



HISTORIA

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 3

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2002

GO UNDERGROUND WITH SIDNEY TAYLOR ON SEPTEMBER 25th



Sidney Taylor of New Egypt, N.J. will take NTHS members for a ride into history via the Underground Railroad. A descendant of Harriet Tubman, he will talk about why and how the Underground Railroad developed, why Pennsylvania played an important role in the Underground Railroad, and the part that Bucks County contributed.

An educator for over 30 years, Mr. Taylor is currently president of the African-American Historical and Cultural Society of Bucks County, serves on the Board of Trustees of the New Egypt Historical Society, and is a member of the Bristol, PA. Historical Foundation.

Among his interests, he lists theater, good conversation, travel, and writing. We look forward to what promises to be an interesting program. Come and bring your friends!

JOIN US AT NORTHAMPTON DAYS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Plan to stop by the NTHS booth on September 15th, and bring an antique or personal possession you would like to have appraised. Dr. Lori Verderame will be featured at our booth from 12 noon until 2pm to give her expert and interesting appraisals. Dr. Lori was a big hit at our May general meeting and kept everyone spellbound for over an hour and a half. Objects will be appraised on a first-come, first-serve basis for a fee of \$5.00 per item.

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OLD RICHBORO SCHOOL ON THE MOVE!

The Old Richboro School is up on wheels and ready to move! Two things detaining the move at the moment are permits and site preparation. It will be moved to the rear of the property on which it sits, and a Commerce Bank and Burger King will be constructed at the front.

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NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members:

Welcome back! I hope you all enjoyed a blissful summer filled with good food and seeing old friends.

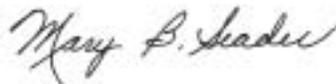
It's been a busy run-around summer. Birthdays, showers, weddings, and the first annual reunion of my husband's family.

We had a terrific crop of wild raspberries and peppers, but the tomato plants have yet to produce one flower.

I hope you all have watched the progress on The Spread Eagle and The Old Richboro School. They were saved because of you folks.

It's past one now, and I've got to have some sleep before I face the morning chores.

Hoping to see you at Northampton Days on Sunday, September 15th.



NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

In November, the NTHS Board of Directors will present a slate of officers at the general membership meeting. As of this publication date, we expect only a vacancy for the position of Vice President.

The Vice President is responsible for arranging programs for the general membership meetings and to conduct business in the absence of the president.

If you are interested in submitting your name or nominating someone for this position, please contact Mary Seader at



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday September 15 - 10 AM - 5 PM
Northampton Days - Richboro

Wednesday September 25 - 7:30 PM
Northampton Township Historical Society
General Meeting - The Underground Railroad

ONGOING EXHIBIT (Mercer Museum)
"Greetings from Bucks County"
Continues through November 30, 2002 during Mercer Museum Hours

Film Series
"Unique Reflections on the Great Depression"
Michener Museum
Wednesday, September 25 through Wednesday, October 9, 7 - 9 pm Ann and Herman Silverman Pavilion
\$10 members/\$15 non-members

Greetings from Bucks County:
Folklife of the Towpath Canal (Mercer Museum)
Tuesday, October 1 - 7:30 p.m.
Historian Lance E. Metz presents a slide program on the Delaware Canal's cultures and traditions. Free with museum admission.



**FOUND! SOCIAL COMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSON
And two committee members**

Pat Komelasky has been appointed as NTHS's new Social Committee Chairperson.

Cathy Wills and JoAnne Maguire have volunteered to serve as Social Committee members to assist Pat.

The NTHS Board of Directors extends their appreciation to Pat, Cathy, and JoAnne for volunteering.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RICHBORO HIGH SCHOOL 1896 – 1946

(prepared and presented by Betty Cornell Luff at the 50th reunion of her graduating class on October 17, 1992, held at Conti's Cross Keys Inn, Doylestown)

As early as 1819, there were one-room schoolhouses in Northampton Township; first through eighth grades were in one room with one teacher. By 1871, there were nine of these schools scattered throughout the township. Since the one in Richboro was the most centrally located, a second floor was added, and in 1896 a two-year high school was started. This building was located on what is now the Davis Pontiac property. First through sixth grades were on the first floor with Miss Sally Twining as teacher, and seventh through tenth grades were upstairs with Thomas Bock as the first high school teacher and principal.

This meant that if children wanted to continue their education beyond eighth grade, they had to walk from all parts of the township. There were just two students in the first graduating class of 1900; they were Elva Fenton and Antoinette Praul. There were three years when there were no graduates, and in 1907, William Scott was the only graduate.

In 1913, a larger, four-room stone building was built a little farther north on Second Street Pike. In 1914, the first class of six graduated from this three-year high school.

By the late 1920's, the population had increased enough for the school board to discuss building an addition to the stone building, but for economic reasons, it was decided to build a modern four room brick building on ground purchased from Mr. Betz. (This was the brick portion that was just demolished in 2001.)

There were four students in the class of 1927, and this was the year Charles Boehm, the principal, made a change to a four-year high school. Three of the class members returned for another year.

The new four-room brick building was originally built for elementary grades, but over the years many additions were added, and I spent most of my high school years in this building.

Graduating classes at Richboro averaged four to twelve students in the 1920's, but by 1942 there were fifteen graduates and a staff of nine teachers, including Raymond Gilbert, our principal, who also taught math. The largest class to ever graduate from Richboro was in 1943 with 28 students.

Approximately 385 students graduated from Richboro High School from 1900 to 1946, when Northampton consolidated

with neighboring townships to form the Council Rock School District.

In this farm community 50 years ago, "our class consisted of a set of twins, two brothers, two cousins, and three of the marriages were to cousins of their classmates."

World War II was in progress in 1942, and several of the boys joined the service or worked at defense plants. Three continued to farm, and many of the girls were able to find employment, replacing many of the boys who were drafted. Four of six girls boarded the train in Holland or Churchville for jobs in Philadelphia.

I closed with this statement, "Tonight I think we can all honestly say we are proud of our roots and particularly proud to say we graduated from Richboro High School, class of 1942."

RICHBORO SCHOOL ON THE MOVE

From page 1

The building will be moved by the same company, which successfully moved the Spread Eagle last December. Once the school is relocated, Commerce Bank will donate it to the township. A significant amount of restoration will be required before it can be occupied.

The move is part of an overall rejuvenation of downtown Richboro, the centerpiece of which is the Spread Eagle Inn. The intersection of Second Street Pike and Almshouse Road is being widened, and a new traffic light will be installed north of Almshouse Road in front of the new Commerce Bank Shopping Center.



Elevated and on wheels, the Old Richboro School awaits moving day. It will be driven backwards, downhill, to its new resting place at the back of the property.

YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS WANTED TO DIG FOR LOST FOUNDATION

NTHS is sponsoring a weekend archaeological dig on October 12 and 13, 2002 at the Willett-Knight House on Bustleton Pike in Feasterville. This historic home is currently owned by Clyde Cobb and his wife; they purchased the property in 1959 and have lived there ever since.

Clyde has done extensive research and has confirmed that the house was occupied by 1768. Research indicates that the house was built in 1748. The house sits on two and a half acres, which is part of an original parcel of 500 acres that was purchased from William Penn by John Harding.

The Bucks County atlases of 1876 and 1891 show that there were originally three buildings on the lot. There are now only two. The current garage was built on the winery foundation. Clyde has requested assistance in locating the foundation of the third building.

Vivian Braubitz and Michael Tomkins, both professional archaeologists, will lead the dig. The activity will be open to ten children ages 12 and up and will run both days from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. A fee of \$10.00 will be charged.

Interested children will be able to sign up at the NTHS booth on Northampton Days. Registration may also be done by contacting Debbie Glessner via email at Dglessner@earthlink.net



The Willett-Knight House pictured
in the mid 20th century.

NORTHAMPTON DAYS from page 1

Northampton Days will be held on Township Road, between Upper Holland and Richboro-Newtown Rd. Events will run from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

About Dr. Lori Verderame:

Art historian and certified appraiser, Dr. Lori Verderame is the director of the fine art resource www.DrLoriV.com and Masterpiece Galleries. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Wesleyan University and earned her PhD. in art history at Pennsylvania State University. She has taught art history at the Penn State University, the State University of New York, and at the Yale University Art Gallery. Dr. Verderame has held museum positions at the Allentown Art Museum, Muhlenberg College, and the Palmer Museum of Art, Penn State. Additionally, she has trained museum docents at the James A. Michener Art Museum as well as curated exhibitions at Colgate University, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Iowa.

She recently authored a book titled, Seymour Lipton: An American Sculptor in conjunction with the exhibitions of the same name, which traveled to college museums throughout the country for over two years. Her most recent article titled "Bucks County Artists," was published by the national art journal, American Art Review. Dr. Lori also appears on the CBS KYW-TV3 program "Trash or Treasure," in Philadelphia, PA., providing appraisal and collecting tips to the viewers.

Emily's Rice Pudding

Contributed by Pat Komelasky

1 1/2 cup rice

2 cups of water, salt

Boil rice until soft and place in baking dish with:

1 can evaporated milk

3/4 Cup sugar

1 tsp. vanilla

3 1/2 cups of milk

1 Tbsp. Butter

Mix all these ingredients and stir into baking dish with rice. Sprinkle with cinnamon and nutmeg on the top and bake at 300 for 1 hour. Yum!

Baked apples with vanilla sauce—next time!

Harry W. Martin 1925 - 2002

Historical Society member Harry W. Martin of Churchville peacefully passed away at home with his family by his side on Wednesday evening, August 7, 2002.

Born in Philadelphia, Mr. Martin was a resident of Churchville for many years. He attended Drexel University and was employed by Eaton Yale & Towne for 38 years.

A man of many facets and talents, he was a volunteer at the Johnsville Air Station restoring World War II aircraft. His love of planes started in WW II when he was a member of the Ninth Air Force, stationed in England, Belgium, and France.

Harry is survived by his wife, Diane, and daughter Diane Amadio, our Ways and Means Committee Chairperson.

Donations in Harry's memory may be made to Doylestown Hospital Hospice, 875 North Easton Rd., Doylestown, PA. 18901, or to a charity of the donor's choice.

Harry W. Martin By Diane Martin Amadio



Harry W. Martin of Churchville, Pennsylvania, formerly of Philadelphia, was eighteen years old on January 3, 1943, when he registered for the draft. All of his brothers and sisters (he being the youngest of six), had already enlisted. He requested a speedy assignment and received it. On April 12th, he was on his way to Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania for two weeks to get shots, uniforms, and

tests. Assigned to the Army Air Force, basic training took place at Seymour Johnson Field in North Carolina. Aptitude tests indicated that Private Martin would be a good radio operator, so off he went to Camp Krauter, Missouri, for six months training in radio school.

From Seymour Johnson Field, he was shipped to Boston and sent out on a troop ship with bunks six high. There was a Harry Martin above him as well as below him! They remained in the harbor for a few days as part of a convoy. They passed time by watching men play baseball on the deck of a flat-top next to their ship. Eventually they set sail for Liverpool, England. As their ship approached the port of Liverpool, P3-8's were putting on an air show for the approaching convoy. Harry remembered that he was able to look down on a pilot flying below the level of the ship's deck. When he first arrived in England, he would sit on a hillside

and watch buzz bombs, launched off the coast of France, exploding in London. Harry was assigned to the Eighth Air Force, but only for about two weeks. Then D-Day occurred and he was re-shuffled to the Ninth Air Force Armament Ordinance #1928 Ammunition Company. When he took the train to transfer from the Eighth to the Ninth, he met his good friend Colby Craig. Once Harry arrived in Colchester (southeast of London), England, he began the work that he would do for the duration of the war – loading and moving bombs for aircraft disposal. Sgt. Wendell Lewis was in command, and was like a father to Privates Martin and Craig.



During this period, there was detached service in Great Dunmore and Ipswich Airfields. In October, the Ninth packed up and flew C-47's over the Channel and into France. Their camp was set up in the chateaus of Meru. Here, airbases were numbered and not identified by town, so there is some uncertainty of the exact placement of air bases.

Everyone was given a day off on their birthday, and it was no exception for Private Martin when he turned 20 on January 30, 1945, in Meru. He was promptly rolled in the snow and thrown down a coal chute. He had to spend the rest of his "day off" washing his uniform.

Then he was transported to Belgium where the men of the Ninth lived in tents, which had boardwalks through the mud. There were many more ruins here than in Paris. They had no baths for months. During this period, President Franklin Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945.

Eventually they were moved to German barracks, which was a large chateau with statues and an iron fence. One day Privates Martin and Craig caught a rabbit and made an impromptu stew in a five gallon bucket over an open fire. Along with a few loaves of French bread, the men served up a great meal for all the guys in the barracks.

One day while they were working on a road in Belgium,, the men heard a boy riding by on a bicycle yelling, "Fini la guere!" (The war is over!) They ran to a nearby town and found everyone celebrating – they say it never stopped.

Privates Martin and Craig were on a troop ship in the Mediterranean near the Rock of Gibraltar when the first atomic bomb was dropped. They remained in the harbor until the second bomb was dropped. At this point they set sail. One third of the way to their destination, Japan surrendered, and the Captain of the ship came on the public address system and said, "My orders have been changed." The men felt their ship make a mighty swing to head for home.

THE SPREAD EAGLE INN BOASTS A NEW LOOK

Over the past four months, Twining Construction of Newtown, PA has turned the once dilapidated Spread Eagle Inn into a beautiful landmark in downtown Richboro. The \$300,000 contract, funded by Northampton Township through a grant from Toll Brothers, completely restored the exterior of the Inn. It has been returned to its late 19th century grandeur, including a complete re-facing of its walls, window restoration, top and mansard roof restoration, porch restoration, and painting. NTHS has ordered shutters, which will be delivered and painted this month. Once the shutters are hung and the grounds are landscaped, it will be an elegant historical landmark for Richboro, and will help to define Northampton Township. NTHS extends its gratitude to all who helped save the Spread Eagle Inn.





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	Pat Komelasky	355-0649	gkomelasky@msn.com	
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 2002-2003

Sept 25	General Meeting	7:30 PM	November 20	Dinner Meeting	6:30 PM
March 19	General Meeting	7:30 PM	May 21	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 : _____