

The regularly scheduled September 2026 public meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 10th, 2026**, starting at **7:00 PM**. **Gene Donatiello, retired Brick Township educator, author and historian with the Brick Township Historical Society** will present a program "Stories from Brick Township". **Meeting location:** Point Pleasant Borough Municipal Building, 2233 Bridge Ave., Point Pleasant Borough. The meeting is free and open to the public.

The Formation of the Borough of Point Pleasant 1920

This Newsletter focuses on the Borough of Point Pleasant, its creation, its first Mayor and of some of accomplishments made during Mayor Melville Burns Parker's term in office. The following Towns seceded from Brick Township prior to the Incorporation of the Borough of Point Pleasant. They were Lakewood March 1893, Point Pleasant Beach May 1886, Bay Head June 1886, and Mantoloking April 1911. Point Pleasant Borough was the last Town to secede from Brick.

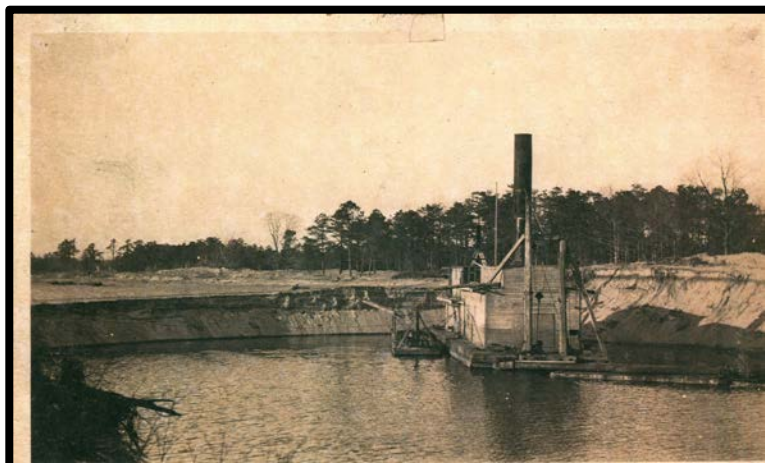
In May 1920, the New Jersey Governor and Legislature approved a charter allowing Point Pleasant to vote on forming its own municipality separate from Brick Township, pending a referendum. Residents approved the measure on June 29, 1920, at an organizational meeting by a vote of 153 YES to 8 NO. In his book *A Point to Remember*, former Borough Clerk Harry "Skeeter" O'Dell (served 1955–1978) wrote that the push to incorporate was driven in part by a desire for local control of education. Although one-room schoolhouses were common, growth in the 1920s created a need for more formal school facilities as the town evolved beyond a seasonal resort. We found no evidence that Brick Township opposed the secession, however Brick did seek state financial assistance to offset the loss of tax revenue after the Boroughs secession.

At that same June 29 organizational meeting Joseph Holmes Harvey was elected as Borough's first Mayor. However, at that very same meeting J. H. Harvey resigned citing poor health conditions and Melville B. Parker was appointed. Mr. Harvey occupation was a teacher in Point Pleasant and later operated his own undertaker business. In 1930 he sold his undertaker business to Allen Van Hise. That business is still in operation as Van Hise and Callagan Funeral Home on Arnold Avenue. Mr. Harvey was a well-respected member of the community and was appointed as a Trustee of the Point Pleasant Methodist Church on Arnold Avenue in 1903. Mr. Harvey died in 1941 and in 1945 the Church was renamed the Harvey Memorial Methodist Church in his honor. Harvey Memorial is still an active Church located on Arnold Ave.

Melville Burns Parker, the Borough's first mayor, was the retired secretary of the American Steel Spring Company. After maintaining a summer home in Point Pleasant for many years, he settled here in retirement. A respected community member, Parker served as mayor from 1920 to 1928 and was a Mason and Knight Templar.



Original Point Pleasant Borough Hall---1926



Dredging of the Point Pleasant Canal



Point Pleasant Historical Society
Phone: (732) 892-3091
Email: ppbhistoricalociety@gmail.com
Website: pphism.org

Point Pleasant Historical Society
PO Box 1273
Point Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742

Point Pleasant Historical Society *Serving Point Pleasant and Point Pleasant Beach*

Mayor Parker's administration saw several key achievements. With support of the newly formed Borough, the Point Pleasant Volunteer Fire Company was established in August 1920, with John Miller serving as Fire Chief. Its first firehouse stood on the north side of what is now Route 88, near the cemetery by Arnold Avenue. The department later moved into the original Borough Hall at Arnold Avenue and Route 88, using two bays that faced Arnold Avenue. The fire service continues today as the Point Pleasant Fire Department, Station 75, on Memorial Drive near the Route 88 Canal Bridge.

In the early years, the NJ State Police provided police protection for the community, however in 1920 Mayor Parker and Council appointed Albert Fleming to serve as an unpaid Marshal. Mr. Fleming served in that capacity through 1924 and in 1925 the Borough formed the Police Department and Vernon Williams became the first paid uniformed policeman. I find it interesting that the Borough of Point Pleasant formed its Police Department in 1925 and Point Pleasant Beach formed its Police Department in 1929, yet it was not until July 1972 that Brick formed its own Police Department. Prior to the formation of these Police Departments, it was the NJ State Police that provided police protection to the communities. Prior to the formation of Point Borough and Point Beach's Police Departments the NJ State Police local office was located on Arnold Avenue.

During Mayor Parker's tenure, the Borough opened a new Municipal Building in 1926 at the intersection of Route 88 and Arnold Avenue, where Dunkin' Donuts now stands. The location of Borough Hall before 1926 is unknown. As the community grew, another Municipal Building was constructed in 1976 at its current location on Bridge Avenue.

While not the project of the new Borough in December 1925 while Mayor Parker was in office the last bucket removed dirt therefore completing the construction of the Manasquan River Bay-Head Canal and the first boat navigated the canal in February 1926. In 1964, the canal was renamed "The Point Pleasant Canal" by Federal Legislation. The Canal is now one hundred years old.

Today, Point Pleasant Borough has approximately 19,565 residents (US Census Bureau 2024 estimate) and is a safe and thriving community known to be family orientated with high standards in public education with a number of parks and several marinas for local boaters. Point Borough is famous for its community events including Summerfest and National Night Out, both held at Community Park and Earth Day and the Fall Fireworks Festival both held at Riverfront Park the home of Bennett's Cabin. This year we celebrated our Country's 250 Year Anniversary of our Nation let's also give a special thanks to the people who followed their vision to build our local community.



Mayor Parker's home on Manasquan River, just west of old Clarks Landing. Demolished in the 1980's.



Bennett Cabin at Riverfront Park