



# HISTORIA

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 1

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 2009

## The Powerful and the Powerless: Archaeological Discoveries from the President's House



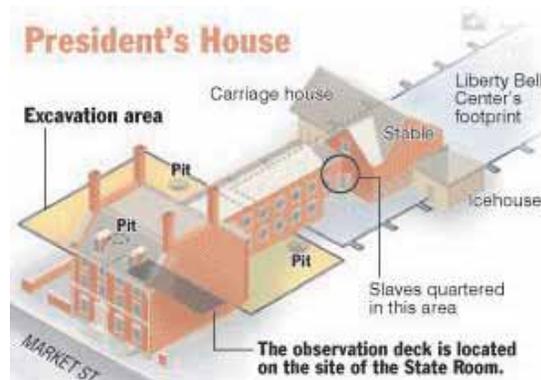
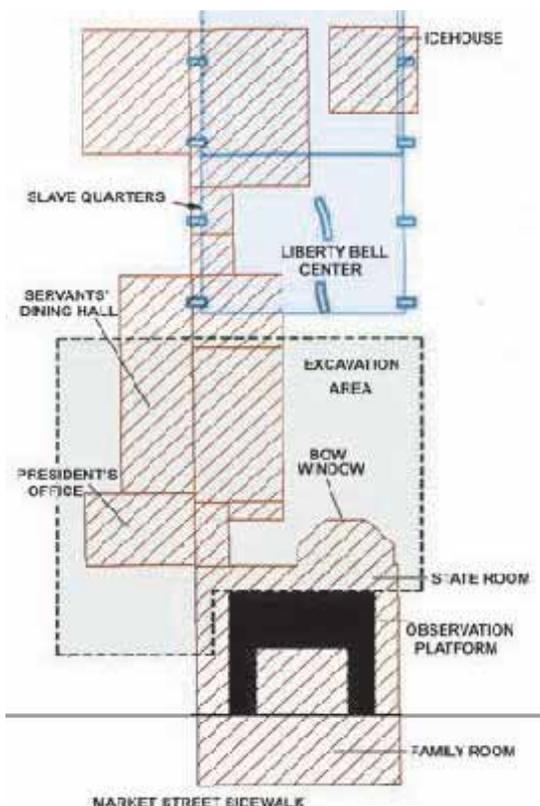
The March Northampton Township Historical Society meeting will again feature Senior Archaeologist Douglas Mooney who will present an overview of the excavations and the findings they produced.

In 2007, the City of Philadelphia and the National Park Service commissioned archaeological investigations at the site of the former executive mansion President's Washington and Adams occupied between 1790 and 1800. Conducted as an exercise in public archaeology, this project was initiated in response to an emotional national outcry following the revelation that nine enslaved Africans were kept in bondage here during Washington's administration, that two of those individuals successfully escaped to freedom from this site, and that quarters for some of the enslaved were lying beneath the entrance to the new home of the Liberty Bell. These investigations surpassed all expectations and produced archaeological evidence associated with

Presidents Washington and Adams and the enslaved individuals who toiled on these grounds, drew more than 300,000 visitors to the excavations, and sparked impassioned public debate related to the juxtaposed themes of freedom and slavery inherent in this site.

Douglas Mooney is a Senior Archaeologist with the URS Corporation, and is a long-time resident of the Borough of Royersford, in Montgomery County. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Anthropology from West Virginia University, his Master's degree in Archaeology from Penn State University, and has twenty years experience in archaeology and cultural resources management. Mr. Mooney has participated in or directed the excavation of more than 150 sites throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region and in England, and for the last ten years has focused his research primarily on the archaeology of Philadelphia and surrounding areas. He is the author of more than 50 technical reports and professional papers, and his expertise encompasses prehistoric, historical, urban, and mortuary archaeology.

Please plan to attend this exciting presentation at the Northampton Library on March 18<sup>th</sup>. The meeting starts at 7 PM for greeting and refreshments.



**NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Welcome to the Northampton Township Historical Society's 35<sup>th</sup> year and the 17<sup>th</sup> year of our publication, the HISTORIA. We would not have a society without YOU, our members. As in any organization we are aging and unfortunately we have lost many of the fine members that started our society and supported it from the beginning. Every organization faces this aging process and to keep going must bring in new members. I encourage you to bring a friend or neighbor to one of our meetings and introduce them to the society. I also welcome your ideas on how we can make the society better.

I would like to thank Mary Seader, who has been your president since 2005 and served as vice president prior to that. Mary has been very dedicated to the society and has done an outstanding job in keeping us going and getting great speakers for our meetings. Thank you Mary! I would also like to welcome Virginia Freedgood as a new board member. Virginia has an extensive background in history and preservation. She and her husband, Oz are relatively new to the area and we welcome them to the society. Board members Chris Fluehr and Jean Gallagher have left the board and we thank them for their service. All other board positions remain the same as last year and I look forward to serving you as president of the society again.

Our meeting this month features the return of Doug Mooney who gave a great presentation on the archaeological digs in Philadelphia at our meeting last September. We are looking forward to another great talk.

Looking forward to future meetings we expect to have Richard Noe show and speak on another of his great movies about Northampton Township and we are looking at the possibility of some of our older members speaking about life in Richboro in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Please make a note of our 2009 meeting dates listed on the last page of the HISTORIA.

If you have not yet paid your dues for 2009 we will be sending out a reminder in the next month. Thank you for your continuing support.



**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 March 18, 7 PM**

Northampton Township Library

Douglas Mooney

Discoveries from the Presidents House

**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

**Through May 31, 2009**

Everyday Rhythms: A New Exhibit

Everyday Rhythms will trace the evolution of musical instruments using the Mercer Museum's collection of 19th-20th century artifacts.

The exhibit is free with museum admission.

**Sunday April 5th, 2009 - Noon-5 pm**

Doylestown Museums Free For All

Enjoy a day of free admission and special activities at the Mercer Museum & Fonthill, James A. Michener Art Museum, and Moravian Pottery & Tile Works in Doylestown. "Doylestown Museums Free for All" also features free shuttle service between the sites and Doylestown's R5 SEPTA station courtesy of Bucks County Transport. Free parking is available at all four museum locations

**Richboro School Reunion**

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

Northampton Valley Country Club, Richboro

Contact - Emma Walker Worthington

215-943-0108

**Your NTHS Membership is due for 2009**

**Congratulations to the following NTHS members that gave above and beyond their normal membership dues in 2008.**

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

# Richboro School Reunions

By Betty Cornell Luff

Back in the summer of 200, Emma Walker Worthington pondered the idea of reuniting with friends and graduates from Richboro High School. This was about the time that Commerce Bank had purchased the school property and wanted to dismantle all of the school buildings and build a bank and Burger King. After much interference from interested townspeople, Commerce Bank agreed to save the oldest 1913 stone structure and move it to the back of the property.



Rosanna Slack, Class of 24 and Bessie Cornell Ivins, Class of 23, May 2001 reunion.

Emma assembled a group of her old classmates and Richboro graduates and together they organized a very successful first reunion of 214 classmates and friends who shared their memories of years past. That year the oldest attending was Bess Cornell Ivins who was 97 years of age and graduated in 1923. Three members of the class of 1925 attended the reunion, they were Clara Yerkes Finney, Ruth Opitz Crane, and

George Traub. Also four former teachers attended. Mary Davis Lobley, class of 1940 came from British Columbia.



Betty Luff talks to three graduates from 1925, Clara Yerkes Finney, Ruth Opitz Crane, and George Traub, May 2001 reunion.



Richboro School teachers, Marion Tomlinson, Edith Wilson, Miss DeKay, and Mary Ann Gilbert. Emily Hallowell also attended.

The first reunion was so successful; it was decided to hold another reunion in May 2003. That year Rosanna Slack who graduated in 1924 was the oldest attending and again four teachers were present. The attendance was 160 with Arthur Solis coming from Alaska.

Two years later in 2005, a third reunion was held with 110 graduates, classmates attending. Ruth Opitz Crane, class of 1925, was the earliest graduate attending.

Again in May of 2007, 115 attended when Richboro High School held it's forth reunion. With again a very successful reunion it was decided to hold yet another reunion this year on Friday, May 29, 2009 at the Northampton Country Club in Richboro.



Ruth Opitz Crane graduated in 1925. She was the earliest graduate at the 2007 reunion.

The last graduating high school class was in 1946 but anyone who attended the old Richboro School until it closed in 1987 is invited to attend. Although they have said this in the past this may well be the last reunion, so please plan to attend and see your old school friends and talk about old times. The reunion is on Friday, May 29, 2009. Contact Emma Walker Worthington at 215-943-0108 for reservations.

## The Horse and the Wagon

Do you recall some years ago  
 And I'm sure you do of course  
 That while the family had no car  
 Each family had a horse

And then recall there was a time  
 When you had some place to go  
 You got out that old wagon  
 Or the sleigh if there was snow

The kids got in the backseat  
 And up front was dad and mom  
 Then that familiar CLIPPITY CLOP  
 Just like a rhythmic song

You CLIPPITY CLOPPED along the way  
 Without a car in sight  
 Waved to folks as you passed by  
 Looking left and right

And as you rolled along  
 You saw a rabbit, side the road  
 And in the meadow flowers  
 And just out front a toad

But the world is moving, oh so fast  
 With much advances, yes of course  
 But can't we slow and maybe dream  
 Of the wagon and the horse?

And can't we in our busy lives  
 Stop rushing, pause or stop  
 And think about those yester-days  
 And that rhythmic CLIPPITY CLOP

George Ivins, May 2008



Cameron Wilson on his horse and carriage riding through Tyler Park.



John Cornell, Betty Luff's father, rides in a horse and carriage while courting her mother.



The way it looked in our fields in the early 20th century and before.



# NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 732, RICHBORO, PENNSYLVANIA 18954-0732

NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org

## 2009 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

<b>President</b>	Doug Crompton	215-355-5307	doug@crompton.com
<b>Vice President</b>	Pat Komelasky	215-355-0649	gkomelasky@comcast.net
<b>Secretary</b>	Vivian Braubitz	215-322-0635	vyvyanb@comcast.net
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jackie Liney	215-858-8066	jackie@childrensculturalcenter.org
<b>Membership</b>	Doug Crompton	215-355-5307	doug@crompton.com
<b>Ways and Means</b>	Vacant		
<b>Social Committee</b>	Pat Komelasky	215-355-0649	gkomelasky@comcast.net
<b>Director (former Pres.)</b>	<b>Mary Seader</b>	<b>215-355-4467</b>	<b>tiogacbnrjs@aol.com</b>
Director	Sylvia Amato		CAmato@voicenet.com
<b>Director</b>	Betty Luff	215-357-3767	
<b>Director</b>	<b>Virginia Freedgood</b>	<b>215-860-7877</b>	<b>virozantiq@aol.com</b>
HISTORIA Editor	Doug Crompton	215-355-5307	doug@crompton.com

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

March 18	General Meeting	7 PM Library
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

February 10, April 14, 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*

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY*



*MARCH 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, March 18, 2009 - 7 PM  
Discoveries from the President's House - Doug Mooney**