



The Half Moon

- The Newsletter of the Newtown Historic Association -

Welcome

The Newtown Historic Association proudly presents this newsletter to the Newtown community with the goal of providing news and information on related historic and preservation events in our area. We welcome any comments or suggestions for future articles.

Officers

David Callahan, *President*
Brian Rounsavill, *First Vice President*
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Claire Hennessy – *Hon. Director*
Scott Griffith – *Parliamentarian*

Newtown Historic Association

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Newtown, PA 18940 USA
Phone: (215) 968-4004
<http://www.twp.newtown.pa.us/historic/nha.html>

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Bob & Jennifer Abrahamson, *Newtown, PA*
- Philip & Diana Betsch, *Newtown, PA*
- Harry & Becky Betz, *Wrightstown, PA*
- Justine Bishop, *Holland, PA*
- Norman Buckman, *OceanGrove, NJ*
- Frank & Dot Fabian, *Upper Black Eddy, PA*
- John & Susan Guy, *Newtown, PA*
- Gene & Terry Kiely, *Newtown, PA*
- Gloria Kishi, *Holland, PA*
- Karen & Lee Pantas, *Newtown, PA*
- David & Nancy Schaffer, *Newtown, PA*
- Fred Stewart, *Newtown, PA*
- Tom & Andrea Van Vreede, *Newtown, PA*

Corporate Members

- The Brown Agency
- David J. Witchell Salon & Spa
- Dragonfly, Ltd.
- First National Bank of Newtown
- Intrasource – Blair Park Services
- Johnson, Kendall & Johnson
- The Law Office of Paul R. Beckert, Jr.
- Newtown Hardware House
- One Ten South Salon
- Anthony Petsis & Associates.
- Re-Max Properties
- Stuckert & Yates
- The Pro Shop of Newtown
- The Township House
- Wells Fargo Home Mortgage

Inn & About Newtown

A new Newtown Historic Association fundraising event was held on Saturday, May 1, 2004. Over 60 individuals participated in the rotating dinner that began and ended at the historic Court Inn with pre-dinner hors d'oeuvres and post-dinner dessert and coffee. Patrons were able to wine & dine about town in five neighborhood homes and enjoy the hospitality.

Summer Fest

On July 18, 2004, from 12:00 Noon until 4:00 PM, the Newtown Borough Retailers Association will sponsor Summer Fest on State Street from Washington to Centre Avenues. The Newtown Historic Association will be following a "Victorian Days" theme. Entertainment will include a Barbershop Quartet, wheelmen, dressed re-enactors, croquet on the back lawn and lemonade in the Boone Garden. The Court Inn will be decorated in Victorian style and any members who wish to display Victorian pieces may contact Skip Gittens at (215) 968-8783.

Annual Dues

The annual dues notices have been mailed to all active members. In an effort to continue our membership drive, members are encouraged to submit the names and addresses of potential new members to the Corresponding Secretary, Mary Callahan, at dcnhh@comcast.net.

Lindbergh Talk Highlights May Meeting

The May General Membership meeting was held on Monday, May 17th at the Court Inn. A standing-room-only crowd came to hear Lloyd Gardner, a Research Professor of History at Rutgers University, discuss the Newtown connection to the famous Lindbergh kidnapping case of the 1930s that is chronicled in his new book, *"The Case That Never Dies: The Lindbergh Kidnapping,"* The subject of many books, as well as novels, and films, the Lindbergh Case continues to provide surprises for researchers and the general public as well. Many questions were answered by the speaker.

Market Day

The 27th annual colonial craft fair will be held on Saturday, September 18th (rain date Sunday). Over 60 crafters and demonstrators will present a wide variety of interesting crafts, from bee keeping, quilting, rug braiding, spinning and woodcarving. An Antiques Auction of donated antiques will be held. If you have something to be sold, contact Marty Ginty at (215) 968-6475. The Festival of Foods will feature local Newtown restaurants, kettle corn, and funnel cakes. Open hearth colonial cooking, children's crafts and other activities will be held in back of the Court Inn. Entertainment will be provided by Ann D'Silva, the "Public Nuisance", and the "Sugar Sands Ramblers" Band. A raffle of a \$400 gift certificate toward a weekend at the historic "Duke of Windsor Inn" in Cape May, NJ. Individuals interested in volunteering should contact Mary Callahan at (215) 968-3914.

Open House Tour

The 42nd Annual Christmas Open House Tour will be held on Saturday, December 4, 2004 from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The tour features 10 private homes and public buildings decorated for the holiday season.

- Hanlon House (Washington Ave.)
- Evans House (Court St.)
- Malzone House (State St.)
- Fink House (Court St.)
- Del Greco House (Court St.)
- St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- Newtown Fire House
- Newtown Library Company
- The Stocking Works
- The Court Inn

The Court Inn will feature the Museum Gift Shop, Open Hearth Cooking in the cellar kitchen, Colonial Music on the second floor and Re-enactors of the colonial period. Refreshments of mulled cider and cheese will be served throughout the day. Tickets are \$20.00 and will be sold the day of the tour at the Court Inn and at the Stocking Works. Parking is available at the Stocking Works with bus transportation to various locations. Advance ticket sales at Newtown Hardware House. Rest room facilities are located at the Court Inn and the Newtown Borough Council Chambers. No photos or high-heeled shoes allowed in the houses. For information, call (215) 968-4004.

5th Grade Walking Tour

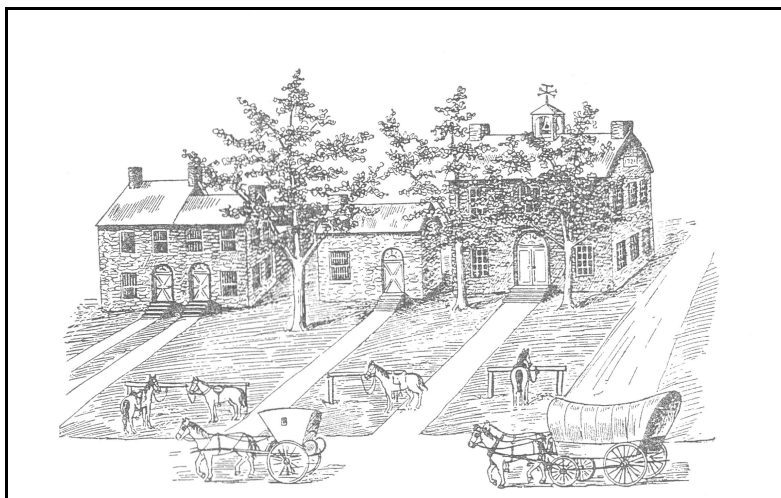
The fifth annual 5th Grade Walking Tour was held on Wednesday, June 2, 2004. Over 290 students participated from three schools: Goodnoe Elementary, Newtown Elementary and Newtown Friends Elementary. The Court Inn and ten other historic sites were visited.

Articles for Sale

With space limitations and multiple copies already in storage, the NHA archives is selling the following:

1. George P. Donehoo, ed., *Pennsylvania: A History* (Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1926), 5 volumes, 4 historical and one biographical. Illustrated. Good condition. \$200.
2. *Bucks County Historical Society, Papers, Vols. 6, 7, and 8.* Fair condition. \$50 each.
3. Doron Green, *History of Bristol, PA* (1911), 369 pp., illustrated. Good condition. 2 copies. \$75.
4. Donna B. Munger, *Pennsylvania Land Records.* 234 pp. Researcher's guide. Very good condition. \$35.
5. William Penn Tercentenary Commission, *Remember William Penn* (1944). Fair condition. \$15.
6. *Life Magazine*, January 10 and 17, 1969. Fair condition. \$1 each.
7. *Bucks County Panorama Magazine*, 8 issues from November 1973-December 1974. Fair condition. \$10 for lot.
8. *Newtown Tricentennial Calendar of Events*, 1983-84. \$3.
9. *Pennsylvania Heritage Magazine*, fall 1992. Good condition. \$1.
10. "William Penn's New Township" (*Newtown*), pp. 52-87, *Colonial Homes*, February 1987. Illustrated. Fair condition. \$2.

Persons interested in any of the above listed items should contact David Callahan with questions and for payment, shipping and availability details.



Newtown: The County Seat

One little-known fact is that Newtown served as the County Seat of Bucks County for almost a century, before it was moved to its present location in Doylestown. March 24, 1724 was an important date in the future development of Newtown as a viable commercial, political and professional center. It was on that day that an enabling Act of Assembly changed the location of the County Seat from Bristol to Newtown, where it would remain until 1813. All County-wide elections were held there until 1786; afterwards other election districts were established. The move of the seat of power to the village may have been the single most important contribution to its growth.

The man who, perhaps, made the greatest single human contribution to the town, Shadrach Walley, died in 1721 in his beloved Newtown. He died intestate, Newtown's largest single land holder, owning at the time 1,544 ½ acres – approximately a quarter of all of Newtown Township. Four years later, in 1725, some of Walley's land would be purchased for the County Seat complex. On February 2, 1725, Trustees purchased five acres for 300 pounds. The Trustees of the time were: Jeremiah Langhorne, William Biles II, Joseph Kirkbride II, Dr. Thomas Watson, and Abraham Chapman. Their plan was to divide the five acre tract into six equal squares, 190 feet by 142 ½ feet. Built in "county complex" Square One facing south, were the court house, the jail and keepers house, and an office building.

The entire tract would soon have 18 lots within its perimeter: the Walley property to the north and east; Penn (Lower) Street to the south; State (Main) Street to the west; Court (Middle-Second) Street as the north-south axis; and Centre (King) and Mercer (Queen) running east-west. The main building was, of course, the two-story stone and hipped-roof court house.

During the period Newtown housed the County Seat, the rural community grew into a prosperous government center, leaving behind its origin as an essentially agricultural village. At the beginning of the 19th century, the town was well established as an active and affluent commercial center. Demand for Newtown's products and services increased. As the 19th century progressed, the community remained a busy commercial and cultural center. After the County Seat was relocated, Newtown was gradually transformed back into the tranquil little town it once was.

* Excerpts from "A Foundation for Progress", as published in *Newtown 1684-1984, A History of Newtown, Pennsylvania as prepared for the Celebration of Its 300th Anniversary*, 1983, p. 10; and *Early Newtown: A Pictorial History of Newtown, Pennsylvania*, 1999, p. 2 & 3.

Recent Acquisitions

We are pleased to announce the following additions to the NHA archives for the period of January – June 2004:

- One Dollar Script Certificate, Phila., Newtown & NY Railroad Co. dated 12/15/1873 – *C. Scott Eves*
- “Bucks County Courts and the Bucks County Bar Association” – *Paul & Mary Kester*
- Topographic Map of PA – NJ, Burlington Quadrangle, 1945 – *Jane Brooks*
- Morell Smith Post #440 Scrapbook – *Wesley Robinson*
- 31 Newtown Items Including: Various WWI, WWII, Korea Military Photos; Various Newtown Photos; Booklets – *Michael & Jo Donovan*
- 156 Newtown Items Including: Postcards; Photos; School District of the Borough of Newtown Papers, Letters, Reports, Tax & Financial Records; Large Victorian Glass Jar; “George School Alumni, 9th Annual Banquet, 1904; Architectural Drawing of Various Newtown Properties; WWII Ration Books of William Stuckert, 1942 – *David & Mary Callahan*
- Minutes of the Meetings of Newtown Friends, 1911-1920, 1921-1925 – *Paul & Mary Kester*
- “The Councilor”, Newtown HS Yearbook, 1948; Forsyth Family Photo, 1931 – *George Forsythe*
- Purple Heart Stamp Matted Keepsake – *John Farruggio*
- 225 Items Including: Diaries of Mr. & Mrs. P.H. Morris, 1930-1959; Photo Albums, WWI Postcards, Savidge’s Shoe Store Photos; Newspaper Clippings; “Sweetland” Program; Savidge, Hogeland, Hampton & Morris Family Photos and Family Death Notices; Savidge Family Correspondence; Calling Cards; Account Books of George Hampton; Shoe Tools; Memorial Plaques; 2 Bibles Godley’s Lady Book, 1865; Peterson’s Magazine, 1869; The Lady Friend, 1867 – *Sarah Jane Dallas*
- 75 Years – Macedonia Baptist Church 1908-1983; 100th Anniversary – Newtown Lodge No. 427 Free & Accepted Masons of PA; Appraisal – Joint Elementary School District, 1964; The Newtown Common in Newtown, Bucks Co., PA 1682-1948; Discharge Certificate of Robert James Powell, 5/8/1921 – *Mr. & Mrs. Charles Schwartz III*
- Auction Advertisement for the Sale of the Village Farm Property – *Ed Swan*
- Collection of Architectural History Books & Magazines – *Patricia Sydney*
- US Air Force Uniform, 2003 – *Craig Houchins*
- WWI Items Belonging to Charles Lauer: Helmet, Gas Mask, Anti-Dimming Stick, Puntees, S-Hook, US Military Funeral Flag, Lantern, Gun Box – *Grace Lauer*
- Deed, Frederick Ellinger to James Ainrights – *Mr. & Mrs. William Hanlon*
- Program for the Dedication of Hicks Marker, Photos of Various Newtown Events – *Newtown Borough Council*
- Newspaper Clippings Scrapbook; Northampton Township Booklet, 1722-2000 – *Mrs. Vincent Luff*
- Public Ledger News, 3/25/1836; Maria Cornell’s Wedding Slippers – *Preston VanArtsdalen*
- Council Rock Taxpayers Association Papers – *Helen Randle*
- Various Old & New Newtown Postcards – *Langhorne Historic Association*
- Newtown Enterprise Newspaper, 9/29/1894 – *Kingdon Swayne*
- The Search for the First Chain Bridge in Bucks Co., PA – *Virginia Geyer*
- Photos of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Chester, PA – *Susan Rose*
- “Book of American Clocks”; “American Pewter”; Measuring Glasses; Newtown Reliance Co. Platter; Cat’s Meow Wooden Replicas: Court Inn & Newtown Fire Assn – *Larry & Cathy Fink*

Upcoming Events

- Summer Fest, *July 18*
- Market Day, *September 18*. 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- General Membership Meeting, *October 18*
- General Membership Meeting, *November 15*
- Open House Tour, *December 4*. 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The Half Moon is published quarterly by the Newtown Historic Association, Inc., P.O. Box 303, Centre Avenue & Court Street, Newtown, PA 18940 USA

 Printed on Recycled Paper.
