



# Portland Poynts

The Chronicle of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society

July-August, 2021

27 Prospect Circle, P. O. Box 108, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716-0108 ♦ [www.AHhistory.org](http://www.AHhistory.org)

## BLAST FROM THE PAST- Atlantic Highlands Style

By Patty Bickauskas

This being our summer newsletter and it being July, I thought I would print some of the articles that pertained to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations. It is very interesting how some of the celebrations have changed over the years. From horse and bike races in the 1890s to dances in the 1950s. With the pandemic almost behind us, I hope that everyone will enjoy their 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations this year and have a happy and healthy summer!

### The Journal dated July 4, 1895

THE JOYOUS FOURTH. HOW THE DAY WILL BE CELEBRATED AT THIS PLACE.

Sporting Events

During the Day and Fireworks in the Evening —

The Band will play on the Bluff at the end of Fourth Avenue. Atlantic

Highlands expects a multitude of visitors on the

Fourth and is making preparation to entertain them in royal style. In addition to the permanent amusements, ice cream saloons, bathing pavilions, etc., some new features will be introduced. A program of sporting events has been arranged, most of which will take place on Valley Drive. The events are as follows:

9.30 am. — Horse racing on Valley Drive. The races will comprise both



running and trotting matches. Anyone having a swift animal, or one that he thinks is, can enter the race by paying the entrance fee, which goes to the winner in each event. Free to all explains the whole matter.

10:00 am. — Bicycle races on Valley Drive. 1st, 1/3 mile handicap, best 2 in 3 heats. 1st prize, \$35 diamond stud. 2nd race, 1/3 mile scratch, best 2 in 3 heats.

1st prize, gold ring, valued at \$10.

10:00 am. — Baseball game on grounds near First Baptist church.

11:00 am. — Cat boat race in charge of A. G Hall; also swimming match in charge of B. F. Champion. There will be a number of entries in each.

2:30 pm. — Baseball game on the grounds near the Baptist church, between Affinities and Acorns of Brooklyn.

In the evening there will be a display of Paine's fireworks at the foot of Fourth Avenue, in charge of E. H. Cook and Lewis Foster. A band stand is erected there from which the orchestra will discourse patriotic and other

popular airs.

(Ed. Note: The Strauss family and their visiting friends would most likely have attended these events.)

### The Journal dated July 11, 1929

Favored by delightful weather and the presence of a large crowd of visitors from adjacent neighborhoods as well as the usual holiday crowds from Manhattan and Brooklyn, the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration in Atlantic Highlands was a distinct success.

With the parade in the afternoon, the spectacular display of fireworks in the evening and the concert by the Lions band at Atlantic Park in the interval, the visitors had no lack of entertainment and they seemed to find it to their liking.

The mayor and members of the committee were well satisfied with the response to their efforts and it seems assured that the celebration will be an annual feature of the summer season hereafter.

The shores of the bay were lined with automobiles and spectators on foot to enjoy the fireworks' display, which was a feature of the evening. The fireworks were fired from a point on the Mandalay Pier from which they were clearly visible from the shore all the way from Gateway to Leonard. There were 28 set pieces in addition to the usual complement of bombs, mines and pin-wheels, making one of the most elaborate

exhibitions ever seen locally.

### The Journal dated July 1, 1955

AH Yacht Harbor July 4 Activities Include Fireworks!

The traditional 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend at the yacht harbor will be highlighted by fireworks display to be sponsored by the Yacht Club.

The display to be conducted by professionals will be staged after 10:00

pm, Sunday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Atlantic

Highlands Star fleet will give way to Comets this weekend. The Comet elimination series July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> will lead to the Comet territorials in Sandy Hook Bay off here July 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

The Northern POW Squadron will hold a rendezvous at the Basin with dinner, dance, predicted log race and beach party slated. E.C. Siekley, South Orange, is rendezvous chairman.

Hart Webber and his orchestra will play for another in the series of holiday weekend dances Saturday night in the club's quarters in the \$50,000 harbor administration building here.

P.C Sutcliffe, owner of the 'Moke Kopper Cup' is in charge of the log races Sunday morning. The beach party is 2:00 pm Sunday. 🍷



The Journal dated July 5, 1959  
JULY 4 DISPLAY TO LIGHT THE  
SKY

Neighboring communities are certain to be aware that the borough is celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

A traditional display of fireworks will illuminate Sandy Hook Bay to signal another patriotic observance by the Bayshore town. The spectacle, scheduled to run for more than an hour, will begin and 9:30 pm, harbor commission officials have promised. The fireworks will be set off from the barge, anchored off the basin's six piers in the shelter of the mile-long stone breakwater. Commissioners again have emphasized that every one will enjoy the front row seat for the fireworks. Parking areas can accommodate more than 1,000 cars. Others will view the excitement from the approaches to the million-dollar marina.

So what did you think? A gold stud valued at \$35.00?! A diamond ring valued at \$10.00?! And where the heck in this town are they able to accommodate 1,000 cars??? A few things to note, the location of Valley Drive for the horse and bike races back in the 1890s is now Highway 36. Comet territorials are sailboat races and log races are boat races. The "Moke Kopper Cup" I am assuming would be some type of trophy. One article that I am unable to include was dated July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1964. The cover page of that day's paper was the complete Declaration of Independence.

I hope you enjoyed this little glimpse into the past. For more articles like this and other interesting information from our town newspaper, please go to our website and [www.AHhistory.org](http://www.AHhistory.org), and click on the ARCHIVES header.

## Granny's Attic at the Strauss Mansion



In the second half of the 1950s, New Jersey home ownership exploded. During the next several decades, fashions changed dramatically. What was IN a few years later was OUT. Belongings were stored in attics and basements that came to be known as Granny's Attic.

The Strauss Mansion Museum was no different. But the time had come to clear out items that were damaged or no longer in usable condition in the historic room displays.

Board Members Ken Frantz, Greg Caggiano, Roy Delloso, Joanne Delloso, Ben Ascone, and Society volunteers Justin Rodriguez, Jake Reid, Jason Korloff, Brooke McKenna, Enzo Lopez and Matt Arcati formed a dedicated...and muscular group...that streamed and sweated through the third floor and basement storage areas to cart out those items that were no longer usable.

In one day, they accomplished what might be called a miracle...disposing of an awesome collection of unserviceable materials.

Thank you, all of you, for your strenuous efforts in making space for new exhibits in the Strauss Mansion Museum.



We have come a long way from this time last year when our sole venture out was to the local grocery store or some takeout food if we were lucky. New Jersey is recovering after more than 1,000,000 cases and 24,000 deaths from Covid 19.

The Board of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society salutes all our first responders and front-line workers who risked their lives everyday to make our lives safer and a little bit easier. Now it is time not only to remember what has transpired but to realize the opportunity we have in front of us to build a brighter future together.

I encourage everyone to check our website at [www.AHhistory.org](http://www.AHhistory.org) and to sign up for our emails to discover how the Society is reopening with Guest Speakers, Music at the Mansion hosted by Audra Mariel, a Vintage Baseball Game, the Arts and Craft Fair, a lunch cruise on the Navesink Queen, the Flea Market and a full docket of spooky happenings in the October.

We wish you a safe and prosperous summer and invite you to visit the Strauss Mansion on Sundays from 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm for a self-guided tour or indulge yourself with our new Audio Tour narrated by Board member Greg Caggiano.

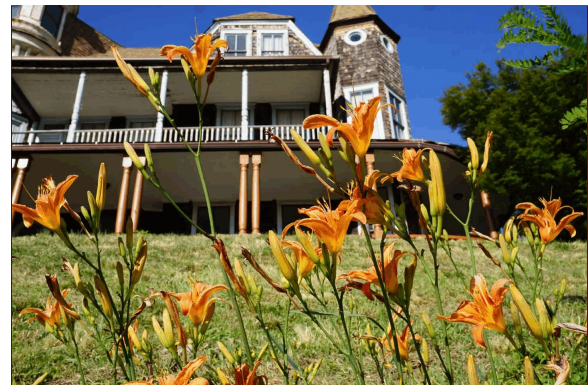
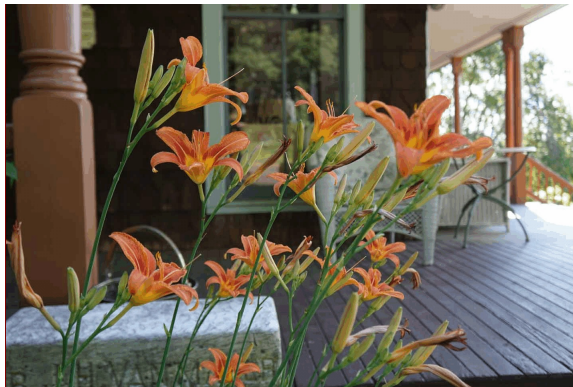
Thank you.

*Ken Frantz*

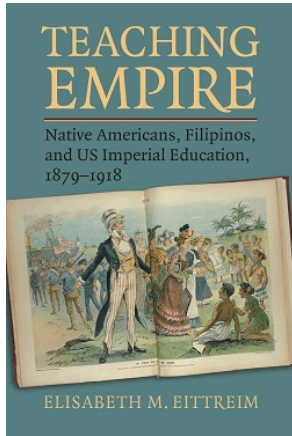
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at the Strauss Mansion



## GUEST SPEAKER Elisabeth Eittreim

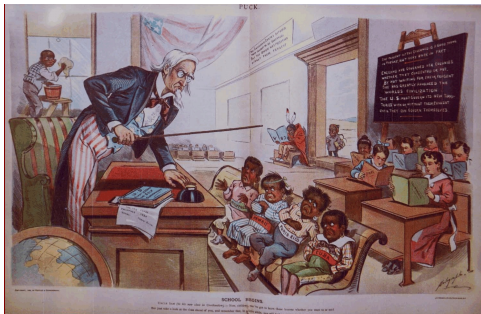


On a pleasant mid-June evening, two dozen people gathered on the Strauss Mansion porch for the first in this year's Guest Speaker programs. Atlantic Highlands resident Elisabeth Eittreim discussed her book, Teaching



Empire: Native Americans, Filipinos, and US Imperial Education, 1879-1918.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the U.S. government viewed education as a way of civilizing “others” under its sway — American Indians and Filipinos. Teaching Empire considers how teachers took up this task, first at the Carlisle Indian Boarding School in Pennsylvania in 1879, and then in a school system set up amid an ongoing rebellion launched by Filipinos. Drawing upon the records of 55 teachers at Carlisle and 33 sent to the Philippines, her book reveals the challenges of translating imperial policy into practice, even for those most dedicated to the imperial mission.



These educators, working on behalf of the U.S. government, sought to meet the expectations of bureaucrats and supervisors while contending with leadership crises on the ground. Their stories show the problems common to all classrooms — how to manage students and convey knowledge — complicated by their unique circumstances, particularly the military conflict in the

Philippines. Eittreim's research shows the dilemma presented by these schools' imperial goal: “pouring in” knowledge that purposefully dismissed and undermined the values, desires, and protests of those being taught. Entangled in U.S. ambitions, racist norms, and gendered assumptions, teachers exhibited significant agency, wielding their authority with students and the institutions they worked for and negotiating their roles as powerful purveyors of cultural knowledge, often reinforcing but rarely challenging the then-dominant understanding of “civilization.”

Examining these teachers' attitudes and performances, close-up and in-depth over four decades of Carlisle's operation, Eittreim's study offers rare insight into the personal, institutional, and cultural implications of education deployed in the service of U.S. expansion with consequences that reach well beyond the imperial classrooms of the time.

Future guest speaker events will be posted on the Society's website, [AHhistory.org](http://AHhistory.org).

# A Summer Day at The Towers

By Walter Johnson

The first weekend in June, New Jersey experienced a heat wave with air temperatures exceeding 90 degrees. I was at the Strauss Mansion before visiting hours and before the air conditioning unit kicked in. The first floor was comfortable with the ceiling fan rotating. The second floor was warm. The third floor, which would have been the servants' quarters, was hot and stifling.

As I stood on the rear porch sipping a cold drink and relishing the occasional slight breeze, I began thinking how the Strauss family and their friends would have functioned in this kind of weather. They would come to Atlantic Highlands to escape the hot, humid conditions of a summertime Manhattan which did not know the invention of air conditioning. Just as that day was hot and humid.

Standing there in my short-sleeved cotton shirt and jeans, I reflected that Victorian clothing styles would have required that ladies wear stockings, drawers, chemise, corset, under petticoat, hoop, over petticoat, light weight cotton day wrapper dress, and veiled gardening hat. Gentlemen would wear a shirt, tie, vest, coat and hat. It's no wonder the ladies would retire to their rooms during the midday heat, probably to remove some of those oppressive layers to cool down and refresh themselves, and the gentlemen would do likewise in their rooms. Admittedly, Victorian clothing would have been made from breathable natural fabrics rather than the synthetics of today.



The Strauss "summer cottage" was designed with transoms above the doors to many of the rooms and doors connecting all the rooms to provide ventilation. Privacy was obviously not a consideration. An open tower (no longer in existence) on the third floor acted as a chimney to bring the fresh, cool evening air into the entire building, a remarkable architectural design for the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Later in the day toward sunset, a cooling breezing picked up. This would have been the time the ladies and gentlemen would gather on the first and second floor porches for drinks prior to sitting down to sumptuous dinner. I headed home to a relaxing al fresco dinner, grateful I wasn't burdened by all those layers of clothing.

# Lighthouses: LARGE and small

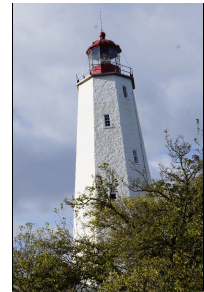
By Greg Caggiano

Everyone knows about Twin Lights and the Sandy Hook Lighthouse, but not many people realize there is actually a third lighthouse still standing in the Bayshore area: the Conover Beacon of Leonardo. A light has stood at this spot since the 1850s, operating in conjunction with the two more prominent lighthouses mentioned and also the Chapel Hill Rear Range Light in Middletown (that one is still standing as well, but is almost unrecognizable as a private residence). This current iteration pictured dates to 1941. Prior to that, it had been constructed of wood. The Conover and Chapel Hill lights were both discontinued in 1957. Approaching ships would have seen both lights aligning with each other, one at beach level with the other farther up on the hill. Four lighthouses (and five total lights) are all within 15 minutes of each other. The waters of Sandy Hook Bay had long been considered treacherous. There are over a hundred documented shipwrecks in nearby waters according to the New Jersey Maritime Museum, the earliest of which was the 130 ton, 18 gun private ship of war Castel Del Rey, captained by Otto Van Tuyl, on December 19, 1705.



## Sandy Hook Lighthouse

A little late on Black History Month, but did you know there is actually a slavery connection to the Sandy Hook Lighthouse? But it's not what you think! During the American Revolution, the area immediately surrounding it was known as "Refugee Town". It was here where Loyalist sympathizers (white and black) could live in safety with protection from the British army, including large numbers of escaped slaves. British operations in Monmouth County included raiding parties by the "Black Brigade", former slaves paid by the British and considered part of the regular army. They were led by Colonel Titus Tye, a Colts Neck slave who walked to Virginia to join the British under Lord Dunmore's proclamation and promise of freedom. He returned three years later in charge of his own force in 1778 and fought at the Battle of Monmouth. He also squared off with Joshua Huddy in a match straight out of Hollywood. This Lighthouse was a literal beacon for ships, and also one of hope for those looking to escape. While Revolutionary War activity is well documented and marked on Sandy Hook, I cannot recall any nods to this very important part of history. More fascinating information about this time period can be found in Michael Adelberg's *The American Revolution in Monmouth County: Theater of Spoil and Destruction*.



Greg Caggiano is a historian who has served on the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society Board of Directors since 2014. He lectures at Brookdale Community College through their Lifelong Learning Department. Be on the lookout for his Slavery in New Jersey class which is offered twice a year.

# Atlantic Highlands Chamber of Commerce

By Lori Anne Oliwa, Executive Director



The Atlantic Highlands Chamber of Commerce is preparing a full roster of events in 2021. It is LA implementing new initiatives including the Women In Business Committee and the Lunch & Learn Education Series.

Popular events returning for the 2021 season include the Atlantic Highlands Farmers Market every Friday June - October; the Summer Classic Car Show on Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm; the Fall Classic Car Show on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, and the Taste of Atlantic Highlands Restaurant Tour and Business Showcase on Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 - 4:00 pm. Rain dates for all events are one week later.

For additional information and sponsorship availability, contact [info@AtlanticHighlands.org](mailto:info@AtlanticHighlands.org) or call the Chamber at 732-872-8711.

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## Curtain Up



Question: How do you get curtains for windows that are 8½ feet tall?

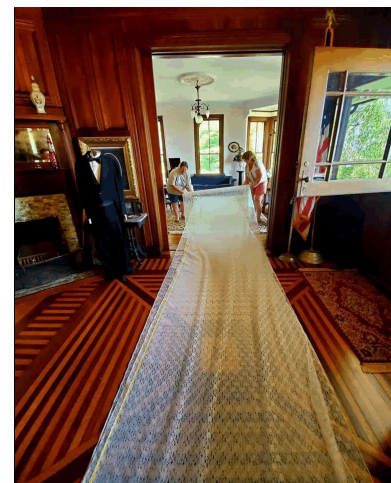


Answer: You purchase the material and you make them.

That is what dedicated Atlantic Highlands Historical Society Board members Patty Bickauskas and Joanne Dellosso are doing. The Society recently purchased 150 feet of ivory lace curtain material and the two of them are cutting and sewing the curtains to cover the eleven windows in the parlor and the dining room. To handle such a project, Joanne is preparing the curtains for the parlor windows and Patty is making the dining room window curtains.

In the days before air conditioning — or electricity for that matter — “summer cottages” were designed with huge double-hung windows to allow ocean breezes to cool the high-ceilinged rooms. The new curtains will enhance the look of the rooms and restore the elegant Victorian ambiance that would have prevailed during the Strauss’ occupancy.

Patty isn’t sure how long this project will take but she is hopeful it will be finished soon.





Back in 1895... the Strauss family would have been reading about...



July 10-11 ~ The Doukhobors' pacifist protests culminate in the "burning of the arms" in South Caucasus.

July 15 ~ English cricketer Archie MacLaren scores 424 innings, a record that lasted until 1994.

July 31 ~ The Basque Nationalist Party is founded by Sabino Arana.

August 7 ~ The Ajaz Tower, a symbol of the Slovenes, is erected on Mount Triglav.

August 10 ~ First indoor promenade concert is held at the Queens Hall in London.

August 19 ~ American frontier murderer and outlaw, John Wesley Hardin, who claimed to have killed 42 men, is himself killed by off-duty policeman John Selman in an El Paso, Texas saloon.

August 29 ~ Northern Rugby Football Union is formed consisting of 21 rugby clubs, leading to the creation of the sport of rugby league football.

August 29 ~ The Mat Salleh Rebellion in North Borneo is incited against the British North Borneo Chartered Company.

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## New Exhibits At the Mansion

### Memphis Pig Out Sign



The Memphis Pig Out was a beloved restaurant that operated on First Avenue in Atlantic Highlands from 1985 - 2017. It was one of the first dedicated BBQ restaurants in New Jersey and was immensely popular with visitors and locals alike. The building dates back to Prohibition when it operated as a

speakeasy and is now the site of the Atlantic House. Owners Mark and Connie Strassburg found a hidden stash of liquor bottles in the basement during early renovations.

### Ellie Huson's Chair

Ellie Huson was the first ever customer of the Memphis Pig Out when it opened in 1985. She returned to dine there every week, in the same chair, until her death in 2009 at the age of 106. Huson was a bit of a local celebrity and her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and ensuing birthdays were celebrated by many at the Pig Out. Ellie was a raconteur who met Theodore Roosevelt and was gifted a "Teddy Bear" from him when she was a child. The "Teddy Bear" is currently in the Society's collection and will be on display in the near future.



**UPCOMING**



# EVENTS

The Atlantic Highlands Historical Society Presents

## Arts & Crafts Festival

Sponsored by Mary Ellen and Eamonn Sweeney,  
Monmouth Homes and Resources Real Estate  
141 First Avenue, Atlantic Highlands, NJ  
732-337-9241 - mesweeney@resourcesrealestate.com





**Saturday, July 17**  
**10 AM - 4 PM**

Veteran's Park, opposite Borough Hall on First Avenue

**More than 50 vendors!**

Join us for a day full of fun, arts and crafts, special food, and community celebration in Atlantic Highlands. That's when our Annual Arts and Crafts Festival, one of the longest running in eastern New Jersey, will be held at Veterans Park. Unique jewelry, watercolors, prints, ceramics, woodwork, fabric and floral displays, photographs, decorative and gift items, and other original artistic creations will be shown and sold by dozens of artists.

The Atlantic Highlands Historical Society Presents



**PLAY BALL!**

Third Annual



## Vintage Baseball Game

Monmouth Furnace vs. Brooklyn Atlantics  
at Firemans Field, W. Highlands Ave. and Ave. C





**Saturday, July 24**  
**11 AM (gates open at 10)**

This day of fun for the whole family will feature a "base ball" game played by 1860's rules, games for children, and entertainment. Snack Shack will be open.

# MUSIC

**AT THE STRAUSS MANSION**

**July 15<sup>th</sup>** ~ Timothy Ogunbiyi Trio,  
Trio Joe - fundraiser

**July 29<sup>th</sup>** ~ Twin Peaks with  
Rolando Alvarado, Martin Howth  
to open

**August 25<sup>th</sup>** ~ Timothy Ogunbiyi  
Trio

### Speakers

**July 21<sup>st</sup>** ~ William Wilson: The  
History of Monmouth Park

**August 18<sup>th</sup>** ~ John Barrow:  
Wreckers—The Land Pirates of  
Monmouth County

### Jersey Journeys

**August 14<sup>th</sup>** ~ Navesink Queen  
Lunch Cruise

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See details on [Ahhistory.org](http://Ahhistory.org) Calender of  
Events.

# MUSIC

## at the Strauss Mansion



To call this group “singers” would be a major mistake. In truth, they are story-tellers weaving fascinating tales set to foot-tapping music.

On a clear, cool, early summer evening, illuminated by Tiki torches and a fire pit, Fire in the Garden — a Keyport-based musical group consisting of Alissa Pecora, Frank Patrouch and Al Milewski —

serenaded dozens of music lovers for two hours from the rear porch of the Strauss Mansion with a pastiche of ethnic folk songs and original compositions. With clear diction, each member presented not songs, but stories of love, love lost, sadness and murder, all set to music.

While electronically enhanced to provide acoustic coverage to the back lawn, the sound was maintained at a discrete level that made the singing and playing extremely personal and intimate.

During the second set under a darkening nighttime sky, Alissa Pecora lit up the lawn with a sultry rendering of Jessica Rabbit’s song *Why Don’t You Do Right?* (from the 1988 award-winning live-action/animated comedy/mystery film *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* You remember that scene, don’t you? Of course you do!)

Fire in the Garden also generously provided several copies of their CDs for sale with proceeds going to the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society.

## 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 per person suggested donation. Audio self-guided tour available.

### VOLUNTEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Patty Bickauskas

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Bette VanDeventer ~ Secretary

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### PORTLAND POYNTS

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# MEMBERSHIP

Join the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. Your membership supports the outreach and educational programs of the Society.

Membership categories:

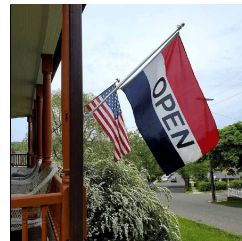
- ★ \$10 student
- ★ \$25 individual
- ★ \$50 family
- ★ \$100 supporter
- ★ \$200 sustaining
- ★ \$500 benefactor

Join online by clicking on

**MEMBERSHIP**

then clicking on

**CREDIT CARD ORDERS.**



The Strauss Mansion is open for Sunday visits, 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm, April - December. Audio self-guided tours of this amazing 21-room “summer cottage” are available. Related books and other items can be purchased in the Visitors Center. Free admission; a \$5 per person donation is suggested to support the Society’s programs and outreach.