



Notes from the Academy

SUMMER 2023 | VOL. 5 NO. 2

From the Desk of the President

Summer is an exciting time as we gear up for the Olde Tyme Peach Festival and unveil new exhibitions. A big thank you goes to Bruce and Sarah O'Donnell for their help installing our new art hanging system in the community room! Because of their work, we are delighted to hang our new exhibition "Fear to Freedom: The Flight of the Hawkins Family".

While we prepare for our larger undertaking, the more regular work of the Society continues. Our summer intern, Pamela Ahern, a Ph.D candidate at the University of Delaware, has started her internship. Pamela has a passion for archival and collections management and we look forward to working with her.

In May, we hosted our annual research paper awards ceremony. Students were asked to do research in a different way this time by interviewing a local community member and creating an oral history. Caroline Miller, who interviewed Jeanne Buckworth, won first place and an award of \$1,861 in honor of the year Middletown was incorporated. Congratulations to her and many thanks to our amazing volunteers who ran the program this year.



Highlights in this Issue

*From the Desk of the
President*

~

*Volunteer for the Peach
Festival*

~

Exhibitions Opening

~

Peach Festival Fun

~

*Volunteering at the
Society*

~

*Objects from the
Collection*

~

*Sale of Artworks of Local
Scenes*

Volunteer for the Peach Festival

As the peach trees start to swell with fruit, it's time to be thinking of the Olde Tyme Peach Festival on the third Saturday in August. We're planning to have a great day on August 19, 2023. As usual, we rely on volunteers to help out by taking a two-hour shift sometime between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

If you can help (many jobs to choose from), please call or text Alison Matsen at 302-740-5544.



Opening two new Exhibitions



You are welcome to join us for the opening of two coordinated exhibitions on July 22nd from 6-8 pm! “Courage and Compassion: Middletown and the Underground Railroad” and “Fear to Freedom: Flight of the Hawkins Family” both focus on the underground railroad and the work done by local abolitionists. “Fear to Freedom” is a collaborative exhibition between the Middletown Historical Society and the art students of Appoquinimink High School, and explores the experience of the Hawkins family in their flight to freedom through Middletown. The opening is free to the public, and light refreshments will be served.



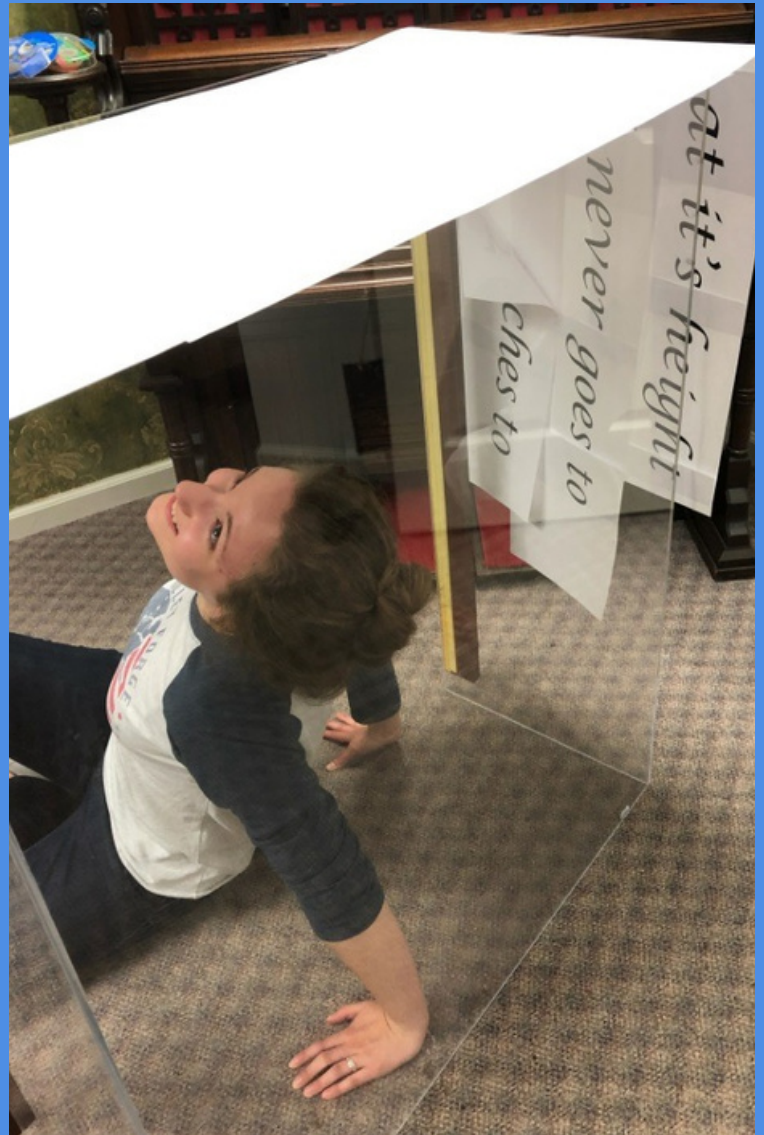
Peach Festival Fun

Be sure to visit the Historical Society when we host the 30th annual Olde Tyme Peach Festival on Saturday, August 19th! All of the Society's exhibitions will be open, and we will have many community guests, from the M.O.T. Jean Birch Senior Center selling peach baked goods, the local chapter of the D.A.R. doing genealogical research, and many different public historians outside! For more information please visit: <https://middletownpeachfestival.com>



Volunteering at the Society

Like many small museums and cultural organizations, the Middletown Historical Society gets its work done through the help of volunteers. Many of our volunteers enjoy the socialization, giving back to their community, and learning new things! The Society welcomes volunteers of all ages from high school students upward! One of our high school volunteers frequently states that volunteering at the society is the highlight of their week! Volunteers generously give of their time in caring for the society's collections, running outreach programs, installing exhibitions, and much more! If you are looking for something to do this summer, please consider the Historical Society! Reach out to Abby at Abbyharting@gmail.com for more information.



Objects from our Collection

Anyone who's ever watched a period drama probably knows what "calling cards" are. A visitor typically would give his/her card to the employee who opened the door, and the employee would show it (perhaps laid on a silver salver) to the lady of the house, and she would decide whether or not she was "at home", in other words, available to talk with the visitor.

The calling cards here were used by MOT people in the very early years of the 20th century, and were part of a collection kept by the family who lived in the 18th century house at Noxontown Mill. How many names do you recognize?



Rosetta and Mary Evans lived in the house; Mary married Norman C. Hicks. Turpin Rose was their maternal grandfather. He supervised the building of Old St. Paul's Church in Odessa. Harry Culver ran a drugstore on Main Street in Middletown, and the Brocksons are the ancestors of Irv Brockson, who lives near Silver Lake. Vandegrifts, Prices, Cochrans and Kings are families who have lived here since the 18th and 19th centuries.



Sale of Artworks of Local Scenes

David Ohlerking is a plein air artist who travels the United States. His paintings are being featured at the Historical Society through the Olde Tyme Peach Festival. The artworks show local M.O.T. structures and townscapes. Above is an image of 208 N. Broad St. in Middletown. The works will be available for purchase for \$50 each with the funds going to the Society. This will be a dutch auction with the price of the paintings decreasing over the course of the day. We thank Mr. Ohlerking for his generosity! Be sure to see the paintings at the Academy.

Contact Us

(302) 378-7466

mhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

**Open first Friday and third
Saturday from 1-4 pm**

Or by appointment call

Alison Matsen at 302-740-5544

Physical Address:

216 N. Broad St.

Middletown, DE 19709

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 567

Middletown, DE 19709

Like us on [Facebook](#)

Middletown Historical Society
Board of Directors

President-Linda Harting

Vice-President-Patsy Warner

Secretary-Dale Wyatt

Treasurer-Mary Alice Aguilar

Members-at-Large

Louise Atwell

Linda Biggs

David Matsen

Brian Rickards

Phyllis Waecker



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.