A Tribute To James Reese Europe

In June, at the Gatehouse located at City College, Harlem Stage launched a new series of music called Harlem Stride with Randy Weston’s African Rhythms. The renowned visionary pianist and composer Mr. Randy Watson is devoted to the music in Harlem—past, present and future. Harlem Stride takes its name from the distinguished group of musical geniuses.” The Professors”, who defined the Stride movement in Harlem of the 1920’s. Among the most famous were James P. Johnson, Willie “the Lion” Smith, Art Tatum and Thomas “Fats” Waller. As with any great achievement, the Stride movement had its predecessors. So it was fitting that one of the most significant figures of the pre-jazz era, James Reese Europe. Europe was honored by one of the giants of his own era, Randy Watson. Europe’s influence was surely felt by and inspiring to the “Professors” and we felt it only fitting that we begin with this heartfelt prelude to jazz, perhaps the greatest American art form.

A special thank you was given to MG N James and Sgt H Trimble of the 369th Historical Society for their generous support to the tribute. Mr. Randy Watson was presented with a portrait of James Reese Europe from the 369th Historical Society. The Historical Society members who attended the event had front row seats and were really moved by the tribute.

On a recent visit to the Armory, Mr. Weston came to check out the exhibits and the Curator was able to convince him to join the Historical Society. His musical director, TK Blue, also joined. The Curator, Sgt Trimble, is working hard in trying to recruit the rest of the African Rhythms band members.

Visit the 369th Armory and see the displays that the Historical Society has on exhibit in the Hall of Fame of James Reese Europe.
Women's History Month Celebration

At our Women’s History Month Celebration in March everyone had a good time, and it was a very successful fund-raiser for the organization even though the weather was not on our side. There was a snow storm a few days before the Awards Dinner and it kept one of our honorees away, but her family showed up to support her. Fortunately all our other honorees were able to make it and enjoy the festive afternoon.

Next year our Annual Awards Dinner will be held at the Eastwood Manor, 3371 Eastchester Road, Bronx, NY, on Sunday, March 16, 2008 at 4PM to 9PM. Cocktails, Dinner and Music by: “Carol”. Tickets will be available at $75 per person in advance, at the door $80 per person. So please make your reservations early. Make your check or money order payable to the 369th Historical Society. Mail to: 369th Historical Society, Awards Dinner Committee, P O Box 1206, New York, NY 10037

Lobster Feast Weekend

The Lobster Feast weekend was one big party. A good time was had by all the minute we got on the bus. We did not fill the bus up this time, but we still accomplished our fundraising goal. A success no matter how you looked at it. The first stop was the Clinton Crossing Outlets, everybody look like they bought something from as many stores as they could, the bus was sort of weighted down with all those packages. The next stop was the hotel and then on to the Nordic Lodge-Lobster Feast– All You Can Eat. Everyone really got into that, the food was very good. The next morning it was on to Hometown Buffet for breakfast, another all you can eat, then to Mohegan Sun Casino. We think there was a couple of winners there. The dinner dance cruise on board the Vista Jubilee was our next stop of the day, that was a fun and entertaining evening. Sunday, our final day of the trip we went to Hometown Buffet for breakfast then to our last Casino, Fox wood. Everybody had a most enjoyable time, good food, fun, music, dancing and most of all good friends made it a wonderful weekend. Now it was time to proceed home to New York City.

Baltimore, MD Crab Fest Weekend

Save the Date!!!
Friday, August 15th to Sunday, August 17th, 2008

The 369th Historical Society is going back to the Baltimore, MD Crab Fest. Come join us!! This will be a weekend of fun and camaraderie, renew old acquaintances and greet new ones. There is something to do for everyone in Baltimore. The shopping malls, the Great Blacks In Wax Museum or Reginal Lewis Museum, the Moonlight Dinner Cruise and the Dinner and Dancing at the Crab Fest, Breakfast, and Casinos. If you missed going 2 years ago, now is your chance to see what you’ve been missing. To reserve your spot, please send in a $200 deposit per person to the:
369th Historical Society  Crab Fest Committee  P O Box 1206 New York, NY 10037
At the last Executive Board Meeting the Board voted to increase the Annual Membership dues, from $15 dollars to $25 dollars per person. Life Membership has also been increased, from $250 dollars to $300 per person. A new category of membership has been added, Corporate and Organization Membership. If you know of any Corporation or Organization that would be interested in joining, please call Gen James at 917.699.4178, Mr. Hobbs or the Curator at: 212.281.9474 for more information. It was a unanimous decision of the Executive Board to make this increase because of the cost of living index. If you know of anyone who wants to join the Historical Society please encourage them to join us, it’s important that we “keep this history alive”. Give them the membership application included in this news letter. “Join Today”

Thank you to all the volunteers who have come in to assist the Curator with his projects, we still need you, there is lots to be done. If you can give a few hours a week of your time please come in and help. If you can’t do the time a donation is always appreciated to help with the projects.

Around The 369th

THE BLACK RATTLERS

By Allen S. Joslyn

The knob puzzled me deeply. It had the number “369” and a coiled rattle snake. Was the “369” an address somewhere? But where? Did the snake signify some exclusive club, perhaps a speakeasy?

Fortunately, an enterprising seller on eBay suggested that the knob might come from the Harlem Armory of the 369th Regiment, located at 5th Avenue and 142nd Street in Manhattan, known as the "Black Rattlers". A quick trip to Harlem confirmed the suggestion - the Regiment insignia shows the same decoration and the knobs are on the doors. And thereby hangs a tale of courage, racism and jazz, among other things. To start with the Armory, it was erected in the 1920s and 1930s as the Regiment’s permanent residence. The front, or administration building, was erected in 1930-33, and features delightful Art Deco terra cotta parapets; there is also a medieval-style drill shed, constructed in 1920-1924. The building was added to the National Historical Register in 1991. The knobs are found in the administration building and thus undoubtedly date from the early 1930s. That is about all I know about the knobs themselves. What the knobs commemorate, the 369th Regiment is, however, a fascinating bit of history. It is depressing history insofar as it reflects attitudes in this county in years gone by, but the accomplishments of the 369th itself are all the more impressive given those attitudes.

Besides being known as the “Black Rattlers”, Germans who had the misfortune to cross their path honored them with the name Blutlustige Shwartzmanner” (“bloodthirsty black men”). They also became known as the “Harlem Hell fighters”, and today a portion of the FDR Drive bears that name in their honor. They engaged in more days of combat during WWI than any other regiment in the United States Army, never gave up a square foot of territory nor had a member taken prisoner, except temporarily until they rescued him. About one third of their number lost their lives in combat. (To be continued in the next issue-Interview for article was with Sgt H Trimble, acting Curator for the 369th Historical Society.)
Historical Society
P O Box  1206
New York, NY 10037

Do You Know??? Who was the first female to make the rank of Brigadier General in the NY Army National Guard? (Question in last issue)

(Answer)
Rosetta Y Burke

369th HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

$25.00 Annual  [ ]  $300.00 Life Membership  [ ]  Corporation  [ ]  Organization  [ ]

NAME: ____________________________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS: _________________________________________________________________________________

CITY: ___________________________STATE: ___________________ZIP CODE: _____________________

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _______________________________Email: ________________________________

I hereby apply for membership in the 369th Historical Society. If I am accepted I Promise to:

Uphold the charter and bylaws of the Society.
Renew  [ ]  Participate in the events sponsored by the Society, be a good citizen and preserve history.
Pay dues as outlined in the bylaws. ($25.00-Individual) ($300.00-Life Membership)
New  [ ]  Corporation & Organizations please call for information on joining-212.281.9474

Be a productive member to the best of my abilities.

SIGNATURE: ____________________________________________________ Date ______________________

In addition to my membership dues I would also like to contribute ( )$25, ( )$50, ( )$75, ( )$100,
( )$150, ( )$200, ( )$250 Other $ ______  to support the Historical Society’s programs.

The 369th Historical Society is a non-profit 501(C) (3) organization Chartered by the New York State Board of Regents.
Historical Society
Invites you to Celebrate Women’s History Month
Sunday, March 16, 2008
At
“The Eastwood Manor”
3371 Eastchester Road
Bronx, NY 10469
Cocktails, Dinner, Dancing & Open Bar
Music By: DJ “Carol”
Donation: $75.00 pp [In Advance]  $80.00 pp [At Door]
Parking Available
RSVP By February 4, 2008
For Tickets & Reservations Contact:
Mary James 347.327.3289-Herbert Trimble 212.281.9474-Eva Smith 212.722.7949
Ernest Hobbs (Tuesdays-212.281.3308) or 516.536.0967
Willie Jackson 718.974.5785-Juanita Cox 516.561.2680
Carl I Williams 917.642.5782 or 718.538.8643 Gen James 917.699.4178
Please make checks payable to 369th Historical Society
Mail to: 369th Historical Society, Dinner Committee P O Box 1206, New York, NY 10037
Email: historicalsociety@earthlink.net or mljamesl@verizon.net

“Save The Date”
The 369th Historical Society Annual Fund Raiser Trip
Friday, August 15th to Sunday, August 17th 2008
The Historical Society is going back to Baltimore, MD
to the
CRAB FEST
JOIN US FOR A FUN FILLED WEEKEND
of
Food, Music, Dancing, Breakfast Buffets, Atlantic City Casinos,
Moonlight Dinner Cruise, All You Can Eat Crab Fest with Open Bar, Museums,
Shopping Baltimore Inner Harbor

Double Occupancy--$524
Single Occupancy--$634
Final Payment Due By June 10, 2008

Reserve Your Spot- Send in a deposit of $200 per person
($50 non-refundable) please make checks payable to:
369th Historical Society
Crab Fest Committee
P O Box 1206
New York, NY 10037
For Information and Reservations Contact:
Mary James-347.327.3289-email: mljamesl@verizon.net-Gen James-917.699.4178
Willie Jackson: 718.974.5785-Ernest Hobbs: (Tuesdays- 212.281.3308)-516.536.0967
Juanita Cox 516.561.2680 Carl Williams 917.642.5782 or 718.538.8643