



Portland Poynts

The Chronicle of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society

May-June 2020

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



Due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, the Strauss Mansion Museum is currently closed indefinitely. All scheduled events for May have been cancelled. Please visit our Facebook, Instagram, and sign up for email news alerts as we monitor this situation.

The Atlantic Highlands Historical Society is a volunteer-run organization. It depends on memberships, donations and program income to pay for daily operations; the Society has no endowment. While we are closed during this pandemic, income has suspended. Unfortunately, certain utility and insurance bills must still be paid in order to maintain the integrity of the building.

If you have not renewed your membership this year, please consider doing so now. Membership categories are listed below. Of course, donations would be gratefully received.

We hope to be open as soon as possible. We want everyone to be safe, and we invite you to check our website which includes photo albums and an extensive online archives.

Gin and Tonic, a Victorian Favorite — For medicinal purposes, of course!

By Greg Caggiano

“A G&T please, my dear, if you would be so kind.”



Annual Membership



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

Membership categories:

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



British forces in India were required to take quinine tablets in order to fight malaria. Because this quinine was incredibly bitter, they mixed it with water and added sugar to make it more palatable.

Over time, this was carbonated and mixed with gin to become not only a pleasing cocktail in the sweltering Indian heat, but a healthful beverage that also warded off scurvy with the addition of a lime wedge, hence the nickname “Limeys”.

One cocktail whose origin has no mystery.

Cheers!

The “New York 49ers” in the Gilded Age

Adolph Strauss and his wealthy friends — “the 49ers” — lived at 50 East 49th Street in the area now known as Turtle Bay, then an affluent Jewish community. When a relaxing one-hour steamer boat voyage became available from lower Manhattan, his friends also built lavish homes in Atlantic Highlands, creating the summer enclave sometimes known as The Jewish Newport.

Adolph Strauss was born June 20, 1830 in Weiher, (which translates as “pond”) in the northern Karlsruhe district of Baden-Württemberg, Germany. He and Jeanette were married in Germany before 1852 and the young couple settled in New York City prior to 1858.

Adolph was an importer and dealer of notions — small, useful items such as needles and harmonicas — with an office at 120 Broadway between Cedar and Pine Streets and another office at 412 Broadway at Canal Street.

Their home on East 49th Street no longer exists, but it might have been one of the 20 houses connected in back by a shared secret garden modeled after Rome’s Villa Medici.

The family was affiliated with the Temple Beth El synagogue in Manhattan. Two daughters (Rosalie and Flora) were married there and his son Morris was buried in the Beth El cemetery.

Building a summer cottage near the seashore in New Jersey was a common trend in the late 1800s. Opulence and grandeur was at an all-time high and no expense was spared to create lavish, large structures with multiple rooms and wings.

In 1879, prominent members of the Atlantic Highlands Methodist Church employed a surveyor to layout the streets. The roads around the hill where the Strauss Mansion would be built were designed in concentric circles due to the topography of the area.

Adolph Strauss bought three lots, two owned by John L. Perrine and one owned by Thomas Henry Leonard, the first mayor of Atlantic Highlands in 1887.

Between 1880 and 1900, hotels, cottages, rooming houses and private homes were built. A substantial pier extended into



Weiher, Germany



Temple Beth El Synagogue c. 1894

the bay to accommodate steamboats from New York City bringing wealthy travelers to their summer homes.

On weekends Adolph Strauss commuted from New York City, probably on the S.S. Sandy Hook. (The golden eagle that perched on the ship’s Pilot House is on display in the Strauss Mansion Museum.)

The Towers, as the summer cottage was called, was designed by Solomon H. Cohen and built by Adolph Hutera to accommodate Adolph and Jeanette Strauss, their children Rosalie, Emma, Morris, James A., Flora, Alice and Lenora, and his brother, Nathan. Space was included for two resident servants, Rosa Suchanita and Beatrice Snee. Locals were hired as grounds keepers, cooks and butlers. Some of the five New York City staff may have also stayed at the house during the summer season.

The cottage featured 21 rooms, 69 doors, 70 windows and seven stained glass windows. The exterior of the three-story house is decorated with cedar shakes in a fish-scale and pointed pattern. A two-story wrap-around porch envelops 2½ sides of the home offering views of the surrounding area, Sandy Hook Bay, and the New York City skyline. The two towers — one round and one six-sided — are on the western corners of the house. The third floor’s eccentric roof line has multiple peaks, dormers, gables, gambrels and intersecting hips.



The house sits on a steeply pitched lot near the summit of the old town commanding views over the bay and historic district.

One can only imagine the elegant dinner parties and get-togethers on the porches as they mingled on a pleasant summer’s evening.

Architecturally, the Strauss Mansion is a prime example of an elaborate Queen Anne-style summer cottage and is the only such building in Monmouth County open to the public.

Culturally, it represents the life style of a coastal resort town from Monmouth County’s Golden Age — next to the bay and ocean while within easy reach of New York City by steamer boat and train.

Historically, it reflects the home life, social and community patterns of the Victorian boom era. The hilltop neighborhood in which the Strauss Mansion is located is composed of beautiful homes with preserved period details, evoking memories of an earlier time when life was more gentle, a bit slower and leisurely neighborhood strolls invited passers-by to linger for a while.

Back in 1894... the

Strauss family would have been reading about...



- May - Bubonic plague breaks out in Hong Kong and later in Canton.
- May I - The Commonwealth of Christ (Coxey's Army) leader arrested on Capitol Grounds.
- May I - May Day Riots against unemployment break out in Cleveland, Ohio.
- May II - 3,000 Pullman Palace Car Company factory workers go on strike in Illinois.
- May 12 - Ludwig Englander's Passing Show, the first "musical review" opens in New York City and runs for 145 performances.
- May 12 - Grand Duchess Catherine Mikhailovna of Russia, granddaughter of Tsar Paul I, dies at age 72.
- May 14 - Blackpool Tower, the tallest man-made structure in the British Empire, is opened as a visitor attraction.
- May 14 - A fire starting in the bleachers of the South End Grounds baseball stadium in Boston destroys the stadium and 170 other buildings.
- May 15 - Frank Goodale riding Chant wins the 20th Kentucky Derby in 2:41.00.
- May 19 - Fred Taral riding Assignee wins 19th Preakness in 1:49.25.
- May 21 - Queen Victoria opens the Manchester Ship Canal and Dock linking the previously landlocked city of Manchester to the Irish Sea.
- May 21 - 22-year-old French anarchist Émile Henry is executed by guillotine.
- May 23 - William Love hosts groundbreaking ceremonies for Love Canal in Niagara Falls, NY.
- June 7 - King Kassan I of Morocco dies at age 58.
- June 10 - U.S. Marine Corps called to land on Cuba in Spanish-American war.
- June 13 - Yukon Territory is formed with Dawson as its capital.
- June 17 - The U.S. Navy Hospital Corps, formerly the Hospital Corpsman, is established.
- June 21 - In a bloodless encounter, U.S. captures Guam from Spain.
- June 22 - The Kingdom of Dahomey, West Africa, becomes a French colony.
- June 22 - U.S. Marines land in Cuba.
- June 23 - International Olympic Committee is founded at the Sorbonne, Paris.
- June 24 - French president Marie François Carnot is assassinated.
- June 24 - British chemist Charles Romley Alder Wright who synthesized heroin dies at age 50.
- June 27 - Joshua Slocum from Briar Island, Nova Scotia completes first solo circumnavigation of the globe in a 36-foot gaff-rigged sloop oyster boat.

Blast from the Past—Atlantic Highland Style

Promoting the digitization of the Atlantic Journal

By Patty Bickauskas

As the Memorial Day weekend approaches, it seems that during this difficult time we may not be able to celebrate as in years past. I personally look forward to this weekend. From the Atlantic Highlands PBA Ball that kicks off the weekend on Friday night, to the parade down First Avenue. and the official opening of area beaches, it is an exciting time our little town. Tourist begin pouring. Businesses flourish. I am praying that we can get back to that point again, sooner than later.

But Memorial Day is not just about parties, parades and beaches. It is to honor our heroes that have fought in foreign and domestic wars over the years.

One of the first Memorial Days was celebrated in 1868. It was called Celebration Day to commemorate the men who fought during the Civil War. It was held at Arlington National Cemetery where over 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers were buried at that time. At the end the 1800's the name was changed to Memorial Day and was designated a legal holiday. As years progressed, more and more cities across America celebrated this day for soldiers who fought and died in all wars. Some southern states adapted another date for just the Confederate soldiers It was called Confederate Memorial Day and was celebrated on different dates depending on the state.

Below is part of an article from the June 2, 1898 Atlantic Highlands Journal about how exciting this weekend was back then. Even though this article is more about the fun side of that weekend, we will continue this tradition for years to come and continue to honor the brave men and women who served and died for our freedom.

Decoration Day

A Busy One

Throngs of people come down on boat and train

Many cottage hunters in town — Hotels besieged with guests — Hackmen reaps a harvest — Soda Fountains and Ice Cream Parlors busy

With a single exception, the opening of the railroad along the shore, Monday was the biggest Declaration Day in the history of Atlantic Highlands and it is doubtful even then the visitors in town outnumbered those of Monday. The town was in holiday attire as it had never been before. Banners floating everywhere and First Avenue a veritable mass of bunting and a field of flags. The majority of the business houses, the grocers, butchers, dry goods, etc., closed at noon. Only those keeping open that are in demand on holiday—soda fountains, candy and cigar stores, ice cream saloons, etc. All the morning boats and trains were crowded with visitors for Atlantic Highlands. And, so busy were the hackmen all day, that every one of them made enough to pay for their whole year's license. The real estate men were kept busy showing cottages and this made fat jobs for the hackmen. Several houses were rented and, when pending negotiations are all closed up, the day in that line will no doubt prove to be a record breaker. The hotel people were kept busy showing rooms and many guests were booked for the season.

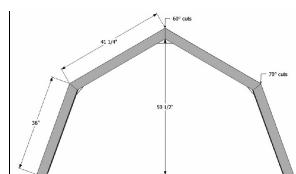
During the bicycle races in the afternoon, First Avenue was lined with people for several blocks on either side, but these did not represent half the

visitors that were in town. Go where you would, you would find strangers roaming about, taking in the beauties of nature in which Atlantic Highlands so richly abounds. Altogether, there must have been fully 2,000 people in town.

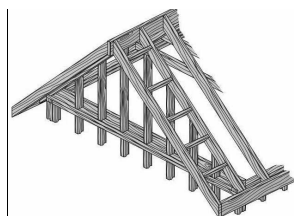
I hope you enjoyed the excerpt from this article. You can read all of it, and many more like it, under the ARCHIVES section of our website at www.AHhistory.org.

As previously mentioned in past articles, there is substantial cost associated with digitizing this newspaper. If you wish to help with a monetary donation, please go to the DONATE page of our website. Every little bit helps.

A Gambrel or a Gable?



Gambrel or Gable?

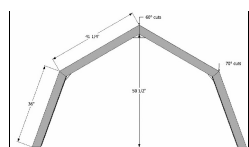


Gambrel or Gable?

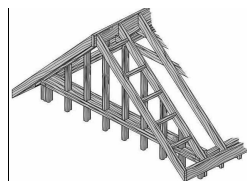
A gambrel or gambrel roof is a usually symmetrical two-sided roof with two slopes on each side. The upper slope is positioned at a shallow angle while the lower slope is steep. This design provides the advantages of a sloped roof while maximizing headroom inside the building's upper level and shortening what would otherwise be a tall roof.

A gable is the generally triangular portion of a wall between the edges of intersecting roof pitches. A gable wall or gable end more commonly refers to the entire wall, including the gable and the wall below it.

So...



Gambrel



Gable

Victorian Etiquette

Dinner



Invitations to a formal dinner should be sent at least 7-10 days before the event and should be replied to within a week of receipt. Unless there is illness, it is considered bad form to reject a dinner party invitation.

It was proper etiquette for guests to arrive for a function no later than 8:00 pm and for the dinner to be finished no later than 10:30 pm.

No single person at a dinner party should be shown favoritism. A husband and wife

are often separated so they can include others and make new friends. It was expected that no female guest would enter the dining room alone. According to tradition, a woman needed a man to "guide" her. Thus, after the butler formally announced "Dinner is served" to the waiting guests, each male guest — having already been informed of his partner — would offer his arm to the woman and guide her to her chair. The host would enter first, himself being partnered with the most esteemed and senior woman guest. Then the other paired guests would follow, according to the woman's rank, with the hostess entering and sitting last, the senior male guest on her arm.

When eating soup, it is proper to hold your soup spoon in your right hand while scooping the soup away from you. The spoon should never be placed directly into the mouth; rather, the soup should be gently tipped from the side of the spoon and poured into the mouth through an opening in the lips.

If a garnish doesn't come on top of your soup, you are expected to garnish it yourself. With the serving spoon, spoon a portion of the garnish directly onto your soup. Place any other garnishes only on your salad or bread plate. Once finished, put the serving spoon back on the garnish's underplate. Do not blow on your soup to cool it.

Only two soups were served per meal at a fancy dinner party. It would have been considered the height of good manners to try a little of each one.

Two types of fish were usually offered at a formal dinner party: one broiled, one lightly fried.

When served a half duck or a half chicken, a guest is expected to seamlessly use his knife and fork to cut the wing and leg away from the breast before he begins to eat any of the meal. (In the kitchen, every individual piece of lettuce in every salad would be inspected as even one lightly brown or wilted leaf or piece of fruit could be grounds for immediate dismissal.)

No matter how large a slice of potato, you were never to use a knife on a dish to cut the food if it could be done with simply a fork. As the 1886 manners guide *Etiquette: Rules & Usages of the Best Society* explains: "Everything that can be cut without using a knife should be eaten with the

fork alone.” And do not toy with your knife or any of your cutlery. One is not to fidget at a dinner party.

With Service à la Russe (in the Russian style) each dish was presented one at a time. However, an impressive dish such as pork shoulder would be shown to the guests for an appropriate appreciation, then taken to the sideboard or back to the kitchen for carving.

With the advent of Service à la Russe, table settings and table decor became all the more important as the cutlery was set out through the entire meal and not brought dish by dish. A knife, for example, was to be a proper half inch from the edge of the table. Etiquette books — which explained the purpose of each utensil — became popular as did the idea of a different wine with each course.

In the 19th century it was considered rude to cut meat into bite-sized pieces before eating. You were supposed to cut one bite-sized piece of meat, put down your knife, take a bite, then repeat.

One Victorian etiquette guide advised “Never embark on an orange” as it was considered rude to use fingers to peel fruit and there was not another way to get to an orange’s juice interior.

At a dinner party, you may not eat until your host picks up his fork to eat. Do not start before then unless your host insists that you begin eating; only then is it polite to eat. Similarly, your host will signal the end of the meal by placing his napkin on the table. Once the dinner is over, you should follow suit and place your napkin cleanly on the table to the left of your dinner plate. However, do not refold your napkin or crumple it up.

In Victorian paintings children are often portrayed as standing to eat their food while at the same table with adults. This was not only due to a basic necessity — not all families possessed enough chairs — but as a way to denote a lower status. It was also believed that eating while standing or sitting upright promoted digestion.

Baroness Staffe, the well-respected writer of French etiquette, warns hosts to never invite people richer than themselves to dinner. It would be the host’s duty to serve food and wines on the level to which the guests are accustomed, which would be difficult for some.

It was considered impolite to leave a single piece of food on the table. Once Service à la Russe was introduced, this was easier to avoid. However, if a

piece of food was left behind on a serving plate, it was the host’s job to beg a chosen guest to eat it. Not doing so would give the host bad luck, while following through was said to grant the guest good luck. Some particularly superstitious guests would save a choice morsel on their plate for last as a treat, hence the phrase “saving the best for last”.

As delicious as a dish might smell, it was considered incredibly rude for dinner guests to comment on the scents or sizes of the offered dishes. Even hosts were not allowed to comment, with the prevailing attitude being that of “what is done is done”.

While nowadays a child can leave the dinner table by politely asking to be excused, it was unacceptable that anyone would dare leave the table during a dinner. Until the meals was finished, it was required by etiquette that everyone stay seated, which meant that any bathroom visits would have to be done before or after the meal.

To show you are finished eating, place your fork and knife either straight up and down on the middle of the plate with the handles resting on the rim of the plate, or the fork and knife may be angled between the ten and four o’clock positions, handles on the rim. And never place your napkin on the plate!

Guests would be served dessert in the same order as they were presented their dinner. Black coffee was never served at a truly fashionable dinner table until after dessert was cleared away. Should a lady wish for a second glass of wine at this time, the gentleman nearest her may serve it — she was not permitted to serve herself. However, it was considered unseemly for a lady to require another glass of wine with dessert.

The word menu derives from the Latin word minor or minutus as in the “minutes” of a meeting. Menus are a gift to the guests of a feast or dinner party, as menus lay out the plan for the evening and allow guests to judge just how much of everything they want to eat. It was also a means of “showing off” the many exotic ingredients and/or methods of cooking the chef use.

After dinner, the women would head to the drawing room. The men would stay in the dining room. Only when everyone had left the dining room would maids be allowed to come upstairs and clear the table. Like children, the maids were to be seen and not heard.

Men were never to offer their arm to a lady who is not their immediate relative or wife. Men and women should never whisper together in public.

Tea Time

A true tea sandwich has the crusts removed only after the sandwich has been prepared, not before.



A courteous hostess would never ask her guests if they wanted another cup of tea. Instead, she would refill the guests’ cups until they told her they had enough. Leaving a cup empty without being told that the guest had finished was the height of poor taste.

There was an etiquette in which to eat the delicacies put out for afternoon tea. First, one enjoyed the savory items, followed by the scones, then the sweets.

In drinking tea, one first poured in the sugar, followed by lemon, then

milk. One never put in milk before the sugar or put the lemon and milk in together.

Stirring a cup of tea was to be done quietly by moving the teaspoon in a small arc back and forth. To let the teaspoon touch the side or rim of the cup was considered rude, as was drinking from a teacup with the spoon inside it. The spoon should be placed on its saucer with the end pointing in the same direction as the handle of the cup. The saucer should not be left on the table; rather the saucer comes with it. Do not, by any means, cradle the teacup if there is a handle.

There is a certain etiquette for eating a petit four depending on its size. Large petits fours that take more than two bites to eat should be eaten with a fork. Small petit fours of one or two bites are eaten with the fingers. Petits fours should be served in a paper wrapper to protect guests' fingers from the delicate frosting.

Breakfast

If breakfast is offered to guests late, it is the custom to precede the meal by sending, coffee, tea, and some eggs and rolls with jam or butter to the bedrooms of the family. In this case, it is likely that some family members will choose not to come down until much later, perhaps not until lunchtime. As breakfast was a less restrained and less formal meal, this was perfectly acceptable and polite.



Death in the Family



After someone in the family died, it was expected that the family should send a death notice to all friends and relatives on nice paper bordered in black. Other than visiting some close relatives, the family would not be seen in public so as to properly respect their grief. The family would not organize the funeral themselves; a trusted male friend would organize it.

PORTLAND POYNTS

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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 pm - 4:00 pm, April through December. Free admission, \$5 suggested donation. Self-guided tour.

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