



**Downingtown Area Historical Society**  
**Hist-O-Gram**

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

[www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://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](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org).

## Local news in December 1945

Here's what was happening in the Downingtown area 68 years ago, according to newspaper coverage at that time.

The theme of the newly remodeled **Lyndell Store**, owned by O.G. Shock, was "A Bit Out of the Way—But Less to Pay."

Officers of **Marshallton Methodist Church's** Sunday School were Mildred Leid, superintendent; John Morris, first assistant; M.H. English, second assistant; Mrs. Ralph Wallace, recording secretary; Betty Keehn, corresponding secretary; and Evelyn Fling, treasurer.

Evening **adult classes** were being offered at DHS for the ninth year. They included these subjects: blue print reading and shop sketching; typewriting; sewing and cooking; and shop courses in wood, metal and electrical work.

A Turkey Fair, to benefit the American Legion welfare fund, was held at the **Downingtown Motor Co.**, 21 East Lancaster Ave.

St. Agnes High School of West Chester had a major upset victory when the Stags beat the DHS basketball team 40-24. Although Ray Barrow, the Whippets' leading scorer last season, was shut down, his brother, **Dan Barrow**, tallied 11 points.

When the **Roosevelt Theatre** in Downingtown offered a free movie for kiddies on the afternoon of Christmas Day, that might have been a wonderful gift for the parents, who were exhausted because they had been up half the night assembling toys, as well as for the young children.

**Majorettes** Antoinette Perella, Josephine DiBerardinis, Mary DiPetro, Theresa Mascherino, Irma DelPaggio, and Helen Rodri received awards at the DHS band banquet. Jean Esworthy, a senior member of the band, was the toastmistress.

The equipment, used at the **Ration Board** office on Washington Avenue in Downingtown, was auctioned off. Many filing cabinets were bought by J.I. Hoffman of the Coatesville YMCA, to be used to store thousands of local servicemen's letters.

The Downingtown post of the **Catholic War Veterans** was organized at a meeting held in the rectory of St. Joseph's Church. The officers were: Andrew Mento, commander; Michael Mento, treasurer; William Boylan, adjutant; Rev. Francis Fox, chaplain; and Rev. Thomas Lawler auxiliary chaplain.

**C.R. Lipka** opened an electrical appliance store at 137 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. Anthony Ciarlone, the manager, said the business would continue to service all types of washing machines and other appliances.

A supper was given for returning servicemen at **St. Paul's Reformed Church**, Lionville. Servicemen in attendance were Ellsworth Maxton, Horace Wilson, William Peterman, Harry Hartshorne, James Messner and Joseph Aicholz.

**DHS football players** who were named to the All Chester County team included: Ray Barrow, first team halfback; and Charles Mills, second team guard and Dick Dague, second team halfback. Whippets receiving honorable mention were tackle Ray Kipp and center Charles DiSantis.

Mrs. Paul Dague reminded members of the **Auxiliary of the American Legion** post that they were far below their goal of 125 boxes of Christmas gifts to be given to hospitalized veterans. Local residents were encouraged to drop off their "Gifts For Yanks" at: Greenleaf's Pharmacy, Griffith's Hardware Store, or the Downingtown Department Store.

## **More info about enemy plane spotting here during WW II**

We've found more information about local volunteers during WW II who were involved in plane spotting, at a post located in a field, where Central Presbyterian Church now is on Uwchlan Avenue (Route 113) in Downingtown. We first learned about that site from Ginny Pierce, who visited it with Eddie Aumiller, when they were just kids and George Aumiller, Eddie's father, was a volunteer spotter there.

Eddie recently told us that Bert Byler, the Aumiller's Washington Avenue neighbor, also volunteered at that post. And Ruth Lowe said her father, Harold Lowe, also was a volunteer spotter there.

We learned a lot about the operation from Eileen McCardell, who now lives at Freedom Village. Eileen remembers going to the spotting site, when her family lived on Washington Avenue and she was a sixth grader at East Ward School. She used to tag along with her father, William Wharry, on Sunday afternoons because that was the only time he had off from his job as pharmacist-manager of Hutchison's Drug Store on East Lancaster Avenue in Downingtown. Eileen said she accompanied him whenever possible because she "absolutely adored" her father.

Eileen recalls that the spotting shed was situated on a tower that "wasn't very high." Inside, there was a table, two chairs and a phone. They used the phone to call an office in Philadelphia whenever they saw any--not just those that appeared to be German or Japanese planes—aircraft flying overhead. To identify the planes they reported, they used cards with black silhouettes of planes printed on them, she explained.

Many readers may remember Eileen, from her 35-year teaching career, when she taught at many of the elementary schools in the Downingtown system. Her first assignment was a kindergarten at the Alert Fire Hall in Downingtown. That was in the 1950s, when baby boomer generation had begun to overwhelm school districts across the United States.

*(Editor's Note: We'd love to publish more stories about volunteers who were involved in enemy plane spotting during WW II and the sites in the Downingtown area where they were assigned. Please contact us at [Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org) if you want to help us on this project.)*

## **Ashbridge House will be closed on Sunday**

The Historical Society's 304-year-old headquarters on Route 30, East Caln, is usually open from 1-4 PM on Sundays. However, since it's a holiday weekend, we'll be closed.

We hope you will come on the following Sunday afternoon, June 2, when we'll be having our monthly cutting and pasting session.

## It's on Route 322, in Guthriesville



Ben Bruton is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify this building, constructed in 1928, at 1131 Horseshoe Pike (Route 322) in Guthriesville. As shown in the photo above, it was the residence and store/gas station, owned by Oscar and Mary Miller before WW II. Shown below is a photo of the building, a residential property, as it appears today.

The Millers sold the property to James and Anna DelPaggio after James finished serving in the Navy during WW II. Gaunt Enterprises bought the place about 10 years ago, according to the DelPaggio's daughter, Jane, who now lives in Glenmoore. She still has the Coke sign shown in the old photo above.



This is what the property, now a residence, looks like today.

## **Events and Activities in the Downingtown Area**

### ***Mac-n-Cheese Cook-off***

The second annual Cook-off will be held, rain or shine, at noon Sunday, June 9 at Kerr Park in Downingtown. Hosted by the Downingtown-Thorndale Rotary Club, the cook-off will have local restaurants, businesses, organizations and hometown cooks competing against each other for the title "BEST Mac-n-Cheese in Chester County." Admission is \$10 per person, enabling people to sample each participating group's dish.

### ***Downingtown Farmers Market***

The Downingtown Farmers Market at Kerr Park is open from 3-7 PM every Thursday. All 25 of the farmers and food artisans at the market must grow, raise or make what they sell – meriting its classification as a "producer only" market.

Offerings include: local fruits and vegetables; pasture raised meats (beef, pork, lamb, veal) and poultry, fresh eggs; dairy products, including cheeses; whole grain breads and other baked goods; handmade pasta and sauce; honey and maple syrup; small-batch frozen desserts; artisan chocolates; hummus and salsa; jams and jellies; roasted coffee and hand-blended teas; fresh ground nut butters; field grown flowers; handmade soap; and doggie treats.

The market will also feature weekly musical guests and activities for children. Consistent with the market's social mission, food drives will be held periodically to benefit the Lord's Pantry and other organizations in need of food donations. Additionally, market space will be made available to non-profit groups if their mission is similar to that of the market.

There is plenty of parking in the Kerr Park lots, as well as in the Borough Hall parking lot.

### ***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](http://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](http://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](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).

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**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:**

**[Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org)**