



# 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:

**PNHS Next meeting: February 9, 2016** • 1723 Main Street

**SPECIAL TIME: 6:30 PM** We are trying "Winter Hours", so everyone can get home a little earlier.

## Boy Scouting in Port Norris

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is one of the largest organizations in the United States. Almost everyone has heard of the BSA. At the January meeting, two former Port Norris Boy Scouts Norman Cobb and Jim Robbins, shared their memories.

Boy Scouts were generally 12 and 13 years old and the Explorer Scout program was built around the idea of advanced outdoor activities going beyond what the younger boys were able to do.

Norman brought the Explorer Scout uniform that he had worn while an Explorer Scout from 1951-1954. It is still in very good shape. The Explorer Scout program was revamped in 1944, and the distinctive uniform and rules for advancement were established. In some ways, it was a new Explorer Scout program. (Read more about the program at: [seniorsscoutinghistory.org/seniorsscoutsite/explorerscouts.html](http://seniorsscoutinghistory.org/seniorsscoutsite/explorerscouts.html))

Norman was very proud of his uniform. He was the third person to own it. It was originally worn by Hershel Terry, Jr. until he went into the service. Hershel passed it on to Ty Cobb, Norman's brother, and it was eventually handed down to Norman.

All Scout meetings were held at the Port Norris Express building on Main Street. It is believed that this building had been a barracks at the Millville Airport and was moved to Main Street. It was Post 21. The scout leaders at the time were Hershel Terry, Sr. from Port Norris, Dave Fithian, from Beaver Dam, and Bill Davis of Millville. Hershel's wife, Lillian, and Bill's wife were involved with the Girl Scouts. Lillian's brother Sam Riley was a Boy Scout leader.



Anna DeFabrites, Hershel Terry, Jr.'s niece, shares in the moment that Norman Cobb donates his Explorer uniform, to the PNHS Collection.

One of the objectives of the Explorers was to teach respect and good behavior in the young men. They met once a week and learned other necessary lessons like how to take care of a snake bite. A couple of times they held square dances to raise money for community projects.

Norman's fondest memories were the summer camping trips. They went to the Lehigh River near Hickory Run State Park in Pennsylvania. They kept the food cold by putting it in metal cans in the river. The butter got so hard they could barely spread it. The river was that cold. Hand pulled cable cars were used to move across the river.

Norman would go ahead to the camp site to set up for the first meal. Stew was the usual menu. During the week they did get a break from cooking their own food and went into the town of Waverly for milkshakes.

Back in Port Norris, the Explorers helped paint and clean at the new Girl Scout building, the Union House, in Millville. The Girl Scouts also came to their building in Port Norris for a social. When the Explorers were having an event at their building, they would ask Norman if his Mom would make homemade donuts. She would make 5 to 6 dozen donuts for 20 people.



The Port Norris Historical Society has the original sign for Post 21. It hung on the Port Norris Express building.



Jim Robbins with his brother Jobie behind him at Boy Scout Camp.

**Back Row** (L-R): 1. ??, 2. ??, 3. ??, 4. ??, 5. Franklin Sockwell, 6. Charles Kesler

**Middle Row** (L-R): 1. ??, 2. Elmer Warren, 3. ??, 4. ??, 5. ??, 6. ??, 7. James ("Clamete") Nichols, 8. Charles Plummer

**Front Row** (L-R): 1. Jimmy (James) Nichols (holding Flag), 2. ??, 3. ??, 4. Jimmy (James) Robbins, 5. ??, 6. Lee (Leamy) Sockwell, 7. Stultz Morgan, 8. Don Berry, 9. Jobie (Joseph) Robbins

If you recognize anyone in the photo, please let us know. [pnhs@historicportnorris.org](mailto:pnhs@historicportnorris.org)

## Pickings of the Month

**Jan 16, 1888** A large party of ladies and gentlemen of this village went to Dividing Creek last Thursday afternoon on a skating party.

**Jan 25, 1888** The cold snap has frozen the pond over nicely, making ice 5 inches thick, and a number of our citizens have been filling their ice houses.

The extremely the cold weather of the last few days has closed Maurice River at this place, it being frozen from shore to shore, and a number of men can be seen fishing.

See More Pickings at [historicportnorris.org/pickings.htm](http://historicportnorris.org/pickings.htm)

Overall, there were 8 or 9 boys in this group. They included, John Laws, Leon Hunter, George Henderson John Lee and Norman Cobb.

The Boy Scouts used the same Port Norris Express building, Post 21, for their head quarters as well. For Jim, he was a Explorer Scout for one summer, because he had to go to work.

Jim Robbins was a scout from a early age. Jim also recalls camping a couple of times. Sam Riley was his scout master. One of the local camping sites, was on Strawberry Ave. where they had a place they could put their tents. Another place was a wooded area in Cedarville. He too, was very fond of the camping. Jim says he was a very picky eater until he got into camping. He would never eat cabbage, but then at camp, he ate it, and he really did like it. Scouting was a great experience.

There also were Explorer Girls Scouts. They would attend social functions with the boys, but no camping! When Jim finds his gear, and more pictures he will share them with us. We would love to hear from others who have stories and photos to share. Boy and Girl Scouts, all are welcome to share.

Thank you Norman and Jim for your memories.



## Moment in History: August 1973

Our question in the December newsletter was “Name the TV movie filmed, in part, in Port Norris areas in 1974”.

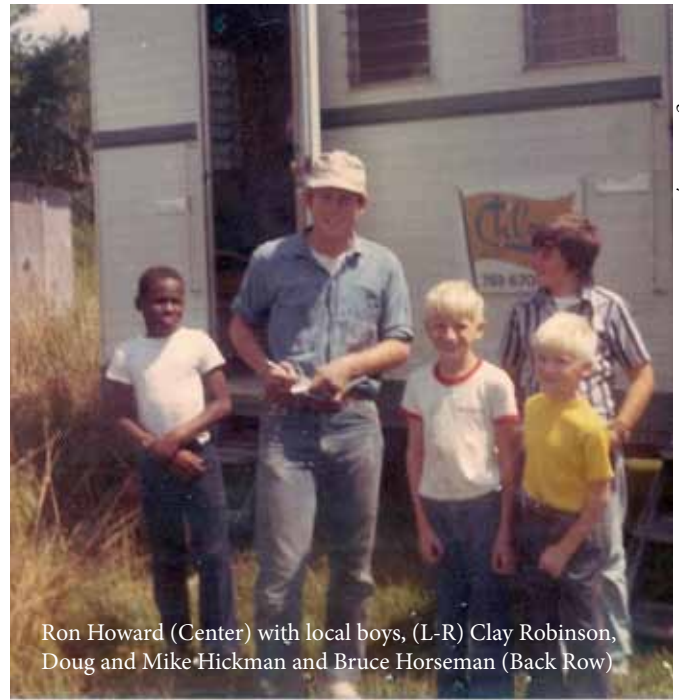
The Answer was, “The Migrants” A stark look at the lives of migratory farm workers, focusing on one family. The film was Emmy nominated as the Outstanding Drama of the 1973-74 season.

One of our PNHS members, Faye Hickman, saw this and recalled her experience of seeing the “stars” in town and meeting them. She said many towns people came out to watch. She is sharing with us her treasured photos, of this Moment in Movie History. Thank you Faye.

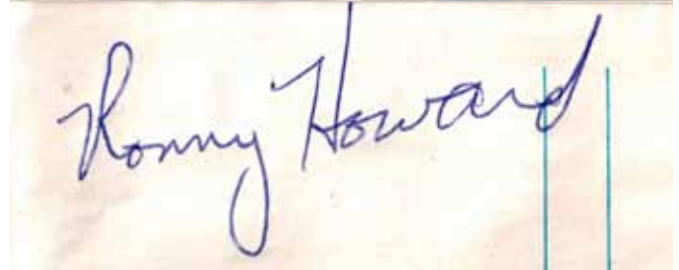
**See all the images and autographs at [historicportnorris.org/migrants.htm](http://historicportnorris.org/migrants.htm)**



The town people watching, the TV movie, being made in Berrytown.



Ron Howard (Center) with local boys, (L-R) Clay Robinson, Doug and Mike Hickman and Bruce Horseman (Back Row)



Photos and signature: Faye Hickman

**Membership and Renewal for 2016** We would love to add your name to our growing list of members. Please give some thought to joining the PNHS. Membership fees are for Individual - \$10, Family - \$15, Benefactor - \$50 and over, and Student - \$1 (no voting privileges) and entitles you to discounts on our merchandise.

Click here to renew or join, [historicportnorris.org/membership.htm](http://historicportnorris.org/membership.htm).

Or mail your check to: Port Norris Historical Society, PO Box 187, Port Norris, NJ 08349.

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://historicportnorris.org)**

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## NORRIS ASKS

### Do you know how many acres are in preservation in Commercial Twp?

Answer: Situated along the southern New Jersey shoreline of the Delaware Estuary, the Commercial Township Salt Hay Farm Wetland Restoration Site covers approximately 4,171 acres in Cumberland County and is the largest EEP wetland restoration site. The site includes the preservation of 339 acres of upland buffer habitat and the preservation, restoration and/or enhancement of 2,894 acres of previously diked wetlands. Enhancement began in 1996 and was completed in 1997 with the return of daily tidal flow to the site. Source: [pseg.com/info/environment/pdf/siteoverview-CT.pdf](http://pseg.com/info/environment/pdf/siteoverview-CT.pdf)

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Photo: Rachel Cobb