

Our Towns

Revolutionary (war) bike tours pedaled from Kent

KENT

By Elyse Sadtler

Sal Lilienthal, owner of the Bicycle Tour Company in Kent, will celebrate the 20th anniversary of his business this year.

Lilienthal has been in the cy-

cling industry for more than 35 years. Before settling in Kent and starting his tour company here, he was employed as a licensed race mechanic at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Lilienthal eventually landed a job with the Motorola American Cycling Team and worked at the Tour de France with Lance Armstrong.

He's now offering tours, all on the East Coast, that take a decidedly slower pace — allowing his clients to stop and see the sites along the way.

Clients can rent bicycles and they can follow a number of self-guided tours that Lilienthal has mapped out. Many of them reflect his interest in the Revolutionary War sites that dot the Northwest Corner.

Inspiration for combining bicycle tours with Revolutionary War history came to Lilienthal one day in 1998, while on the banks of the Delaware River in Washington Crossing, N.J., on a scenic tour he had organized.

"I wandered over to the Daughters of the American Rev-

olution plaque that commemorated the place where General George Washington crossed the Delaware River with his soldiers," he recalled.

"I thought of the famous painting and, after some reflection, I decided to design bicycle tours around key Revolutionary War sites. After a year of researching, I came to realize how little I actually knew about the American Revolution."

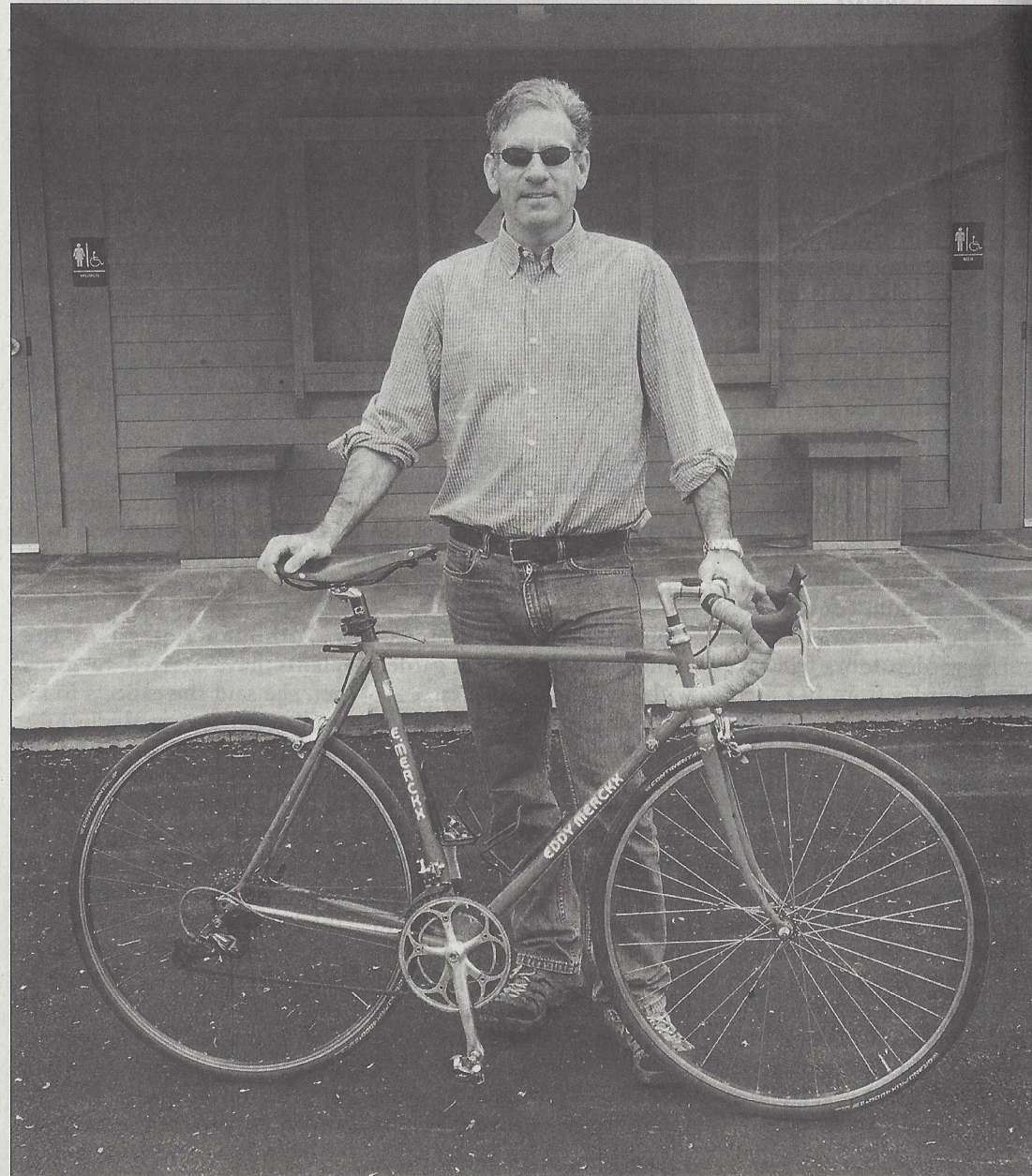
Tours in Connecticut — and be-

yond, from Quebec to Georgia — are detailed in Lilienthal's book, "Revolutionary Battles: Experience America's Roads to Independence."

In addition to running his own business, Lilienthal also helped create the Western New England Greenway, which runs through Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. And he is chairman of the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail.

For more information, go to www.bicycletourcompany.com.

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PHOTO BY ELYSE SADTLER