



Notes from the Academy

SEPTEMBER 2021 | VOL. 3 NO. 3

Middletown School Opens

From the *Middletown Transcript* 100 years ago, September 17th, 1921
Transcription starting on page 3

The Middletown School opened Monday morning with the Board of Education present to greet and welcome both teachers and pupils. A number of mothers showed their interest by accompanying their children. It was inspiring to behold the children as they approached the school contemplating a year's profitable work and a season of happy association with their playmates. This was strengthened by the increased numbers arriving in the busses from Townsend, Odessa, Mt. Pleasant and other outlying territory.

When the classes were assembled and the final count registered, it was found that the enrollment had surpassed all previous opening records, there being 220 in the grades and 86 in the High School. This number has since increased to a total of 311.

The local School Board ever interested in the welfare of all the boys and girls, had anticipated this increase and had made provision for taking care of all by adding an extra room and teacher to the grade corps. This places a teacher in charge of each grade group in the elementary school; provides for excellent departmental work in the upper grammar grades, and places the elementary school on a par with the best in the state.

Our High School is growing rapidly. The number in attendance now is 20% greater than one year ago, while the teaching force in the High has not been increased. This condition necessitated a longer school day in order

to properly care for the additional classes. Under conditions as they now are, it is necessary to begin the school day at 8.45, dispense with a part of the recess time and dismiss at 3.45.

For quite awhile the mothers have been interested in securing proper playground equipment. As a result of the splendid work done by the Parent-Teacher Association in co-operation with the efforts of the school, some excellent equipment has been added, consisting of a slide, sea-saws, horizontal bars, and other minor equipment, thus providing a definite means of spontaneous, and happy exercises for the children. This means real joyful recreation so essential to the best work and health.

Health education is being worked out in the High School. Thirty minutes daily is to be devoted to this work, all High School pupils taking part. Text books will be used as guides, yet the work will be made vital by frequently using the open air as a means of promoting the very things we are developing in theory in the class room. We do not want a pupil to do as one did in Mississippi, make 98 in physiology and hygiene, and faint as soon as the examination is over. This program of health education will extend down into the grades. Each teacher will not merely make the best use of the class room hours, but will, also, through supervised play, make the best use of the time the children are out on the grounds.

FACULTY

Principal—O. E. McKnight.
Mathematics—Miss Ida V. Howell.
Vocational Agriculture—Mr. E. P. Vogel.
English and Science—Miss Elizabeth Jones.
Home Economics—Miss Elizabeth Houston.
Languages—Mr. A. F. Riser.
8th Grade—Miss Mabel Price.
7th Grade—Miss Mame Rebman.
6th Grade—Miss Elizabeth Thomas.
5th Grade, (substitute)—Mrs. W. H. Jump.
5th Grade, (regular)—Miss Pauline Wiley.
4th Grade—Mrs. Loddie Rhoades.
3d Grade—Miss Elsie Jones.
2d Grade—Miss Helen Stradley.
1st Grade—Miss Jennie Rickards.

Miss Coffin resigned a short time ago to accept a position as County Supervisor in Caroline Co., Md. Miss Stradley comes to us from Galena, Md., where she has been engaged a number of years in the primary department.

While circumstances did not permit all our teachers to attend summer school, a splendid showing in this line was made.

Miss Howell attended Columbia University; Mr. Vogel a short course in Penn. State; Miss Rebman, the State Normal at Florence, Ala.; Mrs. Rhoades and Miss Elsie Jones, University of Delaware; Miss Stradley taught Physical education in the University of Pennsylvania, and took work as well and Miss Rickards attended the University of Virginia. Miss Wiley has been engaged in Chautauqua work all summer. She is expected to begin her work here Tuesday.

Highlights in this Issue

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From the Transcript*

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Research Paper Contest

The Society is conducting its fifth annual historical research paper competition, with papers to be submitted on or before October 30, 2021. The Board of Directors has established up to \$3,500 to be paid in cash prize awards that will be distributed to place winners and honorable mention contestants. The Society is offering this competition to build student interest in history, specifically Middletown history, and to introduce them to the joy and satisfaction of ferreting out a story from long forgotten facts and sources. This year's topic will be based on early Middletown street names. The preliminary rules of the competition, and the street names that may be selected, are now posted on our [website](#).



Middletown Academy, Middletown, Delaware, MHS Collection

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Transcription from page 1

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The Academy Building is referenced as the school in the above article. It is now home to the Middletown Historical Society and Middletown Main Street, Inc.

From the Desk of the President

While it's been a quiet summer, the Historical Society has been busily working behind the scenes preparing for new spaces, caring for our collections, and greeting the public both on site and at special events.

The Society is working with the Town of Middletown and Middletown Main Street to improve accessibility to spaces on the first floor of the Academy. Look for additional details about these projects in the coming months.

Over the summer, the Society has put together a team of volunteers to catalog and rehouse some of our collections. This has included objects like postcards, a baseball card, prints, maps, and even a painting or two. Our volunteers love the opportunity to learn more about the care of collections and the history of Middletown through these objects!

Of course, we not only enjoy caring for the physical artifacts that tell Middletown's history we also delight in sharing that history. On August 21st the Volunteer Brewing Company held a celebration for their 4th birthday! The Historical Society had an excited group of volunteers onsite at the Brewing Company ready to greet the public. The booth was overflowing with different items that the Society brought, from our Images of America, Middletown book (co-authored by Shauna McVey and the Society), the 100th Anniversary Booklet, note cards, an 1880s reproduction map of Middletown, Peach Festival paraphernalia, and peaches which were made available for sale. Volunteers put together bags of marbles for children to take home, as well as a thaumatrope craft which included advertisements from the Middletown Transcript of other such toys that were available. The weather was perfect and a good time was had by all! Many thanks to our volunteers who manned the table: Mary Alice Agular, Phyllis Waecker, and David and Alison Matsen!

Items from the Collection

One of the newest items donated to our collection is a pair of Frisbees from Pappy's Restaurant, one of which is pictured below. These Frisbees enlarge our holdings about Pappy's as the Society already had a Styrofoam boater style hat, pictured below. Pappy's, from the 1970s into the 1990s, was where Middletown's, and the surrounding areas, residents went for a spaghetti dinner or one of their hand-tossed pizza pies. What do you remember of Pappy's? It originally opened in the 300 block of North Broad Street. A fond memory of those who dined there was watching the cooks make the pizzas in the viewable kitchen. When Pappy's moved outside of town, north of Frog Crossing, children could step into the nook that was the viewing platform for the pizza area of the kitchen. The smells of fresh baked pizza crust, melting cheese, and the many seasonings mixed with the good times had with one's family make some of the most delicious memories of a Middletown childhood. Excuse me while I go order a pizza!



Fall Programs

On the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm, the Society welcomes the public for special programs.

Sept. 21: We heard an interesting talk by Alison Matsen about German migration to this area.

Oct. 19: Terry Wiley, MG RET-DE, CASA DE has numerous experiences from growing up in Middletown, to serving the United States in Vietnam, and working with the Delaware Army National Guard. Final topic TBD.

Nov. 16: Student awards for research papers about local street names.

Dec.21: Tours at 3 pm and at 7:30 pm in Odessa of the "Little Women" Yuletide exhibit. \$5 per person. Meet at the old Bank Building on Main Street.

Contact Us!

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Mary Alice Aguilar
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Brian Rickards
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Dale Wyatt

The Middletown Historical Society collects, preserves, educates, and encourages the development of Middletown's history in order to foster historic awareness and pride in our community.