



# 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: June 13, 2017 • 7:00 pm • 1723 Main Street**

## Port Norris First United Methodist Church

**Summary:** The Port Norris Methodist Church began with home services as early as 1823. Its first conference minister was appointed in 1869. Growing demands made a church possible and this was dedicated in 1872, standing on the present cemetery grounds. It burned down in 1885. A second church was built on the present church site and dedicated in January 1886. This was torn down in 1924 and the present church building was dedicated in April, 1925.

You can read the full history of the church up till 1925 on our website. This history was compiled and written by Pastor David I. Naglee, March 1962.

<http://historicportnorris.org/church-1782.htm>

### CHAPTER VIII TIME TO REBUILD

The year 1921 saw the beginning of a new project at the church. The church structure had been erected in 1885 and renovations and been few prior to 1921. A number of church officials felt a complete remodeling of the church was in order. Already members had inquired about having the church basement enlarged to house a kitchen and dining room. \*Other ideas were freely given on how the basic structure could be changed to meet the growing needs of the congregation. It all began as a small pebble rolling down a mountain side. The pastor The Rev. H.H. Neale, had called the building committee to a special meeting in December of 1920. As tentative goals they planned to do something about the church basement; new pews, interior painting; a new lighting system; repairing of windows, steps, and vestibule; and a new arrangement for the pulpit furniture. The committee had seen some of the needs of the church, but took no official action toward the realization of these goals. The pebble was rolling all by itself, but soon it



All Photos Rachel Cobb

Cobb



would get other pebbles to roll with it. The Official Board, in turn, desired the total church membership to consider the possibilities under such a project. After the meeting an inspection of the property was made. It was soon agreed upon that the building was far from being safe, and that a renovation would not be wise. A spirit of despair rested upon the group when confronted with these facts. Hope was not lost for at the next Official Board meeting, February 26, 1921, some person of faith made a motion that the church building be completely rebuilt. The rolling pebble had now started what became an avalanche in a few years

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Many persons desired to see beauty and practicality blended together in the new building. The memorial windows were successfully designed to reflect some aspect of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the deep faith of the Church congregation.

#### ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL FACTS

The Rev. Herbert H. Neale, 1920-21, was the first minister to own an automobile. The first couple to be married in the present church building was Warren Miller and Mabel Hollinger on November 24, 1926. (It took Mr. Miller several days to recall the date when asked by the author).



The new church doors added in 2016 where a donation to the church. A pair of the original doors were given to the historical society for display.

A Home-Camp meeting was held in 1911. Camp meetings were being held in most of the surrounding areas of Port Norris. The Rev. George Abel pondered whether to try one at Port Norris. The largest obstacle to having a camp meeting was the mosquitoes. The only way to outwit them was to have camp meetings indoors. A number of sizeable trees were cut and used for atmosphere, being fastened to the end of each pew, and across the front of the church auditorium. The meetings lasted for two weeks, and the custom was followed for several years. When the electricity failed, during one of those meetings, old fashioned barn-lanterns were tied to the trees. This gave a realistic effect, to say the least.

Miss Louella Fowler first became choir director at the age of eighteen. She was later married to Morton Bateman, and continued her work in the music department of the church for 48 years. Under her direction the Senior Choir

produced "The Story of the Pink Rose" on September 26, 1915. Miss Elizabeth Buzby was the organist, and Mrs. Joseph N. Fowler was the reader. The Sanctuary was decorated with 500 pink roses for the occasion.

[Read more, click here](#)

[View more images of the windows click here](#)

### Picking for May 26, 1890

All persons having flowers to donate for Memorial purposes are kindly requested to send the same to G. A. R. Hall on Friday afternoon, May 30th, by two o'clock where they will be thankfully received by the ladies of the G. A. R. in behalf of the J. C. Shinn Post. See more Pickings, [click here](#).

## THE CEILING IS DOWN!

**SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES [CLICK HERE](#)**



**Thank you to everyone who has helped. And to Todd Oliver & Sons Construction.**

**NEXT, the electric, which will include new lighting. You can be a part of this project. See our "BUY A LIGHT" campaign. In our main room we will be adding recessed lights and pendant lighting, along with a couple of ceiling fans. We need everyone's support. [Click here for more information.](#)**

# Come see Us!

## Saturday, June 3rd

### 11 am - 1pm

Stop in to see us and take a look at the bare ceiling dating back to 1890 before it is covered up. There will be a journal for your signature and/or message, which will then be placed into the new ceiling as a time capsule.  
**COME BE A PART OF PORT NORRIS HISTORY!**

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Legends of Port Norris**  
**Annual Fundraiser**  
**Sunday, November 12, 2017**  
Ramada Inn, Vineland, NJ

**2017 Nominations due**  
**by June 13th.**

[Click Here to Nominate a Port Norris Legend](#)

**Please Note:** Meeting dates and times are posted on the website each month along with the approved minutes from the last meeting. Everyone is always welcome. [Click here to view.](#)



### NORRIS ASKS

#### What was the original name for the Maurice River?

The original inhabitants of the Maurice River were indians from the tribe known as "Lenni-Lenape". They affectionately named the river "Wahatquenack", which translated to "abundance of life" and that is exactly what it meant to them. There was enough fish and fowl in the river to sustain the entire indian population the year round. Theirs was a prosperous life on the Wahatquenack.

Source: Methodist Church History

### Membership and Renew for 2017

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)

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!



**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