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**PHOTOGRAPHER VIRGINIA PARROTT CAPTURES THE SPIRIT OF THE SEVENTIES IN VIVID COLOR, IN *BEAUTIFUL DOWNTOWN HOBOKEN*: SUNDAY, MARCH 25, AT THE HOBOKEN HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

**Hoboken, NJ** – March 22, 2007 – For her solo show in the Upper Gallery of the Museum, “**Beautiful Downtown Hoboken: Photographs from the 1970s,**” which opens **March 25, with a reception from 2 – 5 p.m.**, photographer Virginia Rolston Parrott chose more than two dozen photos from this colorful period, based in part on their artistic merits, and in part on how well they represent the era.

Scenes include kids playing in a fire hydrant, laundry hanging on the multistory backyard lines, and haunting images of abandoned piers along the Hudson. Prints will be available for purchase. The exhibit runs through May 6. She will also share a wider selection of photos taken in the 1970s in a **slide show on April 15**, as part of the lecture series accompanying the Main Gallery exhibit, “From Another Time: Hoboken in the 1970s.”

When she first moved to upper Hudson St. in Hoboken in 1974, Parrott enjoyed the stunning views across Elysian Park to the Manhattan skyline, but she wasn’t particularly inspired to take photos of the beautiful brownstones she passed on her walk to the Path every morning. “All the streets looked the same, very dignified, but not interesting,” she recalls.

Then, in 1976, she moved to an apartment near 2<sup>nd</sup> St. and Willow Ave. Her building super kept pigeons on the roof, and the neighborhood had a rougher reputation than upper Hudson St., albeit much better bread, with Marie's bakery around the corner. "All of a sudden, I couldn't go out the door without seeing photographs everywhere," she says. "That's when I really became a photographer."

Everywhere she looked, she saw stories in the faces and buildings. She was so captivated, she says, she overcame her usual inhibitions about approaching strangers for portrait shots. And the people she met in "beautiful downtown Hoboken" were generous enough to allow her to document their lives. Inspired by the gritty urban landscape and the rusting steel structures on the waterfront, in 1978 she applied for and won a \$2,000 grant from the N.J. State Council on the Arts. "For the first time, I felt like I could afford to keep working as an artist.

Since the 1970s, Parrott has been recognized with grants and shows throughout the '80s and '90s in New Jersey and New York galleries and museums, including the Newark Museum and the Jersey City Museum. Additionally, her photographs have been collected by the Museum of the City of New York, the Port Authority of NY/NJ, major corporations and private and municipal collections in the United States and Europe.

While she has continued to shoot different series when inspired by her surroundings – the Hudson River piers, Central Park, even laundry hanging on clotheslines – Parrott is nostalgic for Hoboken in the 1970s, especially the vanished waterfront structures and the once-colorful variety in the storefronts, bars and homes, which has been long since lost to renovations.

### **About the Hoboken Historical Museum**

Founded 1986, the Museum's mission is to educate the public about Hoboken's history, diverse culture, architecture and historic landmarks. In 2001, the Museum moved into one of the oldest buildings on the waterfront, in the former Bethlehem Steel shipyard, at 1301 Hudson St., Hoboken. For more information, call 201-656-2240, or visit [www.hobokenmuseum.org](http://www.hobokenmuseum.org).

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