



# 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

Barry Fleck, *President*  
William Mahler, *First Vice President*  
Brian Rounsavill, *Second Vice Pres.*  
Mary Jo Garner, *Recording Sec.*  
Caroline Bennett, *Corresponding Sec.*  
Rich Seidner, *Treasurer*

## Board of Directors

Keyna Crawford  
Paul Gouza  
Dan Griffin  
Bronwyn Jones  
Betsey King  
Geno Peruzzi  
Richard Speranza  
Susan Thompson  
David Walton  
Honorary Life Dir. – David Callahan  
Honorary Life Dir – JoAnne Nardo  
Parliamentarian – Tim Potero

## Newtown Historic Association

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

## Callahan Research Center

100 Mercer Street  
Research Center Hours  
Tuesday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Thursday, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
And also, by appointment

## New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Joan Grozalis  
Terrill and Holly (McClanen) Hart  
Jonathan Just  
Don and Linda Marshall  
Janet Price  
Elizabeth and Gordon Todderud

## New Corporate Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new corporate members:

C&N Bank  
Petsis & Associates

## Upgraded to Contributing Membership

Annamarie Kaminski  
Robert and Betsey King  
Robert and Judy Musto

## Upgraded to Distinguished Donor Membership

Bob and Jennifer Abrahamson  
Norman Buckman  
David and Sandra Chantry  
Warren and Donn Dallas  
Bernard and Alisa Dupuy  
John and Joan Johnston  
James and Terri Keane  
Kevin and Rebecca Kerchner  
Steven and Felicia Laskey  
Steve Lemken  
Charles and Barbara Lewis  
George and Mary Maffett  
Eduardo and Kelly Medeiros  
JoAnne Nardo  
Paul and Deborah Salvatore  
Betsey Stucker  
Robert Szwajkos  
Doug and Susan Turner  
Christine McKee and Anthony Walsh

## Upgraded to Innkeeper's Circle Individual Life Member

Richard and Georgia Koenig  
Janet Beasley and Brian Titus

## Virtual Trivia Pub Quiz Winners

Congratulations to all our winners of the second Newtown Historic Association Virtual Trivia Pub Quiz!

**Grand prize:** Team Watties (Casey Crawford, Kevin Crawford, Keyna Crawford, Dr. Eddie Denkin)

**2nd place:** Team O'Malley (Bridget O'Malley, Gerard O'Malley, Holly O'Malley)

**3rd place:** Team Fleck (Mary Dinneen, Barry Fleck)

Thanks to everyone who took part and helped make this event a lot of fun and a great success—all those individuals and businesses who have supported the Newtown Historic Association through their time, donations, and gifts.

## Summer Cocktail Party

The Newtown Historic Association will hold an outdoor Summer Cocktail Party on **Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** Save the date on your calendar. More information to come!



## Half-Moon Inn Spring 2021 Page 2

### Half-Moon Inn Renovation Update

Despite the pandemic, cold weather and snow that have impacted our historic town, nothing has held back the dedicated NHA volunteers from continuing the renovation of the *second floor* of our beloved Inn.

Compare the pictures before we started and where we are today. Our former research center with no room to move around and full of file cabinets and boxes, has transitioned into a welcoming area where members can gather comfortably (see photos that follow).

(Before)



(After)



While we are not done decorating or putting on the finishing touches, we are getting closer to completion. Many thanks to the generosity of the Law Firm of Rosenn, Jenkins and Greenwald in Wilkes Barre, PA, who donated many of leather chairs and tables that you see in the picture above, and the conference table and chairs for our Callahan Research Center. While renovating this room, we discovered a long-hidden fireplace behind the bookshelves on the southern wall. It is filled with support stone and was covered over at the turn of the last century (see photo below).



The wallpaper hanger's signature is still on the wall (see photo below).



This is the ninth fireplace at the Inn. The other eight have been restored and seven are operational. We plan to restore this fireplace and chimney to working order, and we have applied for a grant to undertake the work. With your continued support, we will be able to complete our renovations and provide you with a "Room at the Inn" where we can gather together for discussions and educational programs!

### Furniture Request

One of our supporters recently donated six decorated, circa 1840, plank-bottom chairs (see photos below). They are great examples of the time period and painting styles. The chairs are already in the new room and we thank Dr. Dan Vile and his wife, Janice, for their kindness in donating them.



If, like many of us, you are currently downsizing your home and would like to donate your "no longer needed" antique furniture, samplers, paintings, china, or other items to the NHA, we would greatly appreciate it.

We may use your gifted items in the Half-Moon Inn as we continue to decorate or, if they have particular ties to our Newtown history, utilize them within the Callahan Research Center. With your permission, we may also sell them and use the proceeds to continue our renovations.



## Half-Moon Inn Spring 2021 Page 3

### Furniture Request (cont'd)

We hope you'll consider this as one way to further your goal of clearing more space in your home and, in turn, helping the NHA.

### The Aark

For many, [Aark](#) Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center in Chalfont is the first place to call when an injured bird or fawn is found on the side of the road or in the backyard. Yet, many of us forget that Aark's first home was in Newtown.

Mary Jane Stretch, Aark's founder, began helping injured animals early in life until this passion led her to a career in wildlife rehabilitation with licenses from the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Game Commission of Pennsylvania. With its mission of fostering the care and understanding of wildlife, Aark nurses animals until they are ready for reintroduction into the wild.

Aark first settled in Newtown in 1976 in a farmhouse located at 106 Twining Bridge Road, which had 250 acres of undeveloped land. The farmhouse, leased from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, remained Aark's home until 2008.

In the years from 1976 until 2008, Aark grew in reputation, and incorporated in 1979 to become a formal non-profit known as The Aark Foundation, Inc. As a part of the Newtown community, Aark's volunteers educated kids with programs at school and visited local retirement communities. Aark even offered its farmhouse as a stop in the Newtown Historic Association's annual Christmas tour.

Leah Stallings, Aark's current Executive Director and Mary Jane's daughter, recalls Aark's time in

Newtown fondly with no shortage of animal stories. These memories include the time when the family's old horse "Billy Horse" broke out of the pasture and moseyed down to Council Rock High School (now Council Rock High School North) to meet Leah's sister after school.

Unfortunately, Aark was not able to extend its lease at the Twining Bridge farmhouse past 2008 and was forced to move. Although it was not the immediate threat of development that forced Aark's move, Mary Jane believed that rampant development in Bucks County had a detrimental effect not only on the wildlife, but on the community as well. She shared these thoughts and other anecdotes in her book, *The Swan in my Bathtub & Other Adventures in The Aark* (available for loan from the Village Library of Wrightstown). After a significant amount of work and fundraising, Aark purchased its forever home in Chalfont at 1531 Upper Stump Road, where it helps approximately 5,000 injured and orphaned animals per year.

Today, despite founder Mary Jane's passing in early 2020, Aark continues the critical work that it first launched in Newtown.



### Historic Gardens Update

The Half-Moon Gardens will soon be in bloom, thanks to the capable hands and green thumbs of the Countryside Gardeners. The group has committed

to yearly maintenance of the site. Plans include Spring garden preparation and the planting of flowers, along with four Winterberry bushes along the back fence. Volunteers are welcome. Those interested may contact Mary Jo Garner at (215) 858-0939.

Plans for the Boone Garden are also underway. Headed by Karen Groff, volunteers are also welcome and needed for flower bed preparation and planning. Interested volunteers may also contact Mary Jo or Karen at (267) 566-4400.

Finally, the NHA is looking for homeowners in Newtown to proudly present / show off their beautiful front or back yard gardens in this summer's Annual Garden Walk. If you are interested, please contact Mary Jo at (215) 858-0939.

### Garden Photo Poster

The Newtown Historic Association's Garden Photo Contest Poster continues to be available for purchase at the Newtown Hardware House at 108 South State Street in Newtown. The cost is \$20.00 per print. A check made out to the Newtown Historic Association is preferable, but cash will certainly be accepted.

All proceeds from this fundraiser go toward the support of the Newtown Historic Association.



## Amazon Smile

A reminder that there is one very important way you can continue to support the NHA without costing you any money.

Go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) and register under the Newtown Historic Association. Then every time you want to place an order, log into your personal smile.amazon account. You should see, "Supporting Newtown Historic Association" on the web page when you order. The NHA will receive a .5% donation from Amazon for every purchase.

Please note that we do not receive the donation unless you specifically order on your smile.amazon account, so please order using this account. While at no cost to you, the donation from Amazon will help us get through this financially challenging time.



Without the continued financial and emotional support from our community, our ability to protect and preserve Newtown's historic heritage which provides significant value to those who live, work and shop in "Historic Newtown", would not be possible.

Thank you for your support!

## Did you know?

Ulysses S. Grant, the famous Civil War General and 18th President of the U.S., had ties to Newtown. Ulysses Simpson Grant's great aunt, Hannah Simpson Hough, lived at 24 S. State Street.



## History Book Club



We are excited to announce the start of a history book club and are currently gathering names of individuals who may be interested in joining us in this new endeavor!

If you are interested, please email [info@newtownhistoric.org](mailto:info@newtownhistoric.org) or leave a message at (215) 968-4004.

## ACME GIVE BACK WHERE IT COUNTS BAG

The NHA was selected as the beneficiary of the ACME Markets "Give Back Where It Counts" Reusable Bag Program for the **MONTH OF MAY**. The program makes it easy for customers of ACME stores to contribute to the local community and also help the environment.



Each time the **\$3.00 reusable GIVE BACK WHERE IT COUNTS Bag** is purchased at the ACME at 48 West Road, Newtown, PA during the **MONTH OF MAY**, the NHA will receive a **\$1 donation**. The bags will be available at various registers and at the reusable bag rack. If you are having trouble finding the bag, ask the store manager where the ACME GIVE BACK WHERE IT COUNTS Bag is located, and they will be happy to show you!

Do you have historic items to donate? (pictures, letters, research on a property or family, furniture, etc.) If so, please contact us.

## Corporate Members

We are proud to highlight our corporate members:

ALP Supply Inc.  
DeFrehn Roofing Services  
Mary Dinneen, Realtor  
First National Bank of Newtown  
Gilbert, Wilson & Hunter LLP  
Harold Beck & Sons, Inc.  
Johnson, Kendall & Johnson, Inc.  
Wm. B. Parry & Son Ltd.  
Quantum Learning, Inc.  
Stuckert and Yates  
T & T Tree Service  
Waitkus Design

## Upcoming Calendar

### April:

- 4/19: **Annual membership meeting** and Chase Palmer, "Postcards of Bucks County", 7:30 p.m. (virtual)

### May:

- 5/15: **Spring cleanup** at the Half-Moon Inn starting at 8:30 a.m.

### June:

- 6/19: **Garden Walk** starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Half-Moon Inn
- 6/26: **Summer Cocktail Party** at the Half-Moon Inn, outdoors from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

### September:

- 9/20: **Membership meeting** with Jeff Marshall, "Real Dirt on Real People", 7:30 p.m.

### October:

- 10/2: **Market Day**
- 10/9 – 10/10: **Tyler Walking Tour** from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For further details, visit [www.newtownhistoric.org](http://www.newtownhistoric.org).