

## NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP CULTURAL CENTER

Residents in Northampton Township can look forward to the Fall of 1985 when it is expected that the new Cultural Center will be dedicated. A product of almost four years of plan preparation and construction, the Cultural Center, located on Upper Holland Road near its intersection with Bustleton Pike will house the Free Library, an office for the Township Historical Commission and a Senior Center. Almost forty percent (40%) of the cost of the building comes from federal grants obtained by the Board of Supervisors through the Bucks County Office of Community Development.

This new facility will afford a much needed expansion of desired and needed library services, such as larger area and selection within the children's library, a work area complete with reference books and work tables, special browsing stations within the stacks, expanded work and storage areas for the library staff and, most important a room to expand the collection. For the first time, senior citizens in Northampton Township will have one place to go that is their own—the Senior Center. Within the Center, one will find an arts and crafts room, lounge and reading area, gameroom for cards, billiards, etc., and a number of small meeting rooms for all kinds of activities (visiting physicians, self-help courses, etc.). Also included within the center is a multi-purpose meeting room capable of seating 200 people which, although controlled by the members of the center, can also be used for general community purposes if desired. Finally, besides an eloquently decorated entrance and foyer area which includes display cases for art, library and historical exhibits, the Center will house an office and storage area for the Historical Commission, currently engaged in preserving documents, artifacts, and other significant items related to our Township's past. This new building is expected to become a real "center" of activity and service to our Community.

Each of the following sections details some of the features and services we, as residents of Northampton Township, can expect with our new Cultural Center:

**Free Library of Northampton Township** — Patrons (visitors) coming to the new building will find many exciting changes and advantages in comparison to the Newtown-Richboro Road facility. The first impression reveals larger and well lighted parking areas, attractively color coordinated exteriors and interiors, carpeting, public telephone and a water cooler; all features not currently enjoyed at the existing library. The new library will be almost twice the size of the current library with increased reference and stack areas. New features include specially built stands in the stack area for convenient browsing and a lounge area for relaxed reading. The stack area will be separated in sections containing adult and junior non-fiction books, adult fiction, large print books, classics, and "new arrivals." The reference area will have a separate seating for patrons using investment service materials and nearby access to back issues and periodicals. The new building provides for future wiring of a computerized circulation system. The collection is currently being bar coded in preparation for this conversion. In the future this will allow for faster and more efficient book check out service to our patrons. In addition, a new custom built circulation desk will be installed which will enable the library staff to serve more than one patron at a time.

Additional space in the children's area will house junior fiction and all easy reading level materials. Bright and colorful seating will be enhancing this section. Plans for an increased number of sessions for story hour, computer classes for pre-schoolers, and nursery school tours are now being formulated by our staff and your Library Board. New programs involving juvenile patrons will also be considered, such as: a Read-At-Home summer program for 5, 6 and 7 year olds; Read A Chapter — Introduce An Author; and Dial-A-Story, a recorded service operated by telephone.

The new library will also feature separate working areas for the Librarian and members of the staff. These expanded work areas will enable the staff to be more efficient in their duties and will equate to a higher quality responsiveness to patron's questions and needs.



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With the new library in service, gradual increases in the number of hours the library will be open to the public are expected. These increased hours of operation will be sustained with increases in paid and volunteer staffing. Increasing the size of the collection has received a good beginning this year with a \$10,000 Collection Development Grant from the State Library of Pennsylvania. The new books acquired with these grant monies will be available when the new library opens.

The Multi-Purpose Room with its substantial capacity is expected to be utilized when senior citizen activities are not being programmed. Having this space available will give the Free Library opportunities to schedule lectures, book discussion meetings, and movies for residents and non-residents alike.

The purpose of the Free Library of Northampton Township is to provide informational, recreational and educational services to residents of this rapidly expanding community and surrounding areas in Bucks County. With the advent of the new library building, the Free Library of Northampton Township shall be able to dedicate itself even more to making readily available, to the greatest number of patrons, the most wanted library materials of all kinds, and to become a point of access for any needed information.

**Council Rock Senior Center** — Many of the senior citizens of Northampton Township will see the fruition of a dream with the completion of our Cultural Center which will house a bright, cheerful and efficient Senior Center. The Senior Center was designed to be functional, as well as encourage sociability. Two entrances will be available to the complex; one in conjunction with the library, the other as a private entrance for the Senior Center alone.

Behind the Senior Center, a walking course which was funded by the Bucks County Agency on Aging, The National Fitness Campaign of Wells Fargo Gamefield and Northampton Township will be installed. It is here that seniors can participate in physical exercise and maintain good health habits through a medically designed fitness exercise program. The course is expected to be installed before the Fall of 1985 by volunteers, under the supervision of the Kiwanis Club of Council Rock. Within the Center itself, a lounge designed in soft colors is intended to allow for seniors to socialize and to encourage companionship. Within the lounge television facilities are being provided, as well as a light reading area and a greeter's desk which could be staffed by volunteers to provide information to any visitor to the Center, about the Center's activities and programs or any other information that a senior citizen might desire. Next to the lounge area is a gameroom. Within this gameroom are a number of card tables and a pool table, which are expected to provide many hours of relaxation for both men and women alike.

Lining the front of the interior of the Center are three rooms, each of which are available for certain types of educational and/or conference activities. A small conference room equipped with a conference table and eight to ten chairs will be available for small lecture sessions and/or meetings and will have accommodations for cable television hookup to further enhance its educational capability. A second room will be finished as a small office to house the administration of the Center. The third room in the front of the building is a large meeting room with space for up to 25 chairs. It is anticipated that this larger meeting room could be used for small conferences or various medical or educational programs catering to a larger audience.

The Senior Center is equipped with modern and convenient restrooms, a storage room and finally an arts and crafts room. This room is furnished with several work tables and chairs, as well as adequate storage space and equipment needed by any of the members involved in craft work. Large windows in this room allow for extra light and give the room a brilliance all its own.



The Center also consists of a small but versatile kitchen and the large multi-purpose room which will be able to accommodate up to 200 people in a theater like setting and 100 people in a cafeteria style setting with tables and chairs. The room is designed for a variety of programs as well, and comes equipped with provisions for cable television.

The "Senior Center" as it will be called, will provide many educational programs, some of which may well be provided for and funded by the Bucks County Agency on Aging. The membership of the center will consist of, but not be limited to, residents of Northampton Township, Newtown Township, Newtown Borough, Wrightstown and Upper Makefield Townships. While it is anticipated that the programming and activities will be under the direction of the general membership, the Township will be supporting the actual maintenance operation of the facility.

The Township anticipates that the Senior Center, nearing completion, will be operational by early Fall. Membership in the Senior Center will be by application.

**Northampton Historical Commission Room** — The Northampton Township Historical Commission is pleased to be able to have a room within the new Cultural Center. It is anticipated that the Historical Commission will be using the room to display many of the historical artifacts of Northampton Township already in the Commission's possession and through this display, hopefully, encourage others in the community to donate additional historical pieces. The room is expected to become a focal point for students in the Township who wish to conduct any type of research on our local history. Materials will be provided in the room on such diverse topics as geneology, farm history, and population changes as they relate to Northampton Township.

Naturally, because today's news is tomorrow's history, we will also be attempting to exhibit and preserve current happenings that affect our Township. Special display cases will house artifacts and historical documents relating to the history of Northampton Township and will be maintained by the Commission in the foyer of the new Cultural Center. It is foreseen by the Commission that the Historical room will be utilized frequently by young and old, and as a result, is a logical extension of both the Senior Center and the Free Library. It is therefore fitting that our community's past be housed within the Cultural Center in the belief that by affording our residents with the capability of studying their roots, we can better plan our future.

