

**Report of the Executive Director  
New Castle Historical Society  
May 31, 2009**

**Museums**

- Admissions at the NCHS museums and programs total 1,926 through May 16, 2009. Visitation for the same period in 2008 totaled 2,333, reflecting a decrease of 17.4% in 2009.
- Total attendance for ADIONC at the Amstel House was 137 and 269 at the Dutch House. The Old Library Museum was not open in 2009 due to construction. This represents an overall an overall decrease of over 30% from 2008 attendance of 360 at the Dutch House and 222 at the Amstel House.
- New roofs have been installed on the outbuildings at the Amstel House and Dutch House properties. The outbuildings will be painted beginning on May 22.
- Work is underway at the Amstel House kitchen with the fireplace and chimney restoration. The fireplace has been opened back to its original size. New discoveries include original plaster for the firebox, a flue for the bake oven, use of a lug pole instead of a crane, and square bricks used for paving the hearth. The chimney is also in the process of reconstruction. The original construction of the chimney is not traditional in that the chimney has hollow cavities between the flues rather than solid masonry. These are unsafe for use and will be filled in. Rebecca Sheppard from UD CHAD visited on May 18 to examine the chimney.
- HAC reviewed and approved the mortar mix for use in the chimney project on May 20.
- The *New Castle Nuptials* exhibit has been postponed until 2010 due to construction at the Old Library Museum. The Friends of the New Castle Library may mount an exhibit about the history of the New Castle Library Company later this year.

**Programs**

- A blog has been established to detail the progress of the preservation projects at the Amstel and Dutch houses. The URL is <http://preservingnewcastle.blogspot.com/>.
- The Arasapha Garden Club will hold their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary tea on June 4 in the Amstel House garden. The tea is by invitation only, and recreates a historic tea held in the garden decades ago.
- A total of 38 people are joining NCHS on our bus trip to Gettysburg on June 27 & 28.

**Collections & Archives**

- The Society received a donation of several secondary history books from William Brumbley: *The Dutch & Quaker Colonies in America, Vols. I & II*, 1899; *Little Known History of Newark, Delaware and its Environs*, 1936; *What Them Befell – The Ridgelys of Delaware & Their Circle*, 1949; and *Decorative Antique Ironwork*, 1968.
- A recent oil painting of the New Castle Court House cupola has been offered to the Society for acquisition. The collections committee has decided not to accept the painting due to its limited significance and space and care considerations.