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BOOKLOVERS

A BookLovers look at Spinner's newest

Well, BookLovers, it was awesome meeting a few of you yesterday at the first-ever New Bedford Book Festival.

If you missed Day One, head out to Day Two today from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 1213 Purchase St. Admission is free and open to the BookLoving public.

More than 40 local authors, publishers and book sellers will be reading, selling or discussing their books — Spinner Publications being one of them.

The New Bedford-based publishing house will discuss their latest release, "A Picture History of New Bedford Volume II: 1925-1980," by Joseph D. Thomas, Alfred H. Saulniers, Natalie A. White, Marsha L. McCabe and Jay Avila (2015.)

This was the book that you BookLovers helped fund back in November. After I wrote a column about the 501(c)3 community-based nonprofit needing help to publish the history, the awesome readers of this column donated a whopping \$4K.

It was worth every penny.

The 372-page glossy coffee table book is a well-researched history in an easy-to-read format with perfectly-chosen archival photos that alone tell a fascinating story.

Our story. Our grandparents' and parents' stories.

Spinner truly deserves credit for an outstanding job on this one. It makes for an absorbing read for local history lovers, as well as a great resource for SouthCoast middle or high schools.

I was absorbed in this book. It was like reading through a scrapbook of my parents and grandparents lives.

My dad and I poured over the photos — from the post World War II-era ragman, the kind he said he remembered from his childhood in Fall River, to the 1979 New Bedford Half Marathon, which he ran.

The book begins in 1925, just after World War I. Your ancestors arrive here from Ireland, Portugal, Lebanon, England, Poland, France.

We see SouthCoast during Prohibition, The Great Depression, World War II, the baby boom, Korea, Vietnam,

the free love era, disco, Watergate.

We see a troubled textile industry, a challenged school system, hurricanes, blizzards, race riots, urban renewal wiping out old neighborhoods, and the rise of the Whaling City's fishing fleet.

There's a lot here in these 60 years, to say that Vol. 1, the in just about the same amount of pages, took us from 1602-1925. But not many readers remember 1769 — many remember 1969.

And maybe that's what makes this volume so interesting. It's like looking through old year books, scrapbooks. If the Greater New Bedford area was one big family, this would be our family album.

The photos, gathered from Spinner archives, Standard-Times archives, and private collections, tell a story on their own.

One of my favorite photos in the book is simply called, "The New Bedford Kid, 1976" — a boy, maybe 6 or 7 years old, in a white undershirt, lollipop in his mouth, staring down a pool ball, cue poised high to strike.

But to flip through the book is to see a slide show of images, each, as they say, telling 1,000 words.

1928: Six little kids sit along a New Bedford street curb. The Textile Strike of '28 has caused thousands of city residents to starve. The kids gnaw on bread from a breadline.

1931: Two women with bobbed hair inspect yarn at the New Bedford Rayon Company.

1934: Members of the New Bedford Liquor Squad destroy a whisky still furnace in a raid.

1938: Kids race in a soapbox derby at the site of the Municipal Golf Course.

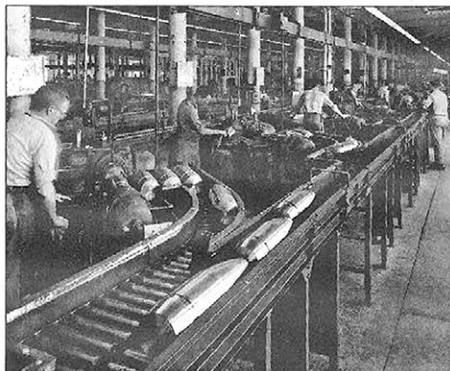
A trolley runs down Achusnet Avenue in the 1930s. Dozens of kids, some waving at the camera, cooling off in Buttonwood Pond in the summer of '35.

Fourth-graders at the Alfred Wood School pledge allegiance to the flag, during World War II.

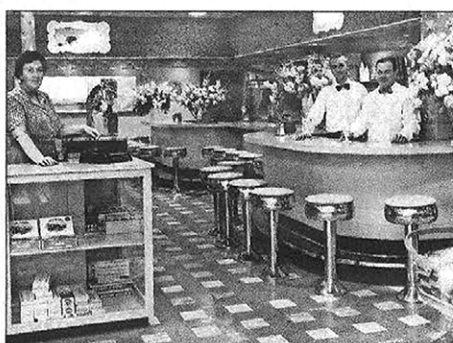
Hundreds of moviegoers standing in the rain outside the Olympia Theater to see Boris Karloff in "Frankenstein."



Preparing for the 4th of July parade held by the textile mill committees. PHOTOS BY SPINNER PUBLICATIONS



Chamberlain Manufacturing Corporation, 1962.



Ray and Joe's Delicatessen, 104 William Street, 1954.



Route 6 westbound traffic coming from the bridge, High and North Second Streets, fall 1956. (Note the mother holding a baby in the front seat of the car in front!)

Rep. John F. Kennedy campaigning on the New Bedford waterfront in 1952.

Flooded roads during Hurricane Donna in 1960.

A massive line of cars waits for gas on Kempton Street during the gas crisis of 1974.

...I could go on — but I urge you to look for yourself.

The book fest is held today at Groundwork! at 1213 Purchase St., just outside downtown New Bedford, near Glaser Glass, and accessible from routes 195 and 18.

Spinner is a 501(c)3

community-based nonprofit with a mission to "record and promote the history and culture of the cities and towns of southeastern New England."

For more information visit www.spinnerpub.com or call (508) 994-4564. Spinner is located at 164 William St.

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