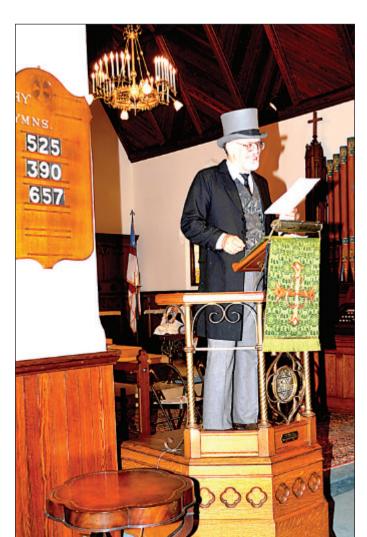
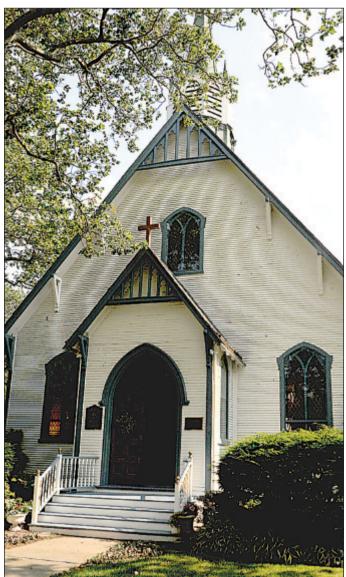
The Coast Star PEOPLE





Photos by STEVE WEXLER, The Coast Star

On Saturday, the Spring Lake community celebrated the 130th birthday of The Church of the Holy Trinity [right], the borough's oldest church. Members of the church who helped to make the celebration a success included [above, from left] Father Russ Griffin, SSC, who was visiting from the Church of St. Uriel the Archangel in Sea Girt; Trustees Tom Burkhard; Grant Gille and Penny Hoffman; organist David Citron; Trustee Brian McLaughlin; President Nancy Carson; Treasurer Dawson Smith: and Father Peter Stimpson. Attendees first enjoyed a service led by Father Stimpson [below, center], followed by a special performance - which re-created the founding of the church in 1881 — by members of the Spring Lake Community House Theatre [bottom, right]. Those members included actors Mary Ann Pierce [bottom right photo, from left], Karen Phillip Bulington, Doug Moore [also above, left], Ian Moore, Jay Draper and Frank Leonhardt. Currently, the church is seeking donations from the local community to help it toward its goal to restore the building's original Pennsylvania slate roof [below, left].



Holy Trinity celebrates 130 years

Spring Lake's oldest church, The Church of the Holy Trinity, has served as a historic cornerstone of the community for more than a century

By Caren Caterina

Lake celebrated a very special birthday — not in honor of one and Bible readings from 1 Kings Department of Interior for listing of its residents, but, a historic and Psalms. landmark which has faithfully served the Shore community as a played music on the church's on the Monmouth County summer chapel for over a century.

residents gathered inside The dance singing, "Happy Birthday." Historic Places in February of Church of the Holy Trinity to take part in celebrating its 130th

The Church of the Holy Trinity — the oldest church in the borough— is located at the corner of Monmouth and Third avenues, in Spring Lake. It is an Episcopal Church, but welcomes people of all denominations and backgrounds.

Holy Trinity is the first building in the borough to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Saturday's celebration began Stimpson. with a small church service, followed by its rededication.

Attendees also enjoyed a performance by members of the Spring Lake Community House Theatre, who presented a humorous, but factual, re-creation of the 1881 founding of Holy Trinity.

Seven actors, under the direction of producer Pat Barry, Spirit. included Doug Moore, Ian Moore, Frank Leonhardt, Jay Draper, Mary Ann Pierce, Karen Phillip Burlington and Cindy Markus.

Father Peter Stimpson, the you were born." This past Saturday, Spring church's pastor, led the service,

Prayers of rededication were 1991. presented by Dawson Smith, the church's board of trustee treasurer, Nancy Carson, board of trustee president and Father Stimpson.

"God is everywhere," said Father Stimpson. "Why then do we build churches."

The Church of the Holy Trinity, said Father Stimpson, "is a symbol in Spring Lake that there is a God."

"A church is to help you pray

such as its windows and spires, to until 1931.

represent the trinity Father, Son and Holy

Father Stimpson said the church has been a part of the Spring Lake commu-

In March 1991, the church which included prayer, hymns, was honored by the United States on the National Register of Organist David Citron who Historic sites after being placed 1904 organ, concluded the cele- Historic Sites Inventory, in 1989, On June 25, dozens of local bration by leading all in atten- and the New Jersey Register of

The church is comprised of many beautiful features — from its herringbone patterned wooden ceiling to the decorated wooden trusses supporting it.

The Holy Trinity's stick-style and Gothic revival exterior is beautifully capped by the high steep Gothic roof, which is 45

feet to its peak. The interior of the church contains stained glass windows and boasts one of only two of the ... to talk to God," said Father county's church organs originally water powered. In 1904, the The church, he said, is filled organ was installed and it was with special symbols to "help you water powered because, accordunderstand religion," such as the ing to church officials, the southfact the church is built in the ern part of Spring Lake did not form of a cross, and, several areas have electricity at the time. The of the alter are built in threes — organ remained water powered

Lake community, as well as visiboard of trustee Penny Hoffman, many ways over the years, including for summer services, winter far beyond repair. Christmas carols by candlelight, baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Labor Day weekend.

As part of the church reaching its milestone of 130 years of age, a private cocktail reception followed the service at the the Warren Avenue home of Penny and Robert Hoffman.

A donation of \$25 for one person, or \$40 for a couple, was accepted for a post-birthday the reception will help the church's Raise the Roof Campaign — to restore and replace the church's 130-year old there last September, so it is also Pennsylvania slate roof, which is the original from 1881.

"We are trying to put the church back into shape," said Mr. Hoffman, "was a time for Father Stimpson. "It [the roof] is going out on us and we need to replace it."

The Church of the Holy who is co-chair of the Raise the Carson, is "still a vital part of the Trinity has served the Spring Roof Campaign, along with community." tors of all denominations, in said the church's roof has been Spring Lake and represent the repaired many times and is now

Regular Sunday services are has not only been supported by feel comfortable to come on a only held from mid-June through the community, but, with the Sunday morning," said Ms. help of two Monmouth County Carson. Historical Commission matching grants in 2010 and 2011, totaling \$5,600.

> During the reception, Mr. Hoffman said Saturday's celebration was "an opportunity for us to share what we came to know as such a beautiful church."

Mr. Hoffman said his family party reception. Donations from began attending the church in 2000 "and fell in love with the church immediately."

"Our daughter was married special in that regards as well," said Mr. Hoffman.

The cocktail reception, said people to congregate." "And clearly we are trying to

raise money to help replace our Board of trustee Grant Gille, roof," said Mr. Hoffman, "and to raise awareness as to how

> important the church is." Ms. Carson also called the event a "celebration for the entire community that we reached 130 years."

"The Church of the Holy Trinity," said Ms.

"We really are a landmark in [town's] history," she said.

"And, we are still a house of The church is trying to raise God, a place to come and wor-\$200,000 to replace the roof and ship, a place where people can

> "We have people come in shirts and flip flops," she continued. "That is the feel of our church ... spend a little time with

> "People who come once generally come back, because it has that feel," said Ms. Carson. "It is just a place you can go to worship God and the people who come to the Shore love that. It is a peaceful place and it is beautiful."

> Ms. Carson also said what makes this church special is the fact it has continued to remain much in the state it was originally built in — 130 years ago.

> "There are not a whole lot of electronics added to it ...," she said, "that's special."

> A birthday party wouldn't be complete without some cake, candles and clapping.

> Towards the end of the evening, all happily joined in to sing "Happy Birthday" to the church, inside the Hoffman's dining room.



We really are a landmark in Spring Lake and represent the [town's] history.

> — Nancy Carson President, church board of trustees

