

# DISCOVER Conference House Park !

Nature • Recreation • History • Culture

## Conference House Park

Located at the southernmost point in New York State on the shore of Raritan Bay, Conference House Park provides a wealth of recreational facilities and historical sites. It is named for the historic house on its grounds where a Revolutionary War peace conference took place in 1776.

Long before Europeans settled on Staten Island, the Lenape used this area as a seasonal settlement and trading post, taking advantage of an ideal location for hunting and oystering. Today, the Lenape grounds are designated a National Historic Landmark, preserving and protecting this important Native American archaeological site.

With more than 267 acres, the park features many public education and recreational opportunities. Recent facility improvements include a renovated visitor center with public restrooms and exhibit space, a new bay-side pavilion for events, expanded paths, hiking and biking trails, and a new playground. Another popular park destination is the "South Pole," marking the southernmost point of New York State.



Become a member of the Conference House Association to help keep history alive!

The Conference House Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the historic houses within Conference House Park, and educating the public about their histories.

Membership in the Conference House Association provides the support necessary to keep this distinctive historic site open to the public and the ability to serve the community through education programs and special events.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE / ZIP

TEL / EMAIL

- Individual \$25
- Family \$40
- Senior Citizen / College Student \$20
- Supporting Friends \$100
- Corporate Friends \$250

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

Free Quarterly Newsletter announcing programs and activities; 10% discount on workshop fees; 10% discount on purchases from The Conference House Gift Collection; Guided tours of Conference House free with membership card; Discounts on events throughout the year.

Please make checks payable to The Conference House Association.

Mail to:  
The Conference House Association  
P. O. Box 171  
Staten Island, NY 10307

All contributions are tax-deductible  
For more information, call (718) 984-6046





## The Conference House



This grand stone manor house was built c. 1680 by Christopher Billopp, a Royal Navy captain, as the center of his 1,600-acre estate. It is

named the Conference House for the Revolutionary War peace conference that was held here on September 11, 1776 with John Adams, Edward Rutledge and Benjamin Franklin representing the Continental Congress, and Admiral Lord Richard Howe representing King George III of England. Despite their negotiations to end the fighting, no agreement was reached and the war continued for another seven years.

After the war, the Conference House was purchased by Samuel Ward for his son Caleb Ward Sr., who divided the estate into smaller parcels for his five children and many grandchildren. The area became known as Ward's Point.

Over the next century, the house changed hands several times and deteriorated extensively. In 1927 the Conference House Association was established to preserve the house, and it has been open as a museum ever since. Today the house survives as the oldest stone manor in Staten Island. Special events and educational programs focus on the Billopp family and the Revolutionary War conference.

The house is open for guided tours from April through mid-December and school class tours are available by appointment. Special events are held throughout the year. [For information, call \(718\) 984-6046, or visit www.theconferencehouse.org.](http://www.theconferencehouse.org)

The Conference House is a National Historic Landmark, New York City Landmark, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is owned by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, operated by the Conference House Association, and is a member of the Historic House Trust of New York City.

## The Ward House



The only Ward family home remaining on Ward's Point today was built about 1830. This house belonged to Caleb Ward's granddaughter Hannah, who was the wife of boatman Samuel Wood. In

1850, Wood sold the waterfront portion of his property to William H. Rutan and later sold the house to Theodore Leven, a Swedish immigrant. The Leven family occupied the house for nearly sixty years. This house is temporarily closed for renovation; visitors are welcome to explore the grounds.

## The Biddle House



Captain Henry Hogg Biddle, who owned the ferryboat between Tottenville and Perth Amboy as well as Biddle's Grove, a summer resort for temperance groups, constructed this house about 1845. It is a rare example in New York of the Greek Revival architectural style, with identical sweeping, sloped rooflines on both

facades. This house is temporarily closed for renovation; visitors are welcome to explore the grounds.

## The Rutan-Beckett House



The Rutan-Beckett House, built about 1850, was the home of ship builder and New York State Assemblyman William Henry Rutan. It remained in his family until 1910, but after a period of

abandonment, the Beckett family purchased the house and remodeled and modernized it in the 1950s, which is how the house remains today. From its stainless steel Tappan wall oven, orange boomerang design Formica countertops, and authentic furnishings – down to the box of the Beckett Family vacation slides – the Rutan-Beckett house is preserved today as a wonderful example of the popular American décor style of the 1950s. This house is temporarily closed for renovation; visitors are welcome to explore the grounds.

## DIRECTIONS

By Bus:  
S59 (Richmond Ave.) or S78 Tottenville (Hylan Blvd.) bus to Hylan Blvd. and Craig Ave. Walk one block south to Conference House Park.

By Ferry & Subway:  
R/W Train to Whitehall St./South Ferry station, 4/5 to Bowling Green, 1 to South Ferry, or the J/M/Z to Broad St. Take the Staten Island Ferry from Whitehall Terminal, Manhattan, to St. George Terminal, Staten Island. Follow bus directions.

By Car:  
Route 440 (Outberbridge Crossing) to Exit 1 (Arthur Kill/Page Ave). Right onto Veterans' Rd. (1 traffic light). Right onto Tyrellan Ave. (1 light). Right onto Boscome Ave. (1 light). Boscome will turn into Page Ave. Proceed straight on Page Ave. (7 lights). Right onto Hylan Blvd. Follow Hylan Blvd. to end. Left into Conference House Park parking lot.

For additional information, contact:  
Bonnie Williams, Conference House Park Director  
[Bonnie.Williams@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:Bonnie.Williams@parks.nyc.gov)

Dial 311 for all Parks & Recreation information, outside of NYC call 212-NEW-YORK or visit: [www.nycparks.org](http://www.nycparks.org)

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DESIGN: Dana L. Wilner



City of New York  
Parks & Recreation

# Conference House Park

## STATEN ISLAND



Discover all there is to do and see  
in Conference House Park  
on Staten Island's South Shore!