

Newtown Historic Association

NEWSLETTER

Spring 1999 Issue

President: David Callahan

Editors: Lorraine Pentz & Helen Randle

Coordinator: Ann Balderston

CALENDAR

Saturday April 10 5:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.	Cocktail Party-Court Inn-\$15.00 per person. Guests invited. Call Lorraine Pentz 968-4357 if you would like to help
Monday April 19 8:00p.m.	Annual Membership Meeting- Reports from Standing Comm- itees to be presented
April ? (maybe end of April)	Painting Day - Garage
Sunday May 16 2:00p.m.	Architectural Walking Tour from Court Inn

COCKTAIL PARTY

Don't forget the Cocktail Party on Saturday, April 10th from 5:00 to 8:00pm at the Court Inn. Cost is \$15.00 per person, which will include drinks and hors d'oeuvres. A special treat will be fried oysters provided by Lee and Skip Gittens. If you haven't joined us in the past, please do so. It's a lovely evening in the delightful setting of the Court Inn in the company of good friends.

INTERNSHIP AT COURT INN

Lyle Rosenberg of the Bucks County Community College, in connection with his Historica I Preservation class, is providing us with two students to work on a project at the Court Inn. Lisa Loeffler, an intern, and Evelyn Bonner, who is doing an independent study, will research and identify all the furniture and accessories on the first floor. A written description together with a diagram will be placed in each room to supplant the lists which are now outdated or missing. This will be helpful for Sunday hosts/hostesses and for visitors to the Inn.

GRANTS

The Newtown Historic Association has been given a \$10,000 grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development to help with the replacement of the roof and chimney on the Thornton-Hicks at 107 Court Street which was purchased by the association last year. Our State Representative Dave Stiel was most helpful in assisting us with the application process.

CHORES

ACCOMPLISHED-CLEAN UP DAY

A third annual clean up day took place on February 21st at the Court Inn and several of our members turned out to wash windows, polish brass and furniture, and clean the kitchen and fireplaces. These annual work sessions have resulted in the good maintenance of the Court Inn. We owe a debt of gratitude to the following members: Mary and Dave Callahan, Dolly Gish, Marion Dalhman, Ann Linkenheimer, Sue and Marty Sutton, Paul Gouza, Nancy Freudenthal, Ann Balderston, Gail and Ted Blandy, Ann and Larry Auerweck, and Lorraine Pentz.

COMING UP-PAINTING-GARAGE

The garage on the Thorton/Hicks property adjacent to the Court Inn is in need of painting. The work will be undertaken sometime in April (date not selected at the time of printing) and we will be looking for volunteers. If you are interested, check with Dave Callahan at 968-3914 for a specific date. Our past painting projects have been fun and the members' efforts have helped to maintain the Court Inn property.

ARRAH LEE GAUL

Does the name "Arrah Lee Gaul" ring a bell with you? It did with me when I read an article in the March 6 issue of the Philadelphia Inquirer about the March catalog sale of the Alderfer Auction Co. The catalog sales are those where auctioneers offer their high-quality items, usually confining them to one or few categories. This one was of paintings, country furniture, art pottery and silver. Local artists' works included those of Walter Baum, John Folinsbee and Harry Leith Ross, names familiar to us. Paintings by members of "The Philadelphia Ten" were featured. The "Ten" included Arrah Lee Gaul, a name which was familiar to me and one which is not easily forgotten.

It was in August of 1984 that the Newtown Historic Association was invited to make application to the Executor of the Estate of Arrah Lee Gaul for award of the bequest of a "mahogany block front desk (1740)" in her Will to "a museum to be selected by my executor, in his sole discretion." This was a challenge. There would probably be many applicants. But Thomas Mayer, then our President, and David Callahan believed it well worth a try. So the application was submitted by Tom and the Association invited to attend a group interview. David represented the association and later described his introduction to the session. Most of the well-established museums or house museums were represented by their lawyers, who made formal speeches. David spoke, in simple language and from his heart, conveying his enthusiasm for our relatively young facility and how we could provide a suitable home for the desk.

The NHA was awarded the desk in February, 1985. In a letter announcing the award, the lawyer representing the estate wrote to Thomas Mayer "Your letter of August, 1984 and the subsequent presentation in Court by Mr. David Callahan were excellent and obviously persuaded the Judge in reaching his decision." The desk now resides in the Innkeeper's Room of the Court Inn. I was among those members who were unaware that the donor was a prominent Philadelphia artist.

Helen F. Randle

P.S. While in 3D making a copy of this material, I ran into Maryalice Hagan, a NHA member, who was doing research on another artist. We were exchanging information and she informed me that Patricia Sydney, another Newtownian, has just published a book with Page Talbott on "The Philadelphia Ten", including Arrah Lee Gaul.



“THE KINGDOMS OF EDWARD HICKS”

Elizabeth Mayer was winding up her “Tuesday at the Court Inn” on February 6th. The rest of the faithful volunteers who work in the Barnsley Library had left for the day, when she heard someone enter the Inn on the floor below with a resolute step. To her surprise it was David Callahan, our NHA President, who had just returned home with his wife Mary from a trip to Williamsburg, Virginia to attend the Preview and Opening of “The Kingdoms of Edward Hicks” exhibition at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Center. David’s enthusiasm for this experience was evident. Elizabeth reports that she, who has known and worked with David for many years, had never seen him so enthused! The affair had been a great success and they had been a part of it!

The occasion was a tribute to Edward Hicks, considered to be one of the, if not the foremost America primitive painters. Hicks lived in Newtown for a large party of his life, where he painted and preached in the Quaker faith.

In 1986, the Association acquired a tavern sign painted by Hicks which is displayed in the Hicks Room of the Court Inn. Other items owned by the NHA include a mortar and pestle, a painted tin box, a miniature blanket chest and a decorated rocking chair formerly belonging to Edward Hicks, which have been lent to the Folk Art Center for this exhibit, which will travel to three other museums after its display in Williamsburg.

The exhibit was arranged by Carolyn Weekley, Colonial Williamsburg Director of Museums, who, as David put it “was the driving force behind the exhibit, who wrote a wonderful book about the life of Edward Hicks entitled “The Kingdoms of Edward Hicks” and who was one of the speakers at the lecture program on Saturday afternoon. Wendell Garrett, former editor of ANTIQUES magazine and now Senior Vice President of Americana at Sotheby’s, also spoke.

As representatives of one of the donors, the Callahans were honored by an invitation from Mr. Robert Wilburn, President of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, and Mrs. Wilburn, to a reception and dinner at the Williamsburg Inn on Saturday evening. Reports David, “There were 30 Peaceable Kingdom paintings on display and a number of other paintings by Edward Hicks. It was really interesting to see the differences in his paintings during his lifetime. They reflected the changes and dissensions that were occurring in Quakerism.”

Our President reminds us that this exhibit will be at the Philadelphia Museum of Art from October 10, 1999 thru January 2, 2000 and encourages all of us to attend when it comes to Philadelphia.

Helen F. Randle

THE YEAR OF EDWARD HICKS

In this 150th anniversary of the death of Edward Hicks, plans are being made to commemorate the event. Jane Crumlish is heading up a committee formed by the Newtown Historic Association, The Newtown Library and Newtown Borough. Members include Phil Hagan, Glenn Haines, Dave Callahan, and Paul Gouza. Places where Hicks lived and is associated with will be featured on a walking tour. There will be a bus trip to the current Williamsburg exhibit when it comes to Philadelphia in early October. Packets containing information on the life of Hicks will be supplied to elementary school students. Anyone wishing to assist in the planning of these programs should call Jane Crumlish at 968-5448.

COPY OF HICKS PAINTING

The Newtown Historic Association has been given a digitized copy of the Edward Hicks painting "The Twining Farm" by Dr. Tom Lincoln of California, who is a descendant of Edward Hicks/Hutchinson family. Dr. Lincoln owned the painting prior to selling it at a Christies's auction for over \$1,200,000. Dr. Lincoln has also offered to donate to the NHA eight letters written by Beulah Twining. He has asked us to do some research on an inventory of furnishings from the Hicks/Hutchinson family as he is in possession of a settee which has come down in the family.

NEWTOWN ARCHITECTURAL WALKING TOUR

Our walking tours have become quite popular and informative to both newcomers to the area and those of us considered to be old-timers. Jeff Marshall of the Heritage Conservancy will once again lead the tour on Sunday, May 16 leaving the Court Inn at 2:00p.m. Refreshments will be served at an Open House at the Inn following the tour.

PICTURES IN ADVANCE OF BUCKS COUNTY"

The Newtown Historic Association has a very large collection of old photographs we would like to share with the community. The Advance of Bucks County will feature a bi-weekly series of photographs which were reviewed and chosen by Brian Rounsavill and Paul Gouza. They will also put together a presentation book of the pictures, which will be available for purchase. The book will be on view at Market Day in September.
