

## Welcome to Middletown, Maryland & Dempsey's Grille



Middletown is a small, rural community, steeped in American history with a population of 2,668 at the last census. Located in the beautiful Middletown Valley that stretches between the Catoclin Mountains on the east and South Mountain on the west, the town reportedly gained its name from its location midway between those ranges. A young Lieutenant George Washington, while surveying the South Mountain area, reported that the valley to the east was one of the most beautiful places he had ever seen. Later, as a Colonel in 1755, he accompanied General Braddock on the old Indian Trail that ran through the valley on his way to Fort Cumberland.

The earliest German and English settlers started to arrive in the valley in the 1730s. Among them was Michael Jesserong, who paid £66 for 50 acres. He named his property Middletown and sold the first lots there in 1767, the date officially marked as the town's founding.

The history of Middletown is a mirror on the nation's development. Main Street spread to the west with construction of the National Pike through the town in 1806; the telegraph lines from Frederick to Hagerstown were routed through Middletown in 1854; and in 1896, car 11 of the Frederick Middletown Railway made its first run to Middletown.



Looking west on Main Street in Middletown



family owned and operated and renowned for its home cooked meals and catering services is located at 116 West Main Street and surrounded by numerous historic Middletown *Points of Interest* within viewing or easy walking distance. For example, across the street is the Zion Lutheran Church dedicated in 1860 (the church's steeple can be seen in the picture above).

During the Civil War, both armies passed through the town to the battles of South Mountain and Antietam. Zion Church, then the largest building in Middletown, was commandeered as a "general hospital" to receive critical-care patients, especially those requiring surgery. Pews were removed and replaced by cots. Hundreds of wounded and dying, from both sides of these famous battles, were cared for there. Middletown is a Maryland Heritage Area and is part of the official "Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area" as certified by the Maryland Department of Planning. Adjacent to the Zion Church is the building that housed the former *Middletown Valley Register*, a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century newspaper (1858-1976). Next to Dempsey's Grille, at 200 West Main Street, is the Lamar house, a turn-of-the-century rural medical sanitarium that preserves Dr. Lamar's operating and recovery rooms, library and medical equipment. It is currently home to the Central Maryland Heritage League and the Sunflower Studio, a "Paint your own Pottery" activities fun shop for adults and kids. The site of the former Main's Ice Cream store, located nearby, was a favored stop of Presidents and state officials on their way to *Shangri-La*, now known as *Camp David*.

Thanks for stopping by, visiting with us and being part of our family.