



Gaslight News

March 2014

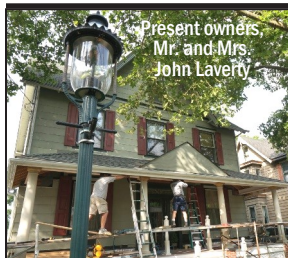
Historical Society of Riverton

vol. XXXXIV, no. 2 (#156)

Founded 1970

Riverton, NJ 08077

Incorporated 1978



Sweat equity in evidence at 616 Main, June 2013, PHOTOS BY JMc



Present owner, Mrs. Helen Hughes
Restored veranda with a view, 207 Bank Ave., May 2013



Present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Spinelli
Former home of founder Rodman Wharton, 407 Bank Ave., April 2013

April 10 HSR meeting at the Porch Club to focus on Historic Preservation Awards

The Daniel Campbell Historical Preservation Award recognizes outstanding Riverton projects

The Society will recognize a number of individuals for their noteworthy home improvement projects on April 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Porch Club during a special *Historical Society of Riverton Preservation Award Night*.

After a short business update, the focus will shift to awards presentations and hearing recipients' brief descriptions of each venture. Refreshments will follow.

The Society's *Daniel Campbell Historical Preservation Award* recognizes persons who have completed projects involving construction, alterations, repairs, or landscaping which are particularly compatible

with the Borough's historic, cultural, aesthetic and architectural heritage for making a "significant contribution to Riverton historic preservation."

Daniel Campbell AIA, is a historic architect widely recognized for his experience in architecture and historic preservation. Working with Walter Croft AIA architect and others, Daniel Campbell painstakingly completed the wonderful *Riverton Yacht Club* exterior restoration, including period-designed doors, original colors through paint analysis, and restoration of the

See **AWARDS** on 3



We marked Mr. Lincoln's 205th birthday in style Feb. 12 at The Bank on Main

See a photo gallery under the [PROGRAMS & EVENTS](#) tab at rivertonhistory.com

Folks attending the February 12, 2014 meeting of the Historical Society of Riverton had no trouble imagining that they were in The Great Emancipator's presence – at least for an hour or so – as actor/historian Bob

Gleason gave his mesmerizing first-person account of Lincoln's life.

The Bank on Main provided a handsome setting to hear how Mr. Lincoln rose to



PHOTO CREDIT: JMc
HSR President Phyllis Rodgers enjoys a moment with the Chief Executive.

our Nation's highest office from humble beginnings. Our speaker's liberal use of Lincoln's wit and humor lightened the narrative of what was a difficult life filled with struggle. Mr. Gleason is so totally immersed in Lincoln fact and lore that he effortlessly charmed the assembly as he finished with answering a number of questions from the audience.

So many members gave Mr. Gleason's performance such a hearty approval that HSR President Phyllis Rogers immediately set about making plans for his return as another one of his many characters, perhaps Edgar Allan Poe.

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- JMc





Riverton's Mayor, the Honorable William C. Brown, standing in for Downton Abbey's Carson, took our coats. Where else, but Riverton?

It's WIN-WIN as Downton Abbey Tea adds to HSR coffers and members' fun

The fundraiser cleared over \$400 and boosted spirits during one of the snowiest winters ever

A capacity crowd of Downton Abbey devotees held on to their Season Four Finale buzz a while longer as they enjoyed afternoon tea themed to the famous British television drama series at The New Leaf.

Proprietor and HSR President Phyllis Rodgers warmed up the crowd, literally and figuratively, with trivia questions about the PBS hit series as Mrs. Hughes (played by Vicki) helped the maids serve Cook's (played by JoAnn DiNoia, Porch Club President) tea and scones served with rose preserves and Devonshire cream.

Lady Phyllis directed her ever-attentive wait staff to deliver towers of delectable sandwiches and savories to each table, each menu item cleverly named after show characters.

The main course, however, was the grand entrance of actress/historian **Alisa DuPuy** as she channeled everyone's favorite dowager countess.

In her monologue, part English history lesson, part etiquette class, part stand-up routine, Lady Violet schooled all in attendance in the fine points of rules of male primogeniture in the UK and the lifestyles of British social classes.

Lady Violet presided over a bingo game and another about lines delivered by characters during the course of the series' four season run.



Linda McCormick and Shiela Hines yell out "Downton."



Alisa DuPuy entertained and informed in a style reminiscent of the imperious Lady Violet herself.

Altogether it proved a pleasant fix for our Downton Sunday habit since we will probably have to wait until January 2015 for the US premiere of Season Five.

Go to theladiesofhistory.com for more details about **Alisa DuPuy** and the more than thirty real-life and fictional characters she portrays.

- JMc



Housekeeper, Mrs. Hughes, oversees the staff.



JoAnn DiNoia, our elegant Cook, serves the scones

PHOTOS BY SUSAN DECHNIK AND JOHN MCCORMICK

We welcome three new members:

- David Gusky - Appleton, WI
- Mary Pat Laverty Peters - Tumwater, WA
- Jane Lindh - Riverton



HSR Chair -

Enclosed is a check for \$20.00 for a membership. Although I live too far away to volunteer or attend meetings, I do enjoy reading the newsletters and Facebook updates. I hope this will cover a few expenses. Thanks so much.

Mary Pat (Laverty) Peters
P.S. Add Western WA to your pie-chart of member locations. ☺

Thank you, Mary Pat!

Save the Date
for a Very Special Performance by

the
**MOORESTOWN
COMMUNITY
BAND**
at

**RIVERVIEW
ESTATES**

Weds., May 28

Check rivertonhistory.com as details are finalized

Rob Gusky's study of Riverton's cycling legacy gives rise to the Riverton Historic Century

Favorite son Rob Gusky creates a new Riverton cycling classic and mobilizes forces to fund a sign

This past December, Carlos Rodgers, originator and promoter of the [Historic Riverton Criterium](#), emailed me and explained that an ex-Riverton resident, Rob Gusky, had reached out to him with a proposal for organizing a 100-mile bicycle ride in June 2014. *The Historic Riverton Century* already had traction.

Rob had first learned of our Criterium and Riverton's bicycle racing days of old on the Society's website.

Since it will commemorate the *1895 New York Times Tri-State Relay Race* from New York City to Riverton, Carlos asked me to help with research.

To fast-forward to recent developments, through conference calls, emails, texts, and phone calls, Rob Gusky soon enlisted a cadre of amateur cyclists to strategize a

plan for overcoming the many obstacles to completing the grueling ride.

In record time, Rob has funded a historical marker sign through a [crowdsourcing site](#) and by securing a Discover NJ History License Plate Fund Heritage Tourism Grant.

Similar to the one by the gazebo at Broad and Main, the sign will describe particulars of the Riverton Bicycle Track once constructed on the old baseball field between Lippincott and Thomas Avenues and note the original 1895 race.

Between the [Historic Riverton Century](#) on Saturday, June 7, the 10:00 a.m. historic marker dedication on Sunday, June 8, and the running of the *Historic Riverton Criterium*, the first weekend in June is shaping up to be a regular Tour de Riverton.

- JMc



Honor your neighbors and support HSR aims

Hear from the owners how they improved their properties while retaining significant historic elements

AWARDS from 1



This jewel of a home on Lippincott Avenue once served as the ice house for the Biddle Mansion. Present owner, Mrs. Nancy Siefert

second floor *Directors Room* to its original c.1880 appearance.

Mr. Campbell is also a distinguished past President of the Historical Society of Riverton and editor of the *Gaslight News*. In March 1999, after careful and exhaustive research by Society members and the Borough, led by Daniel Campbell and Betty Hahle, the National Park Service approved the nomination of The Riverton Historic District, with its 800 acres and 371 buildings, on The National Register of Historic

Places. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of American historic places worthy of preservation.

The Society well understands the economic challenges residents face in improving properties while retaining their most significant, or character-defining, historic elements. Recognizing those achievements with an award so aptly named after one of Riverton's distinguished proponents of historic preservation is in line with the Society's mission "to create an awareness of our heritage, to preserve local landmarks, and to continue to expand our knowledge of the history of the area."

Your attendance will honor your neighbors for their efforts and show support for the Society's preservation aims.

- JMc



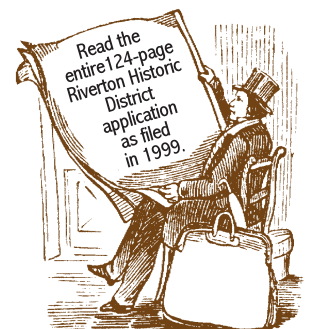
NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

nrmhp.focus.nps.gov

A Little Light Reading



107 Lippincott, built in 1910 by Ezra Lippincott for his daughter Helen.



Present owners
Dr. and Mrs.
Michael Horn

A review of some recent website posts...

...and hints of coming attractions

RYC, Feb. 3, 2014 PHOTO CREDIT: JMc



Jan. 10: [History Repeats Itself as Ice Jams the Delaware River](#)

The sight of a fresh snowfall in Riverton still charmed many folks in early winter. Who knew that regional snowfall accumulation would be one for the record books? Even the students would eventually grow tired of snowdays and delayed school openings caused by the unrelenting snow and cold temps this winter.

When news reports showed video of ice jams on the Delaware River we showed that such accounts are not that uncommon—certainly not once in a lifetime.

Feb. 4: [Get used to it – more on the way](#)

We posted more snow scene pictures and a [pie-graph](#) showing states in which

our members reside.

Feb. 5: [Diaries donated to PH&CS illuminate Cinnaminson's Civil War era](#)

Presenter Jay Howard of the Palmyra Cultural and Historical Society kindly sent us his slide presentation and notes, which we posted online.

Feb. 18: [Proposed ride recreates an 1895 NYC-Riverton bicycle race](#)

Feb. 27: [Century Race plans on track as historic sign fundraising revs up](#)

March 8: [History makers work to create a new attraction – the Historic Riverton Century](#)

Several posts told of Rob Gusky's plan to celebrate the 1895 New York Times Tri-State Relay Race by organizing a hundred mile bicycle ride. The degree to which this idea has captured the imaginations of so many people can be measured by the viral speed at which he has attracted hundreds of Facebook "likes" and friends. Find far more details about the trip logistics and what is

in store at the previous links.

March 7: [Riverton's one-man Polar Bear Club was a world class swimmer](#)


Photos in a Feb. 1920 *Philadelphia Evening Ledger* inspired this post about ice boats, an ice auto, and Riverton's own One-Man Polar Bear Club—Charles Durborow

Still to come before the next *Gaslight News* issue in the fall—

- ❖ Memorial Day Observance
- ❖ Moorestown Community Band at [Riverview Estates](#) May 28
- ❖ Check back for more news about the back-to-back running of the Historic Riverton Criterium and the Historic Riverton Century
- ❖ Riverton's Glorious Fourth
- ❖ We have a backlog of vintage postcards and Dreer's Garden Catalog illustrations to post
- ❖ What is *your* idea for making Riverton history?

- JMc




**KEEP
CALM
AND
READ
THE
GASLIGHT
NEWS**

Help make our growing HSR website at <http://rivertonhistory.com/> more collaborative with your comments and contributions. Check in for information on events, past issues of *Gaslight News*, vintage images, a veterans' page, our blog, and more.

Readers: Inside this issue read about two past programs, and these upcoming events—Apr. 10 Historical Society of Riverton Preservation Award Night, the Historic Riverton Century ride on June 7, and a May 28 concert by Moorestown Community Band. Next issue—Fall 2014

Gaslight News

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RIVERTON

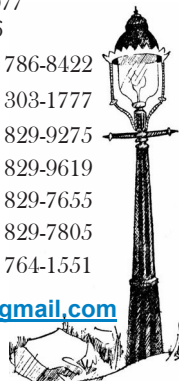
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There is still time to apply to the *Riverton Borough Military & Veterans Affairs Committee* to have a veteran's name included for the 2014 Memorial Day Observance. Dozens of names have been added to the original list since the revision of the eligibility criteria in 2011.

The *Riverton Veterans' Album* found on rivertonhistory.com is an online tribute containing photos of service personnel, hometown newspaper clippings and period advertisements, information about the Riverton War Memorial, and much more. Please contact the HSR if you have anything to share in this virtual scrapbook.

SGT. CARHART GETS SILVER STAR MEDAL

Sergeant Robert W. Carhart, son of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Carhart, of Lippincott avenue, Riverton, has been awarded the Silver Star Medal and a Citation for conspicuous bravery in action. He also received the medal of the Order of the Purple Heart.
New Era, May 11, 1944



**WELL, THAT
EXPLAINS A LOT.**

You may have seen my byline as I write material for the Historical Society of Riverton website, rivertonhistory.com,

and edit this newsletter. One may tend to overestimate my computer ability from the look of our website. While I have fun writing and posting photos and video clips, Mike Solin, our IT consultant, basically set up the website as an easy to follow template. Some parts of the administrative dashboard I have never touched.

I just found 24 emails from readers dating back to 2013. I have no one else to blame since the website staff consists of me (with remote fixes from Mike when I need help).

There are probably some angry, or at least puzzled, readers out there.

If you wrote and did not get a reply, please accept my apology for this oversight, and try again, or call 856-764-1551.

Best regards,
John McCormick