



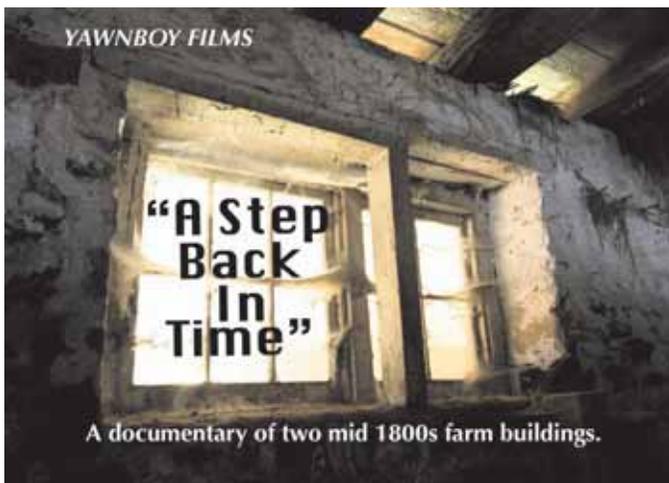
# HISTORIA

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 2

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY 2009

## Take a step back in time with videographer Richard Noe's visits to the Locke Farm



The May Northampton Township Historical Society meeting will feature Professional Photographer and Historical film maker Richard Noe. Richard will introduce historical society member, Paul Locke, who owns one of the few remaining farms in Northampton Township.

Richard will then show his new DVD documentary "A Step Back in Time" completed last winter at the Locke farm. This amazing first half of the film shows the doors opened for the first time in many years, and a tour of the deep circa 1850's cold cellar and hand built stone walled well.

The second part of the film is a tour of Paul's "Sweitzer"(Swiss) style barn not used for the past 25 years. Jeff Marshall narrates the types and names of hand hewn beams and explores how barns were made before the 1900s.

After a short intermission, to celebrate our upcoming Memorial day, a repeat showing of Richard's recreated film, "Parades & Events, 1920-40s Richboro, Pa. using 16MM footage taken by Alva Gill and the Tyler Estate.

This film was introduced several years ago at one of our meetings and a copy is in the Northampton Library. The film still is spellbinding with sound and narration added to the silent B&W, early 1900's footage, by the legendary Gill's work which was not combined until the digital age for a completed film.

To see a parade in Richboro, on packed dirt Second Street Pike, and an entire community march is still a site to behold. The film also includes a May Day event at the Richboro School, circa 1940s. Richard Noe spent several years working to create this film with help from Betty Luff, who was in several parades as a child during this "parade era".

The meeting starts at 7 PM on Wednesday, May 20, at the Northampton Township Library, Lower Holland and Township Road, Richboro. The public is welcome and please bring a friend.



**NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

At our May meeting we welcome society member and videographer, Richard Noe, who will show his video productions of the Paul Locke farm in Holland as well as a repeat performance of the famous Memorial Day parades of the 1920's-40's originally shot in 16MM film by Alva Gill. Richard has and is doing a great job in preserving our past in photographs and video so please come out and support him in his efforts.

Richboro will be going through a new phase of development in the coming months and years with a very large part of the center of town facing redevelopment. Both the Giamo (Giuseppe) and former Davis properties totaling over 16 acres will be developed. While the proposal for the Davis tract includes saving the historic house at the far northeast edge of the property we still need to be ever vigilant about the historic look and character of our town. When the Spread Eagle Inn was moved and restored it was decried that any future structure built as part of that or other nearby developments in Richboro would follow its Victorian façade design. I urge you to keep informed about what is happening in our town and speak up if you think it goes against our historic heritage. We have already lost a great deal of what was Richboro and that makes it even more important to save the few historic structures and sites that remain. Perhaps we could convince the retailers at this site to feature pictures in their establishments of buildings, like the Black Bear, that were previously located there and maybe the developer would entertain markers, close to Second Street Pike, where the buildings once stood.

This being our last meeting for the first half of the year I wish you a great summer and look forward to seeing you again, next at Northampton Days in September, and at our Fall meetings.



**Did you know?**

The entire collection of HISTORIA's (over 16 years) are available online and in color. Check it out at:

**[www.northamptontownshiphistoricalsociety.org](http://www.northamptontownshiphistoricalsociety.org)**

We need your input! Please consider writing and submitting an article for the HISTORIA. Your stories, reminiscences, and photos about "Northampton the way it use to be" are always welcome. Contact the editor listed on the last page of this HISTORIA.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Mark your Calendar**

**NTHS Meeting**

**Wednesday May 20, 7 PM**

**Northampton Township Library**

Richard Noe

Videos of the Locke Farm and past Memorial Days.

**Richboro School Reunion**

**Friday, May 29, 2009 - 11AM - 4:30 PM**

Northampton Valley Country Club, Richboro

Contact - Emma Walker Worthington

215-943-0108

**MERCER MUSEUM**

Pine and Ashland Streets, Doylestown, PA (215) 345-0210 Hours: Mon.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. Noon-5, Tues. until 9 Admission: \$6, \$5.50 seniors, \$2.50 Ages 6-17, Free to members and children under 6

**Doylestown First Friday Festivities**

June 5, July 3, August 7, September 4

It's Free. Craft activities, games, music, dance, and other presentations. See the Mercer website for specific activities - [www.mercermuseum.org](http://www.mercermuseum.org)

**Henry Mercer's Birthday**

Wednesday, June 24 - 10AM - 5PM Fonthill

Fonthill Old Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration

July 4 - noon - 5 PM

**Your NTHS Membership is due for 2009**

**Congratulations to the following NTHS members that gave above and beyond their normal membership dues in 2009.**

- NTHS Circle** - Doug Crompton, Lois Craven Ferguson
- Patron** - Elinor Crompton, Roy and Gail Reinard, Nancy Turner
- Sponsor** - Lewis Hull, Kevin Kruse, Richard and Mary Noe
- Sustaining** - Charles and Muriel Briggs, Kathryn Ciaverelli, Christine and Joseph Fluehr, Rena Goldhahn, Marion and Dallas Kane, Louis Leitenberger, Janet and Kurt Nelson, Fred Stewart, Virginia Smith

# Richboro's Other Hotel

by Bety Cornell Luff

Today it seems hard to believe that in the 1700's and early 1800's Richboro was described as two separate towns. Where the crossroads of Almshouse Road met Second Street Pike was called Addisville and in the lower end of town where Bustleton Pike and Second Street Pike met was called Leedomville.

The first tavern license in town was granted in 1745 and around 1800 it was known as the "Sign of the Bear" later becoming known as "The Black Bear."

According to Davis' History of Bucks County, Richard Leedom and his family owned the Black Bear Hotel from 1762-1858. It was originally a log cabin, replaced by a stone building and in 1882 a French roof was added.



Arnold postcard photograph of the Black Bear Inn, Richboro, Bucks county, Early 1900's.

During the Revolution, early meetings of the Bucks County Committee of Observation and Inspection took place in Leedom's tavern. This is where the Democrats held their political meetings, while the Republicans met at the White Bear (later the Spread Eagle).

Since no photos exist from that period, many of our earliest images of the black and white bear hotels are from the Arnold Brothers postcards; the brothers photographed and printed about 200 scenes from all parts of Bucks County.

It is written that Leedom lived on the second floor of the tavern until he built the stone mansion across Second Street Pike sometime around 1779. He purchased the property in 1776. The prominent innkeeper also operated a grocery store in this house which later became the Milton Luff farm and

today is the Campbell-Thomas Funeral Home. Jean Luff, who was born in this house, recalls when the original barn burnt, the original date stone (1779) was found in the ruins.

Richard Leedom joined the Fourth Association Company of Northampton Township, and his name appeared on the rolls dated August 19, 1775 as a private under Captain Henry Lott. Richard Leedom spent most of his life in Northampton Township. The Black Bear Tavern continued as a tavern until 1926 when the late Jack Frey purchased the property. It was used as his private home until it was torn down and replaced with a ranch style house in 1960. For many years after he purchased it in 1926 travelers would continue to stop expecting a meal at the tavern.



Frey's modern replacment of the Black Bear. Later the Davis Pontiac used car facility.

Jean Luff graduated from high school with Jack Frey in 1938 and for several years worked at Frey's Machine Shop which was located adjacent to the property. He employed 3 or 4 full time men at the facility.



Frey's Machine Shop

**Richboro's Other Hotel - continued from page 3**

Many will remember Jack Frey as the first Northampton Township police chief. He would get irritated when drivers ignored the stop sign at the Second Street and Bustleton Pike intersection and sped through town, so he took it upon himself to purchase a uniform and installed a light and siren atop his Lincoln Continental. I can remember seeing him chasing "city drivers" towards Chain Bridge during the summer months.

In 1830 Addisville and Leedomville became known as Richborough, later shortened to Richboro after the then Postmaster Richard (Rich) Thomas.



Site of the former Black Bear. The last "Frey" home and soon to be torn down former Davis Pontiac used car office.

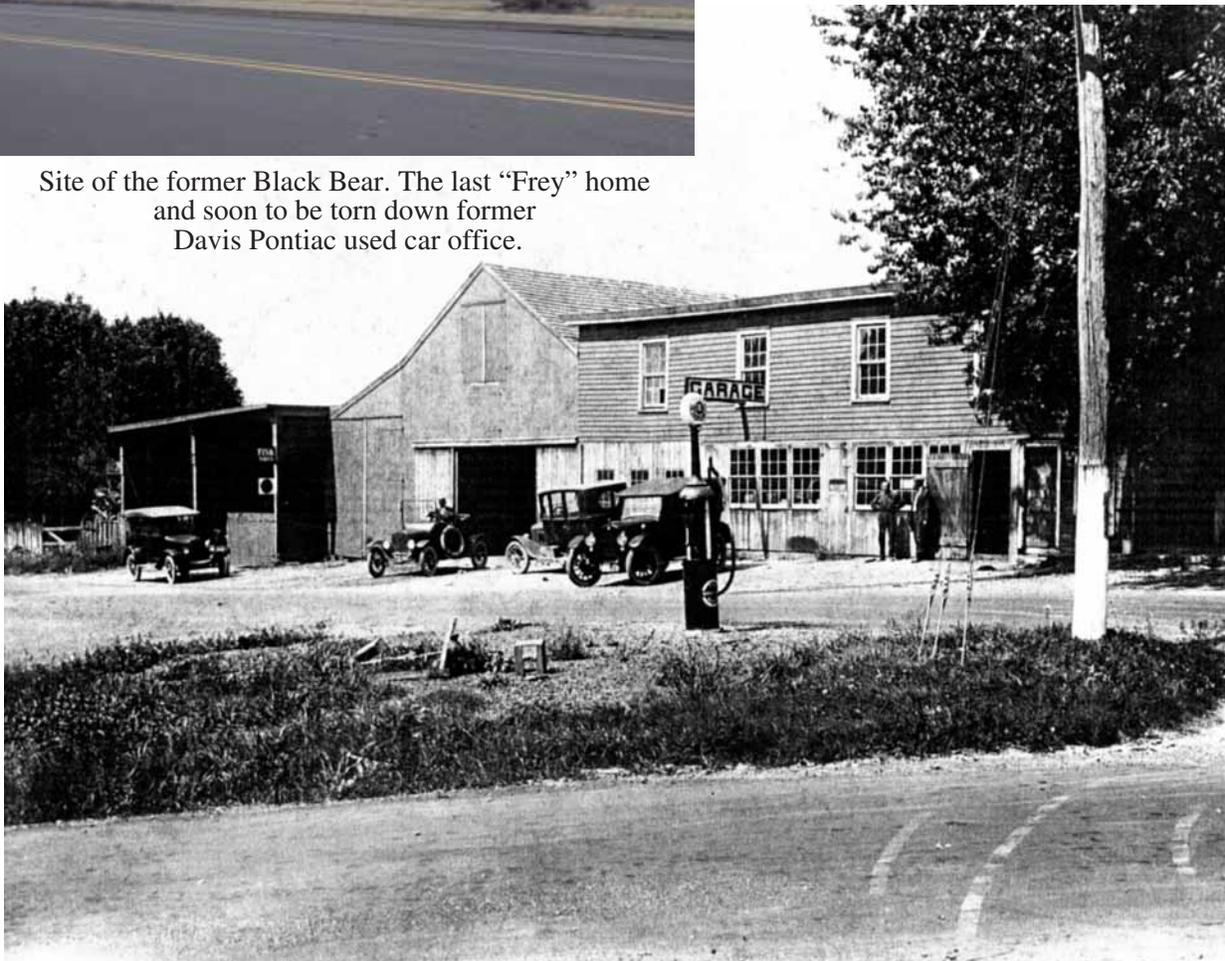
**ELECTRIC FOUNTAIN  
DISPLAY INSTALLED  
BY "JACK" FREY**

**One of the Few Fountains of Its  
Kind in Penna. Now to Be  
in Richboro**

Richboro has the honor of possessing one of the few electrical fountain displays in the state of Pennsylvania. This fountain is erected in the front of "Jack" Frey's garage and is beautified by 35 colored lights.

Mr. Frey, a progressive business man, is continually laying new schemes and he himself has made the landscape surrounding his residence very attractive.

Besides being an expert mechanic, "Jack" is a regular Paderewski, when it comes to fiddling. A. S.



Jack Frey's Garage, 1935.



**Above - The Turner Body Works at the corner of Bustleton Pike (to left) and Second Street Pike (to right) looking south. The Richboro Post office shopping strip was built in the farm field to the far left. The Black Bear Hotel would be to the right across Second Street Pike.**

**Left - The historic stone building part of the former Davis Pontiac in the far northeastern part of the property, cemetery to the right. The showroom and garage were added to the south.**



**Above - The Black Bear in the 1950's just before it was demolished. Frey Body Works to left. This is Second Street Pike looking north to Bustleton Pike intersection. It appears the road may have changed direction slightly from what it now is. The building behind the sign and tree looks like the Luff farm house, now Campbell-Thomas Funeral home and not the Turner house which you now see directly ahead when stopped at the light.**

**Left - Early photo of Davis Pontiac showing store front added to old stone house. Looking across Second Street Pike. Cemetery is to the right.**



# NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 732, RICHBORO, PENNSYLVANIA 18954-0732

NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org

## 2009 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

<b>President</b>	<b>Doug Crompton</b>	<b>215-355-5307</b>	<b>doug@crompton.com</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Pat Komelasky</b>	<b>215-355-0649</b>	<b>gkomelasky@comcast.net</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Vivian Braubitz</b>	<b>215-322-0635</b>	<b>vyvyanb@comcast.net</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Jackie Liney</b>	<b>215-858-8066</b>	<b>jackie@childrenculturalcenter.org</b>
<b>Membership</b>	<b>Doug Crompton</b>	<b>215-355-5307</b>	<b>doug@crompton.com</b>
<b>Ways and Means</b>	<b>Vacant</b>		
<b>Social Committee</b>	<b>Pat Komelasky</b>	<b>215-355-0649</b>	<b>gkomelasky@comcast.net</b>
<b>Director (former Pres.)</b>	<b>Mary Seader</b>	<b>215-355-4467</b>	<b>tiogacbnrjs@aol.com</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Sylvia Amato</b>		<b>CAmato@voicenet.com</b>
<b>Director</b>	<b>Betty Luff</b>	<b>215-357-3767</b>	
<b>Director</b>	<b>Virginia Freedgood</b>	<b>215-860-7877</b>	<b>virozantiq@aol.com</b>
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HISTORIA is published quarterly by the Northampton Township Historical Society. The Society meets four times each year at the Northampton Township Library, Upper Holland Road, Richboro. Everyone is welcome at our meetings. Meetings start at **7:30 PM** (refreshments 7PM), and include a featured speaker. For more information visit our web page or e-mail us at [nths@NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:nths@NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org) Past issues of the HISTORIA, in color, are available on our web page [NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](http://NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org) The HISTORIA is edited by Doug Crompton. Articles are always welcome.

### Meeting Dates for 2009

May 20	General Meeting	7 PM Library
September 16	General Meeting	7 PM Library
November 18	Dinner Meeting	6 PM To be announced

### Board Meetings 2009

August 11, October 13  
Northampton Library 7 PM

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL CLASSIFICATIONS

This will be your membership for the calendar year of 2009 (January 2009 to December 2009)

INDIVIDUAL - \$15    SENIOR - \$10    STUDENT - \$10    SPONSOR - \$100    PATRON - \$250 (5 year membership)  
FAMILY - \$20    SUSTAINING - \$50    NTHS CIRCLE - \$500 or greater (Life membership)

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: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:     /     / **2009**      Membership Classification \_\_\_\_\_

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 welcome : \_\_\_\_\_

# *HISTORIA*

*NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY*



*MAY 2009*

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P.O. BOX 732  
RICHBORO, PA 18954-0732*

**TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!  
PLEASE CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL. IF IT DOES NOT  
INDICATE '2009' YOUR MEMBERSHIP HAS EXPIRED.**

**Next MEETING - Wednesday, May 20, 2009 - 7 PM**  
Videographer Richard Noe, Paul Locke Farm and Memorial Days