



AIRPORT NEWS

Jonathan Martin



Two aerial views of the New Garden Airport showing its early beginning (left) and a recent image (right).

New Garden Airport (Business Highlight)

During 1965 Lex DuPont started acquiring property north of Toughkenamon, between Old Baltimore Pike and the road bed for the new Route 1, Kennett Oxford bypass. This would become New Garden Airport a few years later opening to the public in 1967. In 1972 the primary east/west runway was paved with oil and stone as well as the first 10 unit t-hangars constructed. Additional hangars were built and the runway was overlaid with asphalt in 1975. 1981 the airport was designated as a reliever airport to Philadelphia International Airport. During 1984 the Runway received a 290' extension. In the late 80's the airport constructed more t-hangars and acquired 6 acres of adjoining property for obstruction removal. The rotating beacon was installed in 1989 as well as the fuel farm and the relocation of the access road. Lex and Anne DuPont sold the airport and several acres of surrounding land to New Garden Township in 2007. In 2009 the parallel taxiway was constructed. 2014 the west hangar apron was reconstructed. This year we opened the doors to the Aviation Center, started the east hangar development and will be begin the runway reconstruction project.

New Garden Township purchased the airport primarily with State and Federal grant money in order to ensure that the airport remained an airport, but also for the available land associated with the sale, to sell and develop into a business park to benefit the Township long term.

New Garden Airport is home for 120 based aircraft which all pay a monthly rental fee for a hangar or outside tie down space. These rental fees combined with fuel sales make up about 95% of the airport's annual revenue. According to the most recent Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's operational count, New Garden Airport has increased operations over the previous

study by 28% totaling 27,000 operations per year. This says a lot for our hard-work promoting aviation when compared to other airports across the region who were flat or experienced a decline in operations.

New Garden Airport is a General Aviation (GA) Airport. GA is any civilian flying other than scheduled commercial airline service. The definition encompasses a wide range of aircraft. GA flights range from small homebuilt single engine aircraft, privately owned business aircraft to large jet engine cargo planes. GA also includes services such as flight training, corporate and personal transportation which all play an invaluable part in our regional economy.



New Garden Airport's focus is on the small single and light twin engine aircraft. New Garden Airport offers a flight school, maintenance facility and is home to the Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 240 as well as the Brandywine Soaring Association.

Since 1981 there has been on average 262 airport closures per year in the United States. Many of these airports turn into hundreds of homes, filling what used to be airport open space. New Garden Township's foresight to purchase and preserve the airport in the Township was wise because history has shown that once an airport is closed it isn't coming back. It is truly, a unique and one of a kind opportunity for the Township.

Airports provide communities with jobs, economic and social benefits, tax revenue and a gateway to the national air transportation system. Across the United States there are a total of 5000 public-use airports served by general aviation. GA aircraft fly to more than 10 times the number of airports than the airliners, reaching thousands of rural regions, cities, and towns. All this being said, GA Airports like New Garden provide a significant economic and quality of life benefit not normally considered by community members.

In addition to our aviation tenants, small business and personal aircraft visit New Garden Airport bringing people into the Township, which in turn spend money in our local economy, stay in local hotels, and eat in our local restaurants. Local airports bring a competitive advantage to businesses, help keep employers in our community and bring new industry to the area because of the added value for easy access. Airports provide critical life saving services to the public including "Angel" flights which transport sick patients to distant locations in time of need.



New Garden Airport also plays a role in personal recreation by providing easy access to vacation destinations. Several of our customers use their aircraft for both business and pleasure flying to local destinations such as golf outings, lunch engagements as well as visiting Longwood Gardens, Chadds Ford and the Brandywine Valley.

New Garden Airport's 197 acres promotes open space, recreation and education for the community by way of the Festival of Flight Air Show, Chester County Balloon Festival, Future Aviators Summer Camp, EAA Chapter Pancake Breakfasts, sightseeing flights and more.

A recent study conducted by AOPA (Aircraft Owners and Pilot Association) states that every dollar spent by general aviation generates an additional \$1.52 in economic activity. For every job at the airport, nearly three are created in the visitor-related economy. The Wilber Smith Associates study on Economic Impact of Civil Aviation on the US Economy shows that every dollar spent on airport facility construction generates an additional two dollars in local economic activity and airport development projects produce an impact on the State's economy that is more than 25 times the amount contributed by State and local funds.

Over the last 8 years New Garden Airport has secured close to \$11 Million dollars in Federal and State Grant Funding to improve and develop the infrastructure of the airport. These projects have included the construction of a parallel taxiway, reconstruction of the west apron, new hangars and a new primary runway reconstruction project. The majority of these grants have been Aviation Development Grants which are funded 90% Federal, 5% State and 5% Local. The local share is paid out of the airport's operating budget which is made up of revenue generated at the airport, through hangar rental and fuel sales.



New Garden Airport received Pennsylvania's first Multi Modal Transportation Fund Grant for the construction of our new hangar facility. This Grant made it possible for us to prepare the site-work for two hangar rows, storm water and the construction of the initial hangar row with seven individual t-hangars and two larger box hangars. The airport manages an active hangar waiting list of interested pilots and has secured deposits on all available space for the new hangar complex opening in June. With hangar rent being the primary revenue source for the airport, increased space will positively benefit the Airport's operational budget long term for the Township.

Additional based aircraft will fuel the economic engine of the airport with flight school and maintenance facility utilization and fuel sales.

Several years ago the airport established a Mission to be a visible resource in the local community providing premier customer service for the general aviation and business communities, focusing on our core values of camaraderie, community, education and the future of the 21st Century aviator. Our work over the last several years has proven our commitment to the success of the Township's Airport. We consider community outreach and education paramount to success of not just New Garden Airport but General Aviation as a whole. The Future Aviators Summer Camp was developed, designed and implemented to expose youth to aviation in our community and communities across the United States, right here at our airport for two weeks during the summer.



The aging pilot population is a national problem faced by our industry and one that we are combating locally through the Future Aviators Program. The Summer Camp started in 2009 with 28 campers and has grown to 160 campers last year. Campers have attended the program from all over our local area as well as California, North and South Carolina,

Texas, New York, Delaware and New Jersey. The Future Aviators Camp was asked to be showcased at the Millville, NJ Air Show in 2015. Last year we were invited to take part in a round

table discussion about the success of our summer program at the National Aviation Convention in Oshkosh Wisconsin, which attract 500,000 people annually. Over the last 8 years several campers who have gone through our program developed into youth counselors, entered into the flight school for training and received their Private Pilot License on their 17th birthday.

These educational and community outreach programs combined with the necessary safety and infrastructural improvements to the airport will pave the way for the future success of the Township's Airport. I would personally like to invite you to stop by the airport and see why we say New Garden (N57) Airport is not just an airport, but also a destination.

Jonathan Martin
Aviation Director
New Garden Township

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Benefiting youth organizations in New Garden and Kennett Square