



Market Day Scheduling

We would like to thank everyone who attended and volunteered to help coordinate Market Day this year, as it was a great success seeing hundreds of people enjoying the day. Market Day is one of the two main fundraising events that the Newtown Historic Association plans each year on which we rely to support our operations and preservation activities within the Newtown community.

As you may have read in the Courier Times,¹ despite proactively distributing a press release openly apologizing for the scheduling conflict this year,² we have received letters from individuals, including our State Representative, who chose to boycott the event and accuse the organization of purposefully scheduling Market Day on Rosh Hashanah to exclude a segment of Newtown's population.

As President, I would like to take this opportunity to dispel these accusations and more importantly provide a better understanding of the many factors that go into coordinating a community event of this magnitude.

First, for over three decades Market Day has been held on the second Saturday after Labor Day each year. This custom revives an old harvest season tradition in Newtown, where long ago, local farmers brought their crops to town to sell and enjoy a day of festivities and contests that culminated with a horse race down State Street.³ As a result, Market Day is an event that has become etched on both the minds and calendars of many community members.

Second, by establishing a regular, reoccurring date each year, we have gone to great lengths to avoid scheduling conflicts with other local historical events and community activities scheduled each fall. This is

essential because many of the vendors, re-enactors, volunteers, and attendees participate each successive weekend in other local community events throughout the fall, such as Harvest Days and Craft Fairs, and have their schedules booked years in advance.

Third, although we deeply regret the fact that Market Day conflicted with the second day of Rosh Hashanah this year, in keeping with our planning schedule, the date of September 19th was chosen well over one year ago. Unfortunately, with the lengthy planning, permitting and publicity processes either well underway or completed, the event being filled to capacity and with many vendors travelling from miles to participate, it was simply not feasible to reschedule Market Day this year with only two week's notice.

Fourth, as a volunteer organization, we do our best to work around religious observances and other events when developing our future calendar of events. Accordingly, we surveyed all the vendors who participated in this year's event and have officially moved the date for Market Day next year to October 2, 2010 to avoid a similar conflict with Yom Kippur. We understand the significance of the Yom Kippur holiday to many in our community and have specifically made an accommodation next year out of respect for those who celebrate this solemn holiday.

As always, we encourage community members to channel their energies in a positive manner by volunteering to give back to their community and help to build a deep heritage upon which we can both reflect and celebrate. As such, we look forward to seeing you next year at Market Day and at the many other events that take place in our historic town.

Respectfully,
Brian Rounsavill
President

¹ September 10, 2009, Bucks County Courier Times, p.B6
http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/courier_times/courier_times_news_details/article/28/2009/september/10/group-regrets-scheduling-market-day-on-jewish-holiday.html

² September 8, 2009, Newtown Historic Association Press Release,
<http://www.newtownhistoric.org/MarketDay2009PressRelease-DateConflict.pdf>

³ Half Moon, Vol. 8, No.2, March 2009, "Market Days: How They Went to Market"
[http://www.newtownhistoric.org/NHANewsletter\(03-09\).pdf](http://www.newtownhistoric.org/NHANewsletter(03-09).pdf)