Grist From The Mill

Newlin Grist Mill of the Nicholas Newlin Foundation 219 S. Cheyney Road,
Glen Mills PA 19342 610-459-2359 www.newlingristmill.org

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Newlin Mill Says "Good-bye" to Camp Toland

Camp Toland served the community for many years.

"Camp Toland," a community landmark for more than forty years, was used for the last time in the summer of 2005 and the buildings and pool were removed this winter. The Toland recreational complex was constructed by the Toland family and Mortimer Newlin for the Philadelphia YMCA in 1963. The Philadelphia and Main Line YMCA used the buildings and adjacent twelve acres as a summer day camp until 1981, then returned title for the property to the Nicholas Newlin Foundation.

The Newlin Foundation and the YMCA of Central Chester County created and operated the Toland Family Center for the next twenty-four years. The Family Center organized day camps for neighborhood and West Chester children; It provided swim lessons and coached competitive swimming teams for children and teens, and it was open afternoons, evenings and weekends as a family recreation center.

The Toland pool house comes down

In the 1990s, new recreational facilities were created by local school districts and the Central Chester County YMCA expanded its holdings in the West Chester area. Camp Toland's pool and buildings were increasingly costly to maintain and every year the percentage of community children attending the camp and its events decreased. In 2004, the "Y" decided to consolidate all its offerings in the Chester County properties.

The area where Camp Toland once stood.

Concurrently, the Trustees of the Newlin Foundation, through their long range planning process, had determined that the camp area should be returned to historic and environmental education use, should the YMCA cease to use the land. Director Mike Brown had a series of farewell picnics for former campers and staff in the summer of 2005, and the last Camp Toland session was held in August of that year.

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New Interpretive Plan Will Guide Newlin's Future.

Newlin Mill is working with a new interpretative plan. The new plan serves as a road map to develop and implement a systematic interpretation for the historic side of the site's programs.

Good history museums and historic sites tell stories. The stories they choose to tell and the ways that they tell them is called "interpretation." Interpretation is the term that museums and sites have chosen to describe the process of developing the intellectual themes and presenting them to the public.

Last year, from March to July, the mill staff and the program committee, joined by museum consultant Patrick Harshbarger, met as a task force several times to piece the elements of the plan together. The Task Force was surprised to find that over 75% of the site's nearly 32,000 visitors were recreational visitors who do not engage in interpretative programs. Newlin Mill's largest audience leaves the site without even a basic understanding of the site's history and the role of the Nicholas Newlin Foundation in preserving this significant place.

The new interpretive plan will effect the way all parts of the site are presented to the public, including the mill and miller's house.

The task force described all of the stories [historic themes] it felt could be presented to visitors and where they might best take place. From this very long list Harshbarger found the common elements and drafted an essay called: *Mill as Nexus,* which means simply that the mill was more than a place to grind grain—it was a place of connections. Those connections took many forms, economic, geographic, technological, social, and cultural. Some of the most obvious connections were economic — for instance, the exchange between farmer and miller of grain in return for credit, milled grain, trade goods, or specie. Economic connections also reached from the mill to port cities — Philadelphia or Chester — and from them to the greater colonial Atlantic trade. Other connections are in the land-use patterns established by the miller and early settlers. The connections are also about people. This story is addressed well by the history of the Newlin family and its multi-generational ties to the mill. Finally, but not least, the mill is a very important connection with the past.

The "Mill as Nexus" concept suggests ways to build the intellectual content and myriad thematic connections that will make the site's interpretive message cohesive and focused, while at the same time providing infinite opportunities to explore the complex thematic connections.

The new interpretative plan was approved by the Foundation's Board of Trustees. Today, staff is at work on three items recommended in the plan. The next time you visit Newlin Mill to explore its nature and history see if you can sense the plan in action.

Anglers Enjoy Opening Day

Lucy Bell Sellers has prepared the opening day breakfast for over 20 years.

For twenty years, give or take, the Newlin Grist Mill has celebrated Opening Day of the Pennsylvania trout fishing season. In 1985, Lucy Bell Sellers, then Executive Trustee of the Newlin Foundation, held the first Opening Day breakfast for the anglers who sponsor and fish the catch and release portion of the West Branch of Chester Creek.

Every opening day since, with the exception of one Easter week, Lucy Bell and her friends Betsy Solomon and Peggy Bishop have prepared and served a hearty country breakfast for anglers and guests. This breakfast gives the anglers a chance to enjoy one another's company, and celebrate the coming of spring. It also provides the Newlin Foundation with an opportunity to thank and connect with the many people who enjoy fishing the stream on Newlin grounds. Next year, 2008, the command will change—Mrs. Sellers daughter, Lucy Bell Jarka-Sellers, has agreed to take the job. Newlin's anglers can again look forward to a great opening day.

Water Quality Testing Continues to be Important at Newlin Mill

The staff of the Grist Mill initiated a systematic water quality testing program this spring in cooperation with the Chester/Ridley/Crum Watershed Association. Hilary Fellows, a senior at Kennett High school and her brother Ben, a sophomore, conducted the tests after receiving instructions from stream monitor Frank Dowman, a biologist at the Sun Valley School District. Staff member Rick Fellows, Ben and Hilary's father, supervised the tests.

On a monthly basis, Hilary and Ben recorded water temperature, alkalinity, transparency and turbidity. They also conducted tests for conductivity, dissolved oxygen, nitrates and phosphates and pH range. The test results were submitted to the Watershed Association for comparison with other area streams, and to become part of a permanent record.

Summer Discovery Scrapbook

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Glen Mills, PA 19342

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www.newlingristmill.org

Newlin Grist Mill
Calendar of Events

Fall Harvest Festival

October 6, 10 am - 4 pm

Colonial crafts and demonstrations

Food **Hayrides** **Pumpkin decorating**

Great fun for families!!

Bluegrass music provided by Remington Riders

No Admission fee!!

For information call 610-459-2359 or go to www.newlingrustmill.org