



HISTORIA

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 3

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2001

JOIN US FOR A TALK ABOUT THE TYLER FAMILY AND PARK AT OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING

Mr. Harry Berry, our guest speaker for the September 26th meeting, will be talking about the Tyler Family and the Park. He and his wife, Edith, well known Bucks County artist, live off Spring Garden Hill Drive in a beautiful home that overlooks Tyler State Park.

Born in Philadelphia in 1922, he attended the Philadelphia Public Schools, and later Temple University, University of Pennsylvania, and Harvard University. During WW II, he served in the regular Navy on both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Harry was the founder and owner of Business Forms Printing Corporation for approximately 40 years. He and Edith have been married for 56 years, and they have two children and four granddaughters. He is an elder member of the North and Southampton Reformed Church in Churchville. Edith is a deacon. Harry is also a member of the Magna Carta group and has extensive knowledge of his family's history. The Berrys have just returned from a trip to San Francisco. Harry said the last time he was there, he was on a battleship under the Golden Gate Bridge.

It will be a pleasure to have Harry and Edith join us at our September 26th meeting.

CELEBRATE NORTHAMPTON DAYS WITH US SEPTEMBER 9th *DISPLAYS, RAFFLES, SPREAD EAGLE MEMORABILIA SALE, KIDS' ACTIVITIES!*

Mary Seader, Doug Crompton, Debbie Glessner, Andrea Mangold, and Pat Komelasky have worked to plan the Historical Society displays and offerings for Northampton Days on September 9th.

The Historical Society table will raffle off several items, including a handmade afghan by Betty Luff, a log cabin replica made by Bob Seader, and several antiques. Tri-fold posters will show aerial photographs of Northampton Township, the Churchville Train Station, The Spread Eagle, and the Old Richboro School. Several members will be dressed in historic costumes. Items from the Spread Eagle will be for sale and "The X-Squad," junior explorers of local history, will be introduced for kids. Copies of the *HISTORIA* will be available, and a print of Ranulph Bye's painting of the Spread Eagle will be on display. The opportunity to purchase memberships to NTHS will also be available.



Some of the items from the Spread Eagle Inn which will be on sale at Northampton Days. Tables, chairs, chandeliers and other miscellaneous items will also be for sale.

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dear Members:

The end of summer is near. Our tall, noble Ash trees are losing leaves. Soon, the early autumn chill will be in the air, and we'll feel a bit more exhilarated.

During the summer I've been preoccupied with trying to refinish furniture my husband made. Two pieces of a corner cabinet share the refinishing honors in two different rooms – kind of like an overcrowded second hand shop. My summer project is nearly finished. When the top and bottom halves are joined together, I may launch this piece with a bottle of Pepsi. If you're interested, I'll take a picture of it.

I hope your summer was restful, interesting, and that you feel renewed.

The "Committee to Save The Spread Eagle Inn" has become the "Committee for Historic Preservation." The members of this committee have such enthusiasm and vision. Please support them as they have worked very hard to make an impact on Northampton Days on Sunday, September 9, 2001.

Looking forward to seeing you at our Fall Meeting on Wednesday, September 26th.

Thank you,



LIVING TREE AWARD

The Northampton Township Historical Society is accepting nominations from the community for the Living Tree Award. This award is presented to a resident of Northampton Township in recognition for their community service.

Any person who has distinguished him or herself in the township is eligible. Please submit your nominations by mail BY SEPTEMBER 25th to:

**Northampton Township Historical Society
PO Box 732
Richboro, PA. 18954**

September 9 - 10 AM - 4 PM

Northampton Days Celebration
Township Road, Richboro

September 21 - 7:30 PM

Committee for Historic Preservation
Township Building

September 26 - 7:30 PM

Northampton Township Historical Society
General Meeting - Program: Tyler Family and Park

October 25 - 7:30 PM

Committee for Historic Preservation
Township Building

November 14 - 6:00 PM

Northampton Township Historical Society
Dinner Meeting - Program: 7:30 PM
Frank Murphy, Author of Historical Books for Children

JOIN US!

**November 14th, Dinner Meeting
Hear Local Children's Author, Frank Murphy**

Frank Murphy is a second grade teacher in the Council Rock School District, Bucks County, PA. He loves "searching for stories and then chasing after them." He found the story that inspired *The Legend of the Teddy Bear* on the back of a postcard and chased after it for two and a half years, before locating enough information to write the legend. Frank lives in Warrington with his wife Debbie. When he isn't busy teaching or writing, he chases after his two sons, Griffin and Chase . . .yes, that's right, Chase!

Autographed copies of his books will be available for sale at the meeting.

Some books Frank has authored:

- Ben Franklin and the Magic Squares
- George Washington and the General's Dog
- The Legend of the Teddy Bear
- Always Inventing: the True Story of Thomas Alva Edison

SPECIAL NOTE: We hope that NTHS members will bring their children to hear Frank Murphy talk about chasing ideas for his children's books. Frank is an enthralling, enthusiastic speaker and will be enjoyed immensely by both young and old. Children **MUST** be accompanied by a responsible adult. Non-members are invited to attend this exciting program free of charge. If you join us for dinner, it will start at 6 PM and the program will begin at 7:30 PM.

COMMITTEE FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Members of NTHS's Committee for Historic Preservation have been active throughout the summer, meeting monthly at the Township Administration Building. Chaired by Doug Crompton, the committee has closely tracked the progress of township plans to move The Spread

Eagle along with developments surrounding the controversy regarding the preservation of the Old Richboro School.

Our group is an interesting blend of people and talents. There are those who are true historians and are knowledgeable about preservation and the history of the township. Some are creative, some are good organizers, some write well, some have good ideas, some have critical political links, some have extensive backgrounds in non-profit organizations, some have a wacky sense of humor, and some have technological talents.

Several members of the committee have participated in township meetings to address the removal, storage, and sale of items from The Spread Eagle Inn. Current plans are to make these items available to the general public at Northampton Days on September 9. A bid has been awarded to a moving company, and the inn will most likely be moved within the next two or three months.

At the August meeting, members were advised by Michael Tomkins that The Spread Eagle Inn is eligible for nomination to The National Register of Historic Places. Michael and Sherri Marks will complete the necessary paperwork for the next phase of nomination. The committee is very grateful to Michael and Sherri for their time and expertise.

The supervisors are working to find a buyer for The Spread Eagle who will respect and abide by guidelines imposed for the restoration of the building.

The committee has plans to sell T-shirts at the time The Spread Eagle is moved. The shirts will read, "I was there when The Spread Eagle was moved!" and will include the primary move date, as well as a picture of the inn.

Commerce Bank and the township supervisors are in the process of negotiations so that the Old School will be preserved. At this point it is not known whether the school will remain at its present location or also be moved. The township, with the assistance of the Heritage Conservancy, is completing the paperwork necessary to nominate the Old School to the National Register.

Further information about committee meetings and activities are on the Spread Eagle website at www.savethespreadeagle.com



INTRODUCING "THE X-SQUAD" JUNIOR X-PLORERS OF LOCAL HISTORY

Committee members Debbie Glessner and Andrea Mangold have been meeting weekly through much of the summer to plan the organization of this new group, "The X-Squad – Junior X-plorers of Local History."

The X-Squad has been created to foster a love and appreciation for local history and to encourage our youth to become responsible, informed, and active citizens in their community. Starting in 2002, activities will be run in coordination with Northampton Township Parks and Recreation but under the auspices of the Historical Society. It will be open to all children ages 9 and up.

Activities will be structured in such a manner so that fun will be incorporated with learning, while exposing children to the cultural and historical heritage of our area. It is hoped that we may possibly have the opportunity to coordinate some activities with the Children's Cultural Center and the Churchville Nature Center.

Arrangements for an archeological dig, an historic graveyard visit, and a tour of Mercer Museum are being investigated at this time.

Children and/or Council Rock students needing community service and LINCS hours can fulfill those requirements through membership and participation in specific X-Squad volunteer opportunities.

For more information about the junior society, access either one of these websites:

www.savethespreadeagle.com/xsquad
www.crompton.com/bucks/xsquad

Historical Society member, Diane Amadio, has successfully completed real estate training and is a member of the Alliance Century 21 team at Warwick Square in Jamison.

Congratulations and best of luck to Diane!

REFLECTIONS OF YEARS GONE BY

By Betty Cornell Luff



The Cornell farmhouse and barns on Worthington Mill Road east of Second Street Pike in the 1920's. The farm is now the Highspire development.



The home today, located at 50 Bryan Drive, surrounded by the Highspire housing development. The barn and many outbuildings did not survive.

I was born and lived my first ten years on a 124 acre farm on Worthington Mill Road above Richboro. In doing research many years ago, I found that Thomas Hudson purchased 500 acres from William Penn in 1683; after eighteen transactions took place, my father's uncle, John Banes, purchased the property in 1895 for \$7,000.00.

My mother and father, I am sure, had dreams of living their whole life there when they married in 1910 and took over the large farm. Farming was especially hard back then before rubber tired tractors and other modern equipment. By 1924, my parents already had three daughters, and I think my dad kind of gave up when another girl arrived. I can remember him going into Philadelphia and coming home with a hired man who would sleep above our kitchen. Sometimes he would stay until his first pay and then head back to the city.

Dad had five brothers who sometimes would help each other: One brother, Jesse, married and had a farm. The three younger brothers helped their dad at the home farm on Tanyard Road.

We all reminisce about the good old days, but would any of us really want to go back? I have a lamp that my son made from an old potbelly stove that was used in one of our downstairs rooms. The holes, in the ceiling, remained for many years where the stove--pipe went through furnishing heat to our bedroom above. My mother made feather beds which we would sleep on top of or get under for warmth on winter nights.

The old house has seen many changes. For a long period of time it served as a double house, with the owner using the larger portion and the caretaker living in the smaller section. There is nothing original in the house today except the beautiful open stairway. One of my fondest memories of those days gone by, I can still see my oldest sister coming down the open stairway on the arm of my dad before her small home wedding on June 22, 1932. I remember my parents borrowing a neighbor's organ for the happy occasion.

The smaller section of the house was at one time a large kitchen and one room above. It has a date stone, 1743, and initials J.J.C. Upon doing research I found this to represent James J. Cummings, owner from 1741 until 1758. On the opposite end of the house, the date stone suggests that it was built by G.A. in 1803. Since there were no owners with these initials, could they be the initials of the builder?

Today's advertisement lists 3½ bathrooms and the acreage has been reduced to 1.31 acres, enhanced by a heated pool with a Jacuzzi. The home today has a satellite dish, home security system, security lighting system with remote sensors, plus an extensive home media system. Asking price is \$549,100. for the house and garage.

And to think that 70 years ago this house did not even include one bathroom. I remember as a child taking a bath behind the cook stove in the corner of the kitchen, which today is a beautiful country family room. One of my greatest fears was that there would be a knock at the kitchen door when I was in that tub.

In some ways they were the good old days. They were simpler in many ways, but how many of us would really want to go back?

RICHBORO SCHOOL REUNION

By Betty Luff

“It was just like old home week”, said Marion Dolton Tomlinson, 94, old timer and elementary teacher from Warminster. Oh, what a glorious day! The Northampton Valley Country Club was the scene of a most unusual gathering on Friday, May 25, 2001, when over 210 people gathered to share memories of their youth spent at the old Richboro school. Richboro's last graduating class was in 1946, but many attending were those who went to Richboro at that time, but graduated from Council Rock High School.

The oldest graduate attending the affair was Bess Cornell Ivins, 97, of Dublin, who graduated in 1923. Rosanna Slack of Hatboro, 92, graduated in 1924. There were three classmates from the class of 1925, all 92 years of age, they were Ruth Opitz Crane of Doylestown, Clara Yerkes Finney, Levittown and George Traub of Feasterville. Other old timers attending were Horace Carter, class of 1931 and Donald Null, class of 1933.

Five teachers attending were Mary Ann Gilbert, 89, Marion Dolton Tomlinson, Edith Burrage Wilson, Emily Hallowell Johnson and Elizabeth Dakay.

Mistress of Ceremony was Emma Walker Worthington of Levittown. Greetings were offered by Mrs. Raymond Gilbert, Churchville, and the opening prayer was given by Ruth Osmond Wright, Yardley. A patriotic prayer was offered by Ret. Maj. William Walker USMC of North Carolina. The soloist who accompanied herself at the keyboard was Miss Sharon Kimmel of Yardley.



Rosanna Slack, class of 1924 and the oldest participant, Bess Ivins, 97, class of 1923

attending were the three Wilson sisters, Helen McKendry, Marjorie Shelmire and Doris Reese and Kenneth Jones and sisters, Norma Cutting and Roberta Schneider.

Classes competing for the best attendance were 1942 and 1943. 1943's attendees were William Allen, Harry Atkinson, Jayne Buckley Cornell, George and Doris Clayton Harter, Ted Daniels, Owen Diehle, Alfred George, John Horn, Jean Lightkep Daniels, David Luff, Doris McKinney Fox and Morrell Solly. Twelve attending from the class of 1942 were Doris Awckland Hartigan, Fill Brudon, Ben Cornell, Betty Cornell Luff, Dorothy Deihl Drechsel, Jutta Glass Fisele, Ruth Osmond Wright, John Sauer, Marjorie Wilson Shelmire, J.Beavis Jackson, Regina Hallowell Peasley, and Harry Tomlinson.

The class of 1940 had members coming from far and wide including Mary Davis Lobley, British Columbia, Orlando Long, Texas, Horace Englehardt and Louis Leitenberger both from Florida, Russell Daniels, Sellersville, Norma Jones Putting, Glenside, and Mary Walker Stemma from Penndel.

Mothers and daughters attending were Mrs. Gilbert and daughters Beth Ann Gilbert and Mary Jana Dolton, Clara Finney and daughter Anna Mae Fretz, and Bess Ivins and Charlotte Walter.

States represented but not mentioned are Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Maryland, Montana, New Hampshire and New York.

A most enjoyable afternoon was spent reminiscing with old classmates, teachers and friends.

View all of the 96 pictures at the reunion website:

www.crompton.com/bucks/richboro_school_reunion



Betty Cornell Luff introduces Dr. Cameron Wilson to Janet Weir Null while John Thompson and Ester Stover Search look on.

PRESERVATION UPDATE

The "Committee for Historic Preservation" continues to meet monthly, with primary emphasis on the Spread Eagle and Richboro school situation. For information on meeting dates, meeting minutes, and special events check our web page at:

www.savethespreadeagle.com

Spread Eagle Inn

At their meeting in August, the Northampton supervisors unanimously approved a bid to move the Spread Eagle Inn. The Inn should be moved back on its own property later this fall. Once it is moved an external renovation will take place, and it is expected that the Inn will be sold or leased. We are not sure what it will be yet, but a bank or offices are high on the list of possibilities. The township cleaned out the inn. After meeting to determine how the items would be sold it was decided that the contents would be donated to the Historical Society to be sold at Northampton Days on September 9th. Most of the items are not old and date back to the last renovation in the early 1990's. They consist of tables, chairs, dishes, chandeliers, cash registers, menus, cooking pans, drapes and various odd items. The committee submitted the Spread Eagle to the State Historic register and we were notified by the state that it does meet criteria to be accepted. We are now taking the next step required to get it registered.

Richboro School

The supervisors rejected the Commerce Bank plan, which would have moved the old school to the back of the property. There was objection to the lack of visibility at that location, which has substantially lower elevation. Commerce Bank subsequently filed suit with the township, Historical Commission and others over a request to allow the demolition of the old school. So far they have only demolished the other two structures adjacent to the old school. The township has engaged the Heritage Conservancy to register the school with the state historic registry. It is believed that the township and Commerce Bank may come to an agreement where the school could be moved and still be visible from the road. Commerce Bank steadfastly refuses to accommodate using the school at its present location.



(Above) The old Richboro School sits defiantly amid the demolition vehicles. (right, looking southeast) The newer sections are demolished.



In our last HISTORIA I reported that Bill Smith was gravely ill. I am sad to report that shortly after that printing he passed away. Bill and his wife Ruth were dedicated supporters of the Historical Society since its founding. Bill will always be remembered for his colorful treasurer's reports at our meetings. Bill is surely missed by the society and community. Below are excerpts from the obituary that appeared in the May 16, 2001 Courier Times.

William A. Smith, 83, of Churchville, died --Tuesday, May 15, 2001 at Richboro Care Center, Richboro.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pa. Mr. Smith was a graduate of Frankford High School Class of 1935 in Philadelphia. He was a former salesman representing wholesale lumber companies for over 50 years. Mr. Smith was the former Vice President of Furman Lumber Co. based in Boston, Mass. for 20 years and was responsible for starting the company's Philadelphia operations.

Bill's dedication to country and community service began early in his life. He served his country proudly during World War II as a captain in the U.S. Army. His involvement in community service was tireless. He served as a past member of the Northampton Township Lions Club and Treasurer of the Northampton Township Historical Society. He was also very active as a committee person in the Republican Party in Northampton Township. Mr. Smith was an avid baseball fan and golfer and was secretary of the Material Dealers Golf Association. He will be remembered as a conscientious family man who enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren. He will be deeply missed by his family, friends and the neighbors of his community.

Son of the late Arthur Hayes and Margaret Brockman Smith, husband of the late Ruth Juncker Smith, he is survived by his children and their spouses, Dr. Virginia A. Smith and her husband Michael Sarezky of Wilton, Conn. and William C.A. Smith and his wife Susan of Baldwin, N.Y. Also survived by his sister, Margaret Scott of Brigantine, N.J. and his four grandchildren, Christopher, Daniel, Jonathan, and Billy.

The funeral service was Friday, May 18, 2001 at the Joseph A. Fluehr III Funeral Home. Interment followed at Union Cemetery, Richboro.

Contributions in his memory may be made to North and Southampton Reformed Church, 1380 Bristol Road, Churchville, Pa. 18966 or the Northampton Township Historical Society, PO. Box 732, Richboro, Pa. 18954.





NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 732, RICHBORO, PENNSYLVANIA 18954-0732

WEBSITE: <http://www.crompton.com/bucks> EMAIL: nths@crompton.com

2000 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President	Mary Seader	355-4467
Vice President	Vacant	
Secretary	Vacant	
Treasurer	Vacant	
Membership	Fred Holzwarth	357-4899
Ways and Means	Diane Amadio	355-6399
Social Committee	Doris D'Ardenne	968-5507
Director (Past Pres.)	Doug Crompton	355-5307
Director	Jean Gallagher	357-7833
Director	Sydell Gross	322-5547
HISTORIA Editor	Doug Crompton	355-5307
Send articles to:	1269 2nd St Pike Richboro, PA 18954	

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. Past issues of the HISTORIA, in color, are available at our web page.

Meeting Dates for 2001 - 2002

September 26	General Meeting	7:30 PM
November 14	Dinner Meeting	6:00 PM
March 20	General Meeting	7:30 PM
May 29	General Meeting	7:30 PM
Sept 25	General Meeting	7:30 PM
November 20	Dinner Meeting	6:30 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 2001 (January 2001 to December 2001)

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 in 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: \$ _____

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 : _____