



*May 2016*

We just had our 2016 Board elections... here are the people who have volunteered to serve the Lower Merion and Narberth communities.

**Officers:**

**President:** Gerald A. Francis

**Vice President:** Kenneth L. Brier

**Treasurer:** Leon Levine

**Corresponding Secretary:** Perrin C. Hamilton, Jr.

**Recording Secretary:** Barbara McElroy

**Immediate Past President:** Edmund L. Goldsborough



**Directors:**

**Class of 2017** – Christina Fink, Martha Moffat, Carole Strickland

**Class of 2018** – Louis Barson, Patrick A. Doyle, Sr., Joanne Murray

**Class of 2019** – Gary Brock, Max Buten, Alexander (Pete) Hoskins

**Ad Hoc Solicitor:** James S. Ettelson, Esq.

## **John Dickinson, The Forgotten Founding Father**



At noon on Sunday, May 22nd, the community is invited to join *Merion Friends Meeting* members for a lecture on John Dickinson (1732-1808) and the Quaker influence on his political ideas. Historian Alice Hoffman will offer insights on Dickinson's Quaker-inspired efforts in the fight for rights under the British and his contributions to the U.S. Constitution. Families will have the opportunity to participate in a self-guided historical tour of the meeting's grounds and lemonade and cookies will be served. The Merion Friends Meetinghouse is located at

615 Montgomery Avenue in Merion. **FREE admission and open to the general public.**

## **Lower Merion High School's World War II Heroes**

[The Russell Byerley Memorial World War II Collection](#) consists of original letters and photographs that were sent during the war by former students to Russell Byerley, a shop teacher and coach at Lower Merion High School from 1928 until 1951. When World War II broke out, he continued to be in contact with his former students and asked them to write to him. Over time, he received more than 2,000 letters and pictures, most from Lower Merion High School alumni who were serving in the armed forces. To share news of those who wrote to him, he edited a series of wartime newsletters, which were mimeographed and mailed to hundreds of service men and women all over the world -



hometown news from their high school. He enlisted help from the *Girls' Service League* at the high school to copy, fold, address, and mail the newsletters. When the project became over-whelming, Mr. Byerley asked *The Main Lines Times* and *Ardmore Chronicle* to publish his newsletters, which they each did for a year.

At first, the *Lower Merion Historical Society* had a few of Mr. Byerley's newsletters, which were donated by the late Miles Cassidy, but when Mr. Russell Byerley's son, David Byerley, an alumnus of Lower Merion High School, Class of 1946, learned of our interest, he generously donated the original letters to our society, which number in the thousands. He had saved them for over fifty years.

A few years ago longtime historical society volunteer Farilyn Leopold agreed to go through the Byerley letterboxes, putting the letters in alphabetical as opposed to chronological order. She made wonderful progress and says that she enjoyed reading the letters. Because of wartime censorship, not much was said about jobs or what ended up happening during the war to many of the veterans - just topics about Lower Merion and reading news of former classmates as a way of getting a taste of home. Some letter writers were killed during the war, but we have the letters they wrote before their deaths.

Thanks also to volunteer Eliza Reiss, who compiled a list of the veterans for whom we have photos. Another volunteer was Caroline Slama. We thank all concerned with the preserving and sharing of the artifacts related to this project. We named the collection *The Russell Byerley Memorial World War II Collection* in honor of the dedicated teacher who cared about his students in uniform and left this tremendous legacy, which his son shared with us. [You can view a "Living History" interview with David Byerley talking about his father here.](#)

To see the listing of the 1,393 names, log onto our website and select "*Library Collections*" on the homepage, scroll down the page to "*Number 8*" and click on the heading "*Russell Byerley Memorial Library Collection*" An alphabetical listing of the men and women will display of those who served our country.

### **Here is a sample photo and letter from the collection.**

A photo and a letter of Mariano Barone, Lower Merion High School Class of 1937, who was a prisoner of war.

Now deceased, when he returned to Lower Merion he became co-owner of Ricklin's Hardware in Narberth.



*Dear Mr. Byerley*

*May 23, 1945*

*This looks like it....yes freedom at last. After working faithfully for fourteen months for the Nazi cause we were awakened one Sunday morning (Feb 18) at the most ungodly hour (4:30A.M.). We were told to pack up & get ready to leave as the Russians were nearing our town. We assembled with 99 other American soldiers & started toward the western front; a trip on foot which lasted 73 days. As we neared the American front we had no alternative, but to move in circles till the day of our liberation; May 3 by American troops. We started from the Polish Corridor & ended in western Germany; marching a total of 1800 kilometers. As luck would have it I got an infected blister & spent 11 days in an American hospital at Le Harve, France; being flown there from Hildesheim, Germany. I expect to be on my way home from here in a day or so, and will look you up upon my arrival in the*

*states.*

*Yours,*

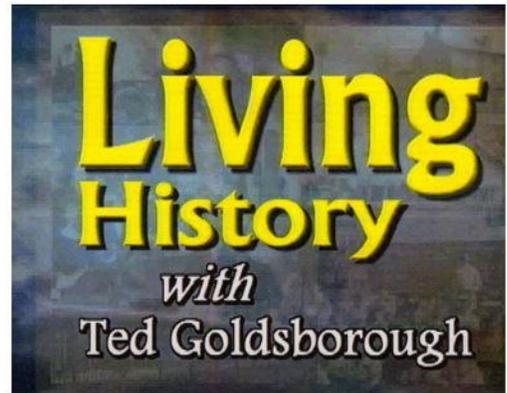
*Mariano Barone*

## Last Taping of the TV Show *Living History with Ted Goldsborough*

For more than five years, a living treasure of our community, Ted Goldsborough, has been producing an oral history series on *Lower Merion Television (LMTV)* called *Living History*. They have been half-hour shows shown locally to cable subscribers on Comcast Channel 7 and Verizon Channel 37. Starting in February 2011, there have been 27 participants who were interviewed in more than 60 half-hour segments, quite a collection of our *Living History*.

Last month, Ted Goldsborough ended his five-year television career with the taping of his last show. In the last two segments the table was turned. Carole Taylor, one of Ted's former students, interviewed Ted about living in Narberth and Lower Merion. The other image shows Mark Murray and Josh Mackley who were responsible for getting each of the 60 shows edited and on the air. The first segment of Ted's farewell will be aired during the month of May and the second segment will be aired in June. [Click here to see a program schedule to view the show.](#)

In July these shows will be archived, and included in the collection of Ted's other television shows on the [Historical Society's website](#).



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### ***MISSION STATEMENT OF THE LOWER MERION HISTORICAL SOCIETY***

The Lower Merion Historical Society is an organization dedicated to *Preserving Our Past For The Future*. This is accomplished by stewardship of local history, education of the community, preservation of historic resources and outreach to promote awareness of the cultural heritage of the Township of Lower Merion and the Borough of Narberth.