



NEWTOWN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. BOX 303 - CENTRE AVENUE & COURT STREET - NEWTOWN, PA 18940

# NEWSLETTER

Summer, 1993 Issue

President - C. David Callahan  
Editor - Helen F. Randle

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CALENDAR

- September 7 - 7:30 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting (Note: Tuesday)
- September 18 - 10:00 a.m. Market Day (See below)  
to 4:00 p.m.
- September 20 - 8:00 p.m. Membership Meeting - Speaker, Henrik Booream, V.,  
Professor of History, BCCC, on "Early Lives of 19th  
Century Presidents"
- October 4 - 7:30 p.m. Executive Meeting
- October 18 - 8:00 p.m. Membership Meeting - Speaker, Robert Moore, Exec.  
Director, B.C. Planning Commission, on "Whatever  
Happened to Bucks County Villages?"

Also, keep in mind that the Annual Christmas Open House Tour will be held on Saturday, December 4.

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MARKET DAY - September 18. Rain date September 19. As of the present date, there are two job openings: a volunteer to prepare and organize the sale of lemon sticks; and a volunteer to be in charge of ticket sales for the hay rides. The latter includes seeing that the ticket booth is manned throughout the day. Please call Mary Rounsavill at 968-3914 if you are willing to take on either of these assignments.

The Bucks County Historical Society has requested that we include in our Newsletter announcement of their new exhibit entitled "Paradise Lost or Found, 1900 - Future", which includes artifacts, photographs and video and oral histories. The exhibit opens on September 11, at Mercer Museum, Doylestown. For further information call 345-0210.

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Court Inn Library. Frances Cronin, our volunteer librarian, has issued an SOS for assistance in clipping and/or filing in the Library of the Court Inn. Due to the installation of climate control this summer, access to the Library has been cut off and the usual heavy workload has been greatly augmented by the backlog. If interested in volunteering these much-needed services, please call Frances at 968-2110. The Library is open from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.

Gifts to the Library: Newtown New Century Club/genealogical information - Mrs. Charles Ermentrout; and material on the Grand Consolidated Vigilant Society of N.J. and PA - Mr. & Mrs. Ogborn Smith.

## CLIMATE CONTROL

The Climate Control Committee, consisting of David Callahan, Rodger Taylor, Roberta Taylor, Thomas Mayer and Glenn Hains, Chairman, recommended to the Newtown Historic Association at its Annual Meeting on April 19, 1993 the purchase of climate control equipment for the Court Inn. They had been researching this subject for a number of months. The priority for climate control was deemed to be on the second floor, where the archives and the Hicks room are located. Climate control for the first floor may be considered later.

The recommended equipment will eliminate fluctuations between temperature extremes and humidity levels. It will also filter out some dust and other air-borne contaminants. In addition, ultraviolet plexiglass screens for the windows were recommended.

The esthetics of putting modern facilities into a historic building were considered, and it was decided that the climate control equipment be located in the attic, with air vents covered by wooden louvers at each end of the building.

The cost of this equipment, being purchased from O'Reilly & Associates, Inc., is \$31,300. This figure does not include the services of a carpenter and an electrician, at an estimated additional cost of \$2,500. The Treasurer assured the membership that the funds needed to purchase and install this equipment are available. The cost of operation is estimated to be \$2,000 per year.

The membership at the Annual Meeting approved this purchase. The work is underway. It is anticipated that the equipment will be in place before the end of the summer.

Reported by Glenn Hains

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## THE BARNSLEY/BARTELS COLLECTION

Cindy Stephenson, Board member and Accessions Chair, has been busy acknowledging and cataloging the numerous artifacts donated to the Association by Ann and Bob Bartels in January. Ann is the daughter of the late "Ned" Barnsley, Newtown's unofficial historian, and there are a number of Newtown-oriented items, as well as antiques and costumes, in the collection, which includes, but is not limited to:

Mementoes of the Newtown Fire Association, the Agricultural Societies of Bucks County and the Grand Consolidated Vigilant Society of New Jersey and Pennsylvania; and an 1882 Bucks County cup and saucer;

Antique spinning wheel, foot warmer, pierced lantern, broiler, 15" pewter charger, Revolutionary War wooden canteen, etc.;

Costumes, including: military uniform, Victorian lace cape, black velvet coat with cape, lace and cotton dress, vests, knickers, hats, bonnets and ostrich feathers.

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Other Donations: Costumes suitable for Open House Day were donated by Mrs. Florence Briggs and Mrs. Helen Randle of Newtown, and by Mrs. Harold Fitzgerald and Richard Walton, of Langhorne. Harriet Ermentrout donated a large easel.

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ERNEST H. MILLARD - A MEMORIAL

"Ernie", as we all knew him, was one of a dozen or so of the founding members of the parent organization of this association, which was called the "Newtown Civic and Historic Association" and was organized early in 1963. On February 25 of that year, in the Neshaminy Valley Youth Center, he acted as Temporary Chairman of the "pre-organizational meeting" of approximately 40 people, which was formed with "preserving the historical aspect of the community, including efforts for preservation of historical buildings" as one of its goals.

February, 1993 marked the thirtieth anniversary of that "historic" meeting; and, of the original founders, Ernie and Dolly Gish were the only participants who were still serving on the Board of Directors this year.

In 1964, in order to qualify as a tax-free organization, steps were taken to convert to a "Newtown Historic Association", which remains in existence today. Ernie served as President of the Newtown Historic Association from 1982 to 1984. Subsequent to his term, he continued to serve on the Board and gave many hours to the furtherance of our work. Having moved from Chancellor St. into the Taylor house on Court St. in 1965, the Millards were conveniently close neighbors of the Court Inn, the Association's headquarters; and Ernie, furnished with a key to the Inn, was available to make it accessible in many emergencies; and not only in emergencies:- Jane-Rae recalls that it was not unusual for Ernie to spot visitors trying to get a view of the interior of the Inn through one of the windows on Centre Ave. and he would hasten over and ask if they would like to be shown through. The Millards made many friends from other communities through this source, a number of whom sent their condolences to the family and recalled their pleasant experiences at the time of their visits, after Ernie passed away. And, in the years to come, many, many Newtown schoolchildren will recall much that they learned from the kindly, soft-spoken, knowledgeable and humorous gentleman who guided them through the Court Inn and briefed them on the history of the Inn, its restoration, its furnishings, the Historic Association, the town; and probably threw in some stories about Penn's state and our nation.

Ernie was a quiet behind-the-scenes worker. He never needed recognition or publicity. He knew who he was and what his many contributions were, and I believe that he was satisfied with his life. For Jane-Rae and their family members, and for us, his "historic" family, it is sad that he was not able to continue to further our purposes in his winning and resourceful ways. We will miss his delightful humor and his worthy contributions, but we will not forget!

Helen Randle

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Donations to the Newtown Historic Association in memory of Ernest H. Millard have been very gratifying.