



PLEASE NOTE THAT THE OCTOBER PUBLIC MEETING OF THE POINT PLEASANT HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO SCHEDULING CONFLICTS. Future public meeting dates will be announced in your monthly newsletters.

A 1924 Historical Sketch of Point Pleasant Compiled by Professor Richard Case.

In 1924, as a part of the festivities of the Mid-Summer Frolic, Professor Richard Case, the first principal of Point Pleasant Beach HS, sponsored an Essay Writing Contest for the students at the school. The assignment was to capture the unique historical development, culture and amenities of Point Pleasant. 37 Essays were submitted. No. 22 by Lida Burdge, of Point Pleasant Boro, secured the first prize of \$5.00 and Essay No. 1 by Mary Johnson of Lavallette secured second prize of \$2.50. Professor Case compiled a summary of the winning Essays and published the following article in the 1924 Mid-Summer Frolic Program that memorializes the history of Point Pleasant through the lens of an educator and his students from 1924. It is presented below with original spelling and punctuation unchanged for your enjoyment:



FIRST BORO COUNCIL OF POINT PLEASANT BEACH c1886
Seated Left to Right---Joshua J. Pierce, Capt. John Arnold, Edw. H. Murphy (Mayor), Capt. Wm. Curtis, Harry W. Headley, standing---Dr. Bennett, Boro Physician, Benjamin F. Coles, Chas. E Cline, and Peter Backes.

Point Pleasant, NJ August 1924 -- A person gazing on the peaceful waters of the Manasquan River would think it was an ordinary little stream like hundreds of others along the Atlantic Coast. The one holding this opinion is much mistaken, because it owns a very interesting past and the towns along its banks have stories and legends handed down from our forefathers. There are many traditions about the Indians who lived in this part of the country.

The South end of the river was occupied by the Metedeconk tribe of the Indians while the other side is supposed to have been inhabited by an equally if not more ferocious tribe

It is very marshy here and little springs are to be found on the shores. Nowhere is there water as cold and altogether desirable as in one on the Brielle side. Tales are told of innumerable battles fought for the possession of it.

This part of the country seems wonderfully suited for Indians. Traces can still be seen of them. There have been found large piles of oyster shells, the remains of some celebration. In other places at Point Pleasant arrowheads of carved flint have been picked up, very good proof of the presence of Indians. The river certainly furnished an ideal place for them, because it abounded in fish, especially in blue and weak fish. Oysters and clams were also very plentiful. The Indians used to come from Long Island in canoes and enter the inlet.

Settlers soon came and drove away the Indians, houses were built, and a little village began to grow. Several industries were developed on a small scale. Vessels were built near the Curtis tract on the river and the Pierce fleet sailed out to the ocean through the inlet and cruised to New York and Virginia. Vessels came in loaded with iron, lime and coal and they went out loaded with wood and farm products. Vessels were unloaded at the spot where the railroad bridge now crosses the Manasquan River and things were carted up to Allaire by 6 mule teams. Tradition tells us that the flat boats went all the way up the river to Allaire. Brick was also carted from Bricksburg (now Lakewood) and iron ore was mixed in that section now known as Point Pleasant Borough. Pine trees were cut and put into a hole and allowed to burn, from which was formed charcoal.

This was supplied to many companies in New York City and constituted the main industry here at that time. A great many fishermen lived here, and it became a fishing center as time went on.

The ocean presents a very different appearance at the present time than it did in the olden days. Flat meadows along the shore protected the inlet from the inroads of the sea. A little further in were sluiceways, very narrow, but deep enough to float a boat of considerable size. Terrible storms often caused bad wrecks and boats were washed ashore. At one point a boat with 300 immigrants was washed ashore here.

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Pirates often visited this section. It is said that Captain Kidd buried some of his treasure on Osborne Island in the Manasquan River or at Allaire.

Robert Louis Stevenson, whom everybody knows by his books, “Treasure Island” and Captain Kidd's stories, once made his house at Point Pleasant. It is said that Osborne Island was named “Treasure Island” after his story. This island was an important point in New Jersey during the Revolutionary War.

The Cook Homestead, now the club house on the grounds of the Point Pleasant Golf Club, is the oldest house and the Curtis house on the riverfront, ranks next. A roadhouse was situated where Mechanics Hall now stands and another roadhouse owned by the Maxson family was situated at the junction of the Lakewood and Herbertsville roads. The oldest graveyard, on the Pine Bluff Road, is hardly ever used now. The oldest church is the Methodist Protestant church.

The people used to cultivate sugar cane, which they boiled down and made molasses. The “Molasses House” was situated on ground now owned by Robert Morris. The people also made their own clothes from sheep and flax. They did their baking in brick ovens out of doors. They made their own candles for light. The oldest school was situated across from White Lawn cemetery and “Squire” Hill and Mrs. Phoebe Curtis were the earliest teachers. The old building finally became a shelter for sheep and later a frame building was erected where the present High School building now stands.

At one time there were four large tracts of land owned by John Arnold, the Forman, Curtis and Cook families. Three men from Trenton bought the Forman tract, which took in land as far south as the Beacon Hotel. They were named Murphy, Brewer, and Cloke, and they formed the Point Pleasant Land Company. They divided the land into lots, and this was the beginning of modern Point Pleasant. Point Pleasant Beach obtained its charter in 1886, and the first census taken showed a population of about 600. At last election over 1000 votes were cast.

Point Pleasant has grown very fast. There are a few places of its size that have such good transportation, mail and telephone service. Its Churches and Schools are of the finest. The water, gas and electric service is unexcelled

The Mid-Summer Frolic Committee is composed of people who are giving their time and money for Point Pleasant. The chairman and subcommittees put their earnest efforts into work all with one object in view---**The Good of Point Pleasant.**



The above picture is provided courtesy of PPHS member Sheila O'Neill. It is of her great grandfather's sailboat, "The Teddy Bear" sailing with the family on the Manasquan River circa 1910 with "Treasure Island" in the background.



(above) The boardwalk at Central Ave. c1928. The picture is taken from the end of the Fishing Pier (now Tiki Bar) looking inland. To the right is original "Sea Breeze Restaurant" and the "Lunch Room Building" would become the near legendary Rip Tide Bar! The homes seen across Ocean Ave. are still there today.