

May 2018 Newsletter

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Middletown Township Historical Society's May Happenings

This newsletter is meant to keep you updated on the latest events and news of the Middletown Township Historical Society. Also, be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) for even timelier news and for historical items of interest.



New Jersey and the Great War, 1914-1919

Presented by Richard J. Connors, Ph.D.
May 21, 2018 | 7:00 pm | Poricy Park Nature Center
Middletown Township Historical Society

Speaker Event: Monday, May 21, 2018

"NEW JERSEY AND THE GREAT WAR" presented by Richard J. Connors, Ph.D.

Richard J. Connors, Ph.D., emeritus professor of history at Seton Hall

University, will speak at the Monday, May 21 meeting of the Middletown Township Historical Society about his new book, "New Jersey in the Great War, 1914-1919." Our state had a major role in the war even prior to America's entry, as New Jersey became a manufacturer of munitions during the early years. In addition, most soldiers encamped in New Jersey prior to departing for France. Dr. Connors will also speak about New Jersey's two fighting divisions, the 29th and 78th. His book will be available for purchase and autographing.

We hope to see you Monday, May 21 at 7:00 pm at the Poricy Park Nature Center, 345 Oak Hill Road, Middletown, NJ. There is no fee for admittance!

Do you have suggestions for upcoming speakers? If so, please contact [Randall Gabrielan](#), our Program Chair.

Welcome to Our New Trustee!

The Society has filled an open trustee position by appointing Marianne Sweet, who will also serve in the role of Secretary. Marianne is a new member of the Society, but she has demonstrated an active interest in promoting the history and heritage of Middletown in the years she has lived here. She is a Volunteer Historic House and Museum Docent for the Monmouth County Historical Association's Marlpit Hall and Taylor-Butler House, a member of Middletown Township's Historic Preservation Commission, and a member of numerous other historical and genealogical groups. Her professional experience in communications and project management will also be a help as we continue to reorganize and look to expand our reach.

The Trustees look forward to working with Marianne!

Thoughts on Member Participation

from Randall Gabrielan, President Emeritus and Program Chair

At his first meeting as president, Tom Valenti gave an earnest, even heartfelt, call for support. He deserves and needs a wider audience and will no-doubt share some of these sentiments in this online newsletter. I wish to add my own thoughts as I have done nearly every task associated with the Middletown

Township Historical Society and have learned from observation of many other local societies over the years.

The greatest need for any historical group is membership participation. Paying dues is a start and attending meetings indicates elevated levels of interest and caring. Participating in some society event or activity is an even higher sign of support. Tom and the society need your support. After our expulsion from the MacLeod-Rice House we suffer a handicap that a few other organizations share-- lack of a permanent home. However, underlying this drawback is the realization that any historical activity is more rewarding when engaged with others whether it is research, genealogy, books, oral presentations or writing. One wishes we could add exhibitions to the list, but not for the time-being, at least.

Equally important is the expectation that one person not need to do too much on his own or remain in a position too long, something I know from experience. The most viable societies are those that generate not only new members, but members who will rise to roles of responsibility. A changing of leadership is an important juncture in the life of any organization. At this point we are not necessarily looking for new leaders, but an injection of new interest. Our trustees need your help. The historical society needs your help. Think of how history can be made more meaningful in Middletown and, for a start, come to a meeting if you have not. If you have, become a regular. When the opportunity to help arises, think of what you can do.



How You Can Help

To follow up on Randy's words, we want to reiterate how much this Society needs the support of those reading this. If you value the aims of the Society, we ask that you please support us both when we put out a call for volunteers and also via membership dues. Volunteer opportunities will be coming soon, but for now if you are interested in continuing your membership, please remit the form that was mailed to

you, or [contact us](#) and we will let you know how you can join or contribute! Thank you.

April Event Recap

Professor Melissa Ziobro gave a timely presentation on the subject of American women marrying into European royalty. These so-called "Dollar Princesses" created much interest and controversy in their time. Thank you to Professor Ziobro and to all those who were able to attend!



[More info on Professor Ziobro](#)



Other Upcoming Events of Interest

In addition to our own event, you may be interested in the following historic-themed events occurring in the Middletown area in the coming weeks:

- [MAN FAILURE: The Story of New Jersey's Deadliest Train Wreck](#) - In case you missed this presentation at an MTHS event last year, catch it at the Middletown Library at 7:00 pm on **Wednesday, May 9**
- [The Promise of Land: Early African American Land Ownership in Monmouth County](#) - Historical Land Title expert Joseph Grabas will present at 2:00 pm on **Saturday, May 12** at the Monmouth County Library

- [Battery Lewis Dedication](#) - The historic World War II military installation in Hartshorne Woods has been restored and interpreted. Dedication Ceremony is on **Saturday, May 19** at 10:00 am, though you may want to plan to arrive earlier
- [Community Fossil Hunt](#) - Middletown Township Recreation will host this event at 11:00 am on **Sunday, May 27** for junior paleontologists at the Poricy Park Fossil Beds. Reservation and fee apply.
- [Mother-Daughter Colonial Tea](#) - Held in the historic Murray Farmhouse in Poricy Park at 10:00 am on **Saturday, June 2**. Reservation and fee apply.

Do you know of other events our readers would benefit from? [Let us know!](#)



Trivia Time

On May 19, Battery Lewis in Hartshorne Woods Park will officially unveil its restoration, as conducted by Monmouth County Parks. Do you know the full name of the Lewis it was named after? Extra credit: what school did he attend?

Answers will be supplied in next month's newsletter!

Thanks for reading! The Middletown Township Historical Society will be in touch again soon! If you know others who would be interested in receiving communications from us, please forward this email and ask them to [join this list!](#)



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