



# 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.

## Officers

Paul Gouza, *President*  
William Mahler, *First Vice President*  
Barry Fleck, *Second Vice President*  
MaryJo Garner, *Recording Sec*  
Mary Callahan, *Corresp. Secretary*  
Marge Torongo, *Treasurer*

## Board of Directors

Keyna Crawford  
Bronwyn Jones  
Betsey King  
Jeffrey Marshall  
JoAnne Nardo  
Geno Peruzzi  
Brian Rounsavill  
Susan Thompson  
David Walton  
Honorary Life Director – David Callahan

## Newtown Historic Association

P.O. Box 303  
105 Centre Avenue  
Newtown, PA 18940 USA  
Phone: (215) 968-4004  
[www.newtownhistoric.org](http://www.newtownhistoric.org)

## Research Center Hours

Tuesdays 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
Thursday 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
And also by appointment  
Admission is free

## New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new individual members:

Ronald & Michele Kumor  
Martin & Shirley Mersky  
All of Newtown  
Gary & Pam Tice, Yardley

## Corporate Members

Zlock & Coverdale PC Newtown

## Upgraded to Corporate Member

Wm B. Parry & Son Ltd.

## Upgrade to Life Membership

Rebecca Woodward

## Make Note - New meeting time change

**Beginning in 2016 our normal monthly membership meetings will begin at 7:30 pm instead of 8:00 pm**

## April 2016 - Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Newtown Historic Association will be held on **April 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM** at the Half Moon (Court) Inn. In keeping with tradition, the Annual Business Meeting reports from all committee chairmen. There will be an election of directors whose terms have expired. Following the Annual Business Meeting we will have a **“Treasures from the Attic”** when some of the NHA collection will be displayed and discussed. A separate email was sent out with the new slate of officers.

## A Walking Tour of George School

Newtown Historic Association will conduct a **“Walking Tour of the George School” to be held Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm.**

The tour will begin at the parking lot by the 1812 Meeting House and The Anderson Library (also next to the new Athletic Center). Use the lower entrance road which goes by the athletic fields and tennis court.

The tour will include the Mollie Dodd Library to see the Archive display area, the new Gym to see the new historical display there, the Train Station location and the Main Building to see the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works fireplaces. The tour will be held by David B. Long who has been the official Archivist at George School since 2008. He is responsible for maintaining the Quaker school's historical documents, non-digital photographs, and related objects.

A “Good Will” Donation of \$5.00 per person would be appreciated - Everyone is invited – this will be a walking tour – rain or shine. No Reservations Needed - This will prove to be a very interesting and informative tour. For further information call 215-968-3914 or visit the NHA Website [www.newtownhistoric.org](http://www.newtownhistoric.org).

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**January Dinner Meeting**

The January Homeowner & Volunteer Recognition Dinner meeting was held on Sunday, January 31st at 6:00 PM at the Temperance House, Newtown. Homeowners who had their houses open for the 2015 Open House Tour were all honored – and Rebecca Woodward a volunteer of many years in the Research Center. It was a delicious dinner and everyone enjoyed themselves.

**February Program**

“The Man who Built Newtown” Garrett B. Girton was presented by Jeff Marshall, President of the Heritage Conservancy and other organizations and author of the book “Bucks County Barns. It was a standing room only program.

**Clean Up Day**

We had a host of volunteers for Clean Up Day – the morning of March 19<sup>th</sup>. Mary Dineen, Barry Fleck and grandson Mitchell, Keyna Crawford, Susan Thompson, Neale Messina, Phil Winn, JoAnne Nardo, John Duggan, Dave Walton, Kevin Brooks, Bronwyn Jones, Dave and Mary Callahan and Paul Gouza.

**March Program**

“Women at the 1777-1778 Valley Forge Encampment” was presented by Dr. Nancy Loane – a very interesting program.

**Tavern Night**

Our annual Tavern Night was held on Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at the Half-Moon Inn. It was a wonderful event, which had lots of colonial cheer. The evening featured 18th century music,

dancing, along with delicious food catered by Joseph's Garden Grille, accompanied by outstanding side dishes. Singing, dancing and merriment carried on until after midnight, and a good time was had by all!



**Dues Notices Sent Out**

Annual dues notices have been mailed, so please don't forget to pay them. It is only through the financial help from people like yourselves that the NHA can continue its efforts to preserve Newtown's unique heritage

**Don't forget - Sunday Social**

Sunday May 15<sup>th</sup> 2- 4 p m.  
Come in for a visit and a tour.

**Penn's New Towne Questers Fund Raiser 2016**



Win a hand hooked rug 48" x 19" made and signed by Lydia Lewis, local guild artist. Raffle June 8<sup>th</sup> \$5 per ticket All proceeds to go support the club's preservation and restoration projects. To purchase tickets call 215-860-3192.

## **Surrender**

By Richard N. Mansley

As you travel south from Newtown to Langhorne on the old Durham Road you come to a stone bridge built years ago by the once powerful Pennsylvania Railroad. The highway is narrow to get under it. The concrete barrier blocks on either side make it even narrower, and dangerous for two trucks or buses to pass under it at the same time. On Friday, May 12, 1899 this bridge was the scene of a battle between the railroad and the Newtown Electric Street Railway Company.

When trolleys were new, the business men of Langhorne built a street railway from their town to Trenton. When they attempted to extend it north to Newtown they were thwarted by the Pennsylvania Railroad which forbid them to lay tracks under this bridge. Likewise, Newtown Electric Railway Company attempted to extend their tracks south to Langhorne they were also prohibited from laying tracks under the bridge to make a through line between the two communities. This thereby forcing passengers traveling between the two communities to get off the trolley stopped on one side of the bridge and walk under the bridge to board a trolley waiting on the other side, no matter what the weather.

On the day previously mentioned, the trolley company attempted to make the connection under the bridge. The whole affair resulted in a battle between the workmen of both

companies. This battle was reported by the Newtown Enterprise newspaper on Saturday, May 13, 1899. Since that time several local newspapers have published exciting accounts of the battle written by their reporters – but none, as far as I can recall have given the reasons why the railroad was forced to reluctantly grant the trolley company the right to lay their tracks under the bridge. After months of legal maneuvering in the courts the problem was finally settled on this basis:

1. The statutes of the Comm. of Pa. state that railways may cross railroads
2. The Pa. Railroad does not own the property under the bridge.
3. The Pa. Railroad changed the location of the highway but did not do so in a perfect manner as the original road
4. It sought to, but does not have the right, to annul the authority of the township officers and close the road entirely to public railway travel, thus shutting off one section of the county from the other.

On Saturday, Oct. 21, 1899 the Newtown Enterprise joyfully announced that the trolleys are now passing under the railroad bridge. It is interesting to note that the government did not force the almighty, all powerful Pa. Railroad to rebuild the bridge; an expensive project that would have interrupted railroad traffic. It is difficult for us today to imagine a trolley passing under the bridge in the middle of the road opposing all traffic.

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## **Corporate Members**

We are proud to highlight our corporate members:

- A. L. Patterson
- David J. Witchell Salon & Spa
- DeFrehn Roofing Services
- First National Bank of Newtown
- Mary Dinneen, Realtor
- Gilbert, Wilson & Hunter LLP
- Global Mortgage Network Inc.
- Harold Beck & Sons, Inc.
- Johnson, Kendall & Johnson, Inc.
- MeMaMates
- Wm. B. Parry & Son Ltd.
- Robert Small & Associates
- T & T Tree Service
- Triumph Physical Therapy
- Stuckert and Yates
- Waitkus Design
- Zlock & Coverdale PC

## **Upcoming Events**

- **Spring Cocktail Party**, Saturday, April 16th. 5:00 to 8:00 pm
- **“Treasures from the Attic”** Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm
- **“A Walk Through George School”** Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> – 2 pm
- **Sunday Social at the Half Moon Inn** Sunday May 15<sup>th</sup> 2 to 4 pm
- **Fifth Grade Walking Tour**, June 1st 9:30 am to 2:30 pm
- **Market Day**, October 1st 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
- **General Membership Meeting**, Monday, November 21st 7:30 pm Program to be announced
- **Open House Tour**, December 3rd 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

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