



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 and activities in our area. We welcome any suggestions for future articles.

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Newtown Historic Association

P.O. Box 303
105 Court Street
Newtown, PA 18940 USA
Phone: (215) 968-4004
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

Karen & Kevin Buckthorpe
Nancy & Gorkham Geylani
Kate & Paul Higgins
Regina Lynch
Lisa & Michael Mattie
Cathie & Gary Pickell
David VanBlarcom

Winners of the Craig Hackett Prints

There are two lucky winners from the Market Day drawing for the Craig Hackett prints. The first-place prize winner was Debra Granite. Debra is now the proud owner of Bird-in-Hand in Fall.



The second-place prize winner was Annamarie Kaminski. Annamarie is very happy to be the new owner of the Lovett Barn.

Market Day Raffle Update

The Market Day raffle has been extended until our October general meeting at the Newtown Theatre. We encourage you to send in your raffle tickets if you have not already done so, drop them off at the Half Moon Inn (Court Inn) mail slot, or bring them with you to the October 25th meeting. Additionally, the tickets will be available for purchase at the theatre that evening.

Upcoming Calendar

October:

- 10/25: "Covered Bridges of Bucks County" at 7:30 p.m.
hosted by R. Scott Bomboy

November:

- 11/21: General Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

December:

- 12/3: Holiday Open House Tour from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For further details, visit
www.newtownhistoric.org.

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Annual Walking Tour

Our annual walking tour was held in mid-September. The event was hosted by Newtown resident Jeff Marshall.



The tour started at the Court Inn, continued down Court Street to Penn Street, down Penn Street to South Congress Street, up South Congress Street, then down Centre Avenue and back to the Court Inn.

The event was well attended with approximately 60 people, and the weather was picture perfect.

The NHA extends its sincere thanks to Jeff for hosting this year's walking tour (again!), and to all those who participated.

Keep an eye out for Jeff's upcoming new book on Garrett Brown Girton (known as "the man who built Newtown").



New Textile Display

There is a beautiful new historic textile display on the second floor of the Court Inn.

Volunteers started the process by looking up objects in the computer at the Callahan Research Center—for example, dresses, hats, and purses. Then, they wrote down the box numbers that the articles were stored in, searched for the boxes, and proceeded to carefully pull out the articles. All those involved in this process were amazed at the

beautiful handwork and how carefully the articles were stored.

This new rotating display is a means for the NHA to share these gems that we are so lucky to possess. Below are a few photos of the display. We welcome everyone to stop in at the Court Inn to take a look!



A Message from Our President

On behalf of the Newtown Historic Association, I would like to thank all our sponsors and volunteers who contributed to our September 30th Friday night celebration, Memories of Newtown, which was held at the Newtown Theatre. It was a sold-out performance hosted by Marty Moss-Coane and featuring our hometown panel of people who grew up in Newtown. Jean Torongo, Corky Swartz, Allan Smith, Betsey King, Barbara Ermentrout, and our resident historian Jeff Marshall provided us with a great evening of fun and memories.



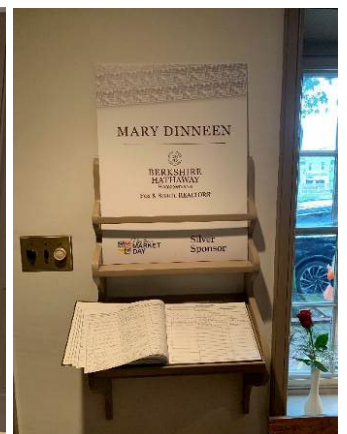
Memories of Newtown was certainly a great way to start this year's Market Day weekend celebration but, unfortunately, Hurricane Ian had other plans for our Saturday. Due to concerns for the threat of high winds from the hurricane, we had to cancel outside activities as a safety matter for our community. But the weather didn't hold us back from opening the Court Inn to the many visitors who joined us for coffee, soda, donuts, and some blueberry pie. Everyone had a great time touring the Inn, buying flower arrangements from the Countryside Gardeners, purchasing Craig Hackett prints, and enjoying the beauty of our 289-year-old Inn with their neighbors and friends.



A Message from Our President (cont'd)

I would like to thank this year's Market Day Chair, Ashara Shapiro, for all the hard work and many hours she spent on our Market Day weekend celebration. Ashara did an amazing job

organizing the activities along with our Market Day committee, which consisted of Mary Callahan, Andrea Bayford, Gary Albaugh, Keyna Crawford, Susan Thompson, Annmarie Kaminski, and Bronwyn Jones (along with myself). In addition, many volunteers from the community helped get the streets ready for Market Day, and others were lined up to help with the Saturday activities (which we were forced to change). All this preparation will not go to waste as it will help us better prepare for our 2023 Market Day weekend.




A Message from Our President (cont'd)

Lastly, I would like to thank all our sponsors, shown below, for their financial support of our NHA Market Day weekend. Without their support, we would not be able to host these events whose proceeds support the NHA's investment in our community. On average, it costs approximately \$50,000 a year to maintain our historic Court Inn, along with another \$20,000 annually to maintain the Callahan Research Center. The money generated from these community events, along with memberships and donations, keeps these buildings open for community use. Please remember these sponsors and, if you have the opportunity, thank them for their financial support of our NHA events. Whenever possible, please consider them when making purchases and seeking services as a way of thanking them for supporting the NHA's Newtown Experience®.


Barry Fleck

Sponsors




A special thanks to our
Newtown Market Day Sponsors:





Platinum Sponsor



Gold Sponsors






Silver Sponsors

MARY DINNEEN
BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY
HomeServices
Fox & Rouch, REALTORS®

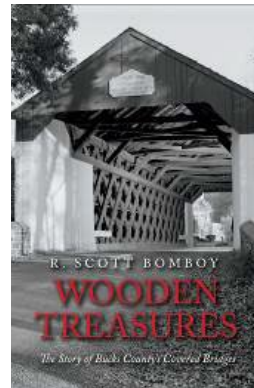
The Stock Family

Bronze Sponsor



October General Meeting

R. Scott Bomboy, author of "Wooden Treasures: The Story of Bucks County's Covered Bridges," will speak at the historic **Newtown Theatre** about his book on **Tuesday, October 25th, at 7:30 p.m.**



Bomboy spent five years on the book, which accounts for the 51 covered bridges once located in the county. Today, only 12 such bridges remain, including the Schofield Ford Covered Bridge in Tyler State Park. Most of Bucks County's covered bridges were gone by 1940, as progress led to their demolition. It fell to a small group of people to save the remaining bridges for future generations to enjoy.

Bomboy is a Bucks County resident, historian, and preservationist who has written frequently about Bucks County's past. He has received national awards for his work in journalism and holds degrees in history from Penn State University and Arizona State University. He also produced the website BucksBridges.com as a joint project between the Bucks County Historical Society and Arizona State. He currently works as editor-in-chief at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.



This special evening is presented by the Newtown Historic Association and the Newtown Theatre. **Tickets are \$15 for the public and \$10 for members of the theatre and the Newtown Historic Association.** Proceeds will benefit both non-profit organizations.

The theatre is located at 120 North State Street in Newtown Borough. For more information and tickets, visit www.TheNewtownTheatre.com/events.

Tyler Park Historic Self-Guided Walking Tour

On Saturday, October 8th, the NHA Tyler Park Historical Self-Guided Walking Tour was held on a crisp autumn morning. Over 45 people participated in the event, which took place at the boathouse dam, where an historical overview of the Tyler family, mansion, and park properties was given by Brian Rounsavill and Phil Schmidt, Park Ranger.



Many interesting questions were asked during the event. All participants received a copy of the recently published "History of Tyler State Park" book, and they were free to tour the park on their own at the conclusion of the event.



Amazon Smile

Get ready for holiday shopping!

There is one extremely easy way you can continue to support the NHA this upcoming holiday season without costing you any money. Just go to

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-1676660> to register with AmazonSmile under the Newtown Historic Association. Then every time you want to place an order, log in to your personal smile.amazon account. You should see, "Supporting Newtown Historic Association" on the web page when you order. The NHA will receive a 0.5% donation from Amazon for every purchase you make.

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 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!

NHA Holiday Items for Purchase

Speaking of shopping, a reminder that the NHA has several unique items for purchase. These items would make lovely gifts for family and friends this upcoming holiday season. All items are available for purchase at the Callahan Research Center during open hours.

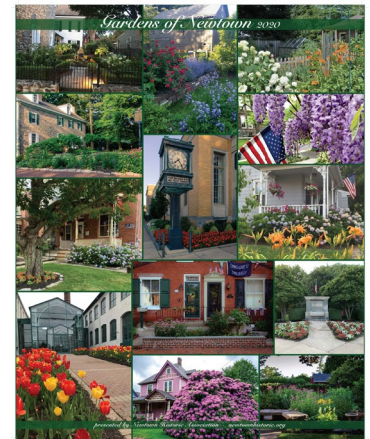
- Holiday ornaments, \$10
- History of Tyler Park book, \$16
- Historic puzzle #2, \$20
- Newtown garden photos poster, \$20
- Historic Newtown, Images of America book, \$21.99

The two books are also available for purchase from the NHA website at

<https://www.newtownhistoric.org/shop/>. The puzzle can be purchased online as well at <https://www.newtownhistoric.org/shop/historic-visions-puzzle/>.



The posters are also available for purchase at Clark's Flower Shop, 101 North State Street, Newtown.



The holiday ornaments can also be purchased at the Newtown Hardware House, 108 South State Street, Newtown.



Maintenance and Operating Costs Update

Here's an update from the NHA Board on the maintenance and operating costs for the Court Inn and Callahan Research Center for the past two years.

FY21 (April 2020 - March 2021)

Callahan Research Center:	\$4,947
Court Inn:	\$40,044
Total:	\$44,991

FY22 (April 2021 - March 2022)

Callahan Research Center:	\$13,453
Court Inn:	\$49,510
Total:	\$62,963

These costs cover expenses for lawn/snow removal, window cleaning and cleaning services, sewer/water, electric/fuel oil/gas, internet/phone, security systems, general maintenance, insurance, supplies, and capital improvements.

Costs for the 2022 - 2023 fiscal year will be higher because of painting, new storm windows, a new heating system, and foundation repair in the Court Inn.

Court Inn Improvements

Speaking of the Court Inn, we would like to share some photos of the improvements that have been made recently. These improvements would not have been possible without the financial support from memberships, donations, and a Bucks County Tourism grant.

The Centre Avenue door, which was in dire need of attention, was stripped and repainted by Jim Garner.



The garden fence was rebuilt by Randy Yardley.



All shutters, doors, and windows have been painted by Shawne Hogge. More painting will be completed before the Holiday Open House Tour.



We have converted the Court Inn from oil to natural gas heating. The new gas line and boiler were installed. The new system has been operational since early October.

Old Oil Tanks



New Gas Pipes (outside)



Court Inn Improvements (cont'd)

New Gas Pipes (inside)



Old Boiler



New Boiler



Looking ahead, we are in the planning stages for foundation repair.

Stone Foundation Repairs Needed



Can You Help Us Solve This Mystery?

Terry Christensen, Chair of the Board at Friends Village here in Newtown, is hoping that someone might be able to help them locate their time capsule. It is believed to be located in their Paxson Hall building, which is located at the corner of Congress Street and Centre Avenue, or perhaps it has already been opened.

Paxson Hall dates from 1899 and, around that time, a time capsule was placed within the building to be opened at a later date. Dave Callahan remembers Henry Palmer dropping off a box of documents from Paxson Hall to him at the Newtown Hardware Store over 30 years ago. Those documents contained meeting minutes describing Garret Brown Girton using his old horse to rig up a makeshift elevator at the south side of Paxson Hall to lift the folks up to where the date stone is so that they could place the time capsule behind it. The time capsule items were all placed in a glass jar.

To the best of their knowledge, Friends Village does not believe the time capsule has ever been retrieved or opened. And the structural expert that Friends Village brought in to look for it could not find it. It is possible that the time capsule was opened on a previous anniversary of the building—at 25 years (~1924), 50 years (~1949), or 100 years (~1999).

Volunteers at the Callahan Research Center could not locate any references in the NHA archives to the time capsule being opened.

If you have any knowledge of the time capsule, whether it's been opened, or its whereabouts, please contact the NHA at (215) 968-4004 or Terry Christensen at (215) 944-8004.

Holiday Open House Tour 2022

On **Saturday, December 3rd**, the Newtown Historic Association will hold the 59th annual Holiday Open House Tour. This tour will give visitors the opportunity to see five private residences and six public buildings decorated for the season.



In addition to the private homes (dating from the early 19th to mid-20th centuries), some of the public buildings in the tour include: the Newtown Library Company (c. 1912), founded in 1760 and incorporated by a Special Act of the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1789; the Newtown Fire Association (c. 1901), home to Newtown's collection of antique fire apparatus, tools, and memorabilia, including the 1796 Patrick Lyons hand pumper, "Old Washy," and an 1892 ladder truck; the Stocking Works (c.1889), originally the Newtown Hosiery Mill, the Lavelle Aircraft Corporation during World War II, and the source of the world's first weather satellite, TIROS 1, in 1960; the Callahan Research Center, home to the Newtown Historic Association archives and in which quilts from the Association's collection will be on display; and the NHA headquarters, the Half Moon Inn (c. 1733)—the beautifully restored 18th century Inn where tour-goers will be able to enjoy period musical entertainment, hearthside colonial cooking demonstrations, and the collection of famed Newtown folk artist, Edward Hicks.



All the homes and buildings on this year's tour are within easy walking distance from the Half Moon Inn (Court Inn) and town center.

Tickets are \$35 for non-members and \$30 for NHA members, and the tour hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Advance tickets can be purchased at the Newtown Book & Record Exchange, 102 South State Street, in Newtown and online at <https://www.newtownhistoric.org/events/annual-holiday-open-house-tour/>. On tour day, tickets can be purchased at the Half Moon Inn (Court Inn), 105 Court Street, and at the Stocking Works, 301 South State Street (both located in Newtown Borough).

Throughout the day, the streets of Newtown Borough will be alive with the sights and sounds of the season as tour-goers make their way to all of the stops on the tour. We welcome you to step back in time, walk the streets that George Washington walked, and experience all that Newtown has to offer. More information is available on the Newtown Historic Association's website.

Do you have historic items to donate? (Pictures, letters, research on a property or family, furniture, etc.) If so, please contact us at (215) 968-4004.

Did you know?

We owe a debt of gratitude to the people who filed the applications for the Newtown Historic District listings on the National Register of Historic Places. Over 40 years ago, they undertook a massive amount of work to document all of the structures and the detailed history of Newtown, and to shepherd the application through the lengthy requirements process. Their efforts enabled the unique character of Newtown that we know and love today. Without it, Newtown would be much a much different place.

The criteria used to evaluate the significance of historic properties and determine their eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places included:

- The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and engineering;
- The presence of culture in district, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; and
- Events, people, construction particulars, history, or prehistory.

The original Newtown Historic District listing was registered December 17th, 1979, and covered 230 buildings and 82 barns or carriage sheds that contributed to the quality and integrity of the area. The original application can be viewed on-line and contains a list of all the properties and their owners, a description, photos, and correspondence from the current owners at that time—both for and against the listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Documentation exists on the history of Newtown that includes a lot of interesting information; for instance, a listing from the tax assessor, Benjamin Taylor, in 1807 of the taxable inhabitants in Newtown:

- Blacksmiths - 4
- Attorneys - 5
- Millers - 1
- Shopkeepers - 3
- Printers - 1
- Carpenters - 8
- Innkeepers - 5
- Masons - 5
- Butchers - 1
- Tanners - 3
- Shoemakers - 7
- Physicians - 1
- Wheelrights - 1
- Silversmiths - 1
- Tailors - 3
- Schoolmasters - 1
- Cookers - 1
- Harness-Makers - 1
- Farmers - 65
- Weavers - 4
- Hatters - 1

Newtown at this time was an active and thriving commercial center, probably without rival in Bucks County outside of the Bristol area.

A second application was filed to expand the Historic District. The boundary increase for the Sycamore Street Extension was listed on February 25, 1986, and included the east side of Sycamore Street from Frost Lane to Saint Andrews Church.

The last boundary increase to the Historic District was for the North and South Extension and was listed on October 28, 1986. The North Extension was north to Jefferson Street and west to Lincoln Avenue, and included 87 contributing structures and 10 non-contributing. The South Extension was for 35 contributing structures and 6 non-contributing.

These extensions included many ancillary buildings, carriage houses, and sheds.

To see the original applications and supporting documents for the Newtown Historic District, visit the National Archives website at catalog.archives.gov. In the search box, enter the National Archives Identifier numbers (see below).

Document Name (National Archives Identifier)

- Original Newtown Historic District Application (71996747)
- Sycamore Street Extension Application (71996755)
- North Extension and South Extension Application (71996757)

Corporate Members

We are proud to highlight our corporate members:

- ALP Supply Inc.
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- C&N Bank
- DeFrehn Roofing Services
- Mary Dinneen, Realtor
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- Harold Beck & Sons, Inc.
- J. McLaughlin
- Johnson, Kendall & Johnson, Inc.
- Newtown Business Association
- Wm. B. Parry & Son, Ltd.
- Anthony Petsis & Associates, Inc.
- Quantum Learning, Inc.
- SDG Holdings I, LLC
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- T & T Tree Service
- The Dave Marcolla Group - Keller Williams Real Estate
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