



# HISTORIA

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 4

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 2005

## Third Annual Frederick M. Holzwarth, Sr. Tribute and Memorial Dinner

The Northampton Township Historical Society's November meeting will feature dinner and a tribute to Fred M. Holzwarth, Sr. Our speaker will be Bob Benton from the Bucks County Civil war roundtable. It will take place at the Spring Mill Country Club in Ivyland on Wednesday, November 16th from 6-10 PM. The late Fred Holzwarth Jr., a past member and membership chairman of the society, donated money to the Civil War Museum in Doylestown and to our society to have dinners in honor of his father. The dinner is open to all current N.T.H.S. Members. The deadline for reservations is November 7th. If you did not receive or misplaced your form a blank for registering is included in this HISTORIA. Please try to attend this wonderful event.



The Bucks County Civil War Library Museum is located 1/2 block from the Bucks County Courthouse on 32 N Broad St, Doylestown. The museum is open free to the public (donations are accepted) on Saturdays from 10:30 am to 2 pm. Arrangements can be made for special tours and research work. Call 215-348-8293 to make an appointment.

The Museum houses many artifacts related to the Civil War on subjects dealing with Doylestown, the 104th Pa. Volunteer Infantry Regiment, as well as the War in general. The articles on display are on permanent or temporary loan from area collectors and history enthusiasts. Donations are always accepted. A sampling of the articles on display include: *Bullets, shells, weapons, musical instruments, and uniforms of the Civil War, Lincoln Medals and Tokens dating from 1870, GAR medals and ribbons, Original documents related to the 104th Pa. volunteer Infantry, and much more.*

The Holzwarth Library is home to hundreds of books relating the America's Civil War. The late Fred Holzworth generously left the Roundtable his vast collection. Recent book donations are helping to make the Library a great resource for researchers. All the books are available for loan. The library includes a complete set of: *The Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Battles and Leaders, Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, History of Pennsylvania, The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government by Jefferson Davis*

Adorning the walls and display cases are numerous works of art, maps, photos, flags, and sculptures. Every where you turn are reminiscences of our past civil conflict Come visit us to learn about this most important event in U.S. history.

**NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Dear Members,

I'm looking forward to the Frederick M. Holzwarth, Sr. Memorial Dinner because I have such fond memories of Fred, Jr. Fred and Bill Smith were two grand fellows and I had affection for them both.

In the years I have been associated with the Historical Society I feel a deep gratitude for the wonderful members. Some are no longer with us and at the coming dinner I would like to remember our late members with a moment of silence. I'd also like to give a cheer for all you dear people.

Our meeting dates for 2006 are listed on the last page of this HISTORIA and on our web page. Hopefully we will be back in our old home at the Northampton library for those meetings. This will be our last meeting and HISTORIA for 2006 so everyone have a great holiday season and a happy new year. Please remember our service people this Veterans Day and enjoy the planet.



**Have a great  
Holiday Season  
See you next Spring!**

**Congratulations to the following NTHS members that gave above and beyond their normal membership dues in 2005.**

- NTHS Circle - Doug Crompton
- Patron - Elinor S. Crompton
- Sponsor - Stanley and Dorothy Davis,  
Margaret and Lewis Hull
- Sustaining - Kathy and Larry Belikoff, Catherine Ciaverelli, Christine and Joseph Fluehr, David and Cristine Handler, Florence Leedom, Louis Leitenberger III, Janet and Kurt Nelson, Virginia Smith, Childrens Cultural Center, Steven Rovner, Virginia Smith, Norman Turner

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**NTHS Dinner Meeting  
Honoring Fred Holzwarth Sr.  
Wednesday November 16 - 6 PM  
Spring Mill Country Club**

**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

Animals on the loose, A Mercer Menagerie Through December 31, 2005

Ben Franklin 300th Birthday  
Special Discovery Tour  
Starting January 14, 2006

Family Workshop - Gingerbread Castles  
December 3 - 12:30 - 3:30 PM Fonthill

Membership Appreciation Week  
December 5-11 Mercer Museum Store

Holiday Festivities for the Family  
December 11 - Noon - 4 PM  
Fonthill and Moravian Tileworks

Holiday Open Houses  
Mercer and Michener Museums  
December 13 - 7-9 PM

Guided Candlelight Holiday Evening Tour  
Dec 15 -16 7-9 PM Fonthill

Candlelight Holiday Open House  
December 17 - 6:30 -10 PM Fonthill

**Churchville Nature Center**

Star Party- Nov 5, Bird Seed Sale- Nov 12-13  
Soup and Bread Get-Together- Nov 18  
Maple Sugar Day- February 26

**David Library**

Fall Lecture Series - Focus on Loyalism  
November 13, December 11 - 3 PM

Newtown Christmas Hose Tour  
Saturday, December 3, 2005

# SCHOOL BELLS - WISHING WELLS C. S. BELL COMPANY

By Michael Tomkins

As indicated in our last HISTORIA, the Society has acquired an early 20<sup>th</sup> century school bell, which was manufactured within the foundry of the C.S. Bell Company of Hillsboro, Ohio. We believe that a similar bell formerly occupied the copula of the old Richboro School, but has since been removed. Plans are to have the acquired bell restored and either installed or displayed within the Richboro School building following its renovations. The bell, which weighs around 250 pounds, has a diameter of 22 inches and a height of 16 inches. Its original A-frame support and pulley wheel is intact. The style of the bell indicates that it was likely manufactured during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A relief located within the interior of the bell appears to read "2-12-12", suggesting that it was constructed in 1912.



**School Bell as delivered to the Historical Society.**

It was acquired from historical society member, Clyde Cobb, who in the past kindly donated the use of his historic property for our archaeological dig programs for kids. Mr. Cobb is the past president of the Lower Southampton Historical Society and is still involved in many of its functions. He purchased the bell at a Sanford Alderfer Auction in 1965. There was no documentation with the bell at the time and its origins have never been determined. Clyde transported the bell from the Hatfield area and has since stored it in his garage for the past 40 years. At some point, he intended to use the bell as part of a wishing well to be constructed on his property. Like many of my planned projects, it never came to fruition. In June of this year, he decided sell the bell, at which time it was acquired by the Society for use at the Richboro School.

The old Richboro School is currently owned by Commerce Bank. As part of the improvements to the property, which will include a bank and Burger King, Commerce plans to restore the exterior of the school building and equip it with plumbing and electrical connections. It is my understanding that the building will then be turned over to the Township.

The C.S. Bell Company was founded by Charles Singleton Bell in 1858. Bell, a native of Cumberland, Maryland commenced his apprenticeship within the founder's trade at the age of 15 within the city of Pittsburgh. Afterward, he removed to Hillsboro, where he set up a small business manufacturing high quality cooking stoves. In 1858, he acquired the Speedwell Foundry and added the manufacturing of plow points and other castings to his business operations. Sometime during the early 1860s, Bell built himself a second foundry and showroom. His partner, James K. Marlay was in charge of the showroom, while Bell continued the oversight of the foundry's operations.

Bell experimented with different formulas of iron, steel and other metals in his search to find an alloy cheaper and more durable than iron. It is said that one day while working with a new piece of metal he accidentally dropped it. To his surprise the metal produced a ringing tone that sounded like a bell. Hearing a potential business opportunity, he focused his metallurgy experiments on producing a metal that could create true bell tones at a fraction of the costs of traditional bell metals. Bell's new alloy was cheaper than brass, copper or tin, which were traditionally being used in the manufacture of bells.

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**Charles Singleton Bell  
1828-1905**

During the first year of production, nearly 1,000 bells were sold. The bells were of different sizes suited to farms, factories, taverns, schoolhouses and churches. Other foundry products at this time included coffee grinders, burr and hammer type food and feed grinding mills, cane and maple syrup evaporators and plows. In 1875, over 5,000 bells were sold and more than 700 grinding mills. In 1889, more than 20,000 bells were manufactured being shipped by wagon and rail to all parts of the country.

Upon the death of Charles Singleton Bell, which occurred in 1905, the business was continued by his son, Charles E. Bell, who had been a partner in the business since 1882. In 1929, the younger Bell passed away. From 1929 until 1934 the business fell into a steady decline. However, in 1934, Virginia Bell, daughter to Charles E. Bell, reorganized the company and took on the role of secretary, treasurer and general manager.

The defense armament in pre-World War II days caused a shortage of metal especially brass and copper used in most bells made by government contract. Virginia Bell learned that the Bureau of Ships was looking for a metal bell to substitute for the regulation bells. Legend has it that she loaded one of her grandfather's ferrous bells in the car, which she personally drove to Washington. Her trip was successful. She returned with a well-needed contract for the production of certain types of bells for the Department of Navy.

The foundry immediately went into production, producing thousands of bells for all classes of U.S. Navy Ships. During this period, the company also produced bells for the British Navy with "H.M.S." engraved on them and for the Russian Navy. As a result of the contracts the C.S. Bell Company gained the title of the largest bell foundry in the world. The company held special receptions for dignitaries of the allied navies and some of its high-ranking officers who visited the foundry. Virginia Bell managed the operations of the foundry successfully until the late 1960s at which time she retired.

Her grandfather's original foundry and showroom were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. The C.S. Bell Company is still in existence to this day. The company, however, no longer manufactures bells. It instead has returned to its agricultural pursuits concentrating on the manufacture of reduction and conveying equipment.

The acquired bell is currently stored within one of the Northampton Township's municipal buildings. This was made possible by Township Supervisors and by members of the Township Public Works Department who kindly transported the bell from Clyde Cobb's house. The Society thanks those who were involved in the moving process.



**Bell closeups showing manufacturer's  
markings on leg and collar.**



# A VILLAGE SEWING CIRCLE

By Betty Cornell Luff

Many of us old timers can recall the days back in 1941 when our country was at war. The rationing of gas, sugar and other foods caused many changes in our lives. It was at this time that a small group of close knit neighbors in the Richboro area decided to meet every Thursday just to work on a quilt, knit a sweater, darn some socks or just repair a hem. Of course, one can imagine the chatting and, gossip taking place also, keeping up with each others family, church activities and goings on in the village. Many recipes and household hints were exchanged and of course refreshments were served.

Over the years, minutes were kept and many activities were recorded, such as a breakfast at Annette's and a pool party at the Kunz home. It was written by one member that these neighbors had no gas because of rationing and hardly enough sugar and cream for their coffee but "Oh! what good times."



**Mrs. J. Milton Luff had plenty of room in her Richboro farmhouse to accommodate her quilting frame which had been in her family for over 100 years.**

**Helping her quilt from left, Mrs Florence Herzog, Mrs. Eleanor Tomlinson, Mrs. Hannah Overholt, Mrs. Raymond Gilbert, and Mrs. Luff. This particular 8'x8' patchwork quilt was donated to the Addisville Reformed Church, probably destined for the hills of Kentucky. (1968)**

Anette Bloesinger Henninger, who was an accomplished seamstress and Home Economics teacher at Council Rock was a valuable member of the group. Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas once said, "Thanks to Annette we actually sewed and I made my first coat under her direction. I had many problems with a pocket but she was so patient". After this group met during the day for many years, the ladies decided to meet in the evenings when their husbands could baby--sit. Every so often a new member would join the circle only to have another member move from the area. When one of their members passed away her sister was invited to join the circle.

When Mrs. Lida Luff set up an. 8'x8' patchwork quilt, it was usually donated to the Addisville Reformed Church missionary box, usually destined for the hills of Kentucky. She remained a part of the circle until her death in 1977 at the age of 96. In 1972, Mrs. Luff captured in the last verse of a poem she wrote entitled, "The Quilt."

*And in this wee and tiny print  
My first born son did take a sprint,  
Then here's a piece -- and yet another  
'Twas made in rompers for his brother,  
A story of the life I've led  
Isn't found in a book -- but on my bed.*

Every five years or so the group would 'celebrate their togetherness by living it up at a local restaurant. Mary Ann Gilbert included the following in a poem she wrote to help the group celebrate their silver anniversary in 1966.

*Now after twenty--five years of much fun  
It is still nice to gather and get sewing, done,  
Perhaps make a quilt, knit a sweater or vest  
Sometimes it's nice to just sit and rest.*

**FLORENCE HERZOG  
1907 - 2005**



It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of one of our charter Historical Society members Florence Herzog.

Florence died on October 8, 2005 at Pickering Manor, Newtown. She was 98 years old. Born in Germantown, she was a graduate of Germantown High School and the University of Pennsylvania. Florence and her late husband Adolph “Ed” Herzog, a Historical Society incorporator, lived in Churchville for 35 years. The house on Bustleton Pike (Herzog’s corner) where they formerly lived is part of the Willow Mill complex that was nominated to the National Register in 2002. Florence also belonged to the Newtown Historical Association and the Bucks County Historical Society. She was a long time member of Addisville Reformed Church and very active with the church's Weeds and Seeds Committee. Her hobbies included flower gardening, bird watching and reading. Florence was the daughter of the late Herman and Matilda Johnson Schenker. She is survived by her son Karl, Lansdale, Pa., and her son Roger and his wife Nicki, State College, Pa.; five grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. Friends and relatives are invited to a memorial service which will be held on Saturday, November 19, 2005 at 10:30 a.m. at Addisville Reformed Church, 945 Second Street Pike, Richboro, Pa. 18954. Memorial contributions may be made to the Addisville Reformed Church or a charity of your choice.

We regret to announce that former Living Tree Award recipient John H. Geyer, 82, of Richboro, died Wednesday, October 5, 2005, at his home. Born and raised in Philadelphia, John was a graduate of Central High School in Philadelphia, Lehigh University, class of 1949 and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was a proud veteran of the United States Navy serving during World War II. After the war John had worked for Alcoa in Massena, N.Y., but soon moved to Richboro and went to work for American Chemical Paint Co. (Amchem) in Ambler as a metallurgical engineer and retired as VicePresident in 1982. He was a life member and former President for two years of the National Coil Coaters Association.



**JOHN GEYER  
1923-2005**

John was a very civic minded member of the community; he served as both supervisor and chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Northampton Township from 1958–1968 and also served on the Township's Zoning Hearing Board. John was a lifelong member of the Northampton Township Fire Company and served many years with the Fire Police. He was Northampton Township's representative to the Bucks County Emergency Management Team and was a member of the Neshaminy Water Resources Authority from 1966–1976 and the Delaware Valley Water Authority. Recipient of Northampton Township's “Citizen of the Month” as well as Northampton Township's Historical Society's “Living Tree Tribute” John was always very proud of his boy scouting and Eagle Scout awards which helped him become a counselor at the Philadelphia Boy Scout Camp at Treasure Island on the Delaware River His deep love of fishing, whether in the United States, Canada or the Caribbean – it didn't matter where – supplied him with many “fish stories.” Son of the late John C. and Helen M. Hartman Geyer, he is survived by his beloved wife of 56 years, Virginia Briggs Geyer; and his children, Virginia E. Geyer of Winthrop, Maine, John S. Geyer and his wife Mickey of Highlands Ranch, Colo., and Diane L. Dudley and her husband John of Sedalia, Colo. In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, High Point Professional Building, 700 Horizon Circle, Suite 201, Chalfont, Pa. 18914.



**Civil War Rountable Museum and Fred Holzwarth Sr. Library, Doylestown, PA**



# NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 732, RICHBORO, PENNSYLVANIA 18954-0732

[www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org)

## 2005 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

<b>President</b>	Mary Seader	215-355-4467	tiogacbnrjs@aol.com
<b>Vice President</b>	Pat Komelasky	215-355-0649	gkomelasky@comcast.net
<b>Secretary</b>	Sylvia Amato		CAmato@voicenet.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Michael Tomkins	215-504-1998	michaeltomkins@comcast.net
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<b>Ways and Means</b>	Vacant		
<b>Social Committee</b>	Pat Komelasky	215-355-0649	gkomelasky@msn.com
<b>Director (Past Pres.)</b>	Doug Crompton	215-355-5307	doug@crompton.com
<b>Director</b>	Jean Gallagher	215-968-5222	
<b>Director</b>	Christine Fluehr	215-579-4334	chris@fluehr.com
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<b>HISTORIA Editor</b>	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 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](mailto:nths@NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org) Past issues of the HISTORIA, in color, are available on our web page [www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org) The HISTORIA is edited by Doug Crompton. Articles are always welcome.

### Meeting Dates for 2005/2006

November 16	Dinner Meeting	6:00 PM (2005)
March 22	General Meeting	7:30 PM
May 25	General Meeting	7:30 PM
September 20	General Meeting	7:30 PM
November 15	Dinner Meeting	6:30 PM

### Board Meetings 2006

February 7, April 11,  
August 15, October 10  
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 : \_\_\_\_\_