



# Port Norris

# Be a Part of History Today

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Port Norris Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the history of our unique village, located in Commercial Township in Cumberland County, NJ.

### Current Happenings:

**Next meeting: August 11, 2015 • 7 pm @ 1723 Main Street, Port Norris**

**Heritage Day August 22nd** The Bayshore Center is presenting its 3rd Annual Heritage Day on Saturday, August 22nd from 11-4:00 in Bivalve.

[Read More.](#)

### Special Treat: Oyster Boats Under Sail

Click the link to a Youtube video of oyster boats under sail in the Delaware Bay circa 1900. This video was taken by my father's father, Leslie Thomas Hollinger, owner of Miller and Hollinger Oyster Company.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjrKIED\\_6rc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjrKIED_6rc)

Thank you so much Tom Hollinger and the Hollinger family for this video link.



### Moment in History: The Palomino - 1686 Main Street



- It was built in 1850
- In 2002 the present day renovations stopped.
- **NOW** Currently for sale as is.

The history below is the closest we have. It's made of some facts and mainly memories of locals. If you know of any facts that are inaccurate, we will be happy to make corrections. Please let us know if you have additional information or photos to add to the story.

During the teens and 1920's the building known as the Palomino was a private home owned by C.W. Hand. Mr. Hand was an oysterman and owned the commercial garage in

Port Norris where he sold Dodge Brothers Trucks and Graham Brothers Trucks.

Jack Grace married C.W. Hand's daughter and took up residence at this house in the 1930's. Mr. Grace also became proprietor of the commercial garage and changed it to a Chevrolet Agency.

Jack Grace sold the property to Lew and Jane Mathis in the late 1930s. Lew had a hamburger and sandwich shop next to the K.P. Hall. Jane was a school teacher.

Lew Mathis expanded the building by building a restaurant on the west side. Some upstairs bedrooms were offered for rent. Lew Mathis loved horses, and named his restaurant "The Palomino."

Mr. Mathis and his son Wilson were very active with the Port Norris harness race track on West Yockwock Road. They helped organize the Port Norris Harness and Saddle Horse Association. They also helped form the Port Norris Rodeo and Western Sports, held annually at the race track.

In the late 1940's Mr. Mathis rented the restaurant to Sal DiGrazio. He ran it as Sal's Sub Shop. Millie Perry worked with Mr. DiGrazio at the sub shop. After a short time Sal left the business to



open a grocery store and gas station on West Main St. This was known as Sal's and Joe's. Joe D'amico ran the back of the building as a car repair shop and Sal had a grocery store in the front.

The next occupant was Bill Mulford. He was a bread delivery man and the Palomino was on his route. He lasted only a short time.

Jane Adams was the next to operate the Palomino. Beatrice O'Brien and Edna Turpin worked with her with Agnes Hruza being the evening waitress.

Jane used the living room and dining room of the main house to accommodate larger groups and functions. The Rotary and Oysterman's Association used to hold their meetings and dinners there.

The Palomino thrived under Jane Adams, with good food, milk shakes and soda bar. The Palomino was mobbed by young and old alike.

Jane Adams left around 1952-53 and purchased Linda Lee's (Jefferies) Sweet Shop, she ran this as a very successful restaurant for many years.

Lena and Richard Hughes ran the Palomino next to around 1963.

Along with being a great cook, Lena was a good business person. With the jute box, pinball machines, shuffle board, and fountain service there was a steady stream of kids headed to the Palomino after school.

Oystermen in Port Norris got up very early in the morning; Kenny Robbins (an oysterman) had a key to the Palomino and would have the coffee ready when Lena arrived each morning.

During evening hours the main rooms of the house were used for dining and larger groups. The teenagers were kept in the restaurant area. The Rotary and Oysterman's Association continued meeting there. A piano was used for singing and entertainment, Maryann Butts played the piano. This was the Golden Era of the Palomino.

Next to run the Palomino was Edna Turpin. She ran it as Edna's Restaurant but everyone still called it "The Palomino" Edna continued the tradition of great food, a gathering place for teen-agers and catering to banquets, Rotary Etc. Many young girls got their start working here.

Edna ran the restaurant to around 68-69.

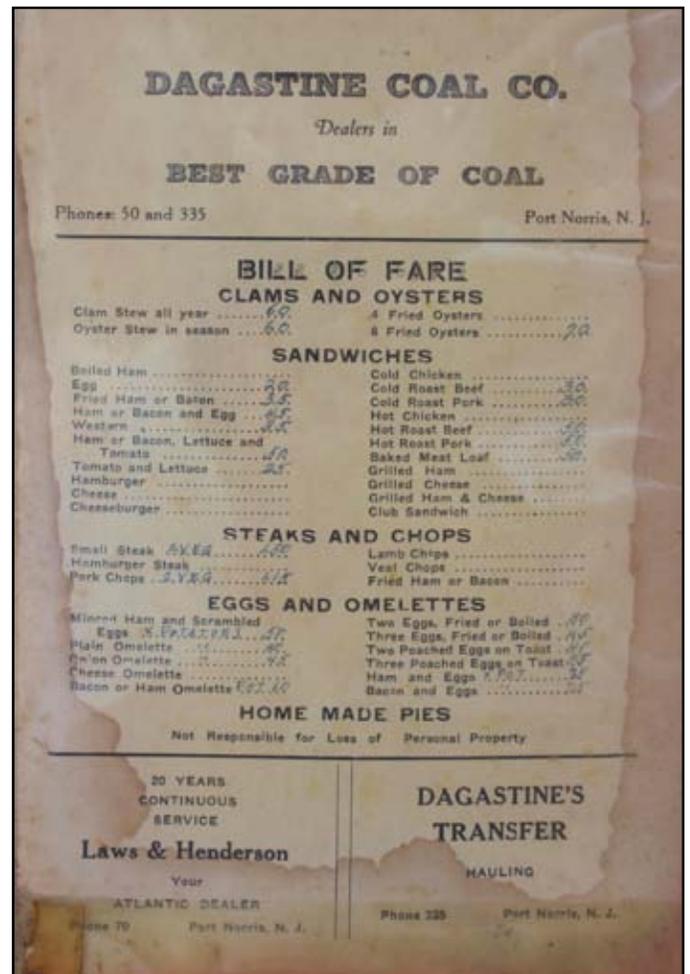
The last proprietor of the Palomino was Roy Hall. He ran the business for a few short years with his daughter being a waitress. When Mr. Hall left, the Palomino was closed - never to open again.

Jim Hoper was a long time resident of the Palomino, having moved here from Virginia. He was an oysterman, commercial duck hunter an excellent poker player. He was known as Diamond Jim, for the huge Diamond Ring he always wore.

Jane Mathis continued to live at the Palomino until her death a few years ago.

Almost everyone in town from the 1930's to the 1970's has stories and memories of the Palomino. It was the hub of activity during this time.

*Thank you Dick Smith for gathering all the information.*



**Notes from Jim Robbins:** The restaurant was added on when Jim was about 8, it was built by Norman Oliver, carpenter and fireman, and a man named Taylor built the foundation, he was a mason.

Ted Torkelly, truck driver for Dagastines lived in the building out back, no facilities much, just 2 rooms. Outhouses only.

There was a fancy dining room.

Adam Massey an insurance salesman, and his sister Jane, were two of the last to live there.



## Personal Stories: The Palomino - 1686 Main Street

**Sam Ricci** - I can remember when I was a kid, I would ride my bike from Dragston, where we lived, to meet my cousin, Jim Dagastine. We would have lunch at the Palomino every time. Our favorite was a hamburger sub and a cherry coke. We marveled at the 4 hamburgers that Lena Hughes stuffed into the sub roll. After lunch we would play the pin ball machines. I don't know how many times I tilted the machines. It was a convenient place to meet; especially since my puppy-love girlfriend lived on the same block and there was always a chance that she would show up. Occasionally, one of us would get courageous and ride over to Bill Sweenys' store and buy a pack of cigarettes. If you could reach over the counter with your money, he would sell you the cigarettes. That was always a tense moment for me because some of my older family members smoked, legally. We would ride over behind the old post office where there was a stand of bamboo and we would smoke the whole pack. I was 13 or 14 then and smoking hasn't seemed to stunt my growth! They are great memories. Thank you for allowing me to re-call them again.

**Carole Robbins** recalls that the Rotary used their meetings once a month, 1955-58 and her friend Maryann Butts played piano. She started when she was in 7-8th grade into high school until the Rotary moved to Jane Adams Resturant.

Carole also recalls the subs were the best. They were very generous subs and you knew they were good when her grandmom approved.

When **Jim Robbins** could drive and had a job he would eat his meals there. Teresa Demeco was the cook then, most of the cooking was in the back, and you had to go through the kitchen to go the rest room. Jim Hopper lived up stairs. He was an oystermen, he was from Maryland. He had a sister ship to the Meerwald. Jim's favorite meal was a hamberger steak with mashed potatoes or fries. Mid 50's.

**Norman Cobb** remembers he would save out from his paper route to get the chocolate milkshakes couple times a week, for just 20 cents each. Millie Perry was working there at that time. The Palomino also had a phone that could be used to make any local call and speak to anyone you wanted for just 5 cents. Norman would call a young lady in Haleyville when he could.

**Barbara Adams** and Kay Hoffman were best friend and always together. They would go to the restaurant, since Barbara's mom worked there, where Millie would let them make their own HUGE sundaes that they would sit and eat. Then they would frequent the penny weighing scales after all that ice cream. Barbara also comments that during those years kids didn't have a lot to do like today. The Palomino was THE place to go and hang out. Sometimes kids came by for lunch and be a little short on money. Millie would make up the difference from her own pocket.

Later when Jane Adams took over the restaurant, she kept the same menu but added her Navy Bean Soup and Spaghetti. Apparently they were quite successful because when they were able to afford their first trip to Florida, she referred to that trip as the "Navy Bean and Spaghetti" trip.

**There seem to be endless stories of that place in those days. If you have one to share please send us an e-mail.**

Philoemina Galiyano, a PNHS Legend, worked at the Palomino before she had the luncheonette. This plate was recently acquired from her estate. This plate used first at the Palomino and then Westside Luncheonette.

**Pickings of the Month June 30, 1888** A large fishing party, among whom were Dr. H.C. Fithian, Samuel Robbins and others of this place, were taken to Fortescue yesterday afternoon by W.L. Hand in his big hack.

**July 25, 1888** A number of our oystermen have had a look at their oysters lying in the different places in the cove, and all report that they are going out of their milk as a general thing, and the few that are already out of their milk are looking well and healthy. Some of them, especially in deep water, are fat, and the prospects now are that the season will be a good one. See More Pickings at <http://www.historicportnorris.org/pickings.htm>



### IN THE NEWS

The Port Norris Historical Society Recognized **Matthew Burns** For Outstanding Efforts in History for 2014-2015 Academic Year at the Port Norris Middle School June 17, 2015

**Legends of Port Norris 2015** In 2008, the Port Norris Historical Society began a yearly tradition of honoring those who have made a significant impact on our community. Honorees come from three categories: 19th Century, 20th Century, and Living Legends. Be they business owners, community leaders, or simply great citizens, they represent what is great about Port Norris. Nominations for Legends

of 2015 are due August 11, 2015. Please email us if you have questions. To see more about the program and download the nomination form. [Click here.](#)

### SAVE THE DATE: September 13, 2015 • 3:00 - 6:00 PM

**Meet the Artist Deborah Waddington Smith FUND RAISER** All proceeds go to the Delaware Bay Watermen’s Memorial DONATION Adults \$50.00 Learn more about the memorial and how to get your ticket to Deborah’s art studio @ <http://www.historicportnorris.org/watermen.htm>

### Membership and Renewal for 2015

If you are not a member, we would love to add your name to our growing list of members. Please give some thought to joining the PNHS. Click here to **renew or join**, <http://www.historicportnorris.org/membership.htm>

Thank you for your support. Membership is key to applying for grants as well as your dollars help us continue with all of our endeavours.



### See us on Facebook and our website [historicportnorris.org](http://www.historicportnorris.org)

If you are getting this email from a friend and would like to be added to our list, please [click here](#) and we will add you. If we received your email at one of our events and you do not wish to receive this newsletter, click here [web@historicportnorris.org](mailto:web@historicportnorris.org), we will remove you from the list. We do not sell or share your email with anyone!



### NORRIS ASKS

## Where was the “Old High School” located?

*See answer below*

Officers  
Rachel Cobb, President  
Richard Smith, Vice-President  
Alvina Baum, Secretary  
Robin Berry, Assoc. Secretary  
Liz Hoffman, Treasurer

Trustees  
Rev. E. Barnes  
Eileen Bernhardt  
Virginia Campbell  
Joanne Hickman  
Sam Ricci

