



Gaslight News

November 2008

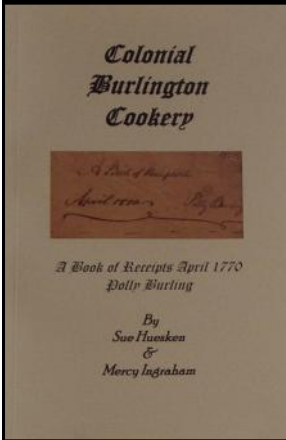
Historical Society of Riverton

vol. XXXVIII, no. 5 (#134)

Founded 1970

Riverton, NJ 08075

Incorporated 1978



Author presents Colonial Burlington Cookery Thursday, November 13th

The Historical Society of Riverton will feature Burlington County author Sue Huesken on Thursday, November 13th, 2008, at 7:30 pm for a local history program in the Media Center of the Riverton School at Fifth and Howard Streets.

carefully collected her recipes into book form in April, 1770, one month before her wedding day.

18th century receipts, or recipes, adapted to 21st century

Sue Huesken and co-author Mercy Ingraham brought to life the local recipes in their book *Colonial Burlington Cookery, A Book of Receipts, April 1770, Polly Burling*. Mercy Ingraham, an experienced historical hearth cook, worked with Sue Huesken to interpret the recipes and adapt the cooking techniques for modern cooks

See **COOKERY** on 2

Colonial Burlington Cookery by Sue Huesken and Mercy Ingraham

Sue Huesken, a Delran resident and HSR member, will present a talk on Colonial Burlington Cookery and offer us a glimpse of traditional colonial cooking in the 1770s. Join us to learn more about the fascinating history of Polly Burling, a seventeen year old woman from Burlington City, who

The decades old mystery of the Watchcase Clock Tower is solved

Next year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the installation of the clock in the tower above the Watch Case office in Riverside. A local newspaper in 1908 reported the company's plans to install the clock "in the right location for letting the residents of Riverside and Delanco know the time... enabling people in a wide radius to set their clocks and watches."¹



See **MYSTERY** on 3

In this issue

- NOVEMBER COLONIAL COOKERY PRESENTATION**
- GERALD WEABER, JR. 1
- A MAJOR FEATURE ARTICLE, PART 2 OF 2 PARTS**
- T.J. ZURBRUGG & THE PHILA. WATCH CASE COMPANY—THE MYSTERY IS SOLVED**
- GERALD WEABER, JR. 1
- NEW DONATION**
- PRISCILLA TAYLOR 5
- PALMYRA PRESENTATION**
- PAT BRUNKER 5

The clock mechanism disappeared from the tower of the Philadelphia Watchcase Company Building in Riverside, also known as the Keystone Watch Case Corporation, in the 1970s without a single witness. Someone disassembled the clock mechanism weighing many hundreds of pounds, lowered it through a trapdoor, carried it down a ladder and then descended a seven story staircase to secretly remove the historic E. Howard & Company clock work mechanism.

In the years since the disappearance of the clock work mechanism rumors circulated that the clock was maliciously scrapped for the monetary value of its metal, or dumped in the river or abandoned somewhere in the Pine Barrens.



To Make Gingerbread Nuts as Polly set down in 1770: Take 2 pounds of flour, 1/2 Pound of Butter, 1/2 Pound of Sugar, a little Ginger, a few seeds, Orange or Lemon Peel, and wet it with Molasses.

Author Sue Huesken will explain how she adapted the recipe for modern cooks.

“The dedicated efforts of the individuals and organizations receiving awards are instrumental to helping us preserve Burlington County's rich heritage...”

Freeholder William Haines, Jr., referring to Sue Huesken



Ms. Huesken examines the clothing of 18th century indentured servants through primary source newspaper advertisements seeking return of runaways in *Had On and Took With Her*.

Ms. Huesken will explain how she “found” Polly Burling and updated her receipts

COOKERY from 1

to prepare and sample colonial fare in their own kitchens. The discovery of this important ‘book of receipts’ pre-dates the first known published cookbook in America by twenty-five years.

The cooking recipes of the colonial period were commonly known as ‘receipts’. The original manuscript for *Colonial Burlington Cookery, A Book of Receipts* is owned by the Burlington County Historical Society and included eight pages of handwritten ‘receipts’.

The November 13th program will be presented in two parts: the first part is in the tradition of the History Detective with a focus on the adventures of the authors in finding Polly Burling while the second part explores Polly’s recipes and Colonial cooking methods. Cookware from the period will be on display during the presentation. *Colonial Burlington Cookery, A Book of Receipts*, will be offered for sale at twelve dollars per copy.

Author wrote a book on colonial clothing and sells clothing reproductions to re-enactors

Another American history book written by Sue Huesken was co-authored with Karen Mullian and is titled, *Had On and Took With Her*, which is an intriguing compilation of advertisements from *The Pennsylvania Evening Post* between 1775-1784. The book reveals the clothing worn by female runaway servants. During the late 18th century indentured servitude was common in America. Valuable servants who ran away before they had performed their contracted term of service were often the subject of newspaper advertisements seeking their return. The ads featured a rendering of the servant’s image including the customary dress of the period.

American history comes to life in a rich variety of forms through the work of Sue Huesken. In addition to being an author she owns a business which produces 18th century clothing reproductions. Her company, Rancocas Merchant, produces and sells clothing and supplies for living history re-enactors for the period of the American Revolutionary War during the 1770s. Rancocas Merchant is a highly regarded company which has also produced colonial women’s clothing, silk bonnets and they are an excellent source for numerous grades of linen, cotton/linen, and linsey-woolsey yard goods.

Ms. Huesken’s preservation efforts recognized by Burlco Freeholders

Rancocas Merchant owner Sue Huesken has been a featured sutler, or merchant, at living history events like the Battle of Bordentown, Company K of the 37th Virginia Infantry & Cutshaw's Battery, and the March to Monmouth during the 225th anniversary of the Battle of Monmouth, among others.

The Burlington County Board of Freeholders recognized twelve organizations and individuals for their exceptional work in historical preservation and education last June 2008. Susan Huesken was recognized for her efforts in transcribing and translating the 1770 cookbook from an original manuscript in the archives of the Burlington County Historical Society.

“The dedicated efforts of the individuals and organizations receiving awards are instrumental to helping us preserve Burlington County's rich heritage for residents and visitors to enjoy for years to come,” said Freeholder William Haines, Jr. in an article published by the *Burlington County Times* June 1, 2008.

-GERALD WEABER, JR.



MYSTERY from 1

The final placement of the clock mechanism in the tower was completed by January 16, 1909.

Clock tower a symbol of Watch Case Company success



Theophilus Zurbrugg in an undated photo provided by Mrs. Nancy Hall

The clock tower became a symbol of Theophilus Zurbrugg’s tremendous success in the watch case industry as he overtook his competition by merger or acquisition to become the largest case manufacturer in the world. Within a year of the clock tower’s completion

the local newspaper reported that “Riverside experienced its most prosperous epoch in its remarkable history. Many employees are working overtime. At the Woolen Mills, there is a shortage of help and colored hands are being taken on.”²

The clock model known as an Illuminator Regulator was designed by the E. Howard & Company of Massachusetts and automatically controlled both the timing mechanism and the electric backlighting for each of the four white clock faces in the tower. The following excerpt relates the early history of the E. Howard & Company:

“Edward Howard, a mechanical genius and founder of the company in the mid 19th century. Howard’s greatest concern was that each and every clock bearing his name be made to his uncompromising standards. He insisted upon and further developed only the most reliable designs, using only the highest quality materials available.

For churches, city halls, and courthouses, Howard made tower clocks that usually

became the most reliable source of time in the surrounding areas. The San Francisco Ferry building, the Boston Custom House, and buildings similar to these were also equipped with the company’s tower clocks. Jewelers used Howard street and post clocks to advertise the accuracy of their products. Today, many of these clocks are still keeping time well within one minute per week, although some are over 100 years old.”

Source: E. Howard & Company



Mr. Gerald Weaber is past vice president of the Historical Society of Riverton, former editor of the *Gaslight News*, and a frequent contributor to this newsletter.

“Every week from 1959 to 1966 I walked the seven stories of the Watch Case building and climbed a ladder through the trap door of the tower to wind the clock.”

Bob Knoll, former electrician at the Watch Case Building

Edward Howard sold his interest in his business in 1881 and retired from the watch and clock business yet his reputation remained strong throughout the industry. In 1903 the rights to the E. Howard brand for watches was sold to Theophilus Zurbrugg and the Keystone Watch Case Corporation.

Bob Knoll recounts how he wound the huge old clock by hand

The original Watch Case tower timepiece is a mechanical clock operated by weights which required winding once a week by hand. In our interview with Bob Knoll, the former electrician at the Watch Case Building, he described the weekly task of winding the clock.

“Every week from 1959 to 1966 I walked the seven stories of the Watch Case building and climbed a ladder through the trap door of the tower to wind the clock. From time to time someone from town would call the H.K Porter Company (the owner of the former Watch Case site) to let us know that the clock in the tower had stopped. I wound the spool holding the steel cable that hoisted



E. Howard & Company tower and street clocks catalog illustration

MYSTERY from 3

a wooden box filled with (ballast) of iron bearings, cinder blocks and rocks.”

The wooden box slowly descended each day by the force of gravity to propel the pendulum in a back and forth motion to drive the gears and turn the hands of the clock a week at a time.

The E. Howard & Company Illuminator Regulator originally installed in the tower included a device for automatically switching the lighting system for illuminating the four milky glass clock dials. The original E. Howard clock installed in the Watch Case tower operated differently than the one installed in Philadelphia City Hall just ten years before in 1899. The city hall clockwork is located in the main building rather than directly behind the clock dial in the tower. ³ The City Hall clock was designed by Warren S. Johnson with a drive-mechanism connected by means of compressed air lines from the main building some distance from the tower.

Restored clock resumed operation September '01 for Riverside's Sesquicentennial celebration

Mr. Knoll pointed out that the clock once again kept time over Riverside owing to a successful fund-raising campaign led by Dave Speegle, Bette Nuss, Regina Collinsgru and the Riverside Business Association in 2001. Today the clock tower is controlled by an electric motor and a computer to keep accurate time. Dave Speegle began the campaign to restore the Watch Case tower clock in 1999 with a five hundred dollar donation from Fred Galdo of Galdo Jewelers.

By 2001 the group raised \$35,000 to

purchase a new clock work mechanism from Rodgers Clock Service of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Watch Case clock resumed operation in September 2001 and coincided with the Riverside Sesquicentennial Celebration of its 150th anniversary of the town once known as Progress, New Jersey.

Return of “The Magnificent Time Piece” described as a miracle by owner of Watch Case Building

Dave Speegle and many Riverside residents affectionately refer to the Watch Case clock tower as “The Magnificent Time Piece.” Wayne Lippincott, one of the owners who purchased the Philadelphia Watch Case Company Building in 1988 for \$710,000, described the return of the E. Howard clockwork mechanism in January 2008 as “miraculous”.

Mr. Lippincott received an offer from an anonymous caller indicating that he knew the whereabouts of the missing clock mechanism and

wanted to return it to the Watch Case site. The only condition for the clock's return to its rightful owner was that no one can ever learn who had removed the clock from the tower. Some close to the restoration of the historic site believe whoever removed the clock did so out of concern for its preservation. The mystery is now somewhat solved and the clock returns in time for its one hundredth anniversary in 2009.

The E. Howard Illuminator Regulator clock mechanism was on display in the Watch Case building last Memorial Day during a Riverside Historical Society open house. Alice Smith, Executive Secretary of the Riverside Historical Society, shared the view that Mr. Lippincott “wonderfully restored” the E. Howard clock mechanism upon its recent return in 2008.

Wayne Lippincott described the return of the clockwork mechanism as “miraculous”.

Mr. Wayne Lippincott, president and founder, Lippincott & Jacobs Consulting Engineers



E. HOWARD & Co.'s
Church and Tower Clocks.

We manufacture, and can furnish at short notice, a Superior Clock for Towers on Churches and Public Buildings, with or without Striking Apparatus. Our work is warranted to be first-class, the wheels being made of the best hard hammered brass, the teeth being accurately cut; arbors and pinions of the best cast steel, frame and supports of cast iron.

We are prepared to manufacture clocks to strike on one or more bells, and to furnish illuminated dials if desired.

Parties wishing any information, either as regards the prices of Clocks or the best method for arranging the Tower for a Clock and Bell, can obtain it by addressing a line to us, stating what information they require.

E. HOWARD & CO.,
 114 Fremont St., | 552 Broadway,
 BOSTON. | NEW YORK.

MYSTERY from 4

Appreciation runs deep in Riverside to both the Lippincott Engineering Associates and Lippincott & Jacobs Consulting Engineers who lend exhibition and archival storage space to the Riverside Historical Society at the Philadelphia Watch Case Company Building.

Visit the RHS website and go to next Open House at the Watch Case Bldg. to view artifacts

The Riverside Historical Society (RHS) has an extensive collection of artifacts and research materials pertaining to Riverside and Burlington County historical events and people. We urge you to visit the RHS web site for their next open house to schedule a visit to their museum at the Philadelphia Watch Case Company Building. RHS meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month beginning

at 7:30 pm at the Methodist Church on Washington Street in Riverside. Membership is open to the general public and the RHS encourages you to bring a friend to their next meeting.

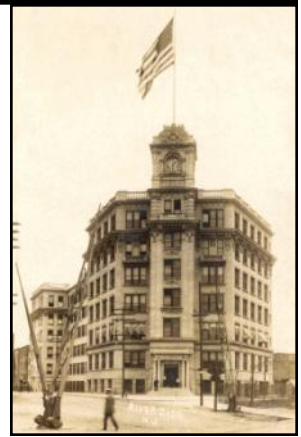
The *Gaslight News* appreciates the assistance of the following individuals with personal knowledge of the Philadelphia Watch Case Company Building and historic site: Bob Kenney, Bob Knoll, Wayne Lippincott, Alice Smith, Dave Speegle and Publisher and Editor of *The Positive Press*, Regina M. Collinsgru.

<http://www.riversidenjhistory.com/Home.html>

1,2 Alice Smith, Executive Secretary (2008). Timeline Research on Theophilus Zurbrugg 1862-1912. Riverside Historical Society.

3 Daniel Coit Gilman, Harry Thurston Peck, Frank Moore Colby (1906). *The New International Encyclopaedia*.

-GERALD WEABER, JR. 



Watch Case Bldg. 1909 postcard courtesy of Mrs. Betty Hahle

***New Era* printer's stand and block type trays donated to our archives**

The HSR has received a most wonderful donation to our archives. Ed Hartmann of Riverton has donated a wooden printer's stand and nine block type trays that were used by *The New Era* to set type for printing Riverton's former newspaper. The stand is approximately 4 feet tall by 3-4 feet wide. The stand is currently unassembled; the nine trays are intact. Ed and his son rescued the items from curbside trash over 40 years ago – we are so grateful that they did! This is an important representation of our town's past.

- PRISCILLA TAYLOR, PRESIDENT 

PHS to host presentation on Meerwald ship

The Palmyra Historical and Cultural Society will host a special presentation on the history of the Meerwald and restoration process at the Palmyra Cove Nature Park on Nov. 5 at 7 p.m.

Meghan Wren, founder and Executive Director of the Bayshore Discovery Project will be on hand to speak about the eight year million dollar restoration project which transformed the former oyster dredger into New Jersey's official tall ship.

Also, coming next month, Saturday, December 6th from 5 pm to 9 pm, PHS is participating in Palmyra Harbour Condominium Association's House Tour. Tickets are available at the Palmyra Harbour Clubhouse.

- PAT BRUNKER 



Meghan E. Wren, CEO and founder of the Bayshore Discovery Project



A.J. Meerwald, New Jersey's Official Tall Ship

⑥ THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RIVERTON
 Post Office Box # 112
 Riverton, NJ 08077
 856-786-6961

photo courtesy of Mrs. Nancy Hall



The Sociable at Coales 5-4-1899

Do you have any vintage photos, postcards, maps, ephemera, or recollections to share which you would allow to be highlighted in an upcoming issue or a future program? Please contact Mr. McCormick directly in order to make arrangements. 856-764-1551
 jlmccormick@comcast.net

Gaslight News

is a publication of the Historical Society of Riverton, and is published five times per year.

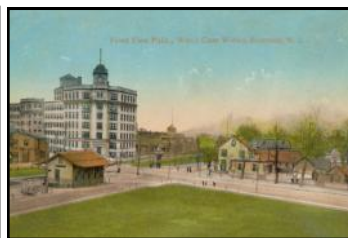
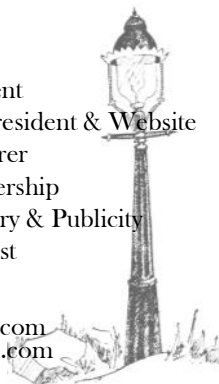


THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RIVERTON

Post Office Box # 112
 Riverton, NJ 08077
 856-786-6961

Priscilla Taylor	President
Pat Brunker	Vice President & Website
Paul Daly	Treasurer
Bob Bednarek	Membership
Gerald Weaber, Jr.	Secretary & Publicity
Aggie Kennedy	Archivist
John McCormick	Editor

E-mail: Rivertonhistory@usa.com
 www.gaslightnews.homestead.com



Readers:
 Find inside Part Two of a two part feature article by Gerald Weaber on Theophilus Zurbrugg and the Philadelphia Watch Case Company.

This installment is about the return of the long-lost Illuminator Regulator clock mechanism to the new owners of the building.

**E. HOWARD & Co.'s
 Church and Tower Clocks.**

We manufacture, and can furnish at short notice, a Superior Clock for Towers on Churches and Public Buildings, with or without Striking Apparatus. Our work is warranted to be first-class, the wheels being made of the best hard hammered brass, the teeth being accurately cut; arbors and pinions of the best cast steel, frame and supports of cast iron.

We are prepared to manufacture clocks to strike on one or more bells, and to furnish illuminated dials if desired.

Parties wishing any information, either as regards the prices of Clocks or the best method for arranging the Tower for a Clock and Bell, can obtain it by addressing a line to us, stating what information they require.

E. HOWARD & CO.,
 114 Fremont St., | 552 Broadway,
 BOSTON. | NEW YORK.