



The Half Moon

- The Newsletter of the Newtown Historic Association -

Welcome

The Newtown Historic Association 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 suggestions for future articles.

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Newtown Historic Association

P.O. Box 303
Centre Avenue & Court Street
Newtown, PA 18940 USA
Phone: (215) 968-4004
www.newtownhistoric.org

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held on April 20th at the Half Moon (Court) Inn. All members are invited. The Annual Business Meeting will include reports from all standing committee chairmen.

Following the Annual Business Meeting, a presentation entitled, “*The History of Horse Racing in Newtown*” will be given by Brian Rounsavill. Although not much has been written on this topic, this brief lecture will cover the history of several local race tracks, as well as a showing of some selected images from the NHA Archives.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Christopher & Michele Amazeen, *Newtown, PA*
- Daniel & Paula Everitt, *Newtown, PA*
- Scott Harp, *Newtown, PA*
- JoAnn Maguire, *Churchville, PA*
- Margaret Martinson, *Washington Crossing, PA*
- William & Kathleen McDermott, *Newtown, PA*
- Dennis & Jill O'Brien, *Newtown, PA*
- Nancy Terry, *Newtown, PA* (*Life Member*)
- Cathy Treverio, *Newtown, PA* (*Upgraded to Life Member*)

Annual Dues

The annual dues notices have been mailed to all active members. 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. We are always looking for new members interested in joining to celebrate Newtown's history and heritage.

Spring Cocktail Party

Invitations have been mailed for the annual spring cocktail party that will be held on April 18th from 5-8 PM at the Half-Moon (Court) Inn. Take this opportunity to catch up with acquaintances, old and new. Tickets are \$35 per person. Join us for this wonderful event. For more information, contact Mary Callahan at (215) 968-3914 or dcnhh@comast.net.

Clean-Up Day

The annual Half-Moon Inn Clean-up Day was held on Saturday, March 28th. About 15 volunteers came out to help lend a hand and restore some luster to the many historical items and furnishings in the Half-Moon Inn. We are very appreciative of their efforts!



Postcard showing the Hamilton Market (Ont., Canada), 1913. An example of a traditional farmer's market.

Market Days: How They Went to Market

A friend, who is more than halfway through the eighties, recently related to us some incidents of the way in which people living within reach of Philadelphia went to market toward the latter part of the last century [1800s] and the early years of the present [1900s]. The attendance was from a distance of twenty-five or thirty miles from the city, including about the same territory which now furnishes fresh butter and eggs to town customers. The vehicles generally used were "light carts," consisting of a rather high body, made of thin walnut or poplar boards, mounted on two wheels, and connected with the horse by substantial wooden shafts. Loaded with butter, eggs, chickens, oats for the horse, and perhaps two or three calves, these primitive conveyances jogged along townward at the rate of about three miles an hour, requiring from eight to ten hours to make the journey from the interior of Chester or Bucks [counties] to the city pavements.

Sometimes the young men of a neighborhood would gather in companies to make the important trip. In those days, it was the custom of the town butchers to send out boys on horseback to meet the carts and buy the calves before they reached the city. The boys or runners would go out, sometimes ten or twelve miles,

and on meeting the market carts, they would jump in and examine the calves tied in the back part, make an offer for them, and count out the money in halves, quarters and "levies" [12 ½ cents] into the hands of the sellers. They would count out so much for a calf as their best offer. If the bid was not high enough, they would take back the money and leave the cart in an angry way, but they scarcely ever failed to come back in a few minutes with a better offer. When they made a deal, they would pay for the calves and put a private mark on the cart as proof of transaction. Then, all the farmer had to do was to deliver the calves at the place agreed upon.

In many cases, the women of the farmer's family did the marketing, leaving the men at home to do the work of the season. The women's equipment consisted of a market saddle – generally a very common affair – on which was placed a bag stuffed at each end with hay. The use of this was to sustain the butter-pails fastened on each side of the rider, the hay preventing the animal heat of the horse from softening the butter. There was also a market wallet, made with pouches or pockets on each side, laid across the horse. In one end of this were packed dressed chickens, and often a supply of bread and butter for the market

woman's personal consumption. The other end held oats for the refreshment of the faithful horse. Umbrellas were then little known, and were at any rate despised as a frivolous luxury by our hardy grandmothers. Each market-woman had an oil cloth cover for her bonnet, with a cape covering her neck and shoulders, and a thick camlet cloak enveloped the lower part of her person. The women also had riding-aprons, which were tied around the waist and protected the feet from exposure when on horseback. Thus equipped, the women of a neighborhood would gather at some convenient crossroads, and half a dozen or more would traverse together the weary way to Philadelphia. Frequently, there was also a man or two in the company, and as the start was generally made near sunset, such protection was not unacceptable. Many of the market-women, though long since grown old and gone from among us, were young and lively, and the long road to the city was often enlivened by song and story. Young people then were much like those of present day, and when they got together on such an expedition, there was sure to be some fun. It would be one or two o'clock in the morning when the market tavern on Market or Second

Street would be reached. The marketing would be unpacked and placed on the stall, the horses all turned into a stable together with their saddles on, and their fair riders would curl up in their cloaks and shawls on the market stalls until customers came at daybreak. When their loads were sold out, they would remount their horses and start homeward, mostly completing the trip before nightfall. Such trips were inexpensive, as they had need to be when the whole proceeds would foot up but a few dollars. In this humble way, less than a century ago, our grandfathers and grandmothers won a hard but wholesome living. They did not get rich fast, but they were contented and happy, which is quite as important. The grandparents of many a man who now holds his head up high once attended Philadelphia market on horseback or in a primitive light-cart.

[This narrative was found in a scrapbook in the Newtown Historic Association. Although the article is dated Saturday, February 19, 1876, the events related, took place around the turn of the century. Unfortunately, Josiah Betts Smith, compiler of the scrapbook, did not include the source.]



Photo of the market wagon owned by Ida Longshore of Newtown, PA. Ida Longshore had a farm on Washington Crossing Road, just North of Goodnoe's corner. This wagon was made by the Randall Carriage Factory in Newtown circa 1900. Ida used this wagon to haul produce to the farmer's market in Philadelphia. The wagon was pulled by two horses and it stands 9' high and is 12' long. The wagon is in the collection of the Newtown Historic Association.

March Meeting

The March meeting of the Newtown Historic Association was held on Monday, March 16th at 8:00 PM at American Legion Post 440, 41 Linden Avenue, Newtown, PA. American Legion and NHA members Michael Donovan and Jon Guy worked together to tell “*The Story of Morell Smith*” to over 75 attendees.

Although his name appears on some monuments and our local American Legion post bears his name, who really was Morell Smith, and why is his story still relevant eighty years after his death? According to the presenters, “*The Story of Morell Smith*” would make a fascinating movie – there’s a handsome and well-educated young man, a budding love interest, doses of patriotic idealism and heroism under fire, a forensic detective story, and even a haunting tragedy in the end.

The presentation covered the life, untimely death, and final return of a true Newtown hero, placed in a context of what was happening in the world back in 1918. It was a very interesting evening for all who were able to attend.

Historic Walking Tour

On June 19th, we welcome you to join us for an historic walking tour featuring the Half-Moon Inn, Court Street and the surrounding area. The tour will be led by Jeff Marshall, Vice President of Resource Protection at the Heritage Conservancy. Join us for an informative stroll through the historic streets of Newtown at 6:30 PM on Friday, June 19th at the Half-Moon Inn. The public is invited and refreshments will be served. Free admission.

Mary Kester (1928 - 2009)

Mary Kester, former volunteer librarian for the Newtown Historic Association, passed away on February 16th. She is survived by her husband of 57 years, H. Paul Kester, retired court administrator of Bucks County and former Newtown Historic Association Parliamentarian.

Some New Acquisitions

- “Joseph S. Walton, 1855-1912” Book – *David & Mary Callahan*
- 1989 American Legion Baseball Team Photo – *Mike Donovan*
- 2008 McCain-Palin Campaign Banner – *Paul & Laurie Gouza*
- Elizabeth Worstall Sampler, 1793 – *Mrs. William Lyon*
- 1909 Bell Telephone Co. of Penna. Newtown Directory – *William & Barbara Welch*
- Lownes Motor Company Various Items – *Mrs. Joseph Quick*
- “Picturesque Colonial Newtown, ‘63” – *Charles & Linda Trowbridge*
- “Loving Legacy, The Life of Howard Tomlinson” & Metal Souvenir Comb from E.J. Grace Tobacconist, Newtown, PA – *Richard Tomlinson*
- Wooden Toys (Walking Block/Jacob’s Ladder) Made by Raymond Cornell – *Carroll Howes*
- Democracy Against the Unnatural Union, Political Poster from the Berks County Governor’s Race Between Hiester and Findlay, 1817 – *Claire Hennessy*
- Two Silk Bonnets – *Patricia Carleton*
- Black & White Photo of James E. Foote – *Thomas Foote*
- Various Items from the Savidge Brothers Store – *Sarajane Dallas*
- Passenger Service Deficit, Technical Supplement, Reading Company, April 1964 – *Frank Weer*
- 15 Color Photos of Newtown Scenes – *Jennifer Gates*
- Various Books, Antique, Victorian and Early American Paper Dolls from 1800s – *Mary Jane Crumlish*

Corporate Members

We are proud to highlight our corporate members:

- Anthony Petsis & Associates, Inc.
- Carriage House Collection
- David J. Witchell Salon & Spa
- DeFrehn Corporation
- First National Bank of Newtown
- Gemmi Construction, Inc.
- Harold Beck & Sons, Inc.
- Johnson, Kendall & Johnson, Inc.
- Newtown Hardware House
- Newtown-Jamison Physical Therapy
- Peruzzi Automotive Group
- ReMax Properties, Ltd.
- Stockburger Chevrolet & Chrysler
- Stuckert and Yates
- The Law Office of Paul R. Beckert, Jr.
- Thomas-Guy Design, Ltd.
- Waitkus Design Landscape Architects
- Wright Realty Solutions LLC

Upcoming Events

- **Cocktail Party**, April 18. 5:00 p.m. @ the Half-Moon Inn
- **Annual Meeting**, April 20. 8:00 p.m. @ the Half-Moon Inn
- **Raid at the Bird in Hand Reenactment**, May 30. 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- **5th Grade Historic Walking Tour**, June 3. 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Historic Walking Tour**, June 19. 6:30 p.m. @ the Half-Moon Inn
- **Market Day**, September 19.
- **General Membership Meeting**, “Bucks County Farmhouses,” October 19. 8:00 p.m. @ the Half-Moon Inn
- **General Membership Meeting**, November 16. 8:00 p.m. @ the Half-Moon Inn
- **Open House Tour**, December 5.

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