



triCityNews

MONMOUTH'S NEWS & ARTS WEEKLY



RED BANK'S RENTAL MARKET

SIGNALS FROM TWO HIGH PROFILE SPACES // P.22



ASBURY RESTORED BLOCK BY BLOCK

ART GALLERY TO OPEN IN DOWNTOWN LANDMARK // P.18

KEADY RESIGNS ASBURY'S HUGO CHAVEZ CALLS IT QUILTS // P.6




10

DRILL BABY DRILL



12

MILK ON THE MONEY



26

'TIS THE FIRST SEASON



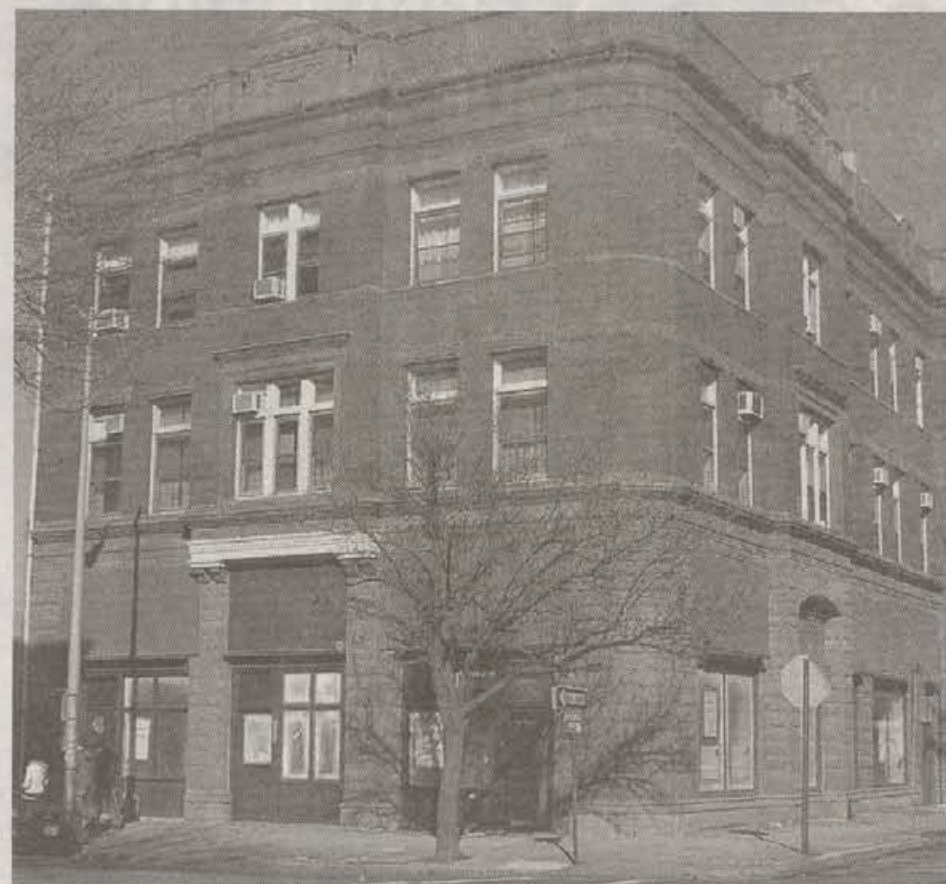
30

SIGN LANGUAGE

Building by building and block by block



Above - Joel Monesson
Below - 701 Mattison Avenue



Downtown Asbury landmark restored; new art gallery opens on first floor

ASBURY PARK - When it comes to our beloved little city of Asbury Park, this newspaper's vision has always been the same.

It's about bringing the city back building by building and block by block.

We've never been about big bang redevelopment projects built on huge amounts of debt. Sure, that gets suburban Monmouth County agog and draws front page headlines in the Asbury Park Press.

It also leads to failure, like Asbury's stab at waterfront redevelopment in the late 1980s. In contrast, our city's remarkable progress of the past few years has been different.

It's all been about real people working on real projects that represent sustainable and measured progress. Building by building and block by block. That's what this newspaper chronicles in our pages. That's been our work for ten years.

The result is that more people want to come to Asbury than want to leave. That concept was unheard of a decade ago. The Asbury Park Press still doesn't understand it. We do.

In fact, this newspaper drives it week after week by telling the individual stories that add up to the great progress you've seen in Asbury Park. Because it all comes from the bottom up. Not the top down. Not many understand that.

So with that introduction, we bring you another great Asbury story of a landmark building and a space inside brought back from the dead.

It's the beautiful Sea Coast National Bank building in downtown Asbury that dates back to 1886. It's located on one of the coolest corners in the downtown - one block in on Mattison from Main Street.

Just turn at Bistro Ole on Main Street and you'll see it on the left at the end of the block. Also on the corner is the Mattison Park lounge. Across the street is

another great rehabilitated old building. Taka Restaurant is a few feet up on the right. Next door to the building on its Bond Street side is Sister Sue's Trinidadian restaurant.

In other words, this is a great location.

And a great story. For four years, its owners have meticulously restored the exterior of this building. It's not even done yet!

And now the guy overseeing the restoration - Joel Monesson - is opening his own art gallery on the first floor this coming Saturday, December 6th.

What a space! Monesson ripped out the drop ceilings that defiled it for decades to bring back its grandeur as a bank with 17 foot high ceiling. An incredible space for a gallery. And what a great companion to the restored Mattison Park lounge right across the street with its similarly dramatic interior, which also was a landmark bank building. They're both really something to see. That's what we call progress.

Monesson, 56, has been an artist and sculptor for thirty years. His other career has been leading historic restoration projects.

He's been at the Sea Coast Bank building for four years and took over the project full time two years ago. Before that, he was employed at Georgian Court College in Lakewood for five years, charged with the restoration of the sculpture and historic masonry.

That's a big deal. The Georgian Court campus was the summer home a century ago of famed New York City financier Jay Gould. It's a pretty wild place. We've been there.

Check out more on the Sea Coast building rehabilitation at the website www.bondstreetrestoration.com, where you can read about this wonderful project. You'll also find a link to Monesson's website where you can check out his art: www.joelmonesson.com.

EYE DESIGN



90 Broad St. Red Bank • 732-530-6865
Linda Cohen • Licensed Optician

OCEAN VIEW!



An Unforgettable Lunch.

**Dinner too!
Daily.**

NOW ACCEPTING
RESERVATIONS FOR
NEW YEAR'S EVE
WITH NICKY ADDEO
& THE NIGHT OWL
BAND!

RESERVE YOUR
HOLIDAY
PARTIES
NOW!

Ocean & Allen Ave. (at the Allenhurst Beach Club) • Allenhurst
732.531.3665 • www.mistercsbeachbistro.com

> Block by Block continued from page 18

So we strongly recommend you visit Joel this Saturday, December 6 from 6-10 pm. That's his opening night at the gallery, which is called Mattison Gallery. It's a great opportunity to see the space and the building itself.

And Joel promises the art will be excellent.

The opening will feature five artists including Joel. They are painters and sculptors who work in different mediums. Interestingly, all these artists live down in Ocean County!

Artists? In Ocean County?

But to be serious: Monesson's involvement with this building, and the artists he's attracting from Ocean County, further demonstrates how Asbury is becoming a magnet for all those creative in our midst. It's a very good sign.

Now all of them should get the hell out of Ocean County and move to Asbury Park.

"I've been here for four years (doing the historic restoration). This gallery just seems a natural extension of that," said Monesson with an easy smile. "The space is beautiful."

Monesson says that the building owners are enthusiastic about his gallery, which takes up the whole 3500 square feet of the first floor. He will keep a small space in the back for his own studio.

"It always was a possibility for me to own an art gallery," Monesson said. "I've always been a go with the flow person. And this just seemed to come together."

So there you go: A new gallery. And a new artist studio. In downtown Asbury Park.

We love it.

Monesson plans to be open normal daytime business hours. He will add later hours on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays as soon as possible to coincide with the busiest nights for the restaurants.

So call Joel at Mattison Gallery at 732-774-4392 for more information. Or visit him this Saturday night at 701 Mattison Avenue.

Here's a little more about Monesson that we lifted off his website. This guy is

an example of the creative and broad-minded people that have been attracted to Asbury Park the past several years. That's what's brought us back. Not the bullshit you see peddled in the Asbury Park Press.

Here's Joel:

While living in late 1970's Manhattan, working nights doing computer graphics for Typographic Images, a cutting edge typesetter, I was introduced to Abstract Expressionist Seymour Lipton. He was in his eighties at the time and though still active in teaching and design, was unable to do the heavy work involved in creating his monumental works. I ended up spending four days a week at his upper West Side brownstone, cutting, brazing, hammering, and assembling the elements of his Monel Metal design, while he spoke of his life, his work, concepts of design, art, and the general state of the world.

When I went to him I had well developed metal and stone working skills focused on a jewelry scale. With him I learned to imagine on a grander scale while he taught his process for exactly reproducing a maquette ten, twenty, or a hundred times the size. Having worked metal minutely, and then monumentally, I thought to myself, "Now it's time to work stone to match the metal." I bought blocks of stone, a hammer and chisels, rasps and files, and set out to learn marble.

As a working artist I've incorporated various media in the realization of my ideas. Gold and silver, stone and bronze, fiberglass and ceramic, wood and plaster, mortar and brick, etc., etc., possess different properties requiring different tools and technique to acquire the finished form. The categorical divisions on this site, sculpture, jewelry, architecture, reflect organization of product, but, in my mind, at least, the creative process is exactly the same.

“
**A new gallery.
And a new artist
studio. In downtown
Asbury Park.**
”