



FRI & SAT, MAY 2 & 3

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DOVER | LEGISLATIVE MALL | THE GREEN

OFFICIAL 2025 PROGRAM

EVENT SCHEDULE | PERFORMER PROFILES | FESTIVAL MAP WITH PARADE ROUTE



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WELCOME *to* DOVER DAYS!



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COVER ART:

"View from the Old State House" by Kiara Florez.

Read more about the artist, Page 4

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A beautiful day on The Green

View from the Old State House” was chosen for this year’s cover of the Dover Days Festival Program.

Kiara Florez, an acrylic-based artist, said her painting for Dover Days depicts the Old State House on The Green. It captures an area that Ms. Florez said the people of Dover really love and enjoy. The Green is one of her own favorite places in the city.

“I work right here on the Green, so I’m constantly looking at the landscape as it changes throughout the seasons,” she said. “Working in a historical building gives me a sense of the legacy and history that, especially Dover in particular, has been carrying for a super long time.”

The building in the back of the painting is a part of the 1521 admin building, which is where Ms. Florez works. She shared that she included that to put a sense of herself in the artwork.

“I wanted to capture just a beautiful day just right on The Green, looking at a historic house, and use all my lovely colors in it,” she said.

Since 2022, she has worked as a development associate at the Biggs Museum in Dover.

Ms. Florez, who has been living in Delaware for eight years, describes her art style process as being very intuitive based and inspired by nature. When she begins painting, she does not create any sketches or drafts.

“I just start painting, and whatever happens, happens,” she said.

She also enjoys “using all the colors of the rainbow.”



Ms. Florez expressed her appreciation for the Biggs Museum and their commitment to showcasing local art, as well as the Dover Art League.

“I want to always let people know, wherever they are in Delaware, hey, there’s also art in Kent County. Don’t forget about Dover: the heart of Delaware, the capital,” she added.

Learn more about Ms. Florez and her artwork at www.kianflo.com.



Kiara Florez

DOVER DAYS 2025

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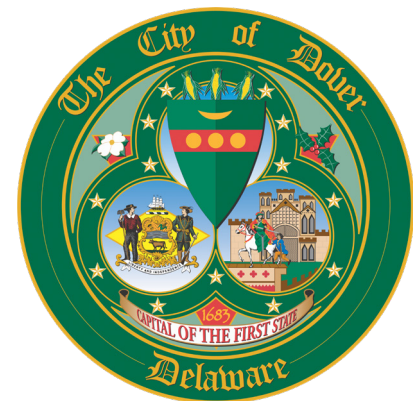
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GREETINGS FROM THE DOVER DAYS COMMITTEE



As members of the Dover Days Celebration Committee, we want to give you a warm welcome to the 92nd Annual Dover Days! We have a jam-packed Friday evening and Saturday planned for you.

Come down to Legislative Mall on Friday evening to get dinner (or dessert) from the food vendors and either settle in for a performance by the Milford Community Band. Or take a free lantern tour with the staff at First State Heritage Park, meeting at the John Bell House on the Green at 7 p.m.

At dusk, there will be a fireworks show to kick off this year's celebration!

Saturday morning, either begin your day extra early at Wesley United Methodist's All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast or save your desired spot to view the parade as it comes

down State Street to the Green beginning at 9 a.m. The rest of the day you have your pick of shopping from local vendors (now all surrounding Legislative Mall), getting a new view of Dover via the tethered hot-air balloon, watching colonial folk band Ampersand perform, visiting museums and historic sites ... you'll just have to read the rest of this program to plan out your day. The festival runs through 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 3.

There's a lot going on for this year's Dover Days Festival – so much that you might not be able to fit it all in! Remember that many of these same sites are open year-round for you to enjoy their programming, educate your friends and family about Dover's history and cultural arts, and even volunteer for them, if you are so inclined.

The Dover Days Celebration re-

mains a team effort, with the committee being made up of representatives from the City of Dover, Downtown Dover Partnership, Friends of Old Dover, First State Heritage Park, the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, and Kent County Tourism, as well as several additional members from the community.

What we love about Dover Days is the way it brings the Dover area together for a celebration of our history and heritage while looking toward the future. We look forward to the young children dancing around the maypole, playing games, learning our area's history, all while remembering our own childhoods and thinking: when did we get so grown up? May we never grow out of a child-like sense of exploration and wonder!

We transport you back in time, not to bask in how perfect and ide-

al things used to be, but to help you relate to the real people who faced real problems in their own time and have wisdom to pass down to us as we face both the challenges and joys of our day. We are truly blessed to have such a historic place still be living and active, and that is what the Green, Legislative Mall, and their surrounding homes, offices, and museums are for the people of this city, this state, and our guests.

We look forward with eager anticipation to yet another "Old Dover Days" in 2026, as it will be the celebration of America's 250th and one year closer to the 100-Year Anniversary of the Dover Days Festival and Parade! Stay tuned!

Rachel D. Rohm

Dover Days Committee President

Robin R. Christiansen

City of Dover Mayor

FRIDAY MAY 2



Join us from 6 to 9 p.m. on Legislative Mall and the Green for food trucks, historic tours, a live band, and, at dusk (approximately 8:30 p.m.), fireworks!

Milford Community Band is a 40-member band

that brings live music to central and southern Delaware. Their concert band will provide patriotic music and audience favorites from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

First State Heritage Park will be presenting a special FREE lantern tour of the Dover Green at

7 p.m. This tour will begin at the John Bell House Interpretive Center. Afterwards, stay and enjoy the other festivities and fireworks display on Legislative Mall.

SATURDAY MAY 3

Festival open!

9 a.m. — 3 p.m.

Parade and Maypole

- 9:15 a.m. — The Dover Days Parade
State Street (begins at Hazel Street and travels down to The Green)
- 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. — Maypole Dancers on The Green (West Side)

History on Stage

On the (East Side)

- 1:15–1:30 p.m. — Mike Petit de Mange as Governor Thomas Collins
 - 1:35–1:50 p.m. — Mike Richards as Warner Mifflin
 - 1:55–2:05 p.m. — Tom Welch as Allen McLane
 - 2:10–2:25 p.m. — Carlos Holmes as Richard Allen
 - 2:30–2:45 p.m. — Dennis Fisher as Jacob Jones
- Find more information about this program and the featured historic figures on Page 10.

On the Legislative Mall Stage

- 10–11 a.m., 11:30–12:30 p.m., and 1:30–2:30 p.m. — Ampersand Family-friendly, upbeat musical group featuring a variety of traditional instruments.
 - 1 p.m. — The Children's Theatre presents selections from the 2024–2025 show season.
- All performance times are subject to change.

On the Green Saturday

- Diamond State Lacemakers – artisan crafters making bobbin lace
- Living History at the John Bell House
- 1st Delaware Regiment – The Fighting Blue Hens of the American Revolution

Behind Old State House

- The Wheelmen – Historical Big Wheel bikes on display
- Dover Area WWII Heroes – Exhibits featuring Dover Area World War II Heroes
- Lenape and Nanticoke Tribes – Historical demonstrations on local Native American culture and lifestyle
- Colonial Trapper – trapper demonstrations and large display of furs

Roving Entertainment

- Kris & Holly – Master of Balloon Animals & Fun
- Kapow Show – Street performer, juggling, balancing & crazy antics
- Urban Sketchers Delaware – our state's chapter of the international group of artists who sketch on location

Legislative Mall and Surrounding Streets

- Light Flight Tethered Hot Air Balloon (weather permitting, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.) \$10 per person, first come first served
 - All Blown Up Inflatables – multiple bounce houses
 - Watergun Fun, Inc – Trackless train rides, water games, duck pond game, fish game, balloon dart game, sand art
 - Sandcastle Building Demonstration (Andy West and Darrell O'Connor)
 - Car, Truck & Bike Show – coordinated by County Seat Cruisers
- *Locations and times of reenactors and entertainers are subject to change. Thank you for your understanding.

LEGEND

- 1** 92nd Annual Dover Days Parade
- 2** Parade Reviewing Stand + Green Stage
- 3** Parade Breakup
- 4** Woodburn/Hall House
- 5** Maypole Dancing
- 6** Dover Century Club
- 7** WSFS Bank ATM
- 8** Dover Public Library
- 9** Christ Church
- 10** Biggs Museum of American Art
- 11** Water Gun Fun
- 12** Legislative Hall
- 13** Sandcastle Exhibit
- 14** John Bell House
- 15** Tethered Hot Air Balloon
- 16** Living History and Historical Vendors
- 17** Wesley U.M. Church
- 18** Old State House
- 19** Moon Bounce Village
- 20** Car Show
- 21** Friends of Old Dover
- 22** Johnson Victrola Museum
- 23** Juggling Show
- 24** Lenape and Nanticoke Tribes of Delaware Exhibit
- 25** Local Vendors
- 26** Food Vendors

(P) Parking **(R)** Restrooms

Festival Map

Events & Landmarks



Saturday
May 3, 2025



Meet people of the past with History on Stage



Michael Richards, portraying Thomas Mifflin, will return for History on Stage Saturday on The Green.

Congratulations City of Dover Old Dover Days



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Photo Credit - Daily State News

History on Stage is a living history initiative, sponsored by the Friends of Old Dover, involving local volunteers who portray and share stories of several significant Delaware historical figures.

You may meet these characters in the Dover Days Parade or on the Green:

Richard Allen, who was enslaved by a Delaware farmer, later bought his freedom and received ordination from Francis Asbury as a Methodist pastor in Philadelphia. Some Methodist congregations welcomed mixed congregations for a while, and he preached in churches with Black and white Methodists. He later left the Methodist denomination and founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the largest denomination for African-Americans.

Elizabeth Battell was an important observer of the early beginnings of the state of Delaware. She was the owner of the Golden Fleece Tavern, where Delaware's Convention to ratify the U.S. Constitution was held. The Golden Fleece also served for 14 years from 1777-1791 as the meeting place for the upper house of the Delaware General Assembly, known since the time of William Penn as the Legislative Council. A woman operating a business without a man present was uncommon in Elizabeth's time, but she continued to operate the tavern as a widow after the death of her husband, French, making her one of the most recognized women of the era.

Thomas Collins served Delaware as general, legislator, judge, president (governor) and other posts. When the Delaware Ratification Convention approved the U.S. Constitution in 1787, then-President Collins sent an official letter accompanying the Delaware document that resulted in Delaware becoming the "First State." As owner of historic Belmont Hall in Smyrna, he often hosted meetings of the Committee on Communication in support of Mas-

sachusetts and the Cause of Independence. While president of Delaware, he also became the president of the Delaware Abolitionist Society.

Allen McLane, who had moved from Philadelphia to Duck Creek Crossroads, was an early advocate for separation from England. His first military action was in Virginia in December 1775, and he continued as an active, courageous officer reporting directly to General Washington for much of his duty as partisan fighter, courier and spy master until the end of the Revolutionary War. Appointed twice as a federal officer, he continued to serve the U.S. until his death in 1829.

Warner Mifflin, an ardent Quaker, had been a large landowner and slave master, but after a life-changing experience, he became one of the nation's most outspoken abolitionists and a leading advocate of reparations for former slaves. He travelled all over the east coast to lobby for the rights of the enslaved.

Harriett Tubman, who was born Araminta Ross in Dorchester County, Md., is one of the most famous conductors on the Underground Railroad. She was an abolitionist, suffragist and activist, who also served in the Civil War as leader, nurse, cook, scout and spy. Tubman personally led enslaved people to freedom through her service on the Underground Railroad, which gave her the moniker "Moses." Tubman's early life was spent enslaved in the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and in 1849, she escaped to Philadelphia, but would return to Maryland many times to recover her family and reunite them in freedom. Her trips on the Underground Railroad often brought her through Delaware, giving us a bit of a claim to her great work.

See schedule of History on Stage speakers on Page 7.

SCENES FROM THE 2024 DOVER CON



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DelmarvaEvents.net

BIGGS MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

The Biggs Museum of American Art will feature an art workshop, guided tour and a chance to see a special exhibit on Saturday, May 3.

Between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., the Family Creative Studio features “Pop-Up Historic Homes.” Construct a textured pop-up historic home to honor Dover’s rich history and The Green.

At 2 p.m., take a guided tour of the museum’s collection of paintings and sculptures to silver and furniture dating back to the 1700s.

The museum’s latest exhibit is the “The Prints of Rockwell Kent: Selections from the Ralf C. Nemec Collection.” Kent (1882-1971) was best-known for his iconic images of the earth’s harsh and frozen extremities, often exploring the the relationship between humans and nature.

THE GREEN

The Dover Green has always been a hub of activity, from the colonial and Revolutionary periods through



Kids cruise under the birds on a track-less train in the Biggs Museum of American Art parking lot.

the Civil War, suffrage and civil rights eras. Today, First State Heritage Park is Delaware’s first urban park without boundaries that includes multiple sites oriented around The Green.

JOHN BELL HOUSE

43 *The Green*

Multiple historical interpreters in 18th century clothing will be demonstrat-

ing the tools and trades used in the late 1700s. From gardening and cooking to laundry and painting, there is something for everyone to enjoy! Stop by anytime between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. during the festival. Please note, there will be no guided walking tours of the Green on this day, but self-guided pamphlets will be available and historic interpreters will be available for questions.

WOODBURN AND HALL HOUSE

151 *Kings Highway*

Woodburn and the surrounding grounds, as well as Hall House, will be open to the public from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 3. Outside of Dover Days, governor’s mansion is available to tour by reservation only, Monday through Friday. Make arrangements by calling 302-739-5656 or emailing corey.marshall-steele@delaware.gov.

LEGISLATIVE HALL

411 *Legislative Avenue*

Guided tours will be available from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the home of Delaware’s General Assembly.

OLD STATE HOUSE

25 *The Green*

Delaware’s historic capitol building will be open for tours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come see Delaware’s historic state capitol and learn about the rich history of our state. Visitors can also try their hand at quill pen writing like people did in the 18th century.

• See **Attractions** on the next page

Biggs Scavenger Hunt

The Biggs Museum’s Dover Days Scavenger Hunt is an interactive challenge that invites explorers of all ages to uncover hidden gems, strike creative poses, and learn something new as you journey through Downtown Dover.

Whether you’re flying solo, teaming up with friends, or bringing the whole family along, each challenge is designed to spark curiosity, creativity, and connection.

Snap photos, answer questions, and complete each stop to become an official Dover Days History Hero.

Prizes, bragging rights, and plenty of great memories await.

Complete all 12 stops to become a Dover Days History Hero.

1. Biggs Museum Challenge: Visit the Biggs Museum and find a painting from the 1700s. What’s the title and artist’s name?

2. Strike a Pose – Kinetic Style: In front of the Biggs, pick a kinetic sculpture and strike a pose mimicking its movement. Which sculpture did you choose?

3. Time Traveler Sighting: Spot at least three people in Colonial clothing. Bonus: What are they doing?

4. Where History Began: Stand on the spot where Delaware became the First State.

Find the historical marker on The Green and write down the date mentioned.

5. Name That Tune: Visit the Johnson Victrola Museum. Name one musician featured there from the early 1900s.

6. Window Art Walk: Look at the Dover Art League’s Loockerman Street window displays. What’s your favorite artwork or theme you see?

7. Mural Moment: Find a mural or piece of street art in Downtown Dover. Describe what it shows or snap a photo!

8. Visit the John Bell House and chat with a historical interpreter: What is one thing you learned about life in Colonial Dover? (Bonus: Ask them what daily chores were like back then!)

9. Bell Ringing Spirit: Locate the Liberty Bell replica near Legislative Hall. Bonus: Pretend to ring it and shout “Liberty!” (Photo encouraged.)

10. Plaque Fact Hunt: Find a historical plaque anywhere downtown. Write down one interesting fact it shares.

11. Christ Church Stained Glass Count: Visit Christ Church on South State Street. How many stained-glass windows can you count from the outside?

12. Constitution Park Sculpture: Find Constitution Park near Loockerman St. Describe the sculpture found there in one sentence.

Optional Bonus Challenge: Watch the Maypole Dance and describe what colors the dancers use in the ribbons.

JOHNSON VICTROLA MUSEUM

375 S. New Street

Experience the early history of recorded sound at this museum dedicated to Delaware native Eldridge Reeves Johnson. Tours are self-guided, but interpreters are able to answer questions and demonstrate vintage machines with music from the 1910s and 1920s. Admission is always free, open from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

DOVER ART LEAGUE

21 W. Loockerman Street

The Dover Art League is open on Saturday, May 3, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will be hosting an art and supply swap. You are invited to bring in artwork (store-bought or homemade) and supplies you no longer need and swap them for something new-to-you. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to join the DAL's community art project. Add your handprint to a collaborate tapestry and help create a one-of-a-kind piece that represents our creative community. This event is free and open to the public.

Christ Church tours

Christ Episcopal Church was founded in 1703 with a petition requesting a priest from the missionary ministry of the Church of England. The current structure was constructed in 1734, and still houses an active congregation. The building has undergone several major renovations to accommodate the needs of the worshippers.

A historic cemetery holds colonial burials, veterans from every U.S. war and noted political figures.

Visitors are welcome on Saturday, May 3, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to learn about the history of the church.



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Enjoy a scoop of ice cream in the Victorian parlor at the Dover Century Club.

DOVER CENTURY CLUB

Victorian ice cream parlor, craft show

The Dover Century Club continues its Dover Days tradition of inviting the public to its clubhouse to enjoy the delights of an old-fashioned Victorian ice cream parlor on Saturday. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the club will offer hand-dipped ice cream, bottled water, hot dogs and chips for sale at the club, located at 40 the Green in the heart of historic Old Dover.

Visitors are also invited to tour the clubhouse, with its white-columned entrance and magnificent palladium window that was built in 1857 and purchased by the club in 1901.

New this year, the 11 participating artists with the First State Crafters will be displaying and selling their wares upstairs! A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Dover Century Club to support their mission of strengthening the community and enhancing the lives of others.

In 2023, the Dover Century Club celebrated 125 years of volunteer service dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others. Founded in 1897, the club is a member of the Delaware State Federation of Women's Clubs and the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the world's largest and oldest nonpartisan, nondenominational women's volunteer service organization. The Dover Century Club has been proud to partner with the Dover Days celebration since the beginning.

FRIENDS OF OLD DOVER

Enjoy special exhibits

Dover Days holds a special place in the hearts of the Friends of Old Dover, since they used to host this event, starting in 1933! On Saturday, May 3, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., their exhibits will be available to view at their 323 S. State St location. The museum is open the First Saturday of every month as well as



Wesley United Methodist Church offers a pancake breakfast Saturday morning.

other holidays and special events.

WESLEY UMC

Bake sale and breakfast

Volunteers at Wesley United Methodist Church are glad to host their Dover Days bake sale and breakfast on Saturday morning. Food is served from 7 a.m. until noon (or until they sell out). United Women in Faith will sell everything homemade at their bake sale: cakes, pies, cookies, candies and other sweet treats, both indoors and outdoors. The United Methodist Men will serve an All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast at the same time. Adults are \$11 in advance or \$12 at the door. Children's tickets are \$5 each. Children under age 6 eat for free. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted. Proceeds will help fulfill the groups' various mission projects, locally and worldwide. Look for the Grace Fellowship Hall at Wesley UMC. Wesley can trace its congregation's roots back to 1778, and the church was completed in 1784 on North Street. The cornerstone of the current State Street location was laid in 1850, and major renovations have also occurred over the years.

DOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Super Saturday!

Join the Dover Public Library in the Children's Programming Room for a fun craft for school-aged kids! No registration required. Occurs from 2 to 3 p.m. at 35 Loockerman Plaza 302-736-7030. The Dover Public Library is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both Friday and Saturday, May 2 and 3.

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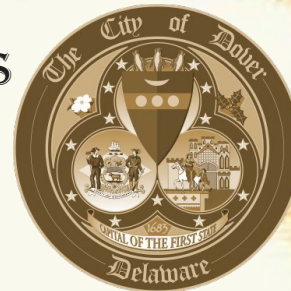
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MAY 2ND & 3RD 2025



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PARADE AT 9:00AM



EACH YEAR'S DOVER DAYS ACTIVITIES SHOWCASE OUR STATE'S HISTORY AND HERITAGE, AS WELL AS HIGHLIGHTS FROM MORE CONTEMPORARY TIMES SUCH AS THE PARADE, TRADITIONAL MAYPOLE DANCING, GAMES, TETHERED HOT AIR BALLOON RIDES, CRAFT AND FOOD VENDORS, MUSIC, COLONIAL ARTISANS' VILLAGE AND HISTORICAL RE-ENACTORS.

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE COME TOGETHER TO MAKE THIS ONE OF THE BEST YEARS YET!



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