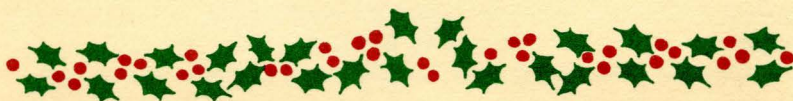


A Christmas Candlelight House Tour



December 13, 1986

5 P.M. to 10 P.M.

RIVERTON FREE LIBRARY

306 MAIN STREET

RIVERTON, N.J.

WELCOME

Welcome to the 1986 Christmas Candlelight House Tour presented by the Friends of the Riverton Library. There are eight lovely homes open this evening for your enjoyment.

In addition to the beautifully decorated homes, we invite you to visit the Library where you will see decorations of yesteryear. Take a few moments to refresh yourself at the Porch Club with a warm drink, homemade cookies, and holiday musical entertainment. Finally, you may wish to browse through two of our local specialty shops, The New Leaf and Victorian Thymes.

We hope this evening's house tour commences the holiday season for you in a warm and festive way.

Candlelight Tour Committee

Beatrice Cook
Mari Veneziano

Indians long ago roamed the forest at the junction of the Pompeston Creek and the Delaware — the site on which Riverton was eventually founded.

A few settlers occupied the land very early, in the 17th & 18th centuries. Their large tracts included fields, orchards, and pasture lands for sheep as well as cattle.

A road was laid out in 1721, to become in time the present Main Street leading into Riverton Road. In the same century, a sizeable fishery was established on the Delaware near the foot of the present Howard Street.

A one-room school of brick was erected in 1822 to serve the farming families. In 1834 the railroad came, and new faces began to appear in the area. Meanwhile, steamboats began traveling on the Delaware in 1809, and an early pier was built at the foot of the old road to permit steamboat service to the immediate region.

In 1851 nine Philadelphians bought up a portion of the old farmland for development. Naming their projected town Riverton, they built their own mansions on the riverfront. Operating a rooming house to attract visitors, they sold off numerous lots to newcomers.

A general store was in business by 1855. In the same year, a Church was organized. After delays occasioned by the Civil War, a Yacht Club was founded in 1865.

By 1880 the population was nearing 1,000. Riverton withdrew from Cinnaminson Township to become a Borough in 1893.

Thus the foundations for the present town were laid.

— Lloyd Griscom

Schedule of Musical Entertainment

6:30 PM Holiday Music and Song
 performed by Robert Cook, Michael Maratea,
 and Michael Veneziano

7:30 PM Porch Club Chorus

8:30 PM Steve Lucasi

"The Porch Club has always been musical" since its first chorus was organized in 1900. Except for short intervals, the Chorus has performed at community functions. At present there are 19 members who will entertain this evening with the program theme "Music which the immigrants brought for Christmas".

Steve Lucasi is the Musical Director of Saint James Church in Jamesbury, New Jersey and has been involved in many of Riverton's musical activities over the past ten years. This evening he will perform an assortment of holiday music and song.

1. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hordis — 907 Thomas Avenue

In 1911 J. Lawrence Lippincott constructed this house on land deeded to him by his father Ezra. Together Ezra and Lawrence had begun development of Riverton above the railroad. The Hordis family is the seventh to occupy the house.

The house is described as an eclectic Colonial Revival with a two story right wing, some Tudor style trim and smooth stucco surface. The interior doors including the sliding panels are cherry.

Interesting is a restrictive covenant first recorded in the deed of 1869 saying that at no time shall the owners "manufacture, sell or cause to be sold in or upon the premises any spirituous, vinous, fermented or other intoxicating liquors except as a medicine in case of sickness".

2. Dr. and Mrs. Rupert C. Hartmann — 302 Eighth Street

This house was built in 1906 and in 1932 the living room was expanded forward to the present size.

Of note here is the collection of beautiful antique clocks. The tall case clock in the foyer is 200 years old and American made. In the dining room is a British made clock, 150 years old.

Several furniture pieces in the living room and dining room have been hand made by Dr. Hartmann, including the Simon Willard tall case clock located in the master bedroom. The window in the front door is also his handiwork.

3. Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Schweich — 617 Main Street

This Victorian home of the late 1880's was built and inhabited by the Slim family until 1946. At that time, Dr. Walter Dudley purchased the home and grounds and converted the front half of the first floor to office space. Since then, it has served as both home and dental office.

In 1985 Dr. Schweich purchased 617 Main Street, and in January of 1986, the dental office was severely damaged by fire.

Guests tonight will see its restoration. Note the beautiful stained-glass windows designed and made by Mr. John McCormick, a local craftsman and teacher at Riverton school.

4. Dr. and Mrs. Robert E. Stedman — 204 Broad Street

This mansard roofed Victorian home was built during the Reconstruction immediately following the Civil War. Many of the unusual external doorknobs carry an 1866 patent date. The kitchen and back porch were added at the turn of the century and according to Riverton historians, it boasted one of the original Riverton indoor outhouses. The steep stairs (blocked off for safety reasons) were originally used by servants attending a second floor nursery.

Paneling in the center hallway and living room was brought from the Sinclair mansion in Pennsylvania. The bedroom suite on the second floor is a family heirloom. Of special note are the very ornate radiators.

Until recently Dr. Stedman's offices were located on the second floor. Now the family occupies the entire house.

5. Mr. and Mrs. William Rudolph — 212 Thomas Avenue

This home dates somewhere near 1880. An early photo showing the house in its original form reveals some traces of Victorian style but with stronger leanings toward a style we call "American Homestead". Folklore notes that the home was built for one of the Hollingsheads and later owned or rented for a short time by a Biddle.

With large rooms, three fireplaces, pocket doors, butler pantry and many other "old world amenities", the home affords both a gracious and relaxing lifestyle. Over the past two years the Rudolphs have redecorated much of the home and continue to do so.

Taking advantage of the ten foot ceilings, the Christmas tree in the living room has become the center of holiday festivities.

6. The Baptist Home of South Jersey — 301-307 Bank Avenue

The Baptist Home of South Jersey purchased this property in 1952 and were told then that it was "More than 100 years old". Currently, the home is the residence of Baptists from the South Jersey area.

The mural on the wall of the office corridor shows several of the present river properties, many of which were built as summer homes for wealthy Philadelphians.

7. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Honeyford — 102 Main Street

The original house built in the middle 1800's was the home of the first meeting of the Episcopal Church. It was also used as an office from which other Riverton real estate lots were sold. Later the Seckel Family bought it and it became a boarding house. The Seckel Family advertised with description: "Private Mansion — Miss Sallie Seckel. Few minutes walk from station. Accommodates 30 guests. Open all the year. Rates \$10.00 to 15.00 per week. Large porch and lawn".

In 1905 the house was burned to the ground and the present one built in its Post Victorian style by a local builder.

On display will be family quilts circa 1890. Tatting and an "egg tree" will also be displayed. A "pretend" group of children will be holding their own cookie baking session in the kitchen.

8. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Siefert — 304 Main Street

Built in 1855, this house was one of the focal points of daily life during the growth of Riverton. Originally owned by W.C. Biddle, the house was rented and eventually purchased by Milton and Hattie Cowperthwaite. The house served as Cowperthwaite's Drug Store for over thirty years and was the site of the first public telephone station in Riverton. Also, the house was used for a time as the town post office.

Over the years, modifications and additions have been made to the house. The current owners, who purchased the house in 1984, are in the process of restoring the house to its original condition.

The house is decorated in authentic Victorian Christmas tradition. Note the trinket chaplet suspended from the dining room chandelier. It contains a small present for each family member to be opened at breakfast on Christmas morning. On display on the second floor is a portion of a collection of Victorian clothing owned by the Historical Society of Riverton.

9. The Riverton Library — 306 Main Street

The Riverton Library was founded in 1899 by a group of citizens who intended it to be "free from Sectarian, Political or Personal control", and remains to this day one of the few independent Library Associations in New Jersey. The Library was first housed in Christ Episcopal Church across the street. In 1908 Mrs. E.H. Ogden made a generous gift of the present building.

Riverton is no longer rural but the Twentieth Century has seen little change in the pace of life at the Riverton Library. This two story cottage built in the Carpenter Gothic Style is a small landmark of Victorian charm.

This evening, please note the miniature rooms found on the tables which were handcrafted by Ruth Schweizer of Riverton.

The display case holds ornaments from the Biddle Estate, Andalusia. These ornaments date back to the 1930's. The more Victorian type tree decorations are from other private collections.

10. Mr. and Mrs. Keith Betten — 404 Main Street

The house at 404 Main Street was built around 1850 and stylistically was influenced by the Greek Revival Style which was then going out of vogue and the Italianate which was just coming into fashion. When originally constructed, the house had a broad porch across the front with French windows that opened onto it from the two principal rooms which flank the main hall. Early in this century the porch was removed. Fortunately the French windows were retained — now opening onto small wrought iron balconies.

On the interior, the house has changed little over the course of one hundred and thirty-five years. The Bettens who have a special love for the sturdy grace of early and mid-19th century furniture are in the process of furnishing the house with pieces from that period.

11. The Riverton Porch Club — 4th and Howard Streets

The Porch Club of Riverton began in 1890 with eight women who met on their front porches to discuss literature and current events. In 1909 they built their own clubhouse. The Porch Club initiated many services, including NJPTA, Family Service, Visiting Nurses and public Kindergarten. The Annual Library Bridge grew from lessons given here by Charles Goren.

Of shingle and board/batten style, it features a massive brick fireplace, laid in Flemish bond with a stone mantel. Note the map of the village of Riverton circa 1851 on a wall near the kitchen.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank those listed below for their invaluable assistance.

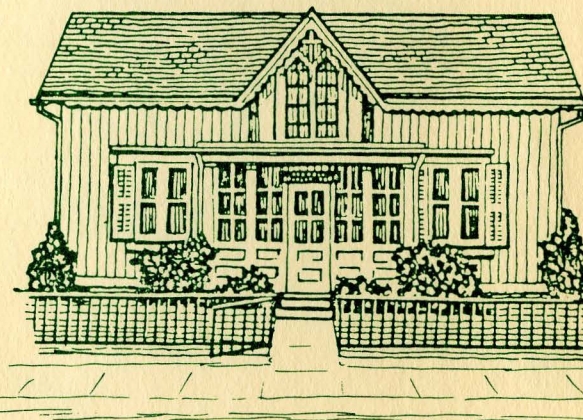
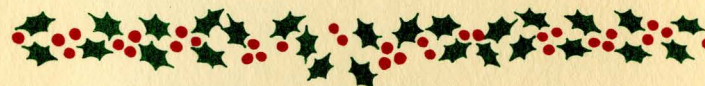
The Homeowners — for their generosity in allowing us to exhibit their homes.

The Porch Club

The Riverton Police Department

The Cinnaminson Police Department

House Tour Committees and Other Volunteers — for their implacable efforts to make the 1986 Christmas Candlelight House Tour a success.



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