve Arrington, Managers Brian Amaker, Robert Arrington, Albert Babrow, Richard Hairston, Yusuf Gaines, Lemmon Hamilton, Dwayne Hill, Robert Jones, Gary Jones, Tracy Moore, Willie Moore, Thomas O'Sullivan, Rajan Shabazz, Sean Thomas and Gerald Wilson.

## Council honors team for achievements

Varsity tracksters end season as champs

by Pat DiMaggio  
The 1990 Rahway Senior High School Varsity Track Team was honored for its achievements by Rahway's Municipal Council at a meeting held last week. The track team compiled a Dual Meet Record of 5-1 and ended its season as champions of Section 2, North Jersey, Group II of the State of N.J.

During the course of the spring track season, many individual and team records were broken.

All those associated with the team distinguished themselves not only with victories but with the greatest poise, discipline, sportsmanship and triumph in achieving their goals.

Members of the team include Head Coach Robert Jackson, Assistant Coach Steve Arrington, Managers Brian Amaker, Robert Arrington, Albert Babrow, Richard Hairston, Yusuf Gaines, Lemmon Hamilton, Dwayne Hill, Robert Jones, Gary Jones, Tracy Moore, Willie Moore, Thomas O'Sullivan, Rajan Shabazz, Sean Thomas and Gerald Wilson.

Members of the Rahway High Varsity Track team show the citation they received from the City Council. They are (l-r) Thomas O'Sullivan, Albert Babrow, En Mayer, Robert Jackson, Lemmon Hamilton, Lakisha Williams, Willie Moore and Sean Thomas.



FROM SHOP TO OFFICE... This booking and sales office in the theater building (seen from the business end of the ticket-selling counter) was transformed by volunteers from a second-hand store.



CLOCK TURNED BACK... Ed Melfe had been the Rahway Theatre's chief usher in the 1930s. Here, in 1985, as a Rahway Landmarks volunteer, he helps restore the lobby's Greek revival elegance.



OLD MARQUEE... It had three layers of successive reconstruction reflecting changing styles over the years. It was replaced with the present marquee in 1988-89.

## Kuc commended on municipal service competency

by Pat DiMaggio  
Jean D. Kuc, who began as a secretary in City Clerk Francis Senkowsky's office two years ago, has just been officially certified as a Registered Municipal Clerk.

At a meeting held last week, Rahway's Municipal Council approved a resolution commending Ms. Kuc for her "professional competency in the execution of her duties."

Kuc, who was raised in Rahway, attended Roosevelt School, the former Junior High School, and is a graduate of Rahway Senior High School. She began her position as secretary under City Clerk Francis "Bud" Senkowsky two years ago and has completed all the course work mandated by the state to qualify as a Registered Municipal Clerk.

Clerks appointed by the council have three years in which to complete their schooling and become certified. Kuc completed the requisite requirements in only one year. She attended Rutgers University in New Brunswick for courses covering the duties of the municipal clerk, records management, and municipal finance administration and elections.

"It was a challenge, going back to school after all these years," said Jean. "But I enjoy the work. I like dealing with the public and find the laws of the City very interesting."

The position of City Clerk is appointed by the Municipal Council and responsibilities include serving as secretary to the council, preparing the agenda for meetings, recording minutes of the meetings and keeping records of all contracts. "Bud" Senkowsky, who is contemplating retirement in February, says Kuc has all the requirements for a successful career in Municipal government.

"She has adapted to the responsibilities of the office," said Senkowsky. "She's very outgoing, dependable and expresses her own views, which is good for this office."

Kuc, who will continue working under the direction of City Clerk Senkowsky, is the mother of four children and will soon become a grandmother for the first time.

"I enjoy working for the City of Rahway," she noted. "It's interesting and fun. Rahway has been a very fair employer in giving people a chance to go to school to better themselves."

COMES HIGHLY RECOMMENDED... Jean Kuc receives a resolution from Mayor Daniel L. Martin, commending her achievements in attaining the designation of Registered Municipal Clerk.



COMES HIGHLY RECOMMENDED... Jean Kuc receives a resolution from Mayor Daniel L. Martin, commending her achievements in attaining the designation of Registered Municipal Clerk.

## Correction

In a front page story last week, it was stated that the City Council approved for 1st reading an ordinance that "will prohibit parking at

all times on the easterly side of Martin St. and between the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays to Fridays on Pierpont St. from West Main Ave. to Elm Ave."

The part of the passage referring to Martin St. is correct as it stands. The part referring to Pierpont St. should have read, "...and will permit 4-hour parking between the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays to Fridays (excluding holidays)..." (etc., as it stands).

## Police arrest burglary suspect

On August 14 at 10:56 a.m. the Rahway Police were called to investigate the attempted break and entry of a private home in the 800 block of Pierpont St. The police were advised that the person who had attempted to break in had fled on foot. Police units arrived on the scene and a description was given out over the radio.

Detective Paul Moo who was on patrol at the time observed a person fitting the description given. Upon further investigation it was determined that this same subject, Jason Costine of Elizabeth, was the person described. The suspect was arrested and held in lieu of \$15,000 bail set by Municipal Court Judge David P. Erickson.

NEED A FRESH SLANT ON THE READ... PAGE 2

community and economic development. The commission would establish a new dynamic partnership between the business community and city government to build a bright future for downtown Rahway, he added.

"We will provide the fresh, new, energetic leadership that is needed to attract new big and new small businesses to Rahway and in the process substantially increase the tax base of our city. By our own efforts, we shall ensure that downtown Rahway is a place of an economically vibrant and thriving future."