



GLEN RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December 2009 Vol. XXXII No. 3

THE GASLAMP

Illuminating Our Past

www.glenridgehistory.org



Sharp Shooting

President's Letter

One of the Glen Ridge Historical Society's newer traditions is our photo contest. We started the contest in 2008, because it seemed a simple way to advance our mission of promoting the history of Glen Ridge. In the process, we learned that our town is home to a large number of skilled photographers. We announced the winners of the 2009 contest at the conclusion of our annual fall walking tour on October 25, and I thought I would use this letter to tell you about them.

First, a disclaimer: I had nothing to do with picking the winners. Several distinguished professional photographers donated their time to serve as our judges. I will allow them to remain anonymous, but I do want to express my appreciation for their work. The judges were instructed to select first and second prize winners in each of three categories: People, Private Homes, and Public Spaces.

The winner in the people category was Neil Nathanson's 3-D photograph of a boy on a motorcycle. The picture looks blurred to the

naked eye, so Neil cleverly attached a pair of 3-D glasses to the mounting board with string. (Those glasses, by the way, were a hit with the kids among our walkers, who'd never seen three-dimensional photographs before.)

Unfortunately, we couldn't figure out how to provide 3-D glasses in *The Gaslamp*, so we'll suggest another way to experience the images in 3-D, albeit in black and white rather than in color. The two separate images underlying the finished photo are displayed below. Try crossing your eyes until you see four images rather than two. If you then relax your view slightly, the images should move together a bit so you see three rather than four. Focus on the one in the middle, which should appear in three dimensions. Neil made these images with two off-the-shelf Canon digital cameras held parallel in a metal frame with a single trigger. Combining the images into a single 3-D photo requires some special software, of which various hand-crafted versions circulate on the Internet.

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An Irreplaceable Loss to the Collective Memory of Our Historic District

News from the Town Historian



Glen Ridge lost an ardent supporter in June with the passing of John Marshall Payne. John served on the Historic Preservation Task Force in 1985 to draft the Historic District Ordinance. His expertise in land use issues as a professor at Rutgers Law School was invaluable. The ordinance passed in 1987 and even now guides the Historic Preservation Commission in its ongoing efforts to preserve the architectural integrity of Glen Ridge. John served on the HPC for many years.

John became a Trustee of the Glen Ridge Historical Society in 1985. He remained on the Board in various roles until 1996. I had the pleasure of tape recording a walking tour with John in the center of town called "Our Beginnings." It was my first exposure to his enthusiasm for history and architecture and his appreciation of both in Glen Ridge.

In 1995, Glen Ridge held its yearlong centennial celebration and John offered to write a local history. He chose a chronological approach rather than the topical style of the *Glen Ridge Heritage Book* (1977) so that the *Centennial Book* would provide a fresh perspective. He was relentless in his pursuit of unpublished photographs and arcane information. Terry Webster and I were his "gophers" and

hounded him for accuracy. He took our nitpicking in good stride and when he found the answer to some question that eluded him he couldn't wait to let us know.

In 1996, the Frank Lloyd Wright designed home at 63 Chestnut Hill Place came on the market. John had nurtured a love for Wright's work since childhood. He and his wife, Edith, went to see the house on a whim and were immediately hooked. They sold their 1886 Victorian on Hillside Avenue and moved into the Stuart Richardson house that spring. Years of complex repairs and precise restoration provided John with hilarious anecdotes for the frequent visitors who came through including many members of the Glen Ridge Historical Society.

A number of years after three houses were torn down on Ridgewood Avenue to build the new high school, John spotted the entrance gates and fencing from the Sunnycrest estate in the backyard of a Bloomfield Avenue scrap metal business. Recognizing their historic importance, he bought and donated them anonymously. After the successful fundraising efforts of Cherry Provost, the gates and fencing were restored and installed at Freeman Gardens.

Shortly before John became ill, he gave a delightful talk to the Glen Ridge Historical Society about the Japanese influence on the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. Watching him at the podium, I was reminded of the wonderful traits I had come to admire in him: intelligence, curiosity, wit, and enthusiasm. John was incredibly generous with his time and talents, and modest to a fault. His influence on the historic preservation movement in Glen Ridge will endure but I will miss him nonetheless.

The Museum Room is open by appointment. If you would like to schedule a visit, please call Sally Meyer at (973) 239-2674.

Sally Meyer

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Editor's Note...The USPS has told us that we can't mail *The Gaslamp* at the reduced bulk rate if we staple it together. Their machines can't read the addresses. So beginning with this issue we will seal them with the transparent circles you had to cut to open this one.

The design and layout of *The Gaslamp* is being tweaked to allow adequate space for the articles - and will continue to be adjusted in forthcoming issues. Contact: **Herb Addison** herb.addison@verizon.net

Continued from Page 1

Second place in the People category went to Megan Giulianelli for her photo of a young girl helping raise a flag. This picture was taken at Linden Avenue School.



Karin Robinson won first place in the Private Homes category for the second year in a row. Her winning photograph captured a green frond peeking around a white porch column, providing a dramatic contrast in shapes and colors.



Second place went to David Doernberg, who captured the glory of a restored house on Woodland Avenue, complete with fern and American flag.



Megan Giulianelli's photo of a Glen Ridge street shrouded in fog was the winner in the Public Spaces category.



Second place was won by David Doernberg, who found a new way to look at one of our oldest and most familiar landmarks, the Glen Ridge train station.



After we announced the winners, we put many of the contest entries on display at the Glen Ridge Public Library. We're grateful to the library for making space available so everyone can see the extent of the photographic talent we have in Glen Ridge.
Marc Levinson

Don't Miss It!

Christmas Tree with Vintage Ornaments
in the
Glen Ridge Congregational Church
195 Ridgewood Avenue
Contributed by the
Glen Ridge Historical Society in thanks for
our use of the Museum Room at the church
Through January 1, 2010

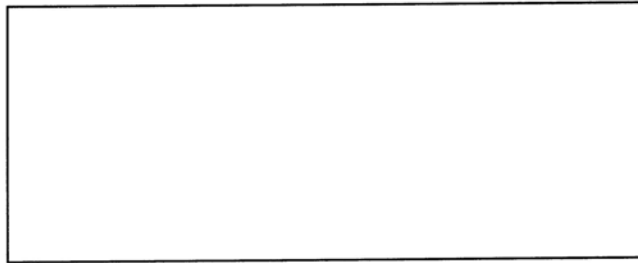


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Coming Events

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES

December 5-20, 2009 – The four historic houses maintained by the Montclair Historical Society will be decorated in period-appropriate styles and open for guided tours. Details at their website: montclairhistorical.org, or at 973-744-1796.

November 27, 2009 through January 2010 – The Newark Museum is featuring *Feasting with Family and Friends: Christmas in the Ballantine House*; The trappings and trimmings of a traditional Victorian holiday are re-created in the 1885 Ballantine House, a restored National Historic Landmark.

News Briefs

The New Jersey Historical Society in Newark has weathered its “cash crisis” and says it has reopened during regular hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Their website currently lists an exhibition titled, “Feast Your Eyes: The Unexpected Beauty of Vegetable Gardens.”