

Founded 1970

Riverton, NJ 08077

Incorporated 1978

New plaques at 309 and 311 Bank Avenue plus the impressive signpost mounted across from Riverton Yacht Club (2017) compose a compelling trio of interpretive historical markers on our borough's most historic thoroughfare.



Additional markers at the Porch Club (2014), Caleb Clothier House at 503 Bank (2017), Riverton Public School (2018), Riverton Free Library (2018), Bicycle Track (2014), and the clock plaza (1999) inform visitors and residents of Riverton's origin and rich legacy.



More in the works: the home of two illustrious abolitionists at 102 Penn Street and the home of founder Rodman Wharton House at 407 Bank Avenue. There are stories everywhere!

Two new markers grace Bank Avenue homes

A historical marker program endowed by Carlos Rogers 2016 Criterium gift gains critical mass

Find an opportunity to take a walk down Bank Avenue in Riverton and admire our two new interpretive historical markers!

We're making more progress on this great project, kicked off by a critical \$4,000 donation from

Carlos Rogers' Historic Riverton Criterium in 2016.

Our usual Sub-Committee on Sub-Surface Issues, **Bill Brown**, **John Laverty**, and **Roger Prichard**, just installed these markers on adjacent Bank Avenue properties, commemorating two more of the town's founders in



A plaque at 309 Bank Avenue explains the home's pedigree
PHOTO CREDIT: ROGER PRICHARD



L-R. Roger Prichard and homeowner Michael Kearney at 311 Bank Avenue
PHOTO CREDIT: ROGER PRICHARD

Michael and Mary Kate Kearney.

At 309 Bank is the home of founder Robert and Anna Biddle. He was a hardware entrepreneur, abolitionist and long-time treasurer of

See **MARKERS** on 2

Alice Paul presentation at Porch Club Oct. 24

Alisa Dupuy portrays the suffragist who mobilized a generation of women to gain the right to vote

Greetings and Happy Fall, Members!

We look forward to your enjoyment of all the exciting events planned for the 2019-2020 season.

As we approach the 100th anniversary of women's voting rights next year we welcome the return of historical re-enactor Alisa Dupuy who will portray Mt. Laurel native Alice Paul.

Alice Paul was an American Quaker, suffragist, feminist, and women's rights activist who was a force in the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which

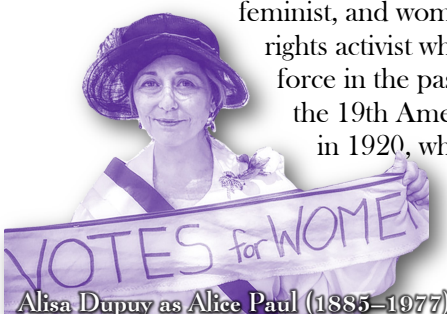
gained women the right to vote,

and authored the Equal Rights Amendment.

No stranger to Historical Society of Riverton events, Alisa Dupuy has both entertained and informed us as several of her incredibly costumed personas before.

- ◆ Porch Club, 4th & Howard Street, Riverton
- ◆ Thursday October 24, 2019 @ 7pm
- ◆ Free to members and the public
- ◆ Light refreshments served

- JMC





②

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF RIVERTON

Gaslight News

is a publication of
THE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF RIVERTON
and is published
four times per year.

Post Office Box # 112
Riverton, NJ 08077

E-mail/Web:
rivertonhistory@gmail.com
rivertonhistory.com/

*In case you
missed it...*

Over twenty blog posts appeared on rivertonhistory.com since the last issue. While we hardly go viral, these showed more than the usual web traffic.

[May 12](#), Historic Riverton Criterium includes women's races

[May 19](#), Speaking of women cyclists...

[June 4](#), ...a look back to past May Days

[June 22](#), Meet Me at the Eagle

[July 21](#), 19th century lunch wagons were fore-runners of modern diners

[July 26](#), A reader's brief Duster reference...

[Sept. 5](#), S.J. Boardwalks & Beaches of Yesteryear



[Sept. 13](#), Millside Farms Remembered



MARKERS from 1

Swarthmore College who lived there a remarkable 51 years with his wife Anna Biddle.

See the [309 Bank marker](#) close up plus a more detailed [history of the house](#) on our website.

Founder William D. Parrish and his wife Elizabeth resided at 311 Bank Avenue. Elizabeth was a sister of Anna Biddle (and had siblings in at least three other original households).

Similarly, William had two siblings dwelling in other founders' villas. William was also an energetic abolitionist and a successful merchant, buying and selling paper and rags and building

boilers and gas-generating machinery.

William Parrish died relatively early, but then the house became the residence of a retired Civil War general, William L. James. He and his family named it "Red Gables" and ran it as a genteel boarding house for many years,

View the [311 Bank marker](#) and a detailed [history of the house](#) on our website.

Research continues for signs at 106 Penn (formerly on the riverbank and home of two illustrious abolitionists) and 407 Bank Avenue, the home of founder Rodman Wharton.

- ROGER PRICHARD



Spring Recognition Awards Night recap

The Historical Society of Riverton paused to celebrate exceptional work of individuals

Our May 23 meeting at [Nellie Bly's Olde Tyme Ice Cream Parlour](#) celebrated a successful year and honored four outstanding people, recognizing them for their ongoing contributions to the Society and the town:

- **Pat Bruner**, for being treasurer of the Historical Society of Riverton and the Porch Club, for heading countless committees and volunteering where help is needed.
- **Carlos Rogers**, for bringing the [Historic](#)

[Riverton Criterium](#) to the town, which has become the unofficial start of Riverton's summer celebrations. Through this competitive bicycle race and Carlos' generosity, his non-profit has contributed over \$35,000 to local community organizations.

- **Kim Paulsen**, for her Friends of Riverton Library work, including another festive Christmas House Tour showcasing homes in Riverton.
- **Pat Solin**, for authoring many articles in the *Gaslight News*, and most recently her research of [Riverton's "Gold Star Boys"](#) of WWI, which became the basis of Riverton School's 2019 Arbor Day Program.

We celebrated with pizza and Nellie Bly's famous ice cream.

- SUSAN DECHNIK



L-R: Pat Bruner, Carlos Rogers, Kim Paulsen, Pat Solin PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN DECHNIK

Criterium gift to fund archives preservation

The Historical Society of Riverton paused to celebrate exceptional work of individuals



L-R: President Bill Brown, Historic Riverton Criterium originator Carlos Rogers, HSR Treasurer Pat Bruner, Archives Co-Chair Keith Betten

Riverton resident **Carlos Rogers**, creator of the Historic Riverton Criterium, donated \$5,500 to the Historical Society of Riverton in June to fund the preservation of our historical collection of documents, photos, and artifacts. (See next page for a related story.)

Combined with \$500 in 2013, plus his [2016 gift](#), which funds our historical marker project, that makes \$10,000!! Thank you, Carlos, for again making history in Riverton. - JMC



Criterion grant to fund preservation of HSR archives

Keith Betten, Archives Preservation Committee Co-Chair, reports on the huge impact this extraordinary gift will have on the Society's efforts to preserve the extensive collection that chronicles Riverton history

Carlos Rogers' \$4,000 donation in 2016 underwrote our still ongoing historical marker project; he repeated history in June 2019, giving \$5,500 to fund another huge Society project to organize our growing historical collection.

Over the course of the past several years a dedicated group of volunteers has worked to secure, store, and catalogue the Society's archival collection (begun nearly fifty years ago) into a series of record groups.

Each one concentrates on a history of a wide variety of Riverton entities including Riverton Yacht Club, the Porch Club, Riverton Country Club, Riverton Gun Club, Riverton Fire Company, Borough governmental agencies, Riverton's founders, plus various religious, civic, and social organizations.

Hundreds of physical documents, publications, and historic photographs comprise the

records that chronicle those histories. Many are irreplaceable in that they may be the only surviving evidence to corroborate a topic. This generous grant will ensure that the borough's rich history will be preserved for years to come.

Materials are now housed in new cubic foot storage boxes on newly acquired archival shelving in a designated space within the Free Library of Riverton.



The basement of the Library serves as the vault for the archives and artifact collection of the HSR
PHOTO CREDIT: JMc

The Historic Riverton Criterion Grant will allow for the permanent placement of all of these historic items into acid-free folders, in archival document storage cases, and the creation of a functional digital and paper-based cataloging system which will describe exactly what the collection contains and how it can be accessed by the public. The plan is to have the entire project completed during calendar year 2020. - KEITH BETTEN



A dollhouse finds a new home

In the [Sept. 2017](#) GN we thanked former resident **Alice Fluckiger** who stopped by on her way from Connecticut to the Jersey Shore to drop off a magnificently detailed dollhouse—a replica of her childhood home in Riverton.

Maybe you saw it on display at Riverton Library last December during our [Museum-For-A-Day](#).

By an extraordinary coincidence the actual home has a connection, albeit several degrees of separation, to **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Eleanora Lippincott**, a previous owner, employed a butler and a cook whose son, a 1949 PHS grad, grew up to become [Dr. Clarence B. Jones](#), advisor and speechwriter to Dr. King.



Santa and Susan Dechnik also gave mini-house tours
PHOTO CREDIT: JMc



Dollhouse at Nellie Bly's
PHOTO CREDIT: SUSAN DECHNIK

The dollhouse languished for awhile in the library basement as we thought about where it could be enjoyed.

By summer, **Bill McDermott** had approached **Jeannie Murphy**, proprietress of [Nellie Bly's Olde Tyme Ice Cream Parlour](#), who

agreed to display it in her front window. An 18" plexiglass barrier to protect it and a sign to explain it completed the display.

- JMc



SAVE THE DATE

Save the Date! On **Saturday, November 23, from 6 to 10**, our family is hosting a house party to raise funds for the Historical Society of Riverton's youth programs, including history writing scholarships for Riverton School and Palmyra High School students.



Sociable at Coales, 100 Lippincott Ave., May 4, 1889
PHOTO CREDIT: HSR ARCHIVE DONATION FROM NANCY HALL

Tickets will be \$50 for adults, no charge for kids under 18 with an adult. I'll update you on [rivertonhistory.com](#) and Facebook when tickets are available in the next few weeks. The attached photo from the HSR's archives was taken in our house in 1889.

- HEATHER HUFFNAGLE



Suffrage memorabilia needed for educational project



Lisa Hendrickson of Mt. Laurel's [Alice Paul Institute](#) asked for our help in finding photographs, voting memorabilia, newspaper articles, etc. from folks that the organization can photograph to reproduce on educational banners.



Col. Ida Kraft speaking at Bridgeboro, 1913
PHOTO CREDIT: Steel Family Album

The Alice Paul Institute is creating a traveling exhibit about the suffrage movement for the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 2020.

These banners will travel to local libraries, historical societies, and corporations throughout 2020.

You might just see an ancestor in the following list of suffragists' names that appeared in newspapers of the time.

- Mrs. Rachel Foster Avery
- Miss Annette Campbell
- Miss Amelia Coale
- Miss Edith Coale
- Mrs. E. S. Cole
- Mrs. Catherine B. Lippincott
- Miss Helen Lippincott
- Miss Elizabeth Lippincott
- Mrs. Mary W. Lippincott
- Miss Beulah Parry
- Miss Susanna Parry
- Mrs. Mary L. Thomas
- Mrs. E. R. H. VanValin
- Miss Elizabeth Williams
- Mrs. D. Henry Wright

Parts of this column excerpted from a longer web post on rivertonhistory.com

- JMc



We sincerely welcome two new members to the Historical Society:

- ◆ Steve Moorhouse, Clermont, FL
- ◆ Anthony & Cynthia Fratto, Riverton

... and we acknowledge the generosity of an anonymous cash donor...

... and we acknowledge the generosity of these folks who gave the following items for our museum...

- ◆ We mentioned in the April GN that Margaret Jones Perritt of Boothbay Harbor, ME found us on the web and generously donated a lady's silver chatelaine purse frame that belonged to Hannah Biddle Frishmuth of Riverton.



Here is a photo.

PHOTO CREDITS: JMc

- ◆ Also mentioned in that April GN, Jim Nachman, a former Riverton resident now living in Cinnaminson, donated scratch-built (not a kit) scale models of Riverton's long-gone [rail-road station](#) and the [Collins Building](#).



Now we have photos!



According to Bill McDermott, There is more to this story to tell another time. Jim also has a scale model of the famous [Nellie Bly](#) locomotive. He grew up here, graduating from PHS '54.



rivertonhistory.com is a collaboration.
Please share your story.

- JMc



Nearly complete run of [Gaslight News](#) now online

Shortly after I took on the job of editor in September 2007, I set out to locate and scan back issues of our newsletter.

PHOTO: JMc



Now, except for [two missing issues](#), they are all online from issue #1, Jan. 1974, through this current issue #181, Oct. 2019.

But we almost didn't make it, as this excerpt from the [October 1976](#) issue of the *Gaslight News* reported:

“ A special meeting of the board was held October 5th to discuss the continuation of the Historical Society. **After much discussion pro and con it was recommended, by those present, that the Historical Society should be dissolved.** A motion was made to that effect. On October 20th the board met again. It was decided at this time to continue holding our programs, as planned, for this coming year. ”

Imagine the irreplaceable loss to posterity if Betty Hahle's "Yesterday" columns went unwritten, the *Gaslight News* never published, our website never went online, and those informative historical markers never happened.

See what old news you can find in the back-issues of the [Gaslight News](#) and [four locally historic newspapers](#):

The New Era (1894 - 1949)
The Riverton Journal (1880-1882)
The Palmyra Record (1913-1918)
The Palmyra Weekly News (1887-1922)

In the long run, the Historical Society of Riverton will only survive if it continues to earn the active support of the community that it serves or it will wither from disinterest.

We sincerely thank you for your interest in history and for your support.

- JMc

