



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

Paul Gouza, *President*
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David Walton, *Second Vice President*
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Mary Callahan, *Corresp. Secretary*
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Liz Kelsey
Joanne Nardo
Lorraine Pentz
Dolly Gish – *Hon. Director*
Claire Hennessy – *Hon. Director*
Paul Kester - *Parliamentarian*

Newtown Historic Association

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<http://www.twp.newtown.pa.us/historic/nha.html>

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.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Kerry Arpajian, *Wrightstown, PA*
- Judy Berreth, *Weippe, ID*
- Mark Fulton, *Yardley, PA*
- Sheryl Kaschak, *Newtown, PA*
- Alan and Carolyn Rosenberg, *Newtown, PA*
- Rebecca Woodward, *Newtown, PA*

Corporate Members

- The Brown Agency
- David J. Witchell Salon & Spa
- Dragonfly, Ltd.
- The 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

Colonial Tavern Night

An 18th century colonial Tavern Night will be held on Saturday, March 20th at 7:00 PM at the Court Inn. Ten local Bucks County colonial taverns will be there and will organize a silent auction with over \$1,000 in wares. Tickets are \$50 per person, attendance will be limited. Please join us for this wonderful 18th century event. For more information, contact Patty Lovi at (215) 579-4212 or pattylovi@aol.com.

Inn & About Newtown

A new Newtown Historic Association fundraising event will be held on Saturday, May 1, 2004 from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM. The festivities begin and end at the historic Court Inn with pre-dinner hors d'oeuvres and post-dinner dessert and coffee. Patrons will be able to wine & dine about town in neighborhood homes. Tickets are \$75 per person. Reservations are required on or before April 20th. RSVP to Jeanne Haeckel 215-860-0921 or Maureen Harrison 215-579-8260. Don't miss this exciting new event.

Clean-Up Day

The annual Court Inn Clean-up Day was held on Saturday, March 6th. A dozen volunteers spent the morning restoring some luster to the many historical items and furnishings in the Court Inn.

The Lindbergh Case's Newtown Connections

The May General Membership meeting will be held on Monday, May 17th at 8:00 PM at the Court Inn. Lloyd Gardner, a Research Professor of History at Rutgers University, will discuss the Newtown connection to the famous Lindbergh kidnapping case of the 1930s.

From the night of March 1, 1932 down to the present day, the Lindbergh kidnapping case has exerted a strong pull on the American imagination. Lindbergh was America's greatest hero of the time. He was a symbol of the nation's optimism and faith in its youth during the Great Depression, when it was increasingly hard to hold onto that faith.

On that night of March 1, 1932, the nation felt the tragedy along with the family of Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh. Discovering his child's crib empty, Col. Lindbergh said to his wife, "Anne, they have stolen our baby." Within hours the Lindbergh estate, Highfields, near Hopewell, New Jersey, was a-swarm with police and reporters – and, inevitably, a mob of the curious.

The first reporter on the scene lived in Princeton, an employee of the old New York Sun. He had no idea how to get to the estate, but his wife had attended a tea party there a few days earlier and was able to drive him through the back roads. Valuable clues were trampled, the ladder the kidnapper used was handled by dozens of people, a deluge of mail arrived day after day with messages of sympathy. Psychics promised to

find the answer in the spirit world. The Lindberghs, besieged by all the would-be rescuers, entered into negotiations with underworld go-betweens, and later with an eccentric educator from the Bronx, who fashioned a code name for himself – "Jafsie."

The police seemed stymied. Col. Lindbergh kept a tight rein on anything they did. A great many leads were not followed up. One of these, in particular, had to do with a local lumber and hardware firm in Newtown, Pennsylvania, the A. W. & W. M. Watson Company [or more widely known as the Frost-Watson Lumber Company]. The day after the kidnapping, the New Jersey State Police received a call from Mr. Watson. What he had to say could have changed the course of the investigation. But Watson's startling information was not used by the police, and he was not even questioned for more than a year. There were other connections as well, including the possible discovery of a ransom bill in one of the stores on State Street.

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. Join us for a fascinating lecture on this historic, nationwide event that has many local connections.

Lloyd Gardner is a Research Professor of History at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ, where he has taught since 1963. He is the author of more than a dozen books on American foreign policy. His new book, "*The Case That Never Dies: The Lindbergh Kidnapping*," is being published by Rutgers University Press, and will be available in June.

Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

The Annual Meeting and election of officers will be held on Monday, April 19th at 8:00 PM at the Court Inn. After the meeting, a tour of the Court Inn will be conducted by David Callahan showing the various phases of restoration that has taken place over the years.

Garden Grant

Unfortunately, the NHA was not selected for the Garden Grant this year. There were over 100 applicants and the competition was very strong. Work has already begun to learn about areas where we can improve for the submission of next year's application.

Upcoming Events

- General Membership Meeting, *March 15 - Canceled*
- Tavern Night, *March 20.*
- Annual Meeting and Election of Officers, *April 19.*
- Inn & About Newtown, *May 1 (May Day).*
- General Membership Meeting, *May 17 (Lindbergh Case Newtown Connection)*
- 5th Grade Historic Walking Tour, *June 2.*
- Annual Picnic, *June 19.*
- Garden Party, *August.*
- Market Day, *September 18.*
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Open House Tour, *December 4.*
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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