



Notes from the Academy

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Teens on the Town: Middletown and the Roaring '20s

The Middletown Historical Society presents a new exhibition, which was opened in time for the Olde Tyme Peach Festival! “Teens on the Town: Middletown and the Roaring ‘20s” showcases the stories of two teenagers who grew up in and near Middletown--Jay Davis, Jr. and Frances Reed, pictured at right. We learn of their experiences: through Jay’s diary, theater scripts, and personal photos; Frances’s photo album; and articles in *The Middletown Transcript*. This exhibition also enables the Society to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Everett Theatre! Many changes happened during the 1920s that Jay and Frances had to navigate--from going to the movies, school, evolutions in fashion and dance, and prohibition. Visit our exhibition and try your hand at theater on our reproduction stage, or learn to dance the Charleston!



Highlights in this Issue

*Teens on the Town:
Middletown and the
Roaring '20s*

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New Ride at the Society

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From our Collections

~

*Thinking About the
Future*

~

*Olde Tyme Peach
Festival*

Photo Gallery

~

*From the Desk of the
President*

~

Upcoming Programs

New Ride at the Historical Society

A new addition to the Society is our chair lift! The Society has been working to make our building more accessible, including creating more exhibition space on the first floor. The chair lift will now make our upstairs exhibitions available. Be sure to try the new “ride” at the Society!



Help us Paint our Shutters!

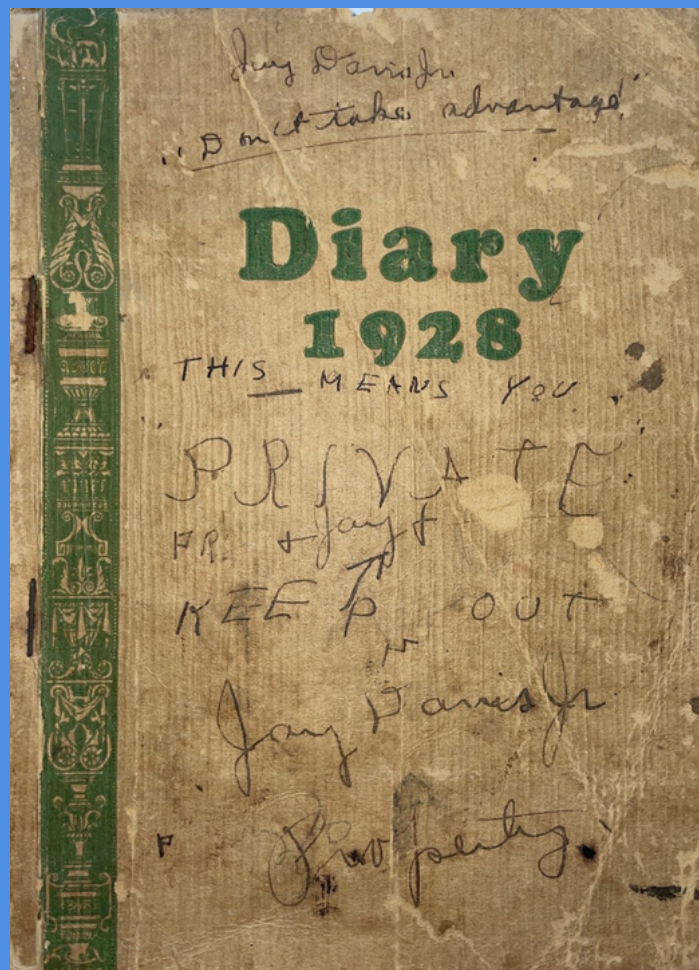
On October 14 (in the afternoon) and 15 (in the morning) join us as we paint our shutters! Please bring or consider donating paint brushes for oil-based painting and latex based painting.

Membership!

A reminder that membership renewals are due by the end of the year. It's \$10 per person or \$20 for a family. Checks should be made out to the Middletown Historical Society and sent to the attention of MaryAlice Aguilar, P.O. Box 567, Middletown, DE 19709

From Our Collections

As part of preparing for our newest exhibition, we selected a number of objects that would help tell the stories of the Everett Theatre and life in Middletown in the 1920s. Research led us to the diary of Jay Davis, Jr. Jay (February 16, 1910- January 16, 1986) grew up in Middletown. He graduated from high school which was meeting in the Academy building. He participated at his home church, Bethesda Methodist, often singing solos on Sundays. The most often documented experience, though, for Jay was going to the movies or participating in the school play, both of which happened at the Everett Theatre. All of this was learned through Jay's diary. He kept the diary from January to December 1929. It gives us a window into his daily activities, as well as the happenings in the lives of others living in and around Middletown. Jay references his sister, Kathryn, meeting Ralph. Kathryn would eventually marry Ralph, which we learned from other sources. The diary also talks about his school friends, the accompanists that helped him when he sang at Bethesda, and many others. In today's digital world keeping a diary is a great way to document the big and little things that make up everyday life.



Thinking about the Future



Strategic planning allows the Society to plan for the future. During our last strategic plan, we were able to build relationships with our local community through an Art Show with the Appoquinimink High School Honors Arts Society, design and implement four new exhibitions, improve our collection storage, and much more. Much of this was done during the pandemic and showcases the strengths of small organizations that are flexible and adaptable. As we start to plan for the next three years, we're seeking the opinions of our members and friends to help guide the Society's next steps. The focus of our next strategic plan will be on growing and retaining our volunteer and membership corps. Please take the 7 minutes to fill out the below survey, and share it with your friends who have an interest in the Society and its future!

<https://forms.gle/h9Ztxkr89YnmEeE18>

Olde Tyme Peach Festival

The Society was delighted to welcome back its flagship event, The Olde Tyme Peach Festival! After not holding the event for two years due to the pandemic, we were back better than ever! The Society welcomed many guests over the course of the day. Our living history group recreated the 1925/1926 Peach Festival that was held by Bethesda Methodist's Epworth League. Please enjoy these photos from the day!



Olde Tyme Peach Festival Photos



Olde Tyme Peach Festival Photos



Olde Tyme Peach Festival Photos



From the Desk of the President

There is always a lot going on behind the scenes at the Historical Society, and this summer was no different. From the installation of exhibitions, care of collections, and preparation for the Olde Tyme Peach Festival, our volunteers and staff have been going above and beyond to create opportunities and experiences for our friends and guests. We are so excited to be unveiling our new exhibition “Teens on the Town: Middletown and the Roaring ‘20s”. We welcomed many visitors to the Society during the Olde Tyme Peach Festival. The day was wonderful with many different participants welcoming back our flagship event. As we look forward to more events, programs, exhibitions, and other activities, please be sure to help us plan for the future by taking the survey at this [link](#). While planning over the pandemic has been difficult, we were able to move forward on a number of initiatives that fostered historic awareness and pride in our community. Thank you for all your support and we look forward to seeing you on site soon!



Upcoming Programs

Oct. 18, 7:30 pm, at the Historical Society:

Enjoy a silent film shown at the Everett Theatre in 1928!

Nov. 15, 7:30 pm, at the Historical Society:

Monthly Public Program: Listen to Maj. Gen. Terry Wiley reminisce about his experiences in the military

Dec. 20: Tours at 3pm & 7:30pm, at Historic Odessa

Tour of Historic Odessa Foundation's Exhibition on Oliver Twist. \$5 per person. RSVP to Alison Matsen at 302-740-5544



Contact Us!

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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.