



HISTORIA

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 2

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY 2004

JOIN US FOR A TALK ON PERENNIALS AT OUR MAY SOCIETY MEETING

What could be more wonderful than having perennials blooming in your garden all season? Many gardeners find their gardens become dull after the vibrant color of Spring. Kay Johns will join us for our May meeting and show us how to successfully use perennials to create garden color and interest from Spring to Fall. Kay will tell us how to use low maintenance and easy to grow perennials for a year around garden plan.

Kay and Herb Johns own Point Phillip Perennials north of Bethlehem. The main attraction of the nursery is two acres of display gardens, loaded with hundreds of different perennials, shrubs and trees. Kay is both an avid gardener and plant propagator.

She is also a board member of the Ridge and Valley Unit of the Herb Society of America, is active in the Seed Exchange of the Hardy Plant Society, and is a speaker for the Partner's Presentations at The Henry Schmierer Arboretum of Delaware Valley College.

Kay will also bring some plants to the meeting for members to purchase. Plan to attend this interesting talk and bring a friend!

MILL RACE INN RESURFACES *By Michael Tomkins*

The 18th century Holland gristmill, commonly known as the Mill Race Inn, has resurfaced from the floodwaters of Mill Creek. What appeared to be the knockout blow occurred in July 2000. Nine months following the effects of Hurricane Floyd, the Mill Race Inn was struck once again by the raging floodwaters of Mill Creek, this time causing what was thought to have been substantial damage to the structure. Unable to muster the funds to fix the building, the Babst family was forced to close the popular restaurant, which they had acquired one year earlier.

Tradition has it that the Mill Race Inn was erected in 1787 and was rebuilt after a fire in 1918. The mill was powered by a wooden overshot water wheel, which utilized the waterpower created by the damming of Mill Creek a short distance upstream from the mill. Portions of the original machinery, which assisted with grinding the grain, still exist within the basement of the building.

During the 1870s, the mill was owned by Isaiah Gerhart, and from the late 1880s until early 1960s it was managed by the Finney family. During this period, Lafayette C. Finney owned all of what is the core of Holland, a farming community historically known as Rocksville, and also Finney's Corner. The Finneys owned and operated both the gristmill and the general store located directly across from the mill on the opposite side of Buck Road.

GENERAL MEETING TIME CHANGE

At the April Board of Directors meeting, we voted and approved a time change for all future general meetings. Starting with the May 2004 meeting, the social period and refreshments will start at 7 PM. During this time, you will be able to chat with your friends, renew memberships, sign up for activities and/or committees, and view literature or displays. All meetings will start PROMPTLY at 7:30 PM with a short business meeting followed by our program.



At our March 2004 general meeting the membership approved new bylaws for the society. The bylaws were signed by the members of the board: Debbie Glessner, Pat Komelasky, Sylvia Amato, Doug Crompton, Betty Luff, Jean Gallagher, Michael Tomkins, Steve Rovner (legal advisor), and Mary Seader.

Please turn to page 3

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members:

Happy Spring! After the cold and wet winter we've had, I know everyone is looking forward to the warmer, sunny days of "real" Spring.

At our April Board of Directors meeting, we voted to enroll Northampton Township Historical Society as a member of both the Churchville Nature Center and the Bucks County Heritage Conservancy. We feel it is important to support the preservation work done by both of these organizations. Hopefully, there may be ways in which NTHS can dovetail with these two organizations in future programs, projects, or activities.

The Board has also been working on job descriptions for all the officer and committee positions of the Society. This, along with our newly revised Bylaws, will establish a foundation for the organization as we move forward. Be sure to visit our website where the new Bylaws and signed resolution has been posted. The sections in red represent the changes and updates to the Bylaws.

We have had an enthusiastic response to the archaeological dig, and will have to place a number of students on the waiting list. I encourage adult NTHS members to join us. Not only will you learn something about archaeology, you will enjoy unearthing many artifacts. Please consider volunteering a few hours or a day to help us with the 10 children who will be participating.

I urge all members to think about how you can become involved in supporting the organization. Everyone has special talents. We have many committees that need chairpersons and volunteers. Many do not require a huge investment of time. Please share your talents to help revitalize NTHS.

This is another reminder to send in your reservation for the second annual Frederick M. Holzwarth, Sr. Tribute and Memorial dinner. Another reason to join NTHS; it's FREE to members! Mark your calendars for June 1, 2004 at Northampton Valley Country Club, and bring your friends. Better yet, recruit some new members!

Please come to our May meeting to hear Kay Johns speak about gardening and perennials. Bring a friend!

Debbie Glessner

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

UPCOMING EVENTS

NTHS General Meeting Perennials

Wednesday May 19 - 7:30 PM

Archaeological dig - May 15/16

Annual Frederick M. Holzwarth Dinner - June 1

Richboro School Reunion 2005

Friday May 27, 2005

Northampton Country Club

Contact:

**Emma Walker Worthington
215-943-0108**

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

Old-fashioned Fourth of July
July 4th - noon-5 PM

Christmas in July
Mon-Sun. July 19-25
10 AM - 4:45 PM Tue to 9 PM

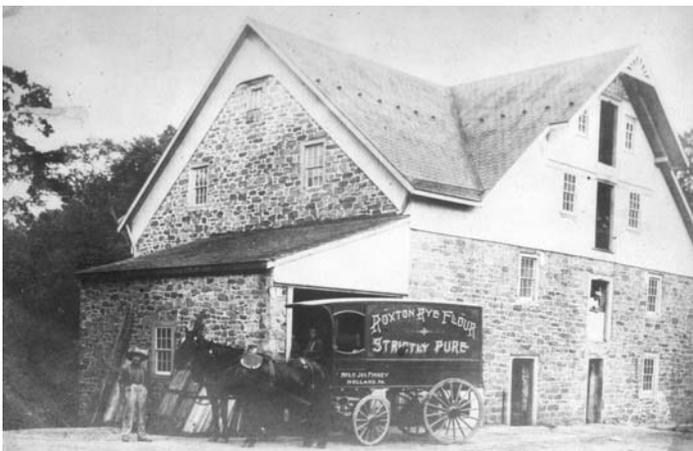
Animals on the loose, A Mercer Menagerie
Through Jan 3, 2005

29th Designer House and Gardens
2155 Lower State Road, Doylestown

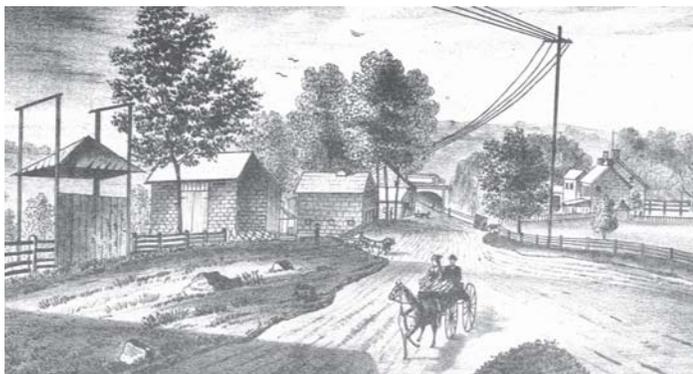
Mill Race Inn from page 1

This building was recently renovated and currently houses Johnny Apple's Restaurant. Lafayette Finney passed away in 1961, and the mill property was sold out of the family and converted into a restaurant. Members of the Finney family still reside in Holland and in the Newtown area.

The Mill Race Inn has sat idle for nearly four years now. Much talk about its future has taken place since that time. Many thought that there was no hope of restoring the mill believing that it had sustained substantial structural damage. Glen Rosenwald, an associate of the Philadelphia-based catering business, Foodarama, apparently thinks otherwise. Purchasing the property in November of last year, he has been formulating plans for its restoration. Current plans are to continue the tradition of utilizing the building as an upscale restaurant. Three cheers to you, Mr. Rosenwald.



Mill Race Inn as it existed around 1906. At this time the gristmill was managed by the Finney family. Source: Photographic collections held by the Northampton Township Archives.



1876 View looking southwest along Buck Road from its intersection with Holland Road. The Mill Race Inn is located to the left of the covered bridge and the general store is depicted at the far center-right of the view. Source: J.D. Scott's *Atlas of Bucks County, Pennsylvania*. 1876.

ROSANNA SLACK November 25, 1908 - March 1, 2004



It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of Rosanna Slack. Rosanna was a founding member of the society and a loyal supporter until her death on March 1, 2004 at the age of 95. She had moved late last year to a retirement home in Doylestown following a fall at her home in Hatboro.

Rosanna was born in Northampton Township and attended Richboro High School through the eleventh grade before her family moved to Hatboro. She completed high school there and went on to business school where she received a teacher's certificate and later graduated from New York University with a degree in teaching. She taught for 42 years and retired in 1969.

I attended Rosanna's memorial service on March 15 at the Hatboro Baptist Church. It was a wonderful service and celebration of her life.

I had the honor of interviewing Rosanna in 1995 at her home in Hatboro. The interview was recorded on videotape and a story, taken from the video and written by Roe Blumenthal, appeared in the November 1995 issue of the HISTORIA. I encourage you to read that fine article. It is available at our website. We honored Rosanna with the William Blumhardt service award at our November 1995 dinner meeting. A picture of Rosanna, with her family, receiving the award, appears below and in the March 1996 HISTORIA. At our November 1999 dinner meeting we celebrated Rosanna's 90th birthday.

Doug Crompton



2004 BIRDHOUSE CONTEST RESULTS

National Preservation Week May 3-8, 2004

This year NTHS sponsored a birdhouse contest to recognize National Preservation Week, which is an outgrowth of the work done by The National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C.

The contest emphasized the environmental aspects of preservation, and the 2004 theme was "*New Frontiers in Preservation.*" It's about more than just saving individual landmark buildings; it is about revitalizing business districts, inner-city neighborhoods, and protecting our irreplaceable historic, natural, and scenic landscapes and environment.

The judges were Mike Borovicka of Churchville Nature Center, Sally Conyne of the Audubon Society, and NTHS members, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Hull. The birdhouses were judged on originality, neatness, impact, and suitability for supporting the natural habitat of the birds. In the spirit of preservation, no toxic materials were permitted in the construction and design of the birdhouses.

NTHS would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. George Komelasky for donating the awards for the contest.

Awards will be presented to the winners at the May meeting. The winners in the following categories were:

Division A — Grades Kindergarten through 3

1st place: Sarah Tomkins, Holland
2nd place: Elizabeth Tomkins, Holland
3rd place: Alex Hardy, Holland
Honorable Mention: Elizabeth Rifkind, Holland

Division B — Grades 4 through 6

1st place: Meadow Batejan, Holland
2nd place: Caroline Hardy, Holland
3rd place: Kelsey Hannah, Holland
Honorable Mention: Vlad Paley, Holland

Division C — Grades 7 through 8

No entries

Division D — Senior Citizen

1st place: Joe Schuch, Richboro

Special Recognition for recycling
Carissa Gill, Holland



The Halls, Mike Borovicka, and Sally Conyne look over the entries in one of the categories.



The judges stop to pose with some of the winning birdhouses. They are on display at the Northampton library.

Frederick Holzwarth Dinner

The Northampton Township Historical Society cordially invites you and your guests to the second annual Frederick M. Holzwarth, Sr. Tribute and Memorial Dinner.

Tuesday, June 1, 2004 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Northampton Valley Country Club, Richboro
Cash Bar

COST: NTHS members — **FREE**

Members' dinners are compliments of the generous bequest of Fred Holzwarth.

Guests and friends are welcome at \$30.00 per person.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED by May 20, 2004

No reservations will be accepted after this date!

RSVP to: Pat Komelasky
 42 Larch Circle
 Holland, PA 18966 215.355.0649



NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 732, RICHBORO, PENNSYLVANIA 18954-0732

www.NorthamptonTownshipHistoricalSociety.org

2004 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| President | Debbie Glessner | 215-357-2449 | dglessner2@comcast.net | PA Relay 800-654-5988 |
| Vice President | Mary Seader | 215-355-4467 | tiogacbnrjs@aol.com | |
| Secretary | Sylvia Amato | | CAmato@voicenet.com | |
| Treasurer | Michael Tomkins | 215-504-1998 | michaeltomkins@comcast.net | |
| Membership | Doug Crompton | 215-355-5307 | doug@crompton.com | |
| Ways and Means | Vacant | | | |
| Social Committee | Pat Komelasky | 215-355-0649 | gkomelasky@msn.com | |
| Director (Past Pres.) | Doug Crompton | 215-355-5307 | doug@crompton.com | |
| Director | Jean Gallagher | 215-968-5222 | | |
| Director | Betty Luff | 215-357-3767 | | |
| 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 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 2004

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------|
| May 19, September 15 | General Meeting | 7:30 PM |
| November 17 | Dinner Meeting | 6:30 PM |

Board Meetings 2004

August 10, October 12
7 PM - Call for locations

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL CLASSIFICATIONS

This will be your membership for the calendar year of 2004 (January 2004 to December 2004)

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 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: _____ 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 : _____