



# Portland Poynts

The Chronicle of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society

March-April 2020

27 Prospect Circle, P. O. Box 108, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716-0108 ♦ www.AHhistory.org

## Welcome Back!

By Ken Frantz, Acting President

The Board of Directors of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society welcomes you to another exciting year of fund-raising events, speakers programs, Jersey Journeys, Music at the Mansion and other special events.

We will kick off the year with a St. Patrick's-themed Music at the Mansion on Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> by the Irish duo of Alice Breda Ryan and Max Carmichael.

The official opening of the Strauss Mansion Museum will be Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-4:00 pm. The monthly speaker series will be the third Wednesday evening of the month and the Music at the Mansion will be the last Thursday of each month.

We expect to be part of Weekend at Olde Monmouth the first weekend in May. Our Annual Arts and Craft fair will be Saturday, July 18<sup>th</sup>. There will be more Jersey Journeys, a Vintage Baseball Game and, new this year, a fine art exhibition at the Mansion on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. Our Annual Flea Market will be in mid-September, and October will bring an array of spooky stories, movies, tours and ghost hunting.

Updated information may be found on our website, AHhistory.org. Better yet, sign up for our e-newsletter and email to be informed of all the Society's activities.

We thank you for your support in the past and we look forward to sharing another exciting year with you.



## Annual Membership

Become a Member of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society and support its outreach and educational programs.

Membership categories:

- \$10 Student
- \$25 Individual
- \$50 Family
- \$100 Supporter
- \$200 Sustaining (listed on website)
- \$500 Benefactor (listed on website)

To become a member, simply complete the online form at Ahhistory.org.



## Visitors Break Attendance Records

By Greg Caggiano

During 2019, the Strauss Mansion Museum was open 50 Saturdays and Sundays and was visited by 552 people. Adding the attendance at special events such as the Music at the Mansion series, lecture nights, Halloween tours and films, and more, the total is well over 1,000 visitors. Weekend at Olde Monmouth, for example, brought 73 visitors. During the few hours of the Taste of Atlantic Highlands city-wide event, the Museum experienced a record number of 129 visitors.

For decades, the Museum was open only on Sundays. Three years ago, a Saturday schedule was added. In October, the weekend open house schedule reverted back to Sundays only. This did not have an affect on attendance as numbers for the end of the year were similar to the start.

The Board will decide the Museum's 2020 schedule which will be posted on our website, Facebook, and Instagram.

October and November are particularly busy, riding on the heels of the ghost tours and paranormal events. A large percentage of visitors who come for a "night of fright" return in the afternoon to learn the history and walk the halls during the daylight hours. Springtime is also busy as people begin to shake off the cobwebs following a season indoors. Summer numbers tend to drop due to people focusing on all the beautiful beaches, restaurants and attractions Atlantic Highlands and the Jersey Shore has to offer.

Visitors came far and wide to the Strauss Mansion Museum last year. One couple from Japan was visiting relatives and wanted to see as many museums as they could. Another gentleman was from England and when he saw the phrase "Mansion Museum" advertised, he wanted to see how it would compare to the manor houses back home. He noted that he was "impressed".

While visiting the Mansion Museum is free, last fall a suggested donation of \$5 was inaugurated. We thank everyone who donated, large or small, as it is these donations which help keep our doors open.





Atlantic Highlands Arts Council ~ Fortunes in Apples; photography by Mark Ludak through April 4.

Atlantic Highlands Public Library ~ Dr. Seuss Birthday Celebration, March 5. Unfogging the Future: A Divination Series, March 18. Muriel Smith, author of Hidden History of Monmouth County. Apr 25.

First Avenue Playhouse ~ Rehearsal for Murder, March. Beau Jest, April.

Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County ~ Jews of India

Middletown Township Historical Society ~ Salvage Archaeology at the Hendrickson Farm. March 16.

Monmouth Museum ~ Juried Art Exhibition, through March 15.

Check organization website for additional details.

## Mansion Spruce Up Time



Volunteers are needed to spruce up the 21-room Victorian era Queen Anne-style "cottage" now known as the Strauss Mansion Museum prior to the season opening on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Dusting, polishing, and sweeping are necessary chores after being closed for the winter. Consider donating some time on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> or Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. High school, college and scout groups can receive service hours for participation.



By Ken Frantz Acting President

Atlantic Highlands is a small town, but the businesses and people are so generous in sharing money and services. We are very blessed and very appreciative of all your efforts. We extend our deepest thanks to all the groups, businesses, State and County Commissions, AHHS friends and members for many years of support. Personally, I wish to thank my fellow Board members for their dedication, enthusiasm and support.

In particular, the Society wishes to recognize:

Dr. Jean Howson who gave countless hours in the writing and follow-up of the NJ Preserve Grant, the NJ Historic Trust, and with preservation architect Margaret Westfield. The Exterior Stabilization Project included the first floor porch restoration, masonry pier repairs, exterior walls, lattice panels and the second floor porch on the East Mount side of the Mansion.

Dan Calandriello, 1957 Atlantic Highlands High School graduate, for underwriting in loving memory of his recently deceased wife, Beverly, the digitalization and online database of the Atlantic Highlands Journal, 1894-1905, 1925-1966, thereby providing public access to this treasure-throve community resource.

Chip Nolan of Skytop Landscaping for keeping the Strauss Mansion grounds well-groomed and beautiful.

Brian Keenan, Director, Bayshore Center at Bivalve for once again bringing New Jersey's Tall Ship, the A. J. Meerwald, and its well-trained crew to Atlantic Highlands with exciting and educational sailings and programs recognizing New Jersey's oyster history, and current environmental issues.

Leeann Lavin, award-winning garden designer and writer and her volunteers for redesigning our garden space and for her highly popular garden talks at the Strauss Mansion.

PBA Local #242 Atlantic Highlands for selecting AHHS as the beneficiary of the 2019 PBA Ball with a donation of \$11,500 for the ongoing preservation and restoration of the Strauss Museum.

Audra Mariel who brings wonderfully talented musicians to our highly popular, intimate monthly Music Nights at the Mansion and frequently lends her captivating voice to many performances.

Victor Zak for organizing the exciting and educational Jersey Journeys and coordinating the new walking tour of the Sandy Hook Lighthouse and bunkers.

Carmen and Doug Craner for their ongoing financial support, and for Carmen's co-chairmanship of the annual Flea Market and other events, and for creating the gift baskets for the Arts and Craft Fair.

Walter Johnson for writing and formatting our online newsletter. He can often be seen at the Mansion photographing prints or antiques or digging through Archive boxes on the hunt for a good story.

Lisa Ebeling for ongoing financial donations and longtime support of AHHS programs.

Lynn Fylak, AHHS past president, who instituted many of our programs and for her fund-raising expertise with the PBA Ball and the A. J. Meerwald visits.

# 2020 Season Opening Day



The 127-year-old Strauss Mansion will reopen for the 2020 season on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm. Exhibits include Victorian-era room displays, the history of the Lenni Lenape Indians who lived in the area for more than 10,000 years, local history items, and a stunning view of New York City, the

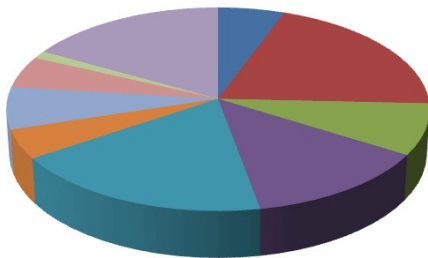
harbor and Sandy Hook, seen from the third floor Tower Room. Relax on the newly-restored wrap-around porch and enjoy the ocean breeze. Stop in the Gift Shop to purchase that special gift for the historian friend. Your purchase supports the mission of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society.

The Museum admission is free. A suggested donation of \$5 per person assists in maintaining this impressive “summer cottage” built by a wealthy New York merchant during the opulent Victorian era.

Self-guided tours are available 1:00-4:00 pm.

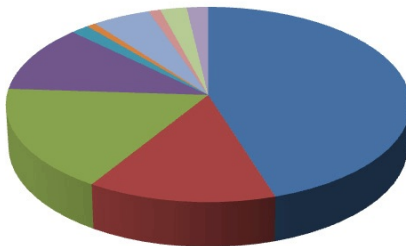
## 2019 Financial Report

### 2019 Fundraising Income *(net of expenses)*



- Arts and Crafts Fair \$2,178
- Flea Market \$7,837
- Membership \$3,179
- October Events \$5,157
- Cash Donations \$7,190
- A. J. Meerwald Sailing \$1,806
- NJ Paranormal Society \$2,600
- Jersey Journeys \$1,980
- Music at the Mansion \$478
- Digitization Project \$6,550

### 2019 Operating Expenses



- Digitization Project \$16,137
- Insurance: liability & D&O \$4,934
- Utilities, phone, internet \$6,129
- Fundraising consultant \$4,000
- Postage, printing, copyng, office supplies \$582
- Web hosting \$288
- Building and grounds maintenance \$1,830
- Advertising \$375
- Museum Security \$828
- Miscellaneous Expenses \$675

Art —  
— Show

● save the date

# LWA VIVE

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**Sunday / May 17 / 2020**  
**5 — 9 pm / \$10 at door**

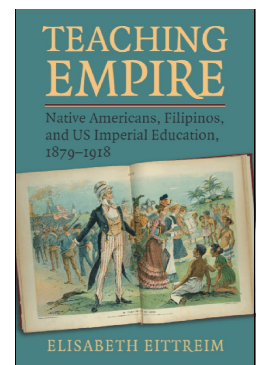
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You are invited You are invited You are invited	The Strauss Mansion 27 Prospect Circle Atlantic Highlands	Exploring the themes of life (joy, love, peace, fear, & pain) through paint, poetry, music, and photography.
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A community of artists from a wide variety of backgrounds will gather at the Strauss Mansion Museum to present an art show tackling the themes of life, including joy, love, peace, fear and pain. The Strauss Mansion Museum will host a painter, photographer, musician, singer and poet for this unique exhibit, a first for the Strauss Mansion Museum and Atlantic Highlands. Each will explore the theme utilizing personal media. Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 - 9:00 pm. Admission is \$10 per person.

## Lecture Series: Imperial Education in the United States, 1879-1918

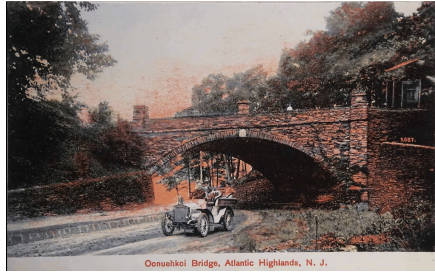
Atlantic Highlands resident Elisabeth Eittreim will give a talk based on her book *Teaching Empire: Native Americans, Filipinos and US Imperial Education, 1879-1918* on Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. Free admission.



# Renovation strengthening 98-year-old span

From the Asbury Park Press, August 10, 1994., by Susan Thea Posnock

When the Stone Bridge was built here in the 1890s, the usual mode of transportation was horse and buggy.



So after standing in the borough for nearly 100 years, and experiencing heavier traffic than originally anticipated, the bridge that carries Mount Avenue over Grand Avenue is being renovated.

"It has had to be strengthened over the years," said Ann Rosse of the borough's historical society.

She said the bridge is made of peanut stone, which is a compression of gravel and sand that occurs naturally in the area.

According to the project engineer Gregory Bitsko, peanut stone is decorative, but not strong enough to support the kind of traffic impact the bridge has had to endure. He said it has been used mostly as surface decoration in area homes.

"We don't have any other bridge like this in the entire county," he said.

Rosse said the bridge is also unusual in that it was built almost entirely with private money.

She said George F. Lawrie, who lived here at the turn of the century, contributed \$800 for its

construction. The rest was raised by private donations. The total cost was \$3,532.

"It is a very pretty bridge, Councilman George H. Wuesthoff said. "Right now it doesn't look too good because they had to take the peanut stone off."

Bitsko, a Monmouth County supervising engineer, said the bridge was in serious need of work. He said the stone wall was falling apart and there were also problems with the railing.

The construction project calls for workers to remove the stone and replace it with more durable concrete, and then to reface it with peanut stone.

"It looks like a stone wall but it actually is stronger than a stone wall," he said of the process.

Bitsko said that way the bridge will retain its historical look, while being able to safely withstand traffic.

The \$389,000 project, which is being funded by the county, began in March [1994] is expected to be completed by the first week of September. Industrial Engineer, Trenton, is the contractor.

The county is in charge of the project because the bridge is a county-owned structure. Bitskin said work is behind schedule. The project completion date was set for July 19<sup>th</sup>. He said work was held up mainly because a crack in the underside of the bridge was larger than originally estimated. The repair material used on the crack could not be covered by any other material for four weeks.



Bridge as it looks today

He said that after the project began, engineers determined there had been more deterioration than initially believed.

Ed. Note: Newspaper clipping provided by Doris Irwin. Postcard from the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society collection. The bridge is approaching its 125<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## MUSIC AT THE MANSION



The last Thursday of every month at 7:15 pm the Strauss Mansion parlor becomes a cozy, intimate cabaret setting for a live musical performance. The evening is hosted by Audra Mariel who has been acclaimed for her unique sound and sincere interpretation of timeless standards. Audra can often be coaxed to join the musicians to sing one or two numbers in her exquisite style.



Audra Mariel

Relax, enjoy the music, and mingle with the performers during intermission.

Admission is \$20 plus food/beverage to share. Doors open at 6:45 pm, performance at 7:15 pm.



March 26 - Irish Folk Music featuring Alice Breda Ryan and Max Charmichael. A pre-season special event: admission is \$15 plus food/beverage to share.



April 30 - Ponderous Ark and DeepWhine.



## Blast From The Past— Atlantic Highlands Style

Promoting the digitization of the Atlantic Journal

By Patty Bickauskas

For some of you, when you hear the word Argonaut, it conjures up images of the less-than-classic 1960s Jason and the Argonauts about the Greek gods Zeus and Hercules and their mythological antics. But this article is not about that. It is about the small wooden submarine displayed in the Atlantic Highlands Harbor.

A 14-foot wooden submarine, the Argonaut Jr. was made of pine and leaded canvas and named after the Argonaut sea creature, better known as the Portuguese man-o-war, because both could navigate on the surface, on the sea-floor, or anywhere in between. Built in 1894 by Mr. Simon Lake (hence the name of the Atlantic Highlands road where a full-scale replica is located) the wheels on the bottom of the boat were powered by hand to move the submarine across the bottom of the seabed. There is also a hatch on the bottom to allow divers to exit. To prove his invention, Lake tested the boat in the waters of Raritan Bay and the Shrewsbury River with great success. Mr. Lake was a man ahead of his time and his creation would ultimately change the way submarines were manufactured.

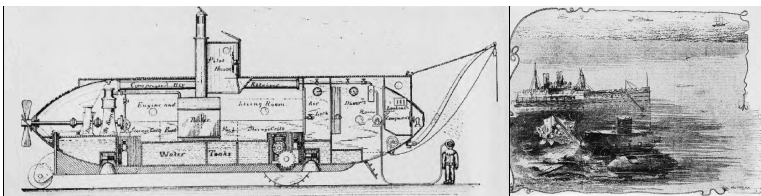
Future vessels designed by Mr. Lake were meant for bigger and better things. He manufactured sturdier steel submarines designed for shipwreck salvage. In 1898, one of these vessels was the first submarine to make a successful voyage in open sea. He even received a congratulatory letter from Jules Verne, author of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea!

Unfortunately, his designs were rejected by the U. S. Navy, and he found a market for them overseas. A submarine he sold to Russia in 1904 was used in their 1904-05 battle with Japan. Lake continued to build submarines for the European market before the U.S. Navy finally came calling. Between 1901 and 1921, he manufactured 33 submarines for the United States.

And all this started with a little wooden vessel.

Some of these facts and the picture, which is a rendering of what his submarines were initially designed for, are from articles that can be found in the our digitized version of the Atlantic Journal. The Atlantic Journal link is located on our Facebook page, [www.AHhistory.org](http://www.AHhistory.org), under the archives section. Go online, read and enjoy!

As I have mentioned in past articles, digitization costs money. If you liked this article and wish to donate to help offset our costs, please go to the donate section of our website.



## Back in 1894... the Strauss family would have been reading about...



- March 3 - Fourth and last British government of Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone resigns.
- March 4 - Shanghai fire destroys over 1,000 buildings.
- March 12 - Coca-Cola bottled and sold for the first time in Vicksburg, Mississippi.
- March 16 - Jules Massenet's opera Thais premieres in Paris.
- March 17 - U.S. and China sign treaty preventing Chinese laborers from entering U.S.
- March 24 - 37 coal miners killed at Franklin, Washington.
- April 5 - 11 coal miner strikers killed in riot at Connellsville, Pennsylvania.
- April 9 - Anton Bruckner's 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony in B premieres in Graz, Austria.
- April 12 - British/Belgian sign secret accord to dividing Central Africa.
- April 14 - First motion picture house opens in New York City using ten Kinetoscopes, a device for peep-show viewing of films.
- April 21 - George Bernard Shaw's Arms & the Man premieres in London.
- April 21 - Norway formally adopts Krag-Jorgeson bolt-action rifle as main armament for its armed forces.
- April 26 - 13,000 mine workers strike in Ohio for pay increase.
- April 29 - the 500-strong Commonwealth of Christ (Coxey's Army) arrives in Washington, D.C. to protest against unemployment.

## 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Flea Market

By Bette VanDeventer



Plans are being made for the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society's Annual 41<sup>st</sup> Flea Market on September 19, 2020. Rain date is September 26, 2020. The market is from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Contracts will be mailed or e-mailed the first week in May.

If you wish to participate, contact the AHHS at 732-291-1861, Bette VanDeventer at 732-291-4313 or Carmen Craner at 732-291-9337. Leave your name and phone number and we will return your call.

# Dining with the Victorians



Breakfast tended to be a large meal and would have included ham, eggs, bacon, bread and fish. This was followed by a light lunch and afternoon tea. The evening meal was the main meal of the day and had many different courses. Wealthy Victorian families would often throw large dinner parties.

Rich Victorians ate French cuisine consisting of rich meats, fish and desserts. The upper class of this era used meals as a time to show off their wealth through fine cutlery, china and up to 20 or more dishes of food. The dishes were put on a sideboard and brought to the table by footmen.

The dining room was the centerpiece of the Victorian home. It was ornately designed to impress guests, and families usually met there three times a day for meals. Evening meals were traditionally eaten late in the day during this time period, and afternoon tea was started as a tradition to stave off hunger while waiting for the evening meal.

By the late Victorian era, afternoon tea was mostly a pastime of the rich. It fulfilled the purposes of socializing, event planning, introductions, informal business meetings, as well as a perfect platform for gossip which was a major pastime of the day.

The four o'clock tea ritual became known as "low tea" because it was served in the low point of the afternoon. The name is also indicative of the coffee table height of sitting room furniture.

Tea fare included many items. Elaborate bite-sized sandwiches that were recently made popular by the Earl of Sandwich, as well as a plethora of sweets and pastries were incorporated into these afternoon events.

Certain foods become popular during each season of the year. Fruit and berries were eaten in the spring and summer while heavier starch items were reserved for the colder months.

Trays of different items were placed all about the sitting room where tea was served. This allowed guests to mingle throughout the early evening.

The Victorians called a tea service a *tête-à-tête*, consisting of

a teapot, sugar bowl and a cream pitcher. Many contraptions were invented for the single purpose of each consumption, such as sterling silver items like the berry scoop and the bun warmer.

Boiling water was often brought around by servants at regular intervals to replace the cooling water in the teapots.

The Victorian high tea was a slightly formal and elaborate form of "five-o'clock tea", or an "at home". It did not, however, call for the elaborate effects of an afternoon reception and was usually served to a larger number of guests than a luncheon, and a smaller number than a reception. The guests at a high tea were usually served cold meats, vegetables, and pastry in substitution of dinner at small tables – and at about five o'clock.

In 1893, the Daily Telegraph explained, "A well-understood high tea should have cold roast beef at the top of the table, a cold Yorkshire pie at the bottom, a mighty ham in the middle. The side dishes will comprise soused mackerel, pickled salmon (in due season), sausages and potatoes, etc., etc. Rivers of tea, coffee, and ale, with dry and buttered toast, salty lunn (wheat flour buns), scones, muffins, and crumpets, jams and marmalade."



# AHHS Receives County 2020 Preservation Grant

By Lynne Petillo

The Atlantic Highlands Historical Society is the honored recipient of a 2020 Preservation Grant from the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Monmouth County Historical Commission. The \$6,175 grant is for restoration work on the second floor west porch of the Strauss Mansion Museum. This grant will allow the Society to continue the porch restoration work begun last year with the first floor wraparound porch and steps of the Mansion, funded by a grant from the New Jersey State Historic Site Preservation Fund.



AHHS Board members attended the February 24, 2020 presentation ceremony at the Hall of Records in Freehold. Our longtime Board Secretary, Bette VanDeventer, accepted the award from County Freeholder Lillian Burry and Historical Commissioner Muriel Smith, offering gracious words of thanks to the Freeholders and Historical Commission for their generosity and support.

AHHS was in great company with nearly 30 our fellow local history organizations who were well-represented. Several preservation grant awards were made for historic structures as well as 17 renewed grants for operations and special projects. Several special project grants supported oral history projects for music (Asbury Park African-American Music Project), town history as presented by students (Historical Society of Highlands) and African and Native American history (T. Thomas Fortune Foundation, Red Bank). The Asbury Park and Red Bank Public Libraries received grants for digitization of housing records and city directories, respectively. Special projects grants were awarded for the designation and restoration of cemeteries: the Allentown Historic Preservation Commission for a historical marker for the AME Church Cemetery and the Borough of Neptune City to restore one of its historic cemeteries. The Colts Neck Historical Preservation Committee to print new historic site brochures, and the Middletown Township Historical Society for its ongoing speaker series also received grants.



(From left to right) Freeholder Patrick Impreveduto, Freeholder Deputy Director Susan M. Kiley, Freeholder Director Thomas A. Arnone, Freeholder Lillian G. Burry and Freeholder Nick DiRocco.

Several operations grants were awarded: the Jewish Heritage Museum of Monmouth County (Freehold) to hire an executive director, the Twin Lights Historical Society in Highlands to hire a curator, and the Wall Township InfoAge Science History Museum to develop interactive kiosks. Several organizations received grants for insurance, utilities, maintenance, and other general operations, including the Englishtown Battleground Historical Society, the Freehold Township Heritage Society, the Parker Homestead in Little Silver, the Friends of Millstone Township Historic Properties and the Township of Ocean Historical Museum.

We were greatly impressed by the enthusiasm of both the honored organizations and the County officials for the shared mission of preserving our local landmarks and for keeping the many stories of prominent citizens, events, artistic and cultural legacies and legends of our area alive to educate and enlighten future generations. Monmouth County residents are so fortunate to have the vast number and variety of historical sites and programs. that we do. Please visit as many as you can and show them love, whether in the form of donations or volunteering or simply spreading the word to others so they can keep those visitor numbers up. It all matters!

Thank you again, Monmouth County Freeholders and the Historical Commission for recognizing the importance of these sites and programs. We hope to see you all during Weekend in Olde Monmouth!

## PORTLAND POYNTS

Electronically published bi-monthly March-November by the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society, 27 Prospect Circle, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716.

Portland Poynts is the original name of the area that became Atlantic Highlands.

Incorporated in 1974, the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society at the Strauss Mansion Museum is a volunteer-run 501(c)3 tax exempt organization committed to promoting interest in the past and present heritage and history of Atlantic Highlands through a variety of services and programs to the community at large. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The Strauss Mansion Museum is open to the public Sundays, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, April through December. Free admission, \$5 suggested donation Self-guided tour.

## VOLUNTEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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