A local artist who often turns to the celebrities of a bygone era for his artistic inspiration will be the featured entertainer on Saturday, March 10, for an organization that also specializes in nostalgia—the Millville Army Air Field Museum (MAAFM).

George Perez, Vineland artist and singer, will perform the hit tunes of the 40’s and 50’s in a presentation called “Come Fly with Me,” a reference to an album of the same name by Frank Sinatra. The theme of the album, released in 1958, focused on musical numbers related to flying and travel.

The event will be held at the N.J. Motorsports Park, 8000 Dividing Creek Rd., Millville, in the Officer’s Club (near the Millville Airport) from 6 to 9 p.m.

The museum preserves the history of the Millville Army Air Field, which was “America’s First Defense Airport,” dedicated by the United States War Department in 1941.

In addition to the pieces made popular by Sinatra, Perez will perform the hit songs of Dean Martin, Tony Bennett, Elvis Presley and Bobby Darin. He will also take requests from the audience.

Perez’s program will include his “Gallery of Music,” which he explains as “paintings of singers I uncover throughout the show and pay tribute to their contribution by singing one of their classic hits.”

The evening will also include an art exhibit of Perez’s works, available for sale.

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MAAFM kicks off 25th year in style

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with a portion of the proceeds going to MAAFM.

Lisa Jester, executive director of the Museum, said the fund raiser is an official kick-off of the museum’s 25th anniversary. She said other events are planned to observe the milestone, including an “aviation celebration,” scheduled for September.

The March 10 evening will include a full buffet dinner, desserts, cash bar, dancing, a 50-50 raffle and silent auction. All proceeds will benefit MAAFM and support its mission of preserving World War II aviation history at the Millville Airport, honor veterans and educate the youth of the community. Tickets are $40 per person, and tables of eight or ten can be reserved.

Jester says, “There is room for everyone at this casual, fun and entertaining evening.” For tickets, call her at (856) 327-2347.

Located in the original World War II Base Headquarters Building, the Millville Army Air Force Museum displays a large collection of WWII aviation artifacts of local and national interest. It recognizes the more than 10,000 men and women who served at Millville during WWII, including 1,500 pilots who received advanced fighter training in P-47 “Thunderbolt” and P-40 “Warhawk” fighter planes.

The Museum recognizes all aspects of aviation history through its displays, community events, and educational programs. Hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Mondays by appointment.

New Bethel A.M.E. Church to observe 140th year with gospel music revue

A narrated musical revue of hymns, Negro spirituals and gospel music titled “This Is Why We Sing” will celebrate the 140th anniversary of the New Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Vineland, on Friday, March 16, at the Landis Theater in Vineland at 6:30 p.m. Rev. Evelyn E. Booze is pastor.

Narrating the program will be Rev. D. Albert Turk, pastor of the Emmanuel A.M.E. Church in New York City.

Highlights of the program include the South Jersey Male Chorus; “Voices of the Lord” from the Chestnut Assembly of God, Vineland; the Rowan University Gospel Choir; the Trinity A.M.E. Church Senior Choir in Bridgeton, directed by Austin Gould; and solo performers Rev. Brenda Ferren-Charleston, a liturgical dancer of the Hope Fitness Ministry; Wanda Williams from Atlanta, Ga., and Felicia Beverly from the Union Baptist Temple.

The requested donation is $12, available at the door or by calling (856) 691-1349 or (856) 691-5157. The theater is at 830 Landis Ave., Vineland.

The event is funded in part by the New Bethel A.M.E. Church, the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission and the County Board of Freeholders.