



# 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  
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Dan Griffin  
Bronwyn Jones  
Betsey King  
Geno Peruzzi  
Richard Speranza  
Susan Thompson  
David Walton  
Honorary Life Dir. – David Callahan  
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  
Newtown, PA 18940 USA  
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

Evelyn Boada  
Regina and Ken Carlson  
Lee Ann and Lou Fancher  
Chris and Michael Franko  
Mark Gatta  
Nancy Gracia  
Dale E. Hoppe  
Mary Jane and John Leonard

## In Memory of Jo-Anne Nardo

Jo-Anne Nardo, a lifelong member and ardent supporter of the Newtown Historic Association, passed away on November 8th, 2021. While the Newtown community adjusts to life without her, we feel very fortunate to have had her as an important part of our historic town.



Jo-Anne started volunteering for the Newtown Historic Association in 1969 and was appointed to the Board of Directors on January 10, 1972. She served on the Board in many different capacities for over 49 years. For the last 5 years, she was an Honorary Life Director of the NHA.

Jo-Anne was a prolific volunteer, always willing to pitch in to support the many NHA activities and fund

raisers. If you visited the Court Inn on a Sunday afternoon, she would have been the one to greet you and take you on a tour. She was always lending a hand to those whom she knew, with a smile and a twinkle in her eyes. There was nothing that was too much when it came to helping her friends.

We will miss hearing Jo-Anne's voice, seeing her smile, and her willingness to help and contribute to her association, her town, and her friends. Jo-Anne was one of those people that you could always depend on. It is with extreme gratitude that we remember Jo-Anne, for all that she did for the NHA and the community. In Jo-Anne's memory, the NHA has received \$10,500 in donations to date, which will be used to maintain the Court Inn that she so loved.

May you rest in peace, Jo-Anne, beside the love of your life, Vince, and in the town that you so loved.

## Upcoming Calendar

### January:

- 1/25: **History Book Club** at 6:30 p.m.

### February:

- 2/6: **Annual Appreciation Dinner** from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- 2/15: **General Membership Meeting** at 7:00 p.m.

### March:

- 3/21: **General Membership Meeting** at 7:30 p.m.

### April:

- 4/18: **General Membership and Annual Meeting** at 7:30 p.m.

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

## Half-Moon Inn Winter 2022 Page 2

### Annual Appreciation Dinner



Please join us for the annual Appreciation Dinner for our Holiday Open House Tour homeowners. All members and guests are invited.

The dinner will be held on **Sunday, February 6, 2022, at The Temperance House**, 5 South State Street, Newtown, PA 18940.

Cash bar occurs from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The dinner takes place from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The cost is \$45 per person. The reservation deadline is January 31, 2022.

You can pay by check or purchase tickets online. For more information, visit the NHA website at [www.newtownhistoric.org](http://www.newtownhistoric.org).

### “100th Anniversary of the Bryn Athyn Train Wreck of 1921”

The February general meeting of the Newtown Historic Association will be held on **Tuesday, February 15, 2022, starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Newtown Theatre**, 120 North State Street, Newtown, PA 18940.

On December 5, 1921, a horrific head-on collision between two passenger trains of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad occurred, killing 26 passengers and crew members, and injuring 70 others. Most of the casualties came from the Newtown, Churchville, and Southampton communities. Learn more about this catastrophe on the 100-year anniversary that led the Interstate Commerce Commission to recommend major changes in passenger railcar construction.

The evening will begin with a special viewing of the documentary film, “*The Bryn Athyn Train Wreck of 1921*” by Thomas Lynskey, a local historical filmmaker. Mr. Lynskey specializes in historically-based media content, ranging from documentaries and dramatic short films to virtual reality experiences and educational software, and has produced several films on shipwrecks, including the Titanic.



The movie will be followed by a lecture by David Rowland, President of the Old York Road Historical Society. Mr. Rowland has been researching and lecturing on the Bryn Athyn Train Wreck for the past 15 years. He also leads the annual Pennypack Trust walking tour to the crash site.

Following the lecture, both Mr. Lynskey and Mr. Rowland will be available to answer questions from the audience. This will be a one-of-a-kind opportunity to learn more about this local tragedy and its connection to Newtown.

Admission is \$5 per person; all proceeds from this special event will be donated to the Newtown Historic Association and the Newtown Theatre. For more information, call (215) 968-4004 or visit the NHA website at [www.newtownhistoric.org](http://www.newtownhistoric.org).

### Amazon Smile

A reminder that there is one very easy way you can continue to support the NHA throughout the year 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 through these financially challenging times.

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!

The Amazon Smile logo, featuring the word "amazon" in its signature font and "smile" in a lighter font, with a curved arrow underneath. Below it, the tagline "You shop. Amazon gives." is written in a smaller font.

### Corporate Members

We are proud to highlight our corporate members:

- ALP Supply Inc.
- Anthony Petsis & Associates, Inc.
- C&N Bank
- DeFrehn Roofing Services
- Mary Dinneen, Realtor
- First National Bank of Newtown
- Gilbert, Wilson & Hunter LLP
- Harold Beck & Sons, Inc.
- J. McLaughlin
- Johnson, Kendall & Johnson, Inc.
- Newtown Business Association
- Wm. B. Parry & Son Ltd.
- Quantum Learning, Inc.
- Stuckert and Yates
- T & T Tree Service
- The Dave Marcolla Group - Keller Williams Real Estate
- Waitkus Design



## 2021 Holiday Open House Tour

The NHA held its 58th annual Holiday Open House Tour on December 4th, 2021, and what a day great day it was. The NHA has held this event annually since 1962 until last year when we were forced to cancel in 2020 due to Covid restrictions.

The Holiday Open House Tour is one of the largest community gatherings held in Newtown each year. This tour gives visitors the opportunity to peek into several of Newtown's unique private residences and multiple public buildings, all dressed for the holidays. This event also allows the Newtown Historic Association to showcase its preservation efforts by putting them all on display for the entire community to enjoy, especially the Court Inn.

Perhaps due to last year's cancellation, this year's excitement spread quickly throughout the community. Everyone had the chance to reconnect with the beauty of historic Newtown and spend time with family and friends on what was a perfect weather day. It was another record crowd in attendance.

The NHA would like to thank the 100+ community members who selflessly volunteered their time and helped with the monumental task of preparing for and welcoming the nearly one thousand visitors to our historic town. Without your charitable contributions and the generous support of our sponsors, we would not be able to hold this special and beloved event.

We hope to see you again later this year at our next Holiday Open House Tour. In the meantime, please enjoy these photos of the 2021 event.

*The Court Inn was decorated for the holiday to welcome our guests to Newtown.*



*Mr. and Mrs. Thornton were there to greet the guests.*





## 2021 Holiday Open House Tour (cont'd)

*The Court Inn was tidied...*



*...while dinner was being prepared.*



*The table was set and waiting for  
empty stomachs.*



*The library bedroom was ready for  
weary travelers.*



*Guests were greeted by lively  
entertainment at the front of the  
Court Inn...*



*...and patiently waited to enter the  
private homes and public buildings.*



*More photos of the day for your  
enjoyment.*



*And from our "A Christmas Carol"  
December 3<sup>rd</sup> event...*





## Garden Photo Poster

The Newtown Historic Association's Garden Photo Contest Poster continues to be available for purchase at Clark's Flower Shop and Countryside Gallery & Custom Frame Design (both on State Street in Newtown), or by contacting Keyna Crawford at (267) 679-9287 or [keynacrawford@verizon.net](mailto:keynacrawford@verizon.net). The cost is \$20 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.



## Historic Visions of Newtown Puzzle

The second in a series of collectables, *Historic Visions of Newtown, PA*, is a 500-piece puzzle and a glimpse of what business was like just a century ago. The puzzle consists of advertising cards from Newtown businesses that are displayed with the background of an advertising page from an 1898 issue of the *Newtown Enterprise* paper.

This puzzle was sponsored by **Johnson, Kendall & Johnson** which has been doing business in Newtown since 1959. The NHA is grateful for Johnson, Kendall & Johnson's commitment to Newtown and Bucks County, and their support of the NHA.

You can purchase the Historic Visions puzzle (\$29 each) at the NHA Callahan Research Center at 100 Mercer Street or Newtown Hardware House at 108 S. State Street in Newtown. You can also [purchase the puzzle online on the NHA website](#).



## History Book Club

Everyone is encouraged to come join us at the Half-Moon Inn on **Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.** to join in our next meeting of the NHA History Book Club. Bring along a book that you've read and enjoyed and share your experience of reading it with the group. We can all catch up after the holidays and enjoy seeing each other safely by wearing masks to our meeting. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Thompson at [sethompson.newtown@gmail.com](mailto:sethompson.newtown@gmail.com). Looking forward to seeing you there (barring any inclement weather)!



## Did you know?

The Center Street bridge over the Newtown Creek, connecting the township and borough, dates from 1796 and is the oldest bridge in Bucks County. The bridge was built when Newtown was the county seat and it facilitated access to the county courts, market fairs and the Newtown Common for residents living north and west. It's construction is rough-cut ashlar stonework and represents local achievement under the newly-formed U. S. government to carry out public works projects in enduring craft and design.



The Roman arch of the bridge was an expression of democratic achievement in the New Republic and also a statement of the maturity of this area of the county with its settlement history already over one hundred years old. The county's rehabilitation of the bridge in 1875 affirmed the importance of preserving this landmark. \*



*\*Excerpted from a document by Kathryn Ann Auerbach, Preservation Consultant*



### Special Corporate Sponsor

J. McLaughlin first opened their store in 2018 at 200 S. State Street in Newtown after renovating the building historically known as the “Button Lady’s House” and also the “Sedia House”. Cindy Koehler, the manager of the store, has always been a big supporter of the NHA from the time she arrived in Newtown. During our NHA community fund-raising events, Cindy and J. McLaughlin often donate a percentage of their sales to the NHA.

We would like to publicly thank Cindy and J. McLaughlin for the very nice donation we received recently supporting our Holiday Open House Tour held in December. It is the support of community-minded companies like J. McLaughlin and people like Cindy Koehler that provide the NHA with the financial resources to continue our preservation work for the Newtown community.

### Market Day Help Wanted

Volunteers are needed to help organize this year’s Market Day, one of Newtown Boroughs largest annual community events.

Please help support the NHA and your community by volunteering. There are many open positions. Come meet new friends, work beside NHA Board members, and support this special fund-raising event that supports the historic preservation of Newtown.

If you are interested in volunteering, please send an email to [info@newtownhistoric.org](mailto:info@newtownhistoric.org) or leave a message at (215) 968-4004 with your contact information—to the attention of Barry Fleck.



### Larry Kidder, Author and Speaker on History

At the November 15, 2021, NHA general meeting, author William Larry Kidder gave a talk about his book, *Revolutionary Princeton 1774 – 1783: The Biography of a Town in the Heart of a Civil War*. During the talk, Mr. Kidder spoke about the divisions in towns like Princeton, Trenton, and Newtown, and peoples’ different allegiances during the war. He also spoke about the importance of the towns in this area all throughout the Revolutionary War since they were on the main road at that time from New York to Philadelphia.



Mr. Kidder offers a day long tour of the important areas from the 10 crucial days of the American revolution. For further information, visit <https://tencrucialdays.org/>.



### Do you have historic items to donate?

(Pictures, letters, research on a property or family, furniture, etc.) If so, please contact us.