

# Townsend's Inlet Civic Center Needs New Roof, Public's Help

By AL CAMPBELL

TOWNSEND'S INLET — Like a tiny, yet proud, grandmother surrounded on all sides by her tall grandchildren the Townsend's Inlet Civic Center, 138 85th St. stands with a good spirit, but an exterior that needs help.

The 120-year-old center, again like a kindly matron, has forever been giving to the Sea Isle City community as a dance hall, temporary house of worship, auditorium, polling place, and gathering place for family-centered events.

Generations of locals have fond recollections of spending time at the center during their youth and in later years.

Now it is time for that community, which has enjoyed the many benefits of the center to rally around the center.

That's where the Townsend's Inlet Improvement Association enters the picture.

Through untiring efforts of Louise Clemente, association president, and a corps of trustees and officers, the "T.I. Civic Center" is preparing to embark on a season of fund-raising

events that will, as its first order of business, repair the leaking roof.

On June 23, at 1 p.m. in the center, The Sea Isle Sand Dune Questers plan "An Afternoon Tea With Charles K. Landis" founder of Sea Isle City.

Portraying Landis, who also founded Vineland and several other South Jersey towns, will be Jim Mac-Millan, WCMC-AM radio host, attired in top hat and tuxedo, carrying a cane and wearing white gloves, as would any gentleman of that bygone day.

Guest speaker for the event will be Michael Stafford, president of the Sea Isle City Historical Society and Museum.

To ensure the authenticity of the historic event, Virginia Cutalo, state president of The Questers will attend.

According to Clemente, the event required special permission from Cutalo to allow non-members to attend, since only Questers are ordinarily allowed to attend such functions.

Center construction was started in 1887 and completed in 1888. An ornate, recently redone, hand-cast plaster of Paris ornament

over center stage proclaims that year, with an eagle with outspread wings.

Architect for the structure was Robert Adams. Its construction, said Clemente, is rock solid; the roof is the sore spot at the present.

To be redone, as funds permit, will be the bathrooms to make them code compliant for handicap accessibility.

On June 30, from 6-9 p.m., a restoration fund-raising dinner will be held.

It will be an evening of local restaurant specialties, followed by homemade desserts, which will highlight the dedication of a history wall in center rear of the center.