



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Photos available upon request.**

**SOAPMAKER, SILHOUETTE PORTRAITURE, FLOORCLOTH MAKER, BOAT BUILDER  
PART OF COLONIAL ARTISAN ROW AT DOVER DAYS FESTIVAL MAY 6-8**

DOVER, DE -- Festival-goers will be transported back to Colonial days on Saturday, May 7 during the Dover Days Festival weekend, May 6-8, in historic Dover, Delaware, Capital city of the First State. From a soapmaker to silhouette portraiture, festival-goers will have the opportunity to see period dress artisans at work, as they make and sell their crafts.

The following are among the participants to date:

- **Miniature Shipbuilding** -- Christopher Kelly of Dover, DE will demonstrate the delicate art of miniature shipbuilding and display several models of boats and ships including one that is comprised of more than 10,000 pieces.
- **Bobbin Lacemaker** -- Kim Czerwinski of Dover, DE will demonstrate the age-old craft of bobbin lacemaking using only two movements of bobbins in the formation of the lace, which are the "twist" and the "cross".
- **Soapmaking** -- Ron Bessette of Dover, DE will explain the craft of lye soapmaking and sell various examples of his work.
- **Silhouette Portraiture** -- Lauren Muney of Baltimore, MD will cut silhouettes onsite for festival-goers. Silhouette portraiture using scissors was the popular way to recreate an image before the invention and common use of photography in the 1800s.
- **Chair Caning** -- You've seen them at your grandmother's house -- chairs with woven seats made by caning -- but have you ever wondered how they are made? Marie Passwaters of Houston, DE will be demonstrating the nearly lost art of chair caning.
- **Floorcloth Making** -- Maria Liberto Bessette of Dover, DE will pose as a Colonial merchant, demonstrate and sell painted floor cloths. The traditional craft of floor cloths, painted canvas rugs, was also referred to as oil cloths, and were often found in Colonial homes in the 1800s.
- **Spinning and Rug Hooking** -- Eleanor Jane Matthews of Hartly, DE will demonstrate the art of spinning and rug hooking. Natural resources were scarce and homemakers utilized and reused every scrap, string and fabric. See how Ms. Matthews will hook a rug just as they did in Colonial times.
- **18th Century "Musick" and Storytelling** -- Robert Mouland of Geigertown, PA, will focus on Irish storytelling, using his superb musicianship on multiple instruments, including a harpsichord, Irish harp and fiddle, to accent the tales he tells. Audiences are enchanted as this age old tradition is brought to life once again.

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Artisan Row will be located just off Dover's historic Green between the Old State House, built in 1791 and recently restored, and the Biggs Museum of American Art. Both the State House and the Biggs Museum will be open, free of charge, all three days of the festival.

Dover Days, now in its 78th year, was begun as a platform to save the demolition of the Old State House. It began as a house and garden tour and has grown over the years to become Dover's largest and signature event. Its iconic image -- maypole dancing -- is still replicated today as hundreds of children dress in Colonial attire including tri-corner hats and bonnets, dance to music and intricately weave ribbons around a flower-topped maypole.

The festival kicks off Friday evening, May 6, with a major Civil War encampment featuring the 2nd Delaware Regiment Volunteers, a judged car show with trophies and dash plaques, a corn hole tournament with cash prizes, food vendors, children's prizes and a live oldies band.

Saturday, May 7 begins with a pancake breakfast, Dover's largest parade, a judged pet parade, 200+ crafts vendors, home and trade show exhibitors and food vendors, exhibits, re-enactments, a Kids Zone featuring an outdoor synthetic ice rink, arts and entertainment, three entertainment stages with live music and performances, a full day of Civil War encampment activities, steam car rides, May basket making and more. Saturday evening will feature candlelight tours of the Civil War encampment and the Dover Days Concert featuring the Dover Symphony Orchestra.

Sunday, May 8 will feature special church services, attended by encampment soldiers and civilians in period dress at the historic Christ Church, tours of the Civil War encampment, museum tours and an antiques show and sale.

Car show, parade and pet parade registration forms are available online. Vendor space for artisans, crafters, food, non-profit information, children's activities and home and trade show are still available with registration forms online.

Festival admission is free of charge (some fees for activities) and is open to the public. Weekend lodging packages are available, and a full schedule of events and additional information about the festival is online at [www.doverdaysfestival.com](http://www.doverdaysfestival.com). For more information, call Kent County Tourism, festival producers, at 800-233-5368.

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