



Downingtown Area Historical Society
Hist-O-Gram

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downtowntownareahistoricalociety.org

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Where and What Is This?



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

Info@downtowntownareahistoricalociety.org

Restaurant Raffle winner will receive 12 dinners worth \$250 each

The Downingtown Area Historical Society is conducting a Restaurant Raffle. Only 250 tickets will be sold, and the lucky winner will receive vouchers for 12 dinners, each with a value of \$250 and a total value of \$3,000, to be spent at the participating restaurants. They include: Beaver Creek Tavern, Dilworthtown Inn, Duling-Kurtz, Eagle Tavern, Four Dogs Tavern, General Warren Inn, Grill at Fore, Kimberton Inn, The Orangery, Ship Inn, Thorndale Inn, and Yellow Springs Inn.

Names of the winners will be drawn at a party for all ticket purchasers, which will begin at 4 PM Sunday, Oct. 6 at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on Route 30 in East Caln, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant. And consolation prizes—including a \$500 Wine Sampler, and two Bed & Breakfast stays, one night each for two—will be awarded at the drawing party, where light refreshments will be served.

Tickets, which cost \$75 each, can be purchased by calling: the Historical Society, 610-269-1709; Darryl Ferron, president, 610-679-2425; or Carol Grigson, treasurer/archivist, 610-269-5413. You also can buy tickets by coming to Ashbridge House, between 1 PM and 4 PM on Sundays.

If you need more information, send an email to:

Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org.

Proceeds from the raffle will be used to help maintain Ashbridge House, and preserve the historical materials, photos and artifacts in our archival collection.

Hot local news 52 years ago

Noted below are news items, originally published in local newspapers in the first two weeks of October 1961

Women who modeled in the **Village League of the Uwchlans** fashion show were Mrs. Donald Corneal, Mrs. William Isinger, Mrs. Walter Mitchell, Mrs. Paul Otter, Mrs. William Meredith, Mrs. Graef Miller and Mrs. Glenn Plank.

Committee chairmen of the **West Pikeland School PTA** included Mrs. Grover Hallman, ways and means; Mrs. Walter Uhler, program; Mrs. Erik Kern, hospitality; Mrs. Robert Smedley, music; Mrs. George Sload, publicity; and Mrs. William Knox, historian.

Those who received awards for perfect attendance at **Marshallton Methodist Church's** Sunday School included Janet and Robert McClure, Earl Edwards, Janet Bickings, fifth year; Nancy Busby, sixth year; Joan Yarnall and Price Stevenson, seventh year; Judy Yarnall, Jay Stevenson and William James, eighth year; Steven Hendry and Susan James, tenth year; and Mrs. Maggie Mercer, twenty-sixth year.

Re-elected as officers of the Downingtown Branch of the **American Red Cross** were Mrs. Fred Pollock, chairman; Mrs. Theodore Noll, vice chairman; Mrs. William Keen, secretary; and Mrs. W.I. Pollock, treasurer. Elected as directors were Mrs. Joan Collins, Mrs. William Hall, Mrs. Gilbert Hamm, Mrs. Lambert McGuckin, Mrs. William Bender, Raymond Lemmon and Doris Amos.

Although Downingtown's Jim Bob Price intercepted a Pottstown pass in the end zone and raced for a 102-yard TD, the **Whippets lost** 23-7. And Susan Whittaker and Carol Shisler scored goals, as the **DHS field hockey team** tied Boyertown 2-2.

Among those promoted in the Sunday School at **Glenmoore Methodist Church** were: To Intermediate Boys—Bobby Ferguson, Ronald Hohl, Freddie Swavely, Michael Hamm and Roger Munson. And to Intermediate Girls—Kathy Ayers, Sheila Massimini, Mary Ann Moore, Mary Jane Pizii and Bettie Saathoff.

Officers elected by members of the **Lady of Chester Valley Rebekah Lodge**, Lionville, were Carrie Underwood, noble grand; Anna Wilson, vice grand; Anita Wilson, recording secretary; Elizabeth Smedley, financial secretary; Grace Benner, treasurer, and Edna Windle, trustee.

Members of the Student Council at **Downingtown Junior High School** were William Shirley, president; Linda Pyle, vice president; Janet Seeds, secretary; and Deborah Dunn, treasurer. And National Honor Society officers were Cheryl Krapf, president; Donna Hilton, vice president; Sandra Irwin, secretary; and Martha Menas, treasurer.

New members of the **Ladies of St. Joseph Church** included Mary Ann Malin, Sue Golden, Maria Serrino, Marie DiOttavio and Mary Jane Esworthy.

Republican candidates for positions in Downingtown were Creston Shoemaker, mayor; George Aumiller, tax collector; Armand Tarasachi, John Rogers and W.P. Canby, borough council; Robert Hadfield and Thomas Brookover, school directors; Benjamin Valocchi, auditor; and Joseph Newlin and Warren Buchanan, constable.

William Wilmot, captain, Minquas Fire Co.; Earl Stern, Alert Fire Co. and former chief of the Downingtown Fire Department; and Richard Keers, Alert Fire Co. were recognized by members of the Downingtown Rotary Club as **1961 Outstanding Firemen**.

New leaders of the **Lionville PTA** were Thomas Greenleaf, president; Ann Just, vice president; Ann Stimson, secretary; Riley Gilbert, treasurer; Lynn Sommer, publicity and communications; Betty Panetti, home room mothers; Myrtle Butterman, hospitality; and Mary Hartsell, membership.

George Beechwood, Charles Platt, Harley Fink, Sam Acker and Beverly Wheat were appointed to the **West Pikeland planning commission**.

Downingtown pupils participated in 1953 May Festival

According to a copy of a program donated by Ron Meacham, we learned that a May Festival was conducted in 1953 by students in the Downingtown School System. The program was offered in the football stadium 60 years ago by pupils at West Ward and East Ward Elementary Schools and the Junior-Senior High School

The highlight of the evening was the crowning of May Queen, Joan Courtless. Jo Ann Forbes was her Maid of Honor. Members of the Queen's Court, comprised of representatives from every school and grade, were: Cora Smedley, Honey Lou McNelly, Audrey Samworth, Patty Sciaretta, Gail Lammey, Mary Ann Clayton, Alice Smedley, Ruth Hall, Andrea Reeves, Mary Ann Hamilton, Betty D'Attilio, Iva Darlington, Rosalyn Berstler, Nancy Lee, Sonia Raysor, Mary Louise Parker, Bonita Plank, JoAnn Antonelli, Laura Ulissi, Linda Lou Lynn, Carol DiAntonio, Priscilla Brown and Kathleen Beatty.

Kindergartners Judy Mento and Bonita Capriotti were the flower girls, and William Trindle and Stephen Mascherino were the Queen's train bearers. Also, Stephen Meacham was the crown bearer.

The Festival's program also included the following activities: a brief concert by the DHS band, directed by Fred Pflieger; a parade and drill by the band comprised of musicians from the two elementary schools, directed by Joseph Poltrone; members of the DHS track meet competing

against each other in the pole vault, low hurdles and mile relay events, directed by Ray DiSerafino; a tumbling exhibit by Junior High students, conducted by Don Heilman; calisthenics done by seventh graders, led by Robert Miller and directed by Donald White; a Singing Game by first, second and third graders from the elementary schools; a Square Dance by fourth, fifth and sixth graders from the elementary schools, directed by Jason Dreibelbis; Rope Jumping by DHS students; the Charleston danced by ninth grade girls; and May Pole Dances by ninth and seventh graders.

Other faculty members involved and their responsibilities included: Louise Brink Remetz, May Queen and her court; Fred Lilley, announcer; Harold Klinger, Rhoda Yost, Marion Dawson, and Elmer Hemberger, properties; May Pole dances, Charleston dances and Rope Jumping, Barbara Coates.

(Editor's Note: Can someone tell us when the festival was begun, and when and/or why the School District stopped offering the program?)

The ruins of Martin's Tavern in Marshallton



John Carbo is the truly perceptive scholar who was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above as the ruins of the two-story Martin's Tavern in Marshallton. It also was known as the Centre House during the pre-Revolutionary War era, according to Catherine Quillman's *Between the Brandywines: A History of West Bradford*. The Centre House was probably built as a residence in 1750, and the tavern was added by Joseph Martin in 1764. According to an unsubstantiated legend, wrote Quillman in her book, British soldiers seized several local farmers rumored to be Tories. "A more plausible account," wrote Quillman, "has two local residents and patriots, Thomas "Squire" Cheyney and Colonel John Hannum, staying at the inn the night before the battle."

After 1874, wrote Quillman, the Centre House was the site of a restaurant, a general store, a feed and flour supply business, a boarding house and a soda fountain. And by the 20th Century,

the structure had evolved into a five-story apartment building. In recent years, the deteriorated structure had to be demolished, and the ruins were repointed and restored to an accurate historic footprint of the original building by The Friends of Martin's Tavern, a non-profit organization.

Jack McCombs, who now lives on North Carolina's Outer Banks, recalls that he lived across the street from the Center House as a boy in the early 1950s. Back then, wrote Jack, an old man lived in one of the units in the "decrepit" apartment house, and he apparently had no friends. Jack's mother used to make meals and carry them over to the old fellow's apartment, where she'd spend some time chatting with him.

"I think, now that I'm older and hopefully wiser," adds Jack, "the conversation was important for his spirit, for his soul; which was as important as the meals she prepared for him. It's also important for me to recall that we were not well off then. In fact we were poor. The only way that old man could repay my mother for her kindness was by making and giving her small rugs made of scrap material."

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Tired of forwarding copies of each week's Hist-O-Gram to friends and family? If you want any of them to become a subscriber to our free Hist-O-Grams, tell them to go to our website:

www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org, and type their email address into the sign-up box on the home page.

We won't share or sell any email addresses. Or if you want your email address deleted from the list, contact us at: Info@downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org.

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Free ads for local non-profits

Free Community Concerts

The Brandywine Area Community Choir, directed by Steve McFalls, will present two free concerts this fall. The first will be at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 460 Manor Avenue, Downingtown, on Sunday, Sept. 22, at 7 PM. the second will be at East Brandywine Baptist Church, 999 Horseshoe Pike, Downingtown, on Saturday, Sept. 28, at 7 PM.

The concerts are titled "An Evening with Gaither Gospel and a Stirring Salute to Our Patriots." The gospel portion will include Gaither numbers and "spirited" spiritual music. The men's chorus will present several patriotic numbers, including the emotionally moving *Count the Costs* and a newly arranged version of our *National Anthem*. The entire chorus will finish the program with a rousing rendition of the Service Songs from each branch of our military, which will honor active-duty as well as military veterans in the audience. The concert will end with the powerful Wilhousky arrangement of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

Combining patriotic and spiritual passion, this choir of 50+ members, representing over a dozen different churches, will entertain and inspire the audience with this evening of music. The St. Joseph's concert will benefit The Travis Manion Foundation, which supports our military and veterans. The East Brandywine concert will benefit One Run Together, a charity founded to assist families of cancer patients. Freewill offerings will be accepted in support of these charities at each concert.

Programs at the Downingtown Library

Pre-registration is required for the three programs listed below, which will be offered at the Downingtown Library, 330 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. You can sign up by accessing <http://www.downintownlibrary.org/> or by calling 610-269-2741.

Tuesday, Oct 1, **Backyard Beekeeping** - Beekeepers Pat Doyle and Debra Pieri will walk program attendees through the adventures of backyard beekeeping. Program will include discussion, equipment, and a live observation hive. The program will be from 6-7:30 PM.

Wednesday, Oct. 9, **Making Sense of Medicare** - Presenter, Ellen Good, MSW, will speak about how Medicare works, managing your plan, cost issues, and how to maximize coverage. Program includes question/answer session. Program will be from 6:30-7:30pm.

Thursday, Oct. 10, **DAPI Ghost Report** - The Downingtown Area Paranormal Investigators' program will include a combination of photos, video, and electronic voice phenomenon of investigations held in the Downingtown area and at the library. The program will be from 6:30-7:30 PM.

Operation Military Christmas Stocking

Help send holiday spirit to our troops in Afghanistan. Suggested pocket-sized items to be dropped off on weekdays between 9 AM and 4 PM at the East Brandywine Township building, 1214 Horseshoe Pike or on Saturdays and Sundays at the Village Hardware, Horseshoe Pike, Guthriesville, BEFORE Friday, Oct. 11: games, chapstick, candy, and small game books (Sudoku, crosswords), nail clippers, Q-Tips, hand sanitizer, baby wipes in individual packs, individual dry soups, packets of individual-size hot and cold powdered drinks, nuts, Trail Mix, and trial-size men's deodorant, shampoo and body wash. No glass or aerosol items can be shipped. For more info, call the township at 610-269-8230.

Downingtown Farmers Market

The Downingtown Farmers Market at Kerr Park is open from 3-7 PM every Thursday. All 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.

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, 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