



Newsletter of the Middletown Township Historical Society

Vol. VIII, No. 1

Summer 2003

We have been quiet, but oh so busy!

The Middletown Township Historical Society has been busy the past year. Not only have we restarted the Newsletter (the last issue was published in 1994), but we have a new exhibit, "Our Road to Liberty", and have been reorganizing our library and collections. We have alphabetized and filed most of the thousands of newspaper clippings, cleared out the storage rooms and installed shelving units, inventoried the books in the library, and began creating individual collections for the manuscripts.

We hope to enhance our preservation systems in the near future. Our current project entails going through the many file cabinets of title searches and other legal documents and establishing a detailed record of what we have. We will be removing them from the badly disintegrating boxes they are currently housed in and placing them temporarily into sturdier boxes until we can get good filing cabinets.

Last year we began contacting the Township's public and private schools to ask for yearbook donations. We were so successful that we requested yearbooks again this past June, and again have been pleased with the interest that the schools have shown. We hope to be as successful when we reach out to the Township's houses of worship and fire companies to ask for donations of items.

The biggest roadblock that we seem to face is lack of exposure. Few people in the community know that we even exist. Even one of the elementary school principals who has been a resident for over 15 years didn't know about us! We have been successful in getting meeting announcements listed in the various local newspapers, but we need to get our name and mission out to the public even more. Our meeting attendance has been way up the past months, but we would like more people to visit on Sundays when the museum is open. Spread the word! We look forward to seeing you!

Our Road to Liberty

The new exhibit at the Middletown Township Historical Society presents Middletown Township as the area of British retreat after the Battle of Monmouth, but also shows the ordinary people and places that were affected by the Revolutionary War. Through pictures and text, "Our Road to Liberty" sheds light on littler known incidents that we now know more about.

The killing of patriot Joseph Murray by three loyalists as he was planting in the fields of his Middletown farm is well known. There was also a Quaker woman, Ann Whitall, who remained in her home in Gloucester County and sat at her spinning wheel as the two armies fought on her land for Fort Mercer.

Some of the known heroes are Capt. Joshua Huddy of the Monmouth County Artillery who was captured by loyalists, escaped by jumping off a ship and swimming to the Sea Bright shore, only to be recaptured and hung without warrant. Ordinary militiamen such as

Micheal Field are also remembered. He was killed and buried on the battlefield, but unlike other dead soldiers, his burial spot is marked.

Panels include confrontations that occurred at Rumson and Navesink, skirmishes to prevent the British from moving stolen supplies to Sandy Hook, and rescues of patriot prisoners of war.

Names that are very familiar to us today such as Stockton and Hartshorne belonged to ordinary people 225 years ago. The exhibit explains what they did to gain their prominent place in our history. We also remember those with small roles who impacted greatly such as John Jacob-Faesch, an ironmaker who provided the Continental Army with ammunition.

There are books on display that discuss the battles of the war, photos of churches that were made into makeshift hospitals and houses that were used for various important events. There is a display that depicts through contemporary photos the British route through Red Hill Road, Chapel Hill and Kings Highway on their way to Sandy Hook and waiting ships that would take them to New York.

The exhibit also includes maps, reproduction clothing and some artifacts.

The museum is open every Sunday, 1-4 P.M. and by special appointment by calling 732-291-2835.

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NEWSLETTER, PLEASE CONTACT THE EDITOR.

Calling all CHA Alums & Faculty !

Howard Goch, a teacher at Croydon Hall Academy from 1965-1975, visited the Museum in June and shared his memories of his time here. He walked through the first floor of the MacLeod-Rice House and talked about what the various rooms were used for and also shared his memories of Dr. Carr and the decade he spent as a faculty member. Are you a Croydon Hall Academy alum, alumna, staff or faculty or know of one? We'd love to hear from you! What do you remember about the time you spent here? What would you like to forget? Send us your memories for a future newsletter.

"Name our Newsletter" Contest

We need a snappy name for our newsletter - do you have any suggestions? Let us know. The winner will receive a Middletown Township Historical Society Tee-shirt.

Lend a Hand

We are looking for people to help us with our various committees. We need volunteers who would like to lend a hand in our library, with the newsletter, fund raising, landscaping, exhibits, and our future web page. We are a small group of dedicated volunteers who want to keep the history of Middletown Township and the Bayshore alive and available. Please join us. If you can give an hour or two contact Laura Poll at 732-291-3165.

Thanks So Much

The Historical Society is grateful for the recent donations of manpower, office equipment and postage over the past few months as we reorganize our office and library. Many thanks go to Jim Coughlin and Eileen Toner for their tireless help in the library; Domonic Koehler for his help in doing small repairs in the office, installing a cabinet and shelving units in the storage room, installing blinds in the museum, hooking up the new doorbell and donating a computer and desk; Ray Veth of Beacon Awards & Signs for a New Jersey State flag; Marlene Poll for the drapes in the library, a bookcase, folding tables and other much needed office equipment; the New Jersey Library Association for magazine storage boxes; and an anonymous donor for the postage to send out meeting announcements and membership letters. Thank you all!

Back in Business

Jersey Joe's is back in business! After nearly 20 years, Joe's son Frank Giola reopened the store over Memorial Day weekend. Can't miss it - right across the street from the Spy House on Port Monmouth Road (732-787-5779). We want to hear about other businesses from the past that are reopening (or have never closed). Drop us a line.

Wish List

We could use a small refrigerator to keep our lunches and water bottles cool during the hot summer months ahead.

Future Meetings

July 21st - Monmouth County Electric Company - Operators of the area's first trolley line. Guest speaker Timothy J. McMahon

August 18th - Our annual meeting at the Twin Lights, complete with slide show by Tom Lavery and a climb of the South Tower for a spectacular night view. Meet at the Twin Lights at 8:00 PM

September 15th - To be announced

Our meetings are held at 8:00 PM on the third Monday of every month at the MacLeod-Rice House (except August).

Don't forget to come out to Middletown Day on Saturday, September 20th - 11:00 AM to 6 PM



MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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DEDICATED TO RESEARCHING, COLLECTING, AND EXHIBITING THE HISTORY OF
MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP

EDITOR: LAURA POLL

Meetings: 8:00 P.M., the third Monday of every month at the MacLeod-Rice House,
Croydon Hall. At the Intersection of Leonardville Road and Chamone Avenue, Leonardo.

Museum open every Sunday (May-Oct.) 1-4 P.M.

MEMBERSHIP DUES PER CALENDAR YEAR

Individual	\$5.00
Family	\$10.00
Sustaining	\$25.00
Dues for new members joining after Oct. 1 include the following year.	