



The Tottenville Historical Society was founded in 2003. Its primary goal is to document and preserve the culture and history of Tottenville, Charleston, and vicinity.

Since 2005, the Society has been working in partnership with the Preservation League of Staten Island conducting a survey of the buildings in the Tottenville community to identify its historic resources.

A comprehensive, illustrated book titled *Tottenville: The Town the Oyster Built*, based on the findings of the survey, has been written by Barnett Shepherd, former executive director of Historic Richmond Town.

To learn more about the Society and the availability of the upcoming book, visit us online at [www.tottenvillehistory.com](http://www.tottenvillehistory.com).



# Rev. John L. Lenhart (1805-1862)

## Memorial Plaque Dedication

*Organized by the Tottenville Historical Society*



**Sat., November 15, 2008  
11 a.m.**

Bethel Cemetery  
7033 Amboy Rd.  
Tottenville, Staten Island, NY

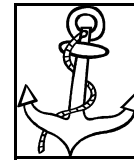


## ***Facts about Rev. John L. Lenhart***

- Born in Pennsylvania on October 29, 1805.
- Rev. Lenhart married Ann (Nancy) Poor, a widow, in 1829.
- He began his Methodist ministry in Philadelphia in 1830, and later served numerous churches in New Jersey.
- By 1845, due to health problems, he made the decision to retire, no longer believing he could be an effective minister.
- In 1847, he was offered and accepted a position as chaplain in the United States Navy.
- Rev. and Mrs. Lenhart moved to Tottenville in 1856 and lived on Amboy Road. Although he did not serve local churches, records indicate that he officiated numerous baptisms and marriages in their home.
- Ann Lenhart died on June 26, 1860.
- Rev. Lenhart died aboard the *USS Cumberland* on March 8, 1862 when it was rammed by the Confederate ironclad *CSS Virginia* during the Battle at Hampton Roads, Virginia.
- A Grand Army of the Republic veterans post was organized in Tottenville in 1880 and named in his honor. The Lenhart Post No. 163 disbanded in 1924.
- An earlier monument was erected in Bethel Cemetery, but was destroyed by a church fire in 1886. The monument we see today was erected in 1912 by the ministry and laity of the Newark Methodist Conference.

According to Department of the Navy, there is no record that the *USS Cumberland* was raised or its wreckage examined. There is no record either that Rev. Lenhart's body was recovered.

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Sadly, little has been written about the 121 heroic men including Chaplain John Lenhart who lost their lives that day. The *New York Times* wrote on March 10, 1862, "She ([Cumberland] was a leaky old affair, and her loss is by no means serious."

"The heroic actions of Chaplain Lenhart remains a sterling example of courage and dedication, and it foreshadows the spirit of all those chaplains who would follow."

This simple declaration, written not long before his death, is a hallmark of all armed forces chaplains.

*"My greatest desire is to be a useful minister, so that whether on shore, or afloat, in peace or in war, I may do good to my fellow man."*

Today is "Rev. John L. Lenhart Day" in Staten Island. As we honor Rev. Lenhart, we also pay tribute to all veterans who have served and continue to serve our great nation. Let us be reminded that the defense of freedom often comes with great loss and sacrifice.

The trustees of the Tottenville Historical Society salute the members of our Armed Forces, past and present, and promise to make sure that they will always be remembered.



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*The Impossible Dream\**

Proclamation: Rev. John L. Lenhart Day

*The Marine's Hymn (Eternal Father, Strong to Save)\**

History of the USS Cumberland / March 8, 1862

Poetry recitation: "The Cumberland's Crew"  
Gregory Hauck

America\* (with recitation of the Gettysburg  
Address by Gregory Lella)

Recognition of Veterans

*God Bless the USA\**  
Michael Goetz and Angelo Russo, soloists

*God Bless America\* (everybody sing!)*

Recessional of the Colors  
*When Johnny Comes Marching Home\**

\*musical selections with accompaniment by JoAnne Nolemi  
on the electric piano

★ ★

*The Tottenville Historical Society wishes to thank the trustees of Bethel Church for their cooperation in arranging this event. We also thank everyone who participated in today's program, especially the young adults from the Tottenville High School Choir and JROTC Color Guard, and we thank you, the members of the Staten Island community for sharing this historical event with us today.*

*Special thanks to Gordon Ekstrand and Bob Schweikert.*

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**Tottenville Historical Society—Memorial Plaque Dedication**



## **PROGRAM**

**November 15—11 a.m.**

*Our special guests include:*

Tottenville High School Marine Corps JROTC Color Guard

Commanded by Gny. Sgt. Miguel Quinones and

Gny. Sgt. Paul Jurik

Tottenville High School Concert Choir

JoAnne Nolemi, Music Director

Bruce Howard, Assistant Public Affairs Officer (*ret.*)

United States Navy Recruiting District New York

American Legion Beauvais-Hudson Post. No. 126

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10:55 *On Eagles Wings\**

11:00 Ceremony opens with Color Guard procession  
*When Johnny Comes Marching Home\**

Pledge of Allegiance

*Star Spangled Banner\**

Words of Welcome

Linda Hauck, Director, Tottenville Historical Society

Introduction of Guests

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