



Port Norris

The Past for the Future

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.

NEXT MEETING - NOVEMBER 9



Following CDC Guidelines we will have a meeting in our Meeting Hall at 7 pm., 1723 Main Street, Port Norris.



John E. Laws

November 7, 1936 - August 21, 2021

In Memorium

JOHN EDWARD LAWS 84, of Dividing Creek, NJ passed away on Saturday August 21, 2021 after a brief illness. Born in Bridgeton to the late Edward O. and Marion Fleetwood Laws. A graduate of Bridgeton High School class of 1954 and a 1956 graduate of Spring Garden Institute of PA. John enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1958 for two years. After the service he went to work for his father at Laws & Henderson in Port Norris. Later in years he took over the business with Henry Taylor Sr. Laws & Taylor which eventually became Laws & Laws retiring in 2005.

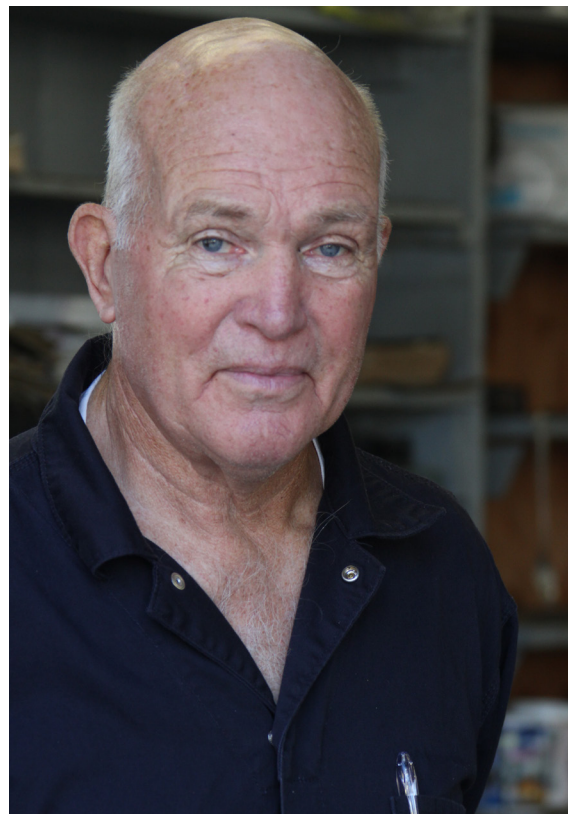
John lived in Dividing Creek all his life and was a member of the Dividing Creek Baptist Church. John was an active member of the Dividing Creek Fire Company since a teenager. He served as their Chief for many years and as a Commissioner for many years.

John retired from working as Cumberland County Fire Coordinator for 28 years. He handled 579 fire calls during his tenure.

He was chosen Fireman of the Year in 1983 and 2010. He served as Past President and Treasurer of the Cumberland County Fireman's Association. He served as President of the Cumberland County Fire Chief's Association in 1974, He was a life member of the Cumberland County Fire Chief's Association and NJ Fireman's Relief Association. John looked forward to having breakfast Friday mornings with the "Old Firefighters Breakfast Club". He was a member of the Dividing Creek Cemetery Association. John was an active resident who helped save their local Post Office. He also wrote two books "History of Little Italy" and "80 Years of Memories with my 1938 International Fire Truck".

[See the full obituary here Hoffman Funeral Homes](#)

John Laws was recognized as a Legend of Port Norris on December 2, 2012. His Laws and Laws garage is right next door to our building. John would often be there working on his car or firetruck.



We would not have our building if not for John and his wife Janice. They owned our building, and they made it possible to purchase it as our meeting hall. We will forever be grateful.

John donated the large light fixture that once hung at the entrance of the Laws and Laws garage and now proudly lights up the front of our headquarters. Thanks to John, we now have on display one of the seats from the old Colonial Theater.



Memories of John

Liz Hoffman shared that , before cell phones and scanners, when the Port Norris Firehouse siren sounded, she would call John (on a landline, of course) to alert him, because he was unable to hear it in Dividing Creek, where he lived.

John and Janice were always seen riding in the International Firetruck during local parades.

“I have such fond memories of running up to Laws and Laws and John helping me find some part or tool to fix something at the Haskin Lab and being able to pick out what I needed and fill out a ticket to leave on the counter because he was out back working on something or another. And we still have the seawater truck he used to drive to campus for us with spare parts in hand so he could repair it when it broke down on the turnpike. Quite the man!” Dave Bushek (From the Hoffman Tribute page)

He used to tease me about going away to college to get my M.R.S., whenever I pulled in to get my car filled up on my Dad’s tab! I am the older daughter of Fenton and Sue Anderson. What a gift to live in Port Norris in those days!

Carol Anderson Steketee (From the Hoffman Tribute page)

John was such a kind and generous man, he will be very much missed!



In 2018 we invited John and Janice to be a guest speaker and share stories of his 1938 International Fire Truck. It was standing room only.



2012 at the Legends Award Dinner

THE NEXT LEGENDS ARE...

Living Legends:

Alvina J. Baum

Georgianna (Georgie) Corona

Elizabeth (Liz) Hoffman

20th Century Legends:

Charles Amos (Mule) Camper

Joseph (Joe) Dagastine

Elizabeth (Lizzy) Hoffman Lore

The awards will be held in person **April 30, 2022**. More details to come.
historicportnorris.org/legends.htm

SAVE THE DATE

Community Day 2021

It was a wonderful day! Thank you to the committee that organized this community day.
It was a great success! Enjoy a few photos of the day.

Photos: Rachel Cobb



New Treasures

It was a delightful day on July 16, at our Meeting Hall as we welcomed the Mertz family from Pittsburgh, PA. Rachel Robbins Mertz, a native of this area, brought us new treasures from the Peterson side of her family. Seen in the photo are two linoleum block prints by Bruce Jones. On the left are salt hay marshes in Port Norris and on the right, a blacksmith shop in Bivalve.

Bruce Jones, a former resident of Port Norris, is the daughter of Dorothea and Captain Walter Jones, owner of the schooners Carey, Myrtle Virginia and Bruce J.

She was a 1957 graduate of Millville H.S. and the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY., where she earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in Art and Education. Bruce's Port Norris mentor inspired her to pursue her work as an artist. She now lives in Maryland where she continues her art career.



Rachel Mertz, Eileen Bernhart and Nancy Garrison holding the linoleum block prints.



Scarecrows 2021

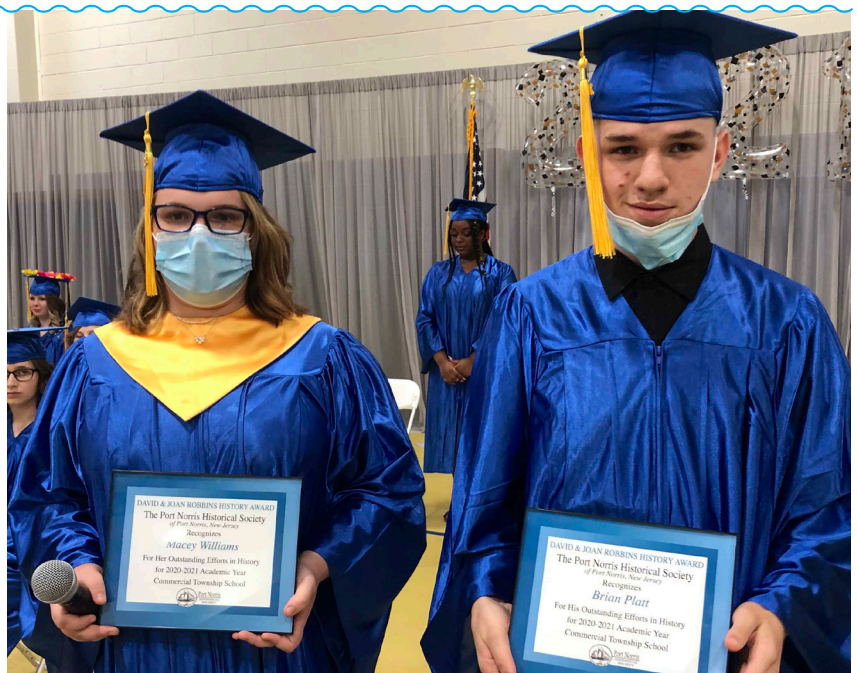
Thank you to everyone who came to the Louise E. Moore Senior Center on September 27 to make 11 scarecrows for Community Day and just for fun.

Graduation 2021

It is always an honor to celebrate the 8th-grade students from the newly named school, Commercial Township School. Graduation was held on June 10th.

At Graduation, held on June 10th, the Port Norris Historical Society presented an award to TWO students this year. The awards, named in memorial for members David and Joan Robbins, were presented to Macey Williams and Brian Platt.

Congratulations to all the students. Enjoy high school!





Timothy Bateman - SGT Civil War
He Lived on Bivalve Rd across from his son Morton.



James S. Fowler
Joan Emily Harper's Grandmother, Lovella Bateman's
brother or father. Port Norris.

Rothengatter Dillon 912 Arch Street,
Philadelphia.

IN THE meantime the county is not idle in road matters. At the February meeting which will be held on the 11th there will be a public hearing for the purpose of hearing and considering any objections to the proposed taking over and improving of the road known as the Port Norris-Mauricetown road. This road begins at the end of the State and county road at Main street, Port Norris, and extends in a northerly and easterly direction through the villages of Middletown, Haleyville and Mauricetown to the bridge over Maurice River.

**FOR SALE—Steel tower windmill
60 foot cedar tank, 60 barrels in good
condition. Isaac B. Reeves, Port
Norris, N. J. 7-13 d 6t**

GONE TO PORT NORRIS.
The College Den Girls who entertained at the Levoy the first three nights this week are now performing at Port Norris.

**LAURENCE JONES,
Auctioneer
Millville, Route A.
Phone Port Norris 121J-21
sell real estate and personal property
and would like to book your sale:
12-21 eod 2m**

1919



P.N.H.S. Eighth Annual Play. "For The Old Flag"

Cast of Characters.

Tom Randall	Tom Hollinger ✓
Philip Randall	J. Tracy Owens
Rodney Hunt	Warren D. Robbins
Hezikah Wilkins	William V. Shew ✓
Oliver Moon	Elmer Bateman, Jr ✓
Mrs. Randal	Emma L. Lore ✓
Lucy Garret	Mary Leah Shropshire ✓
Jessie Randall	Emily F. Bateman ✓
Sophia Ash	Dorothy B. Radolph ✓
Ivy	Helen M. Powell

Business Managers, W.D. Robbins, J. Tracy Owens

Stage Manager ---- Mr John Harris

Coach ---- A.T. Steelman

Prompters ---- Miss Bess E. Smith
 Miss A. Jane Bender
 Miss Elizabeth M. Buzz

In Memorium

Photos: Rachel Cobb



Wesley United Methodist Church, Port Norris, where she served on the Trustee Board and Chancel Choir. She loved her church and loved caring and praying for the sick and shut-in. Georgia truly loved and missed her husband, George, and often spoke of him after his passing. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and member of her church.

She is survived by her son Barry L. Ballard of Millville, two grandsons Barry J. Ballard and his wife Daneisha of Millville, Jordan L. Ballard and his wife Tiffany of Mansfield, TX, three great-granddaughters Sandra Ballard, Kendal Ballard, and Kennedy Ballard, two special cousins, Annette Johnson and Curtis Johnson of Newark, DE, Debbie Ellis of Millville, NJ, and a host of additional nieces, nephews, and cousins. She was predeceased by her husband George Robinson, brothers Fred and Wilbert Dennis, and daughter-in-love Sandra M. Ballard.

The passing of Mrs. Georgia M. Robinson was not brought to my attention last year, and we are so very sorry to share the news. We celebrate her life and are so glad to have honored her as a Living Legend

Georgia M. Robinson

FEBRUARY 12, 1916 - MARCH 11, 2020

Reprinted from The Edwards and Son Funeral Home, Inc.

Georgia M. Robinson of Millville went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, March 11, 2020. She was 104 years old.

Born in Crisfield, Maryland February 12, 1916, Georgia was the daughter of the late Upshur and Bessie Dennis, and the wife of the late George Robinson who passed away in 1997.

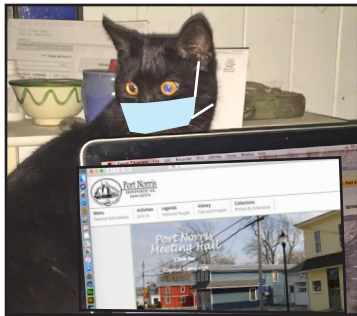
Georgia was a long time resident of the Port Norris area and was retired after decades of service with the Vineland Development Center where she was a lead caregiver. Georgia was a charter member of John



Port Norris Pickings

September 30, 1889

One morning recently the bell at the school house was being repaired and to see that it would work all right it was rung, and about this time the hour for calling school had been changed a little earlier. When two of the lady teachers heard the bell they thought it was school time and hurriedly got ready and almost ran to the school house, only to find no one there and it was an hour yet until their daily toil would begin; so they very quietly took an hour's stroll around our pretty little town.



NORRIS ASKS

How many special lunar events will have occurred in 2021?

12 full moons in 2021 will include 3 supermoons, a blue moon and 2 lunar eclipses.



Photos: Rachel Cobb

Both taken on the Turkey Point Nature Drive.

Left October Full Moon and right, June 10, 2021 Annular Solar Eclipse.

Nominations for the 2022 PNHS Board will be presented at the November 9 meeting at 7:00 pm.
Voting will take place at the December meeting.



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.](#)

Membership and Renewal for 2021

We would love to add your name to our growing list of members. Please give some thought to joining the PNHS. Membership Fees:

Individual - \$10.00 Family - \$15.00
Benefactor - \$30.00 Family \$35.00
Patron - \$50.00 Patron Family \$55.00
Student (under age 17) - \$1.00 (no voting privileges)
Membership entitles you to discounts on our merchandise.

Click here to renew or join, 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.

Membership fees are tax deductible.

See us on Facebook and our website
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 if you do not wish to receive this newsletter, click here 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
Gloria Guidera, Corresponding Secretary
Mary Linda Lacotte, Recording Secretary
Sam Ricci, Treasurer
Elizabeth Hoffman, Co-Treasurer

Trustees

Alvina Baum
Eileen Bernhardt
Virginia Campbell
Faye Hickman
John Hickman
Joyce Massey
Rev. E. Barnes, Lifetime Honorary Trustee

For a complete list of committees see our website. [View Here](#)