



Historical Society of Ocean Grove

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2015
Volume XLVIII No. 90

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The HSOG is a non-profit 501(C)3 organization. The Historical Society received a general operating support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.



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Have you seen our blog? Be sure to check it out!

curiositiesog.wordpress.com

www.oceangrovehistory.org

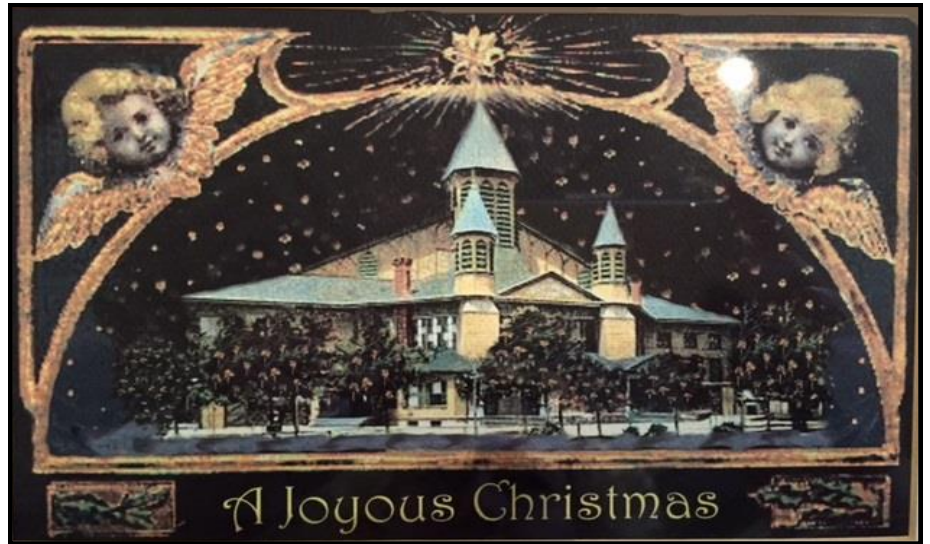


Image from HSOG Archives

Christmas Shopping at C. C. Clayton's in Ocean Grove, 1895

By Kim Brittingham

"Presents! Presents!" the ad read. "Grand Display of Toys, Dolls, Games, Etc., Etc., IN GREAT VARIETY."

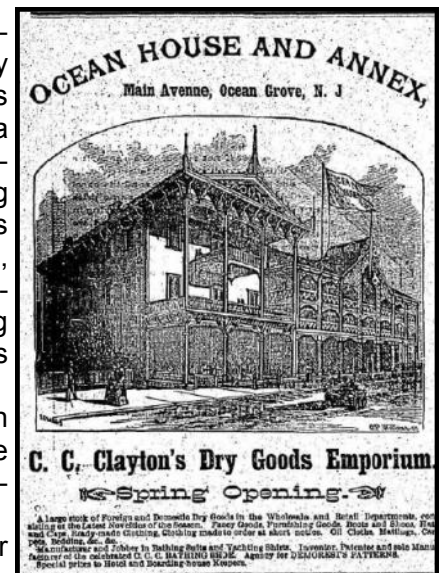
It was December 14, 1895, and for several years in a row, C. C. Clayton's dry goods store (sometimes called Clayton's Emporium) could be counted on to run a nice big ad in the Ocean Grove newspaper right before Christmas, trumpeting their unbeatable prices on gifts. The ads typically listed practical goods like cloaks, shoes, and underwear; sometimes blankets and towels. But in 1895, something changed. Suddenly, the big draw was toys.

I thought this was an interesting reflection of how Christmas became more and more child-centric as the Victorian era progressed.

Queen Victoria was largely responsible for turning Christmas into the celebratory season it is today. Prior to her reign beginning in 1837, Christmas was hardly even mentioned in Britain or the United States. Hard to believe, isn't it? Presents were sometimes exchanged within families, but only to mark the New Year.

With one gesture, Victoria and Albert showed the world an entirely new kind

(continued on page 6)



DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY! NOT A MEMBER? JOIN TODAY!
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MISSION

Since its founding in 1970, the Historical Society of Ocean Grove has pledged itself to preserve, document, and encourage community interest in the history of Ocean Grove. The purpose of this non-profit Society is to sustain the heritage and honor of being designated a National Historic District. The Historical Society aims to:

- Advocate for the protection of Ocean Grove's historic structures, material culture, and built environment
- Maintain Ocean Grove as the largest assemblage of authentic Victorian architecture in the nation, and its establishment as a nineteenth century planned resort community
- Enrich the Camp Meeting heritage of Ocean Grove and the town's unique heritage.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Museum Administrator
Kim Brittingham
Editor

President's Message

First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to the many volunteers who helped make our 2015 season a tremendous success. You gave so much of your time and talents, and all of us at the Historical Society recognize that we simply would not exist without you. Thank you.

We also recognize that we on the Executive Board have a lot of work ahead in 2016. With Mary Skold's generous offer, we can finally give our archives the stable environment they require for longevity and make them available to YOU, whether you are researching your family tree, writing a term paper or thesis, or looking for early photographs of your home. We could not be more excited about the possibilities ahead. Also, having this opportunity to better organize and store our holdings will provide us with fresh inspirations for history talks, newsletter articles and more.

Meanwhile, I wish every one of you a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and a happy, healthy New Year!

Liz Ogden, President

Like us on Facebook to stay up to date with all the day-to-day happenings of the HSOG!

ACCOUNT:	11/30/2015
Operational/Payroll Account	\$4,563.49
Fountain Fund	\$5,371.50
Angel of Victory Fund	\$8,432.04
Mary Buckman Cottage Endowment Fund	\$5,370.00
Endowment Fund	\$3,496.85
Savings 18 month CD	\$10,671.84

Thanks for the Air Conditioning!

One day this past summer, the air conditioning in our Pitman Avenue Museum decided to go kaput. We soon learned that the roof unit needed replacing – a big job that required a crane, a street closing, and over \$5,000. That was going to take a significant chunk out of our annual operating budget.

Plus, we were worried about our archival holdings, both in the ground floor of the museum and the basement. Without the right temperature and humidity control, old objects can quickly fall to ruin. But thanks to 62 of you who responded generously to our special appeal, we were able to cover our budget shortfall. You also made it possible for thousands of summer visitors to explore our historic objects in comfort and safety.

Thank you very much!

Skold Bequest Will Benefit Our Archives

If you have ever enjoyed a tour of our living history museum Centennial Cottage, or perhaps taken a workshop or attended a history talk in its picturesque garden, you have Robert and Mary Skold to thank.

In 1969 the Skolds donated their 1884 cottage to be used as a museum, sparking the founding of the Historical Society which has had the pleasure of operating Centennial Cottage for the public's delight ever since.

Now, in 2015, Mary Skold has once again offered a generous donation – this time, in the form of a bequest to protect the Society's archives and make them more accessible to residents, scholars, and curious visitors. A new committee, chaired by Ted Aanensen, has been formed to oversee the project. Stay tuned for updates in the New Year. Meanwhile, we send our heartfelt thanks to Mary Skold and her family for caring as much about Ocean Grove and its history as we do.

Thank you, 2015 Docents and Volunteers!

The summer of 2015 has come and gone, but before the year ends, the Historical Society would like to thank all the people who took time to serve as docents at our Museum, Centennial Cottage, and on Walking Tours, as well as those who volunteered for Special Events. It was an exceptionally busy summer, with record-breaking attendance. Docents serve as the voice of Ocean Grove history, educating and entertaining visitors. Other volunteers served as committee or events chairs or members and were critical to the success of the various programs of the Society. If you were a returning docent and/or volunteer, we thank you immensely for your dedication to our mission. We are always accepting more docents and volunteers. In June, we hold a Docent Tea for those returning to support the efforts of the Society and of course those interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities are encouraged to come join us for this special tea. This season, we had an exceptional roster of docents and volunteers that went above and beyond to contribute to the Society. A special thanks to those docents, committee and events chairs and members, listed below:

Gayle Aanensen
Vicki Bacolo
Linda Bauer
Ted Bell
Kim Brittingham
Helen Bryan
Jean Buckley
Kim Byham
Stephanie Carr
Margaret Cotton
Emily Deuchar
Anita DiGiulio
Darrell Dufresne
Kathleen Evans
Dan Garrow
Julian Hamer
Ruth Higgins
Gail Hutton
Emma James

Mary Martin
Bill Massaro
Joan Matthews
Phil May
Andrew McGeady
Michael McGraw
Scott and Andrea McGuire
Myrna McLaughlin
Dell O'Hara
Louise Olshan
Adam Ruggiero
Gail Shaffer
Alice Singer
Pat Slattery
Mary Solecki
Karen Spilatro
Bob Waitt
Carol Wilusz

Even with all these volunteers, we did not have all the help we needed, so please consider joining us! Want to have some extra fun? Dress Victorian! Even if you just choose to wear a fun hat, you will be surprised how many people will comment on it, or even want to take your picture!

Another Wonderful Season at the Centennial Cottage



Centennial Cottage, photo by Mary Solecki

This summer proved to be very successful at the Centennial Cottage. The exterior façades were painted in June. Thanks to Patrick Rochford and his crew from Classical Painting, the cottage looks spectacular! The cottage officially opened this year on June 24th and we were pleased to welcome approximately 1,500 visitors through our doors in a short eleven weeks. Our eighteen talented docents happily shared their knowledge of Ocean Grove, Centennial Cottage, and Victorian material and social culture to all who entered.

The cottage and the gardens were also the site of many workshops, the Teddy Bear Picnic, and a Twilight Tour.

The gardens are always a source of beauty and tranquility in our town. Thank you to all who visited us this summer and a special thanks to those docents who helped to share the history of Ocean Grove through our very special historic house museum.

2015 Workshops Inspired Creativity through Various Mediums and Wonderful Instructors



Some of our happy workshop participants.
Photo by Mary Solecki

This year, the Society's workshops were scheduled throughout all seasons of the year. With a total of twenty-seven workshops, we had 120 registrants, some of whom attended multiple workshops, for a total of 73 participants throughout the year.

As in the past, most of these workshops were held in the beautiful gardens of the Centennial Cottage. However, when the weather was uncomfortable because of rain, heat, humidity, or cold, the workshops moved into the museum. Many thanks to Katie Schultheis, Gail Shaffer, and the docents who graciously welcomed workshop leaders and attendees to use the museum facilities, even on busy summer days.

Workshop participants repeatedly remarked on the quality of instruction received from the workshop leaders. Each of the instructors we had this year were very well qualified by both their creative talents and knack for teaching. This year, our instructors were Judy Alberta, Vicki

Bacolo, Barbara Calvo, Margaret Cotton, Carol Grant, Robin Elodie Dabler, Laura McHugh, and Mindy Shapiro. Two instructors were unable to meet their classes due to health and family issues and we wish them both well.

As this was Louise Olshan's first year as Workshops Chair, she gives great thanks to Mary Solecki, who led this effort for many years. As Louise stated, "Without Mary's guidance and gracious answering of my never-ending questions, I could not have taken over this position." Louise also appreciated the help of Julian Hamer and Sam Olshan, who assisted by preparing for and setting up on the days of the workshops. Louise sends her sincere thanks to everyone involved and is looking forward to an exciting year of workshops in 2016 (see the 2016 Calendar of Events on page 5 for the schedule).

Suffragettes in Ocean Grove

To coincide with the American release date of the major motion picture *Suffragette* featuring Carey Mulligan and Meryl Streep, the Historical Society hosted a special event highlighting the connection between Ocean Grove and the women's suffrage movement in the United States.

The audience was treated to three knowledgeable and compelling speakers, the first of whom was Mary Walton, author of *A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot*, who had the audience riveted as she read an account of suffragist Alice Paul being force-fed in prison. Also appearing was Dr. Lyndell O'Hara, a professor at Nyack College in New York City. Some of you may know Ms. O'Hara from her increasingly popular women's history walking tours of Ocean Grove, which feature costumed re-enactors speaking as 19th century women who lived in Ocean Grove. Gayle Aanensen, author of *Summer of the Suffragists*, a novel set in turn-of-the-century Ocean Grove, was also enthusiastically received. Mrs. Aanensen brought along a "Votes for Women" tea set, a reproduction of a set that had originally been commissioned by a wealthy suffragist for a fundraising tea at her home in Newport, Rhode Island.

In addition to a rich learning experience, attendees got to pose as circa 1900 suffragists in our "Time Travel Photo Booth". Vintage hats were on hand as well as "Votes for Women" sashes and parade signs and a backdrop of patriotic bunting.

The event was well-attended and we've already had several requests to take our show "on the road" to some regional colleges and libraries. We'll keep you posted!

The event was organized and hosted by Kim Brittingham, writer and host of our video series "Curiosities of Ocean Grove."



Kim Brittingham, event coordinator and Gayle Aanensen, speaker at the Suffragettes in Ocean Grove event in October posing as circa 1900 suffragists. Photo by Mary Solecki

2016 Calendar of Events

Jan. 16: Workshop: Card Making**	1:30-3:00	M	July 28: Women's History Walking Tour**	10:30	M
Feb. 27: Workshop: Sumi-e Painting**	10:00-12:00	M	July 29: Workshop: Introduction to Zentangles**	10:30-12:30	CC
Feb. 27: Workshop: Japanese Tea Ceremony**	2:00-3:30	M	Aug. 5: Workshop: Zentangles: Beyond the Basics**	10:30-12:30	CC
Mar. 12: Workshop: Mini Message Boxes**	10:00-12:30	M	Aug. 10: Teddy Bear Picnic**	11:00-1:00	M SA CC
April 2: Workshop: Hammered Jewelry**	1:30-3:00	M	Aug. 13: Ocean Grove History Day	10:30-12:00	CR
April 25: General Program and Meeting	7:00	FA	Aug. 15: Workshop: Paper Quilling**	10:30-1:00	CC
May 7: Workshop: Cards and More Cards**	1:00-3:30	CC	Aug. 17: Workshop: Abstract Selfies**	10:30-1:00	CC
May 28: Ocean Grove Antiques Auction (Preview: 9:00-5:00)	5:00	YT	Aug. 19: Workshop: Macrame**	10:30-1:00	CC
June 27: General Program and Meeting	7:00	FA	Aug. 20: Antiques and Postcard Show	10:00-4:00	APG
June 30: Women's History Walking Tour**	10:30	M	Aug. 22: Workshop: Earrings**	10:30-1:00	CC
July 1: Workshop: Inspirational Quotes Matted Artwork**	10:30-1:00	CC	Aug. 25: Women's History Walking Tour**	10:30	M
July 8: Workshop: Fabric Flowers**	10:30-1:00	CC	Sept. 2: Ocean Grove Antiques Auction (Preview 3:00-5:00)	5:00-9:00	YT
July 9: Ocean Grove History Day	10:30-12:00	CR	Sept. 26: General Program and Meeting	7:00	FA
July 11: Workshop: Wire Wrap Jewelry**	10:30-1:00	CC			
July 13: Workshop: Fabric Bracelets**	10:30-1:00	CC			
July 15: 48th Annual House Tour*	10:00-4:00	M			
July 20: Beersheba Preservation Awards**	7:00	SA			
July 21: Beersheba Preservation Awards Walking Tour (weather permitting)	6:00	M			
July 22: Workshop: Paper Flowers**	10:30-1:00	CC			
July 27: Workshop: Acrylic Beach Scene Painting**	10:30-12:30; 1:30-3:30	CC			

Guided Walking Tours: Start at Museum

Begin June 22 | Last day Sept. 3
Wednesday and Friday 1:00
Saturday 11:00

Museum: 50 Pitman Avenue

Open mid-June through September
Monday through Friday 10:00-4:00
Saturday 10:00-5:00

Centennial Cottage: 43 McClintock Street

Open July and August
Monday through Saturday 11:00-3:00

Legend: APG=Auditorium Pavilion Grounds; CC=Centennial Cottage;
CR=Community Room; FA=Francis Asbury Manor;
M=Museum; SA=Starving Artist; YT=Youth Temple

*Fee required | **Fee and pre-registration required



of Christmas. In the 1840s, they adopted the old German tradition of bringing an evergreen tree indoors and decorated it with the help of their children. Suddenly, every family wanted a Christmas Tree. In the early part of the 19th century, most children received small gifts like fruit and nuts at Christmas. At that time, toys were handmade and thus usually expensive. However, with the Industrial Revolution, mass production made toys more affordable to more children. Also, children in the early 1800s who went straight to work in the fields or workshops with their parents became adults who worked rigid schedules in factories, mills and shops, with Christmas Day and Boxing Day (December 26th) designated as days off. With those free days on their hands and under Queen Victoria's influence, Christmas became a time to enjoy family at home.

Santa Claus as we know him, in the red suit delivering presents to children from a reindeer-drawn sleigh, was first introduced in 1821 in a book called *The Children's Friend*, and reappeared in 1823 in the famous poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas", now better known as "The Night Before Christmas". In the following decades, children came to embrace the Santa Claus legend and looked for his visits on Christmas Eve. The timing was perfect for Victorian parents who had the means and motivation to dote on their children. The Industrial Revolution brought with it a rising middle class whose children didn't have to work and could officially enjoy a childhood.

All the elements together — Queen Victoria's elevation of Christmas, economic shifts, the unstoppable rise of Santa, the availability of mass produced toys and children with the time to enjoy them — combined to create...well, let's say, the perfect snow storm. By 1895, C. C. Clayton and most of America and Britain had given Christmas over to the kids. That old Clayton's made me curious. So I decided to do some digging. I learned that C. C. Clayton's store once stood on the spot where the

Sea Grass restaurant is today, on Main Avenue between Pilgrim Pathway and New York Avenue.

In the archives of the Historical Society of Ocean Grove, I found a newspaper clipping without a publication name or date. It's titled, "Clayton Firm Dates to 1873". It was written at a time when the store was still in operation. Here's what it tells us about Clayton's: **"When the late President Ulysses S. Grant was forced to replenish his wardrobe while visiting at Long Branch back in the 1870s, he hitched up his horse and buggy and travelled down to Ocean Grove to the store of C. C. Clayton.**

The fact that it furnished blue serge suits to the late president is only one of the distinctions of the Clayton business, now located in a prominent spot on Main Avenue, Ocean Grove. Altho [sic] there are no official records to back up such a claim, it is believed that the Clayton shop was the first department store to be established along the coast.

When the business was first started — back in those days when James A. Bradley was wondering what he was going to do with the brush-studded sand dunes which eventually became Asbury Park — it was housed in a small structure on Pilgrim Pathway. It was known as Hulse and Clayton.

Later it moved to the Main Avenue site it occupies today. In those days the entire business was comfortably contained in a space about half the size of the shoe department of the present firm. Despite the small quarters, the store carried a complete line of shoes, clothing, and notions for the residents of the camp meeting resort.

W.F. Clayton, son of C.C. Clayton, the founder of the business, said that the firm has been located at the Main Avenue site for at least 60 years. He has found leases for the place dating back to 1873.

W.F. Clayton succeeded to the head of the firm when his father died in 1918. Prior to that he had been postmaster at Ocean Grove during the first term of the late president, Woodrow Wilson."

In 2000, the Monmouth County Library System conducted a series of interviews with residents for a project it called "Remembering the 20th Century: An Oral History of Monmouth County". One of its interviewees was Mary Jane Schwartz. She was interviewed in her home at 72 1/2 Embury Avenue, Ocean Grove — the same house she was born in on November 19, 1915. She talked about shopping at Clayton's in her youth:

"We went around to Clayton Store on Main Avenue, of course the entrance was on Main Avenue, and we just scooted around and went in the back entrance. They had plenty of calico at Clayton's. We knew the clerks by name, and they knew us because we were there all the time. I remember at the back of the store where you went in, I suppose it's the kitchen

now for those restaurants that are in the same building, there was a big, barn-like place where they sold rugs and linoleum. When you went in the back entrance, you'd have that nice smell because it was different. It probably wasn't good for your lungs, but it was ok. Then in the back where you went through the little entrance, sort of like a doorway or archway, they had a little table where they would have the remnants. Every time I went in there, I used to straighten out the remnants. There were two clerks that used to be there...two ladies. One was Miss Crevatt and Harding was the other lady's name. They were there for years and years. In the film *Gone With the Wind*, there is a scene where Scarlett is in Atlanta, and she is in some scene. In that scene there is a big sort of cabinet where they kept spool thread. They had one exactly like that at C.C. Clayton's. I wonder whatever happened to that? It probably got thrown out. It was a big cabinet, and you'd pull your thread out the bottom."

She also talked a little about Christmas in Ocean Grove:

"Well, they started having Christmas trees in this family when Edna and Minerva were small. They were born in the 1890s, and they used to put a Christmas tree in one of these corners here. The tree that Papa bought wasn't filled out like he thought it should be because the ceiling was not that high, so some of the branches were cut off the bottom and inserted in the trunk of the tree to make it fuller. And he tacked it up with a string to stabilize it. And we used to sit and play games with the Christmas tree like "I see", where you'd pick out a special ball. You'd describe the colors in the ball, and the people had to guess which one you were thinking of."

I wondered exactly what was in that twinkling holiday window at Clayton's in December of 1895. I haven't been lucky enough to score a photograph of a Clayton's window display, so I have to let my imagination do the job. My imagination and a little research, that is.

"Toys, Dolls, Games" the ad said. What toys, dolls and games were available to kids in 1895?

There were cast iron toys like mechanical banks and steam trains.

There were wind-up tin birds that flapped their wings and mechanical tin insects that skittered across the floor; clockwork carousels that spun on their own and must have seemed magical.

There were modest dolls made of cloth and fancy French porcelain dolls dressed in ruffles and lace. There were dolls made of paper, too, with paper clothes, and sometimes paper furniture that could be made to stand on its own when folded.

There were paper soldiers, tin soldiers, wooden soldiers. There were miniature castles and mansions for dolls.

There were toy horse-drawn wagons that looked just like the ones that trotted the streets of Ocean Grove each morning carrying vegetables, fish, and ice.

The Parker Brothers were one of several companies making board games in the 1880s, and by 1895 they had released games like "Baker's Dozen", "Mansion of Happiness", "Tiddledy Winks" and "Innocence Abroad".

There were pull toys on wheels, from metal stallions to plush sheep.

There were more than enough toys to fill Santa's pack — and Clayton's window.

At Centennial Cottage, a living history museum here in Ocean Grove, one of three cottage bedrooms is appointed as a nursery. On display are a variety of antique toys, including at least one that we know was actually owned by an Ocean Grove child.

This bear on wheels was manufactured a little later than 1895 — probably between 1900-1910, but it's still a great example of the kind of plush pull toys that were available in the late 1800s. He is displayed in Centennial Cottage next to a handsome photograph of himself in his younger years, posing with his original owner, the son of Mrs. Christian Schmidt who lived at 148 Clark Avenue, Ocean Grove, New Jersey.

While C.C. Clayton's department store may be long gone, Ocean Grove is still a place where charming shops abound, selling unique items you'd never find at your neighborhood Target or Bed Bath & Beyond.

This year, why not do something different? Leave the humid chaos of the malls behind and treat yourself to an afternoon of holiday shopping in "downtown" Ocean Grove, New Jersey, where bygone days seem to come alive again in glowing shop windows, alongside pretty iron lamp posts and under stamped tin ceilings.

It just might make you feel like a kid again.





Historical Society
of Ocean Grove
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IF YOU'RE ALREADY A MEMBER, IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2016!

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- Three annual member meetings

Senior (62+), Students, Military \$15

For one adult member

- Same benefits as above

Family \$50

- Same benefits as above

Aschenbach Sustaining \$125

For two adult members

- Same benefits as above
- Two tickets for a Walking Tour

Skold Patron \$225

For two adult members

- Same benefits as above
- Two Workshop tickets

Business \$300

For business owner and one individual

- Same benefits as above
- 1/4 page ad in House Tour booklet

Dr. Mildred Hardeman Club \$500(+)

For two adult member

- Same benefits as above
- Two tickets to the House Tour

Please note, tickets for tours and workshops must be requested in advance through the Historical Society of Ocean Grove's Museum Office. Tickets are based on availability and must be requested no later than two weeks before the event.

The Historical Society of Ocean Grove is a 501(c)3 organization. Memberships and donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.