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CATCH THE WAVE: BRIDGETON'S HISTORIC DISTRICT HOLIDAY CELEBRATION FEATURES TREE-LIGHTING, PARADE & 24-STOP HOUSE TOUR

Last week's "Bridgeton Rose" awards honored the good stewardship that invigorates the largest historic district in the state. Now three more gala events are lined up to celebrate the Historic Bridgeton holidays: a downtown tree-lighting on Tuesday, November 26, the annual Holiday Parade on Sunday, December 1, and the *piece de resistance* **Historic Bridgeton Holiday House Tour on Saturday December 7.**

The tree-lighting ceremony starts 5:30 pm in "Culinary District Park," the festively decorated corner of East Commerce and Laurel that also features a narrative mural collage by Mexican-born Philly mural artist Cesar Viveros-Herrera. The Holiday Parade at 2 PM, Sunday, Dec. 1, makes its way along West Commerce Street from West Avenue to city center. Floats by local schools and community associations have a "Monopoly" theme this year to honor the launch of "Bridgetonopoly," a local spin on the world-famous Atlantic City-based boardgame.

But it's the **Holiday House Tour** on Saturday, December 7, that makes for the perfect season trifecta. Its 24 stops will pull in some special private homes and public buildings, some not included in years. The East Side (1PM-5PM) promises a look at the **Old Cumberland Bank** building, part of the Bridgeton Library on East Commerce, where volunteers from "Save the Library!," the organization helping fund its restoration, will play proud docents for this treasured 1816 structure. Citizen-power will also showcase the landmark **Old Broad Street Church** on Bridgeton's West Side (3PM-7 PM), as Broad Street Cemetery Association members invite you into this near-perfectly-preserved late 18th-century church, Christmas-decorated for the first time in almost a decade.

Another Bridgeton architectural gem too long off the tour, the prominent Greek Revival home at **65 West Commerce** known as the Elmer/Strickland house, will also be open. The dual name for the house recognizes both its notable original owner, Jonathan Elmer, and its distinguished architect, William Strickland. Strickland also designed the famous Greek Revival Second Bank of the United States in Philadelphia and other significant buildings of the period.

The number of Bridgeton buildings designed by famous architects might surprise you. It surprised many of us when architect and Historic District Commissioner, James Livoti, presented a photo-essay on the theme at the November 13 Awards program. Make a note to check the CHABA and house tour websites: www.historicbuildingarts.org AND www.bridgetonhousetour.com for this photo-essay, which will be posted soon along with ticketing and other information for these events.

The tree-lighting ceremony and parade are free. \$20 tickets for the Holiday House Tour may be purchased in advance or on the day of the tour. Full information at www.getbridgeton.com OR call 856-453-8130.

A generous private donor is offering two tickets to the **Historic Bridgeton Holiday House Tour** (\$40 value) in return for a \$25 donation to CHABA. Send your check to below address by December 1, or phone 856-453-8130 for ticketing information

the Center for Historic American Building Arts [chaba] 31 West Commerce Street, Bridgeton, NJ 08302... www.historicbuildingarts.org... proudly supports the Historic Bridgeton Holiday House Tour www.bridgetonhousetour.com

Pictured above: counter-clockwise from top: Bridgeton Mexican horse-riders, Holiday Parade; the Pocket Park decorated and lighted for the holidays; Cumberland Regional HS band; Mr & Mrs Claus; Exterior and interior shots of homes and buildings on the House Tour (Shoemaker House, Garrison House, Broad Street Church, Coyle House)

all photos by Flavia Alaya

