



# 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.

## Officers

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Jeff Marshall, *Second Vice President*  
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Mary Callahan, *Corresp. Secretary*  
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## Newtown Historic Association

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Centre Avenue & Court Street  
Newtown, PA 18940 USA  
Phone: (215) 968-4004  
[www.newtownhistoric.org](http://www.newtownhistoric.org)

## Annual Dues Reminder

Annual dues notices were mailed to all members. Send information on potential new members to Mary Callahan at [dcnhh@comcast.net](mailto:dcnhh@comcast.net).

## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held on April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Court Inn. All members were invited. President Callahan updated those in attendance on the status of the association, reports were given by the various committees, and the new slate of officers was elected (*see column at left*). The meeting concluded with a PowerPoint presentation by Brian Rounsavill consisting of selected photos from the forthcoming publication, "*Newtown: Past & Present*". Refreshments were also served.

## New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Steve & Lisa Freeman, *Newtown*
- Sheila Grossman, *Philadelphia*
- Robert & Gayle Miller, *Newtown*
- Roy & Gretchen Peters, *Washington Crossing*

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Walking Tour

The 7<sup>th</sup> annual 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Walking Tour will be held on June 7<sup>th</sup>. Over 400 students will participate from the three local area schools: Goodnoe Elementary, Newtown Elementary and Newtown Friends Elementary. The Court Inn and ten other historic sites will be visited on the tour. For more information, contact Skip Gittens at (215) 968-8783.

## Annual Picnic

The annual picnic will be held on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at the Court Inn. The picnic will again be an informal affair, with ample servings of hot dogs, hamburgers, soft drinks and wine. Patrons are asked to bring their favorite salads and desserts. The annual picnic is a good way for people to socialize and meet the new members and renew old friendships. For more information, contact Jeanne Haeckel at (215) 860-0921.

## Spring Cocktail Party

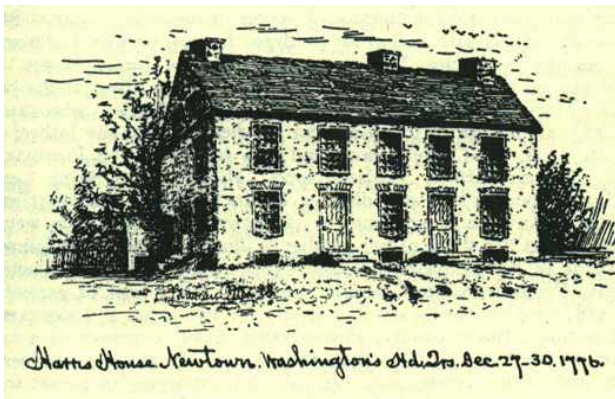
The NHA hosted a spring Victorian themed cocktail party on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Court Inn (Half Moon Inn) was decorated with pictures of the Victorian era done by Rosemary Tottoroto, and there were beautiful Victorian dresses displayed by Sara Jane Dallas and Gretchen Peters. Lorraine Pentz and Jeanette Rogers made arrangements of fresh spring flowers for all the tables and mantles. Glen Bannon and Caroline Bennett were our bartender and barmaid, serving drinks to the guests. Members brought their favorite appetizers and about 60 people attended. The committee of Maria & Brian Rounsavill, Laurie & Paul Gouza, Mary Callahan & David Callahan and David Walton would like to thank everyone for a most enjoyable evening.

## George Washington Did More Than Just Sleep Here

- Compiled by Brian Rounsavill -

Visit almost any town and it is likely that you will find a sign proclaiming, "George Washington Slept Here." As prolific as General Washington was, it is unlikely that all these claims can be conclusively documented. In contrast, it is widely known that Washington did much more than just sleep here. In 1776, General Washington commanded America's Continental Army from the Widow Harris' House in Newtown.

Due to its central location and accessibility as a transportation center on the route from the Delaware River to Philadelphia, Newtown was selected as a supply depot for the Continental Army during the various Revolutionary War campaigns in New Jersey. General Washington made his headquarters in Newtown from December 24<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup>, 1776.



Washington's Headquarters in Newtown was established in a brownstone house, located at the intersection of Swamp Road and Sycamore Street. This home was built by Benjamin Twining some time prior to 1757, who sold the property to John Harris. General Washington was the guest of John Harris' widow, Mrs. Hannah Harris. Sycamore Street, which becomes the road to Washington's Crossing and Taylorsville, was the focal point for the Continental Army's movements.

Washington marched his army from this location in Newtown on Christmas Eve, 1776, and crossed over the Delaware to defeat the British at Battle of Trenton. From his headquarters in this house, Washington wrote his two famous letters to Congress on December 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> giving the official report to Congress on his victory at the Battle of Trenton.

After the battle, over 1,000 Hessian soldiers were taken to Newtown. The officers were quartered at inns and private homes. The soldiers were held in the Presbyterian Meetinghouse and the Jail, before they were later transferred to Philadelphia.



The original house was torn down in 1863, and completely rebuilt on the old foundation, of similar lines, out of the stone from the original Headquarters House. When the brownstone house shown in the photograph above was hastily demolished by developers in 1962 (the second and final time the house was razed), it inspired the local residents to form the Newtown Historic Association.

As cruel an example of "progress" as one can find, a Lukoil station now stands where Washington once made his headquarters – the place where the free nation was born. All too often, symbols of our past are carelessly eroded by the sands of time, leaving little behind for future generations.

It is very easy to take for granted the many important historical sites that surround us. Some we pass by each day on our way to work, others we only notice on a casual Sunday drive. The next time you see a historical marker or site, stop and take a moment to read and learn about the history of this area. There are many stories that we can preserve and pass along to the next generation. As some, like Washington's Headquarters, may not be here tomorrow.

*[This article was compiled exclusively from excerpts from "When Washington was in Newtown" by Edward R. Barnsley, 1939.]*

## Historic Walking Tour

The Historic Walking Tour was held on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Jeff Marshall led a group of about 75 people through the streets of Newtown pointing out various houses and their interesting architectural features. The tour was a delightful and informative evening for all those who attended.

## Welcome Day

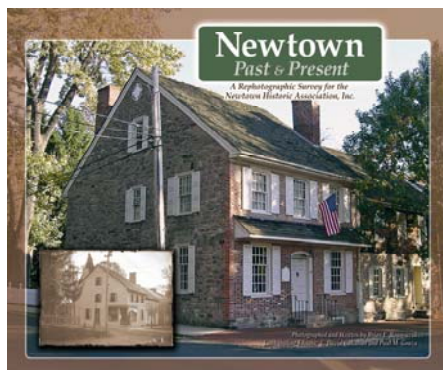
The Newtown Historic Association sponsored a booth a Welcome Day on May 14<sup>th</sup>. A raffle was held for a PlayStation 2, donated by Peruzzi Auto Group, which was won by Robbie Ward of Newtown.

## Colonial Tavern Night

The fourth annual Tavern Night was held on March 4th at the Court Inn. This year's committee through hard work and imagination added more colonial cheer to the event. About 90 people attended this 18th Century night, with more guests dressing in period costume than in the past. The Tavern Night Committee would like to thank the NHA membership for all their support in making this evening such a special event, and for allowing us to bring back to our guess the early days of this Country through song, dance, games, food and dress.

## Volunteers Needed

During the summer months, the Court Inn is open on Sunday afternoons from 2 – 4 pm for visitors. We need members to staff the Inn during these times. If you would like to volunteer for a Sunday shift – please call Joanne Nardo at (215) 968-9052 and she will arrange the schedule for you. It is a nice way to meet people and show them what a wonderful facility we have and also tell them a little about Newtown. No experience needed!



## Book Signings Planned

The NHA's forthcoming book, "Newtown: Past & Present" is a unique photographic and historical journal comprised of eighty photographic pairs that chronicle over a century of progress and change in Newtown, Pennsylvania. The goal was to replicate the original views by attempting to locate the "tripod holes" of the earlier Newtown photographers who first collected these views in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Two book signings are planned to launch the book to the public. The first signing will be held on Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at the Stocking Works from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The photographer and editors will be available to sign copies. Copies will be available for sale at the event.

The second book signing will be coordinated with the Newtown Library Company on Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Newtown Library from 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM. A presentation will be shown in addition to having copies available for sale and personal signing.

The books are \$39.99, plus 6% sales tax and \$5.00 shipping and handling (optional). The anticipated publication date is late August 2006. All proceeds benefit the Newtown Historic Association, Inc. More information will be forthcoming.

## Market Day is Coming

The 30<sup>th</sup> annual colonial craft fair will be held on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> (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. There will also be music, hayrides, children's crafts and our "Festival of Foods" featuring Newtown area restaurants. We will have a surprise feature this year but it is too early to publicize it but we are sure everyone will like it. This is one of our two main fund-raisers for the NHA and we always need volunteers to help. If you would be interested in working a shift or help in organizing the day please contact one of the committee members – Mary or David Callahan 215-968-3914, Laurie Gouza 215-579-0298 or Jeanne Haeckel 215-860-0921 – we can always use more help

## October Meeting

The October meeting of the Newtown Historic Association will be held on Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM at the Court Inn. "The History, Architecture and Dating of Bucks County Barns" will be presented by Jeffrey L Marshall, Vice President of Resource Protection for the Heritage Conservancy. The photographic presentation will highlight the history of the different types and styles of Bucks County barns, how to identify typical features found in a Bucks County barn, and how to determine the age of barns. The public is invited, refreshments will be served.

## Open House Tour

The 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Open House Tour will be held on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. A partial list of featured private homes and public buildings include:

- Sturgis House (23 S. Chancellor St.)
- Linkenheimer House (101 South Chancellor St.)
- Balderston House (232 South Chancellor St.)
- Ettinger/Bauman House (309 Washington Ave.)
- Hibbs House (406 South State St.)
- St. Luke's Episcopal Church (100 East Washington Ave.)
- Newtown Fire Association (20 Liberty St.)
- Newtown Library Company (114 East Centre Ave.)
- Newtown Borough Hall (21 North State St.)
- The Stocking Works (301 S. State St.)
- The Court Inn (Court & Centre)

The Court Inn will feature open hearth cooking, colonial music 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. 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.

## Mugs for Sale

A limited number of "Half Moon Inn" and "Newtown, PA" ceramic mugs are for sale at the Court Inn for only \$15.00, plus tax. Stop by today and pick one up!

## Help Preserve the Boone Garden

The Boone Garden, located across the street from the Court Inn, will be undergoing a transformation this summer at the hands of local Boy Scout, Austin Ludwig. This 2,100 square foot parcel was donated to the Newtown Historic Association from the late Grace R. "Missy" Boone in 1972 for the enjoyment of the community. The Eagle Scout project includes refurbishing the wrought iron fence, removing a stump and erecting a wooden privacy fence, modeled after the fence at Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia, between the restaurant property (the Grotto) and the garden. The project will be taking place this summer, with the goal of completing it by Market Day. The NHA is seeking contributions from members interested in supporting this project. A donation form has been enclosed with this newsletter.

## Corporate Members

We are proud to highlight our corporate members:

- Anthony Petsis & Associates
- David J. Witchell Salon & Spa
- Dragonfly, Ltd.
- First National Bank of Newtown
- Johnson, Kendall & Johnson
- Mom's Bake at Home Pizza
- Newtown Hardware House
- Newtown-Jamison Physical Therapy
- Newtown Roofing Company
- One Ten South Salon
- Peruzzi Automotive Group
- ReMax Properties, Ltd.
- St. Mary Medical Center
- Stuckert & Yates
- The Law Office of Paul Beckert
- The Temperance House
- The Township House
- Thomas-Guy Design, Ltd.
- Wells Fargo Home Mortgage
- YellowHouse Antiques

## Some New Accessions

- *All Ahead Full* – William Craighead
- William Campbell's Coast Guard Items – *Jeanne Detmer*
- Meadow Run Development Information – *Richard Tomlinson*
- Photos of Scott Gray Meat Market & Civil War Vets – *Betty Duckett*
- 18 Photos of the Eves, Murfit, Hogeland, Gilkson and Henry Families – *Betsy Eves Gaier*
- *The Newtown Railroad* Reel, Vol. III 1865-1873; Vol. V 1874-1878; Vol. VI 1878-1887; Vol. VII 1887-1893 – *Richard Mansley*
- Edith Berry Prints – *Harry Berry*
- Beans Family Photos & Information – *Linda Musgrave*
- Various Items Related to Chancellor Street School – *Charyl Kerns Hill*
- Civil War Items of William Henry Wollery – *Theresa Johnson Soyka*
- Large Portraits of Henry and Amanda Pownall – *Renee Noel*
- Photos of Quentin Carver Gas Station – *George Forsyth*
- Horace H. Cornell, Pharmacist, Medicine Bottle – *John Malzone*
- Watson Lumber Co. Mill Work Orders, 1918-1922 – *Donald Plump*
- 1930 Federal Census of Newtown – *George Moser*
- Items Related to the First National Bank of Newtown – *John Parry*
- Items Related to Newtown's 275<sup>th</sup> & 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – *Sidney Yates*

## Upcoming Events

- **Market Day**, September 16. 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- **General Membership Meeting**, October 16
- **General Membership Meeting**, November 20
- **Open House Tour**, December 2. 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

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