



HISTORIA

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 2

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY 2002

JOIN US FOR ANTIQUE APPRAISALS AT OUR MAY MEETING



Have you ever wondered whether Uncle Joe's roll-top desk or Aunt Mary's bisque figurines were worth anything? Does that old book gathering dust on a forgotten shelf have any value? What about the art print you picked up at a flea market because you liked the frame? All of us have wondered whether some of our family heirlooms or antiques have any historical significance or value.

At our May meeting, art historian Dr. Lori Verderame will inspect, appraise, and comment on objects that NTHS members bring to the meeting. She is a certified appraiser with her own show on CBS KYW-TV3, a gallery in Bucks County, and an impressive background in art history.

For a donation of \$5.00, she will appraise one item per member. Dr. Verderame **will not** appraise books, musical instruments or jewelry. The appraisals are verbal and are not intended for insurance purposes. Plan to join us on Wednesday, May 29 at 7:30 PM for what promises to be an entertaining and informative evening.

WILLOW MILL COMPLEX NOMINATED TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER

You may not know it by its new name, but most Northampton residents will recognize the three interrelated stone buildings visible on a nasty curve on Bustleton Pike in Richboro. This curve is often called Herzog's Corner. The Willow Mill Complex includes the c. 1739 Shaw-Leedom house and springhouse, the c. 1847 Sager house and wagon house, and the mid-nineteenth century grist mill. All three stone buildings are currently private residences, but initially they were part of a thriving industrial and agricultural complex important to the early development of Northampton Township.

At a meeting of the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board on March 12, 2002, in the state capital, the historic significance of the complex was reviewed and discussed by the Board for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, the Federal government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation.



The Shaw-Leedom House now the home of historical society members Sylvia and Carmen Amato. The property sits west of the Herzog Corner curve on Bustleton Pike, south of Richboro.

Story continued on page 3

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members:

Happy Spring! Once again it is the Merry Month of May. This is a very joyous month for our family; we have birthdays galore. We celebrate Mother’s Day, and I have many memories of my childhood when my mother and grandparents served wonderful meals. Now it is my daughter Caroline who plays hostess – the love continues.

Spring here in Bucks County is a treasure. The sun warms the green, gentle hills, the aged barns, and centuries old houses. It’s a good place to live.

We have our last meeting before the summer. I hope all of you will be able to attend Dr. Lori Verderame’s presentation about antiques. Bring your items for appraisal. My husband and I plan to bring a dry sink.

Since our last meeting, we have lost two members, Fred Holzwarth, our membership chairman, and Bob Seums. Both men will be missed.

Please remember all those men and women who served our country when you celebrate Memorial Day.

Thank you,



NTHS NEEDS YOU!

**WANTED: SOCIAL COMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSON and 2 committee members**

The Social Committee Chairperson position is vacant and needs to be filled. The post requires coordinating refreshments for the March, May, and September general membership meetings, and the November dinner meeting

We are also sending out a call for 2 volunteers to work with the chairperson as members of the committee.

PLEASE consider serving your organization in this capacity.

If interested, please call Mary Seader at 215-355-4467 or email Debbie Glessner at Dglessner@earthlink.net

**HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR
MEMBERSHIP FOR 2002?**

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 29 - 7:30 PM

Northampton Township Historical Society
General Meeting
Program: ANTIQUE APPRAISALS

Saturday, May 25

Early American Craft Demonstration:
Net Making
2:00-4:00 p.m., Mercer Museum

June 1, October 5

Bucks County Covered Bridge and
Garden Tour
215-345-4552 for reservations and info

Tuesday, June 4

“150 Years of Doylestown”
7:30 p.m., Mercer Museum Elkins Gallery

June 13

David Library - 215-493-6776
Spring Lecture Series
Defense of the Delaware Valley:
Forts Mifflin, Mercer, and Billings

August 10,11

225th Anniversary of Revolutionary War
Reenactment at the Moland House, Warwick
Many weekend activites planned.

We,, of Northampton Township Historical Society are saddened to learn of the recent death of Mary Seader's brother and express our sincere condolences to Mary and her family.

In April, we lost two members, Fred Holzwarth and Bob Seums.

Fred was our membership chairman, and was also active in the senior center where he served as a technology volunteer. He enjoyed working on his web page which emphasized his interest in the Civil War.

Bob worked as a machinist and was an amateur ham radio operator.

Both members will be missed, and NTHS extends sympathy to the families and friends of both men.

WE APOLOGIZE

Due to the death of our membership chairman, Fred Holzwarth we have been unable to obtain an up to date membership list. We are using one that was up to date as of 9/2001. If you renewed or joined since then we may not have the information. We are attempting to correct the problem.

MILL PROPERTY NOMINATED TO NATIONAL REGISTER (from page 1)

The Board unanimously voted to include these five buildings on the National Register. All that remains is the stamp of approval from the National Park Service. Historically, a mill was first established at this location c. 1739 when John and Joseph Shaw purchased twenty-nine acres from William Buckman and Isaac Pennington. After their purchase the Shaw family erected a grist and saw mill on Iron Works Creek, a tributary of the Neshaminy. Joseph Shaw was a stonemason who built the stone mill and the early section of the Shaw-Leedom house. The Shaws' mill was one of at least eight mills established in Northampton along the Neshaminy and its branches. Grinding corn and wheat and sawing lumber became the major industries of Bucks County. These early gristmills and sawmills provided flour for settlers and lumber for homes and barns.

Three generations of the Shaw family owned and operated their mill until 1792 when they sold it, along with the stone dwelling house, to Richard Leedom, owner of the Black Bear Tavern. The mill became known as Willow Mill under Leedom's ownership. Leedom expanded the mill business to include grinding plaster of paris. Using the power of the mill to grind and produce other products in addition to grains was not uncommon for millers in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Leedoms owned the property into the early 20th century.

Architecturally the buildings at Willow Mill represent increasingly rare examples of the early grain milling industry in PA. The complex is an outstanding example of an industrial grouping of buildings that occupied the rural landscape in colonial Bucks County. Both the Sager house and the Shaw-Leedom house maintain a high degree of integrity with original floors, moldings, fireplaces, windows, staircases and cabinetry. Although the mill has been converted into a residence, the building is still unmistakably a former mill. Open rolling fields belie the nearby suburban development.

The buildings in the Willow Mill complex illustrate the importance of the milling industry in Bucks County. These mills contributed to the Philadelphia region's importance as a center of flour milling. Willow Mill remained in active operation for over one hundred and fifty years, illustrating the importance and strength of the industry to the community. Architecturally, the well-preserved complex on a very busy modern road is a rare surviving example of not only the milling industry but also the lives of the people who operated the industry.



The Sager house, formerly owned by historical society members Adolph and Florence Herzog. Now owned by members Kathy and Larry Belikoff, it is located east of Bustleton Pike and North of the mill house below.



The mid-nineteenth century grist mill owned by Neil and Maureen Sagot is located just east of Bustleton Pike at Herzog's Curve.

Story and Photos contributed by Sylvia Amato

Other local properties listed on the National Register are Hampton Hill, The Thompson, John House and Twin Tree Farms in Richboro and the Churchville Historic District.

For more information on the National Register of Historic Places visit the National Park Service website at:

www.cr.nps.gov/nr

FAMILY PHOTOS

by Betty Cornell Luff

Pictures, pictures, everywhere! Does anyone have more pictures than I? After keeping scrapbooks for my four children, getting reprints made for all of them, I then inherit my parents' and my sister's albums. Pictures on the wall, on the mantle, on the desk, and even an eight-generation family tree arrangement beneath the glass on my coffee table. Family, family, everywhere.

I proudly display my eleven grandchildren's graduation pictures on the mantel. And then there are my six great-grandchildren's pictures on the desk.

William E. Randall, Newtown's only commercial photographer from 1876 to 1932, had two chairs in his studio. I have a picture of my three sisters in the same child's rocker used when he photographed Vince's brother and sister around 1920. Also on my wall are two photos of a beautiful red chair. My mother sat in it around 1908, and beside it I have a photo of Vince's mother taken in the same chair during the same time period.

My great grandparents, Christiana Schlafstein and Carl Friedrich (as recorded on their marriage license, also hanging on my wall), came to America as a young couple. The ship's captain figured Carl was leaving Germany to avoid being drafted, so he threatened to take him back unless they gave him all their money. So they arrived in the United States penniless. They were married August 23, 1863 in Philadelphia, and later settled in the Wrightstown area. After arriving in the United States, my great-grandfather, Carl, changed his name to Charles Frederick. Christiana lived to be 93 years old and Charles, almost 90. They are both buried in the Wrightstown Friends Cemetery.

I am also fortunate to have Charles' and Christiana's Bible, listing the births of their nine children. My grandmother, Lena Frederick, was their fourth child. She married William H. Wise (according to their marriage license). However, we knew him as William Henry Weiss. Since this grandmother never owned a family Bible, I am fortunate to have her cookbook in which she listed the births of her five children from 1888 to 1902.

I feel so fortunate to have lived to see six great grandchildren come into the world. They range in age from 6 months to 6 years.

Picture, pictures, everywhere! Family, family, everywhere!



Pictures taken at the Randall studios in Newtown. (top left) Margaret Weiss Cornell (1888-1959), (top right) Mary Fridel Luff (1889-1982), (bottom left) Edith, Edna, and Ester Cornell, (Bottom right) Albert and Anna Luff



NTHS SPONSORS SECOND ANNUAL NATIONAL PRESERVATION WEEK POSTER CONTEST

National Preservation Week was observed May 12 — 18, 2002. This year’s theme was *“Preserving the Spirit of Place.”*

To support and celebrate historic preservation, Northampton Township Historical Society offered its second annual Preservation Week Poster Contest to elementary age children living in Northampton Township.

Judges Larice Burt, Betty Cornell Luff, and Dr. Art Friedman, selected posters that emphasized an historical perspective in preserving the spirit of place. Awards will be presented to the winning students at our May 29th meeting.

RESULTS OF SECOND ANNUAL PRESERVATION WEEK POSTER CONTEST

Division A – Kindergarten thru Grade 3

- First Place: Jonathan Zeidler – 2nd grade, Hillcrest Elementary
- Second Place: Sam Rifkind – 3rd grade, Hillcrest Elementary
- Third Place: Brandon Gold – Kindergarten, Hillcrest Elementary
- Honorable Mention: Natalie Dalfo – Kindergarten, Hillcrest Elementary
- Honorable Mention: Maddie Shikoff – Kindergarten, Hillcrest Elementary

Division B – Grade 4 thru Grade 6

- First Place: Roman Dykyj – 5th grade, Holland Elementary
- Second Place: Dayle Magida – 6th grade, Rolling Hills Elementary
- Third Place: Sarah Rifkind – 6th grade, Hillcrest Elementary
- Honorable Mention: Drew Oros – 6th grade, Saint Bede’s
- Honorable Mention: Geena Ianni – 5th grade, Holland Elementary
- Honorable Mention: Jenna Shikoff – 4th grade, Hillcrest Elementary

Call for Volunteers for Northampton Days to be held Sunday September 15th. Contact Deb Glessner if you can help!

**Moland House – Reenactment 2002
225th Anniversary of the Revolutionary War**

The Moland House encampment is part of a much larger celebration that is being held in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties, but we are the beginning of the Pennsylvania events in 2002. This correlates with the Continental Army's activities in 1777 when the Commander-in-Chief and his 11,000 men marched from New Jersey and settled at the Moland House for thirteen days in August

The reenactment will be held this August 10th and 11th. There is still plenty of room for volunteers. We hope to put on a small play recreating the Council of War held at the Moland House. This will require a few speaking parts (very few lines). If anyone has this talent and would like to participate, please call 215--345--6439. We will video tape the play and use it in the future in our education programs.

If you cannot participate, please spread the word to others to visit the Moland House that weekend. Possibly you will be able to attend the colonial dinner with George Washington as our honored guest. The General will be available for a question and answer period after the dinner. It is at this dinner that the play will be presented. If you are planning to attend the dinner, I would suggest that you get your tickets early. Seating is limited. We are looking forward to a successful fund-raiser and with everyone’s participation, we can do it. The route of the parade, which will kick off the weekend, will be decided at a later date. Entries to the parade are still being accepted.

Reprinted from the Moland Gazette

Spread Eagle and Richboro School Update

The exterior restoration of The Spread Eagle Inn is underway. A \$266,000 contract was awarded in April. When completed the inn will appear as it is depicted in the Ranulph Bye print. We still do not know who will occupy the inn but Starbucks is a good possibility. A first trust bank is expected to be built northwest of the inn on Almshouse road. Restoration and intersection improvements should be completed sometime this summer.

The township has reached an agreement with Commerce Bank regarding the old Richboro school property. Commerce will move the school to the rear of property and elevate it. They will build their bank and a Burger King at the front of the property. As part of the agreement the Burger King will NOT have a playland, and the façade of the buildings will match the school’s architecture. After the school is moved it will be donated to the township.



Old Richboro School, c. 1913, by Edith Berry

**ANNOUNCING THE
SECOND RICHBORO
SCHOOL REUNION**

The Richboro school reunion committee has set Friday May 23, 2003 as the date for the next school reunion. This follows the very successful reunion in May 2001. The call is going out to notify anyone who graduated or attended the old school between 1923 and 1953. Those interested in attending can contact Emma Walker Worthington at:

215-943-0108.



Newtown artist, Edith Berry, poses with her recent pen and ink drawing of the old Richboro School. She donated the original to the Historical Society, and it is currently on display in the Library’s showcase. Mrs. Berry studied under Edgar Whitney, one of the foremost water colorists in the country. She has penned many scenes of Northampton Township, including “Historic Homes of Northampton Township” for the bicentennial celebration in 1976.



NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 732, RICHBORO, PENNSYLVANIA 18954-0732

www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org

2002 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

President	Mary Seader	355-4467	RJSTioga@cs.com	
Vice President	Debbie Glessner	357-2449	dglessner@earthlink.net	relay 800-654-5988
Secretary	Linda Daly	598-3345	LJDalyasid@yahoo.com	
Treasurer	Michael Tomkins	504-1998	michaeltomkins@comcast.net	
Membership	Doug Crompton	355-5307	doug@crompton.com	
Ways and Means	Diane Amadio	355-6399	dianerealtor@enter.net	
Social Committee	Vacant			
Director (Past Pres.)	Doug Crompton	355-5307	doug@crompton.com	
Director	Jean Gallagher	357-7833		
Director	Sydell Gross	322-5547		

HISTORIA is published quarterly by the Northampton Township Historical Society. The Society meets four times each year at the Northampton Township Cultural Center, Upper Holland Road, Richboro. Everyone is welcome at our meetings. Meetings start at 7:30 PM with refreshments, general meeting, and a featured speaker. For more information visit our web page or email us at nths@NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org Past issues of the HISTORIA, in color, are available on our web page - www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org The HISTORIA is edited by Doug Crompton. Articles are always welcome.

Meeting Dates for 2002

May 29	General Meeting	7:30 PM	November 20	Dinner Meeting	6:30 PM
Sept 25	General Meeting	7:30 PM			

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL CLASSIFICATIONS

PATRON:	Extra support for the society	\$35.00
FAMILY:	All members of one family	\$15.00
SINGLE:	Adult individual membership	\$10.00
SENIOR CITIZEN:	Age 65 years or older	\$5.00

This will be your membership for the calendar year of 2002 (January 2002 to December 2002)

Note - Applications received after October 31 will be credited for the following year. This application is sent with all editions of the HISTORIA. Please check your mailing label for the expiration year. Normal renewal time is the first quarter of the year or when the March HISTORIA is received. If your membership is current, please pass this application on to others who may be interested in our society. Please consider a contribution of more than the minimum membership to help defray increasing society costs.

Send to:
Northampton Township Historical Society
PO BOX 732
Richboro, PA 18954-0732

NAME: _____ SINGLE: FAMILY:

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ DUES ENCLOSED: \$ _____

EMAIL: _____

May we count on you to serve on one of our committees ? : Y _____ N _____ MAYBE _____

Please give us your ideas for speakers at future meetings : _____

Would you be willing to write an article for the HISTORIA _____

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed : _____