



HISTORIA

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 2

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY 2006

May meeting to feature a talk on old farmhouses in Northampton Township

Join us at the newly renovated library

Join us on May 17th, 7:30 PM, at the newly renovated Northampton Township Library for a presentation by Richard Noe on "old farmhouses in Northampton Township." Mr. Noe has traveled throughout the township documenting as many of the oldest farm structures he could find, often taking Betty Luff along as his 'tour guide' This should be a very interesting and educational presentation about our farm heritage in the township. As always all are welcome and please bring a friend.

5¢ Toll Please

The story of toll houses in Northampton Township

By Betty Cornell Luff

For a period of about 100 years, in the early 1800's to early 1900s, there were several turnpikes in Bucks County, all leading to Philadelphia with the majority of trade being farmers taking their crops there to market. Wagons and buggies were charged according to the width of the wheels: the wider the wheel, the less the fee because a wider wheel did not make the ruts that a narrower wheel did. A two-horse wagon cost ten cents; a one-horse wagon, five. Even a penny was charged if you peddled a bicycle. Today this does not sound like much, but some of the tollgates were pretty close together and by the time a farmer got to market, it could add up.

These toll houses were usually little white frame houses, costing about \$800, constructed by privately owned companies that built and maintained the turnpikes leading to Philadelphia. Northampton alone had at least four turnpikes running through it at one time.

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This Toll house was on Bustelton Pike just south of Bristol Road, in Southampton Township, but used daily by Northampton travelers. Posing are Kate Jamison and her daughter, Anna Cora Jamison Praul, mother and grandmother of Elmer Praul, Churchville. They operated the toll house after Mr. Jamison passed away. c. 1890

Toll houses stood on toll roads. The tolls, or fees, which travellers on the road had to pay, were collected here. The toll collector lived in the house, and there was often a gate across the road to stop people from travelling without paying.

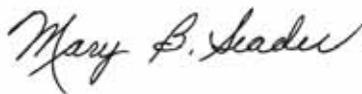
NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am looking forward to being back at the Northampton Township Library for our May meeting. Richard Noe promises a great presentation on the old farmhouses in the township.

I want to thank the North and Southampton Church and St. John Church in Richboro for giving us a home while the library was being renovated. They were so gracious to welcome us.

Every May we celebrate Mother's Day and Memorial Day. Remember all the love that has been given us and remember our Armed Forces presently serving and those no longer with us.

Have a great summer!



Thank you if you have renewed your membership. Membership cards will be sent out in the next month. If you forgot, its time to renew. Please fill out and send in the membership form on the last page of this HISTORIA

Did you know?

The NTHS web page has been updated. We will be adding more content in the future including financial reports and minutes from our meetings. The entire collection of HISTORIA's (over 12 years) are available online and in color.

Check it out at:

www.northamptontownshiphistoricalsociety.org

Congratulations to the following NTHS members that gave above and beyond their normal membership dues in 2006.

NTHS Circle - Doug Crompton
 Patron - Roy and Gail Reinard
 Sponsor - Elinor Crompton, Lois Ferguson,
 Margaret and Lewis Hull
 Sustaining - Jim and Larice Burt, Christine and
 Joseph Fluehr, Jim and Joan Kinney,
 Richard Noe, Lois Leitenberger III,
 Virginia Smith, Fred Stewart,
 Maryanna and Jack Trembath

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your Calendar

NTHS General Meeting Pennsylvania German Fraktur Wednesday May 17 - 7:30 PM

Richard Noe, Old Farms of Northampton
 Northampton Library, Richboro, PA

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

"The Rescue of the Colors"

Extended through August 31, 2006
 Museum Hours, Mercer Museum

"Dolls from the Attic"

Extended through December 31, 2006
 Mercer Museum

Self-guided Tour: "Finding Franklin"

Through December 31, 2006
 Mercer Museum

33rd Annual Folk Fest

May 13-14 - 10 AM - 5 PM
 Mercer Museum Grounds

Spring State Craft Festival

Celebrate Crafts in the Park
 May 20 & 21, 2006

Saturday: 10 am - 6 pm, Sunday: 10 am - 5 pm Tyler
 State Park, Richboro, PA

June 3 - 12 Noon - rain date June 4

House Tour - Tom Baust
 115 Middle Holland road

June 24

Henry Mercer's 150th Birthday
 Open house at Fonthill
 Noon - 4 PM

July 4

Fonthill Old-Fashion Fourth of July Celebration
 Noon - 5 PM Fonthill

July 24-29

Christmas in July
 10 AM - 4:45 PM
 Mercer Museum

Toll houses in Northampton Township

Continued from page 1

Tollgate keeping was a family affair; children helped watch for customers and took the toll if their parents were eating. Someone always had to stay home; the entire family could not leave together. Most old-timers from the area remember the Getty family as toll keepers at the Second Street Pike and Bristol Road toll. They lived rent free and their toll house served as the post office for the tiny hamlet of Cornell, but no one remembers if the family was responsible for the U.S. mail or not. There were two Getty boys, John and Joe, who assisted their dad at taking the toll if he was away helping a local farmer with the harvest. All the tollhouses had signs posted listing the penalties for not paying. Some tollhouses sold tobacco, cigars, and newspapers.



Toll gate at Northwest corner of Bristol road and Second Street Pike (then Middle Road) with the gate down and waiting for customers. c. 1915

While interviewing old-timers on tape many years ago, a former resident of Neshaminy Farms remembered not being able to go to Richboro, Churchville, or Southampton without paying a toll. She told about the Asher Blaker family who operated the tollhouse on Second Street Pike at the end of Twingingford Road. Some recalled that on a hot day, they would stop and get a cold drink from the old iron pump there.



A 1974 view of the Bristol Road and Second Street pike toll house. Notice that Second street pike moved considerably to the east.

My Uncle Jesse told about when he was courting, he would always go around Mr. Carver's tollgate at the corner of Lower Holland Road and Bustleton Pike as fast as possible, but Mr. Carver kept a pile of stones handy to throw at him. Mr. Carver was known to sift the cinders from his stove ashes into the wheel tracks. Today, we would call this recycling. Another well-remembered tollhouse was that of the Jamison family. They operated the tollhouse at Bristol Road and Bustleton Pike in Churchville. Mother and daughter carried on for the company after the passing of Mr. Jamison.

One young girl from Richboro, Anna Whitaker, recalls that she was taken to Southampton weekly for piano lessons and so this meant paying a toll at Bristol Road and again at Street Road, an expensive venture. They soon figured out, however, that they could slip through the Southampton undertakers unnoticed!

When our young people today hear the word "turnpike", they immediately think of racing 65 or 70 miles per hour, and zipping through the tollgate, without stopping, thanks to Easy Pass. Could they have survived in 1900?

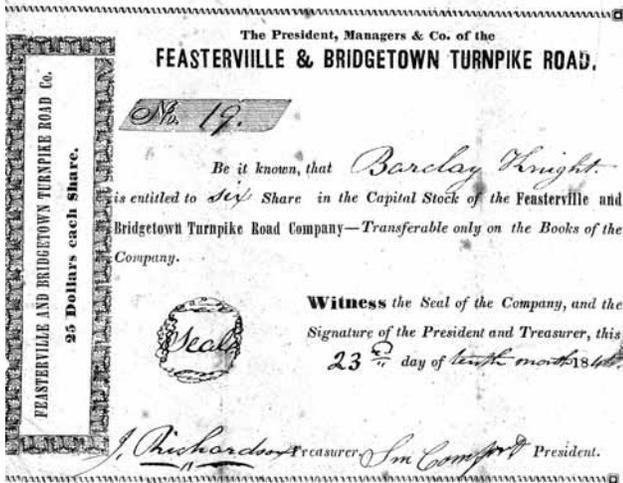
More pictures on next page

News item from Richboro in the Bucks Gazette of January 1901

Notice is published in the Doylestown papers to the effect that on January 28th, a petition of twenty-five or more resident taxpayers of this county will be present to the Court of Quarter Sessions at Doylestown, praying the Court for the appointment of a jury of view, consisting of five reputable citizens of the county to view and condemn the Richboro and Pineville turnpike road, which extends from Richboro, through the village of Penn's Park and by the Anchor tavern, to the village of Pineville. The company has paid no dividend for many years, possibly never, and at this time it is difficult to locate some of the stockholders. The act authorizing the incorporation of the company was passed by the Legislature of 1848, and was signed by Governor Francis R. Shunk, on March 3d of that year. No doubt the road was constructed soon after that date, probably the following summer.



Another view of the house at the corner of Bristol Road and 2nd Street Pike from an Arnold Bros. postcard. (undated).



A stock certificate from the Feasterville and Bridgetown Turnpike.

Southampton Turnpike Road

The corporate name of the turnpike that ran through the village of Southampton was the Foxchase and Huntingdon Turnpike Road. It extended from Richboro, in Bucks County, to Foxchase, in Philadelphia County. This road, known commonly as “The Second Street Pike”, stretched from the Anchor Hotel in Wrightstown Township, Bucks County, to Foxchase.

The toll–house in Southampton was on the southeast corner of the intersection of this turnpike and the Street Road. The last toll–gate keepers were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Beans. The Foxchase and Huntingdon Turnpike Road was transferred to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by deed dated Nov. 10, 1919 and after that date tolls ceased to be collected. Sometime afterward, the tollhouse sold to a private party and was removed from the site.

More Toll roads in Northampton Township

In the early 1800's, many roads were built or maintained by private companies, and travelers had to pay for the privilege of using these roads or turnpikes. The charge was usually a few pennies at each tollgate. A wagon and two horses was 24¢ toll from Richboro to Philadelphia. Many farmers and travelers tried to outwit the toll keepers, or traveled miles out of their way to avoid paying any tolls at all.

By 1924 most turnpikes became state roads, and toll houses were no longer needed. In Northampton it is believed that a toll gate was on the Middle Rd (now 2nd St. Pike) a short distance north of Almshouse Road. It was removed and put at the White Bear Inn (Spread Eagle Inn). A scale was installed, the farmers' wagons were weighed and the farmer charged accordingly. Another toll house was on Bustleton Pike at Lower Holland Road. It was torn down in the 20th century, and is now part of the garage parking lot.

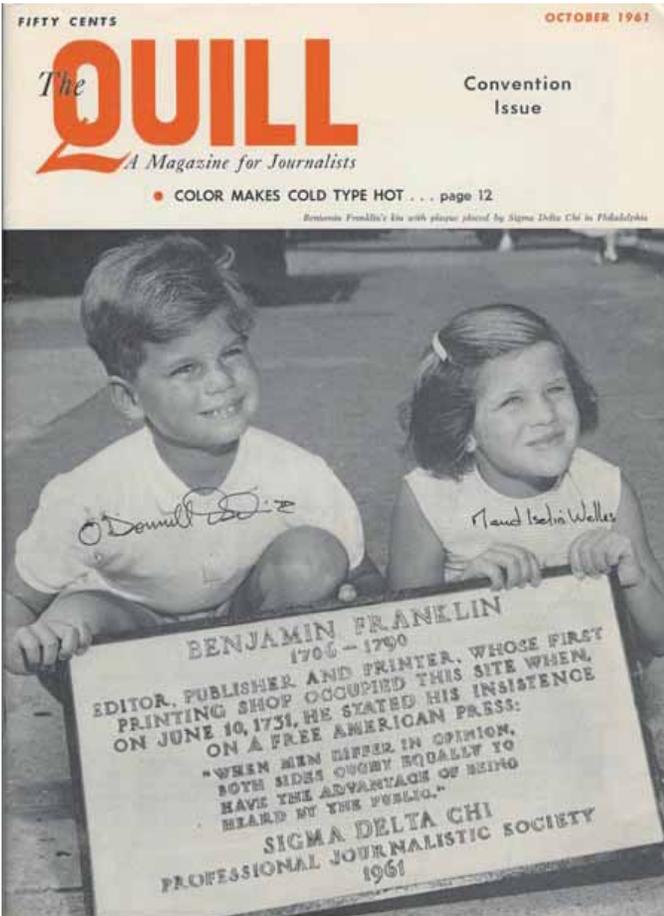
Photos courtesy of the Northampton Township Historic Commission



Dr. Cammie Wilson poses with mother, Olivia, and her baby colt born on March 20, 2006 at the Wilson farm. This was a birthday present for Cammie as it just happened to also be his 85th birthday!



Top: Jean Gallagher and Cammie Wilson talk at our March meeting. Bottom: Richard Noe helps Betty Luff find a location on a Northampton map.



On April 8, 2006 a plaque was rededicated in honor of the site of Benjamin Franklin's print shop at 2nd and Market Streets in Philadelphia. The first dedication was held in 1961 and shown at left are the seventh descendants of Franklin, O'Donnell and Maud Iselen, holding the plaque. The plaque was displaced with the demolition of the old site and through the help of SEPTA it was relocated to it's new location above. Shown are the now grown children and their children, Timothy Welles and Margaretta Iselin, the eighth generation descendants. My father, Robert Crompton, was responsible for the first dedication and I was honored to be involved in this rededication. See www.crompton.com/franklin for more information.

Doug Crompton

Judge Henry Wynkoop paintings presented to schools



Council Rock Librarians hold a portrait of Judge Henry Wynkoop, donated to each school by the Northampton Township Historical society. Front row: (Left to right) Bonnie Curran of Richboro Middle, Robin Hunt of Holland Middle, and Hilary O'Hara of Rolling Hills Elementary. Back row: (left to right) Debra Gniewek and Noreen Moore of CRHS-South, Debbie Glessner of Hillcrest Elementary, Arlene Williams of Holland Elem. and Beth Auwarter of Maureen Welch Elementary. Missing is Gail Gorgol of Churchville Elementary. Many thanks to Debbie Glessner for helping this happen and providing the pictures!

Come to a Birthday Party in June

Tom Baust, the new owner of 115 Middle Holland Road, Holland will be holding a Birthday Party celebrating the 200 year history of his house on June 3rd (with a rain date of June 4th). Tom has invited the NTHS to his home at Noon for a Private house tour of the 1st floor, in advance of the Public. Tom has made arrangements with the Council Rock School District and asks that you use the Student Parking Lot to park your vehicles. He asks that you please be at his residence by 12 Noon, so that the House Tour to the NTHS can promptly begin.

Tom is planning a Flag raising Ceremony at 1:30PM, a House naming Ceremony, Several Music Groups, a few historic antiques on exhibit by Sanger & Schwartz Antiques, and Reenactors from the "Second Pennsylvania Regiment of the Continental Line." Tom asks that everyone bring their own lawn chairs, as his own seating is limited.



NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 732, RICHBORO, PENNSYLVANIA 18954-0732

www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org

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Treasurer	Michael Tomkins	215-504-1998	michaeltomkins@comcast.net
Membership	Doug Crompton	215-355-5307	doug@crompton.com
Ways and Means	Vacant		
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Director	Christine Fluehr	215-579-4334	chris@fluehr.com
Director	Betty Luff	215-357-3767	
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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 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 e-mail 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 2006

May 17	General Meeting	7:30 PM
September 20	General Meeting	7:30 PM
November 15	Dinner Meeting	6:30 PM

Board Meetings 2006

August 9, October 11
7 PM - Call for location

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL CLASSIFICATIONS

This will be your membership for the calendar year of 2006 (January 2006 to December 2006)

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: ____ / ____ /2006 Membership Classification _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ DUES ENCLOSED: \$ _____

EMAIL: _____ Shirt Size [S] [M] [L] [EXL] - (Sponsor and higher)

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 : _____