



Downingtown Area Historical Society
Hist-O-Gram

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

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Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the site of this photo will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your identification entries to:

Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

Many news stories were about local schools in May 1961

Noted below are news items, which were originally published by papers in May 1961.

Toni McCombs and Tom Yerkes received the Lettermen's Club Awards for being the girl and boy who exhibited the most leadership, sportsmanship and athletic ability at the **DHS sports banquet**.

The **DHS student newspaper**, The "Blue and Gold," won third place in the Columbia Scholastic Press Association competition. The paper's editors were Barbara Rothas, editor-in-chief; Barbara Flinn, make-up editor; Beatrice Hilton, assistant editor; Stanley Landis, sports editor; and Katherine Forbes, art editor.

Thomas Brookover and Robert Hadfield were elected to the **Downingtown Area Joint School Board** in at-large race to represent East Caln and Uwchlan Townships, as well as Downingtown borough.

Helen Simmons, a DHS junior, was chosen by the American Field Service to spend the summer in Germany.

Members of the cast of "**Swinging High**," the musical performed by DHS students, were Jim McCausland, Judy Jones, Anne Galt, Charles Newlin, Steve Charles, Jim Williamson, Janice Windle, George Shoemaker, Nancy Gindin, Georgia Wagner and Lewis Wilson.

St. Joseph' School students Aleta Sack and George Hilton won the essay contest sponsored by the **Auxiliary of the American Legion**. The Auxiliary also chose to send Joanna Pope, a DHS junior, to attend the Keystone Girls State Camp.

Newly elected officers of the **Marshallton School PTA** were Mrs. James Daly, president; Mrs. Donald Moore, vice president; Mrs. Clarence Middleton, secretary; and Mrs. William Grigson, treasurer.

Teachers who retired were; Rhoda Yost, sixth grade, East Ward, after 38 years in the Downingtown system; Mrs. Theresa Yonker, third grade, Lionville Elementary, following a teaching career of 31 years; and Mrs. Mary Jefferis, first grade, Marshallton School, with 13 years service.

Paul Miller blasted a double, a triple and a homer, and southpaw John Snyder gave up only two hits as the **Whippet baseball squad** beat West Chester for the second time in three days.

DHS musicians Ralph Girafalco and Marie Pollock were named to the State Band, Region III.

Other Downingtown area news in May 1961

The **Ladies Auxiliary of the Minquas Fire Co.** announced plans for a block party in June. Assisting co-chairmen Mrs. B. Moore, Marie Norris and Marie Hamilton were: Rose Simone, cake wheel; Alice Zittle, fancy work; Rose Nichols, Blanche Summers and Thelma Collier, hot dog stand; Helen Dague and Bernadine Downing, soda stand; Florence Cumens and Pat Zittle, soda stand; Viola Murray and Elaine Miller, candy; and Dot Peters, fish pond.

The **Exton Lions Club** sponsored the Royal International Circus, which performed at the Downingtown Farmers Market. Tickets cost \$1 for children and \$1.50 for adults.

Officers elected to serve in 1961-62 by members of the Afternoon Circle of **Downingtown Methodist Church** were Ethel Entrekin, president; Mary Getman, vice president; Florence McGuckin, secretary; and Mrs. John Haas, treasurer.

Elected to be officers of commissions and committees at **Hopewell Methodist Church** included: Earl Bryant, Membership and Evangelism; Charles Mentzer, Education; Mrs. Richard Warren, Missions; Edward Plank, Stewardship and Finance; John Boyd, Christian Social Concerns; Arthur Lowery, Pastoral Relations; Rev. Howard Adams, Nominating; Wayne Raysor, Methodist Men; and Mary Mowery, Methodist Youth Fellowship.

Newly elected officers of the **Ladies of St. Joseph Catholic Church** were Mrs. Anthony DiStefano, president; Mrs. Joseph Mento, vice president; Mrs. Anthony DiLuigi, recording secretary; Mrs. John Mascherino, corresponding secretary; and Dolly Colella, treasurer.

New officers of **Marshallton Methodist Church's** Circle 1 were Mrs. Douglas Barr, president; Mrs. Gilbert Cann, vice president; and Mrs. George Fling, treasurer.

Sears mail order house planted in Guthriesville

When Norman and Sara Mayhew had a Sears mail order house built ca. 1930 in the Guthriesville section of East Brandywine, they couldn't have known that it would blossom into Jane's Flower Patch business many decades later.

It was the Great Depression era, and the Mayhews didn't have a lot of money. But they wanted to buy a home where they and their kids could thrive. So they scraped together \$850 to buy a mail order cottage from Sears, and have it built on a lot at 1219 Horseshoe Pike (Route 322). Actually, they spent about \$1,200 when you add in the prep work and paying local tradesmen to do things like plastering.

The property changed hands several times before John and Mildred Neff bought the place in 1949. And many improvements were made as the Neff children—Jane and her siblings Janet, Joyce and John—came along.

Jane, who lives there with her husband, Richard Heidelbaugh, and Alison, their 12-year-old daughter, recalls hearing that when her parents had bedrooms and a bath built, and added dormers to the second floor, they discovered that the sub-flooring had been constructed of crating material marked "Downingtown Manufacturing Co." That's where Norman Mayhew was employed as a welder in the 1930s.

Significant upgrades continued to be made over the years, especially after her husband, a contractor, remodeled the interior, says Jane. That's when they found different numbers marked on the original lumber that Sears shipped to the Downingtown railroad station more than 80 years ago.

And over the past 29 years, the property's exterior has also blossomed, as Jane's Flower Patch has thrived in Guthriesville.

Editor's Note: This is a part of a series on Sears mail order houses in the Downingtown area. However, we won't be able to do an article on all of them, because so many of the mail order houses were built in the area. More info on the houses can be found at:

www.searsarchives.com/homes/index.htm.

Ruins of Mary Ann Forge in the Dowlin Forge area, Uwchlan



Theodore J. Gacomis, whose office, Edward B. Walsh and Associates, is located at 125 Dowlin Forge Road, is the truly perceptive scholar who was the first person to identify this as a photo (taken by Beverly Wiker) of the ruins of Mary Ann Forge in Dowlin Forge Park, along the Struble Trail in Uwchlan Township.

Mary Ann Forge was built in 1785 by Samuel Hibberd; he refined pig iron into bar iron and plate iron, according to Susannah Brody's *Uwchlan Township, 300 Years Above the Valley*. In 1801, Hibberd sold the forge to John Dowlin, which was part of the industrial community known as Dowlin Forge. Over three generations of Dowlins, the community included, wrote Brody, "two grist mills, a blacksmith shop, a company store, a sawmill, a woolen factory, a school and several dwelling houses, from modest log cabins to large stone mansions." Mary Ann Forge survived until the 1880s.

According to Brody, Uwchlan Township acquired the land, on which the ruins stand, from Dowlin descendant Marie Inslee in 1990. Preservation of the ruins was done in 1993.

Coming events & activities in Downingtown area

Prescription Drug Take Back Day

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has scheduled another National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, which will take place from 10 AM to 2 PM on Saturday, April 27, at the Downingtown Borough Hall Annex Building, 4 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. This is an opportunity for those who missed the previous events, or

who have subsequently accumulated unwanted, unused and expired prescription drugs, to safely dispose of those medications.

In the five previous Take-Back events, the DEA, in conjunction with its state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners, have collected more than 2 million pounds (1,018 tons) of prescription medications that were removed from circulation.

The National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposal, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of these medications. For more info, call 610-269-0344, ext. 200 or visit the Borough website at www.downingtowntown.org.

DHS West Post Prom Party

The 10th annual DHS West Post Prom Party will be held at the Lionville YMCA. All seniors are invited, and they don't have to go to the Prom to come to the party.

This year's theme is "Passport to the World." The YMCA will be transformed into a night filled with fun and activities, including the indoor pool, using exciting places to tour throughout the world, while providing a safe and fun environment for all. Last year's event drew over 250 seniors and their guests.

The event is coordinated and funded by parents and members of the community. All funds that are raised will be used for the event and are utilized in securing activities, games, food and prizes.

Volunteers are needed for all committees, and parents of students in all grade levels are encouraged to get involved. Please do not wait until your child is a senior to get involved.

Those who wish to help are invited to join us at 7 PM at meetings being held in Room 139 at DHS West on **May 14**. Please check out the [P3 website](#):

www.dwestpostprom.com for more details and to sign up as a volunteer.

Savings opportunities available at DARC

Discount Movie Tickets: \$8, cash only. Honored at all Regal Entertainment Group locations (Regal Cinemas, United Artists Theatres, and Edwards Theatres). Valid for all show times. There may be a \$2.50 surcharge for the first 12 days of select films or a \$2.50 surcharge for IMAX Giant Screen Theatres.

For more info/complete price list on these opportunities and upcoming programs, go to the DARC website www.darcinfo.com, or call 610-269-9260, or stop by the DARC Office (8:30 AM-4:30 PM, Monday thru Friday), 114 Bell Tavern Road Downingtown.

Banquet Room for Rent

The Downingtown (Williamson) Masonic Lodge, a non-profit organization located at 210 Manor Ave. has a Banquet Room for rent. The area is perfect for parties of up to 80 people and has a full kitchen. Rental fees are very reasonable. Call 610-269-3555 for more information.

Joseph's People, Downingtown Chapter

An ecumenical support mission to help un/underemployed people; run entirely by volunteers. We have been at St. Joseph's since 1995. Meets 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Tues. of the month. All are welcome. Visit web page, www.josephspeople.org or just come to a meeting at St. Joseph's Parish Meeting Room behind the school, 460 Manor Ave., Downingtown. Call 610 873-7117. Leave Message. Leader: Cheryl Spaulding, Email: JPCheryl@verizon.net.

Hist-O-Grams are emailed weekly to members and friends of the Downingtown Area Historical Society. If you want to make a comment, add your email address to the sign-up box on the home page of our website. We won't share or sell any email addresses. Or if you want your email address deleted from the list, send an email to:

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