



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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org

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Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the building shown above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Better yet, they will win a \$25 gift card from F.H. Swisher Plumbing & Heating, to be used at a local restaurant.

Please send your responses to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

Judson Armor was a carriage builder and civic leader

This is another article in a series of stories about local residents who were charter members of the Gen. Winfield Hancock Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Post 255, headquartered in Downingtown. The GAR was comprised of veterans of the Civil War. The article was researched and written by Downingtown's Jim Sundman, who has done extensive research on the Civil War.

Judson Armor was born in Laughlintown, Westmoreland County, PA in April 1844. In August 1861, at age 17 he joined Co. E of the 105th Pennsylvania Infantry as a private. During the Civil War, he saw action on the Virginia peninsula, at Second Manassas, and at Fredericksburg where he was wounded in the side by a Confederate artillery shell. He recovered over the following months, but was discharged due to his wounds in March 1863. He married Amanda Compton in Philadelphia in 1869 and they eventually settled in Downingtown in 1876.

Before the war Armor apprenticed as a carriage trimmer and painter, and used those skills to set up his own carriage manufacturing business, the Downingtown Carriage Bazaar, on East Lancaster Avenue in 1880. The business was located directly behind the group of buildings where Georgio's Restaurant and Downingtown Country Gifts are currently located.

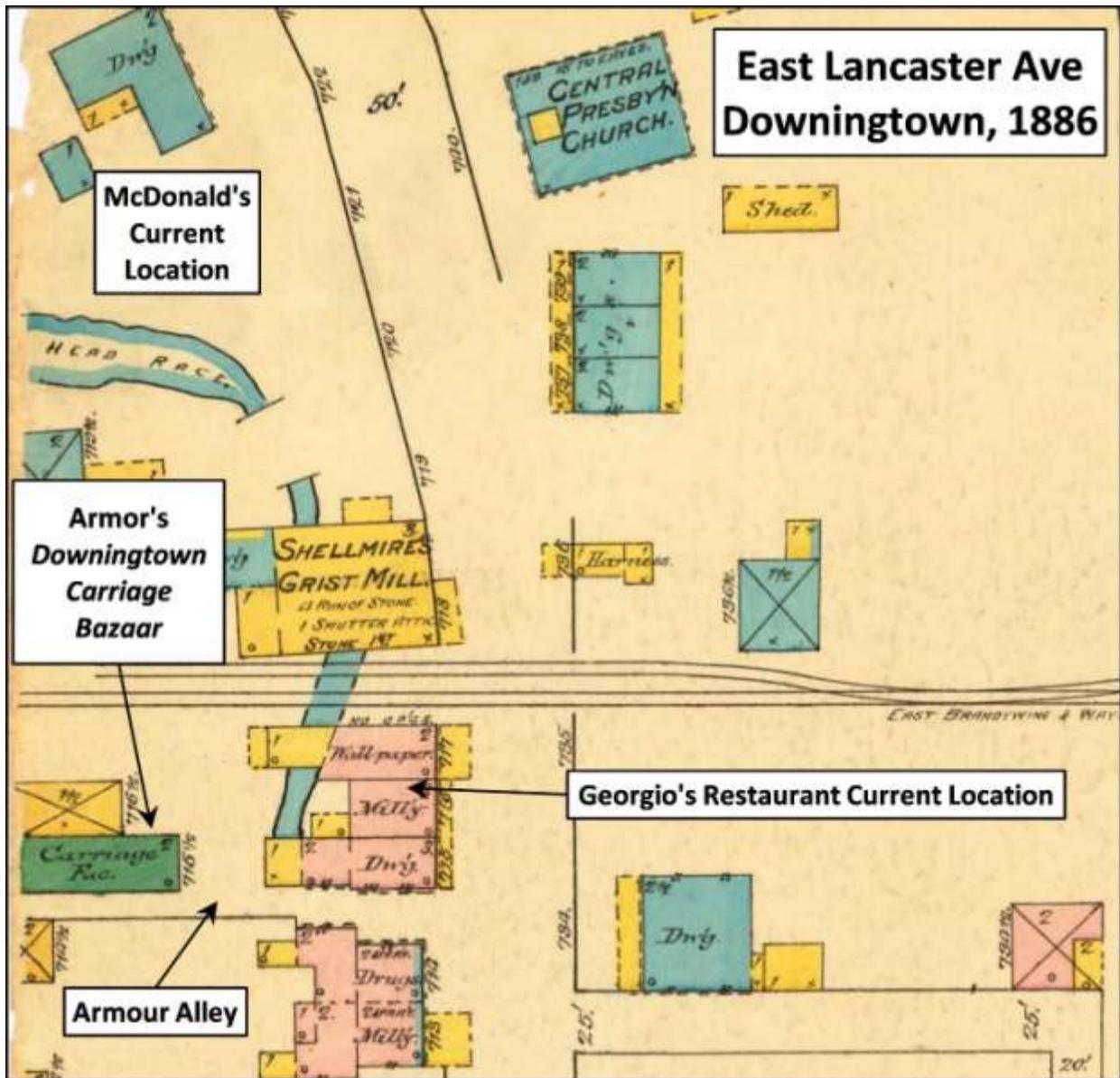
In some historical sources, his last name was spelled Armour. That's why the 1886 map of East Downingtown below shows that *Armour Alley* was a connector between East Lancaster Avenue and Mill Alley. Armour Alley is no longer a street; it was replaced by the current *Armor Alley Walkway*, which was part of the 1970s Downing Center Urban Renewal project.

In addition to being a prominent businessman in the Borough for many years, Armor also was president of the Downingtown Beneficial Society, commander of the Hancock GAR post, a Sunday school superintendent at the Presbyterian Church, and a 33rd degree Mason at the Williamson Lodge in Downingtown. He died at age 80 in 1924 and is buried in Northwood Cemetery.



Downingtowntown Carriage Bazaar.

JUDSON ARMOR, Proprietor,
Manufacturer and Dealer in
CARRIAGES
— AND —
WAGONS,
Carriages, Buggies, Phaetons, Spring
and Farm Wagons. A great variety
constantly on Hand for Sale or Ex-
change.
Warerooms Right at Shelmire's Station
EAST DOWNINGTOWN,
Painting and Repairing in all its Branches Promptly Attended to. All Work Warranted



This map above shows where Armor’s carriage business was located in 1886 and where Armour Alley, which was a connection between East Lancaster Ave. and Mill Alley, had been until it was closed as part of the Downing Center Urban Renewal project in the 1970s. Now the Armor Alley Walkway is located next to the Downingtown Country Gifts store, 147 E. Lancaster Ave.

Hot local news in September 1977

The following items were originally published 36 years ago in the *East Branch Citizen*, a Downingtown weekly.

DHS students scored higher than the national average on their **SAT verbal tests** in seven of the last ten years, And their math SAT scores were above the national average in the last three years (1974-1976) of the past ten years.

East Caln was not eligible to receive a **\$10,000 federal grant**, to be used to build a parking lot on Garris Road, because the township's per capita income was too high.

In a series of stories about **Buffalo Bill Cody's** local connections, it was noted that Downingtown's Charles and Carrie Trego founded the town of Cody, WY, as requested by Buffalo Bill. And Charlie Trego, who was the advance man for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show performances all over the world, had posed for Frederic Remington's life-sized bronze statue, entitled *The Cowboy*, on Kelly Drive in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park.

Recent **property transfers** included: 1343 Ridgeview Circle, West Bradford, \$56,100; 6 Highland Court, East Brandywine, \$44,000; 19 Webb Road, East Caln, \$73,567; 219 Concord Ave., Uwchlan, \$59,000; 13 Christine Drive, Upper Uwchlan, \$67,086; 4 Court Drive, Downingtown, \$41,500.

Members of **Messiah Lutheran Church**, Downingtown, attended the dedication of the new parish house, across the street from the church. After extensive renovations were done on the stone building at 41 West Lancaster Ave., the house included four classrooms, an adult lounge and meeting room, a pastor's study and a church office.

Dr. Charles Micken, superintendent of schools, reported that 58 people were added to the **Downingtown School District's** professional staff, including 53 teachers. Only 21 new teachers had been hired for the previous school year. And the district's enrollment for 1977-78 was 7,044, a decline of 37 students compared to the previous school year.

Members of the parsonage building committee at **Hopewell Methodist Church**, East Brandywine, were Ray Paul, Charles Ax, Wayne Carmichael, George Dowlin, Eleanor Krapf, Wenona Paul, Ted Rissel, Peter Smith, Mary Warren and Teddi Wright.

St. Joseph Catholic Church celebrated its 125th anniversary. Municipal officials and clergy from Downingtown area churches were invited to a special Mass, followed by an ox roast.

Priorities for the **expansion of DHS**, projected to be done in time for the 1979-80 school year, included an addition of eight classrooms above the administrative suite of the high school and a new gymnasium which could accommodate 2,000 spectators.

Local students attending **Dickinson College** were Thomas Beck, William Clifton, Jon Greenleaf, George Phillips, Cynthia Van Roden and Jeffrey Williams.

The **Downingtown Park Apartments**, at 335 E. Lancaster Ave. in the borough, was hit by a third suspicious fire in less than three years. All three fires started in a basement storage area.

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www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.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@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

1817 house is at 205 Santillo Way in Uwchlan



Seth Boer is the truly perceptive scholar who was the first person to correctly identify the house in the photo (taken by Mike Dunn) above as the one at 205 Santillo Way in Uwchlan Township. The original part of the structure was built by Joseph Downing in 1817 as a tenant house on his 200-acre farm. An addition and porches were built during the Civil War. When Lewis Brandolini was planning to build the Ashbridge development on the farm property in the 1980s, he wanted to raze the house. However, Mrs. Cathryn Walton, who had owned the site since the 1940s, refused to sell the property to Brandolini. Instead, Walton sold it in 1980 to Paul and Diane Houser, who spiffed up the place and still live there.

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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.

Classified Advertisements

Paid ads for businesses

Vance Usher, Registered Representative

Providing a courtesy financial advisory service whose objective is to create a portfolio of:

- 1) Investment Grade Bonds - To achieve preservation of principal, and a stream of monthly income, to meet your budgeted living expenses.
- 2) Equities - To achieve market growth, and increase financial wealth, by exceeding the rate of inflation. Contact: vance_usher@netzero.com, 610-329-1056, 320 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, PA 19335.

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.

Join Girl Scouts (See corrected email address)

Registration and Information night for new Girl Scouts will be held on Thursday September 12 between 7 PM and 8:30 PM at Downingtown United Methodist Church, 751 East Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. Enter from the back of the building. Girl Scouts is open to all girls ages 5 through 17, or in grades K-12. For more information contact GirlScoutsDtown@verizon.net.

Teri's Run and Twilight Walk

Dedicated to the memory of Teri Valocchi and all those who have lost their battle with Scleroderma, the 12th annual Teri's Run and Twilight Walk will be held Friday, September 6 on Green Street in Downingtown. Times for chip-timed runs & walk: 6:30 PM, Kids Run; 7 PM, 5K Run and 1.5-Mile Walk.

Registration info: [Online Registration](#) and [Mail-In Form](#). Race Day registration also available. Late registration (8/25 and after) \$25. Kids' race (no shirt included) \$5. Technical t-shirts guaranteed for pre-registered runners & walkers.

Packets are available at the Chester County Running Store from Tuesday, Sept. 3 to Thursday, Sept. 5 or at registration tent on Green Street after 5PM on race day.

Race numbers, chips, & T-shirts can be picked up at the Chester County Running Store, 24 South High St., West Chester.

Refreshments will be served after the race. Raffle prizes and age group prizes, donated by local supporters, will be given away during the Awards Ceremony starting by 8PM on Green Street. Don't miss your chance to be included in the drawing for Four Hall of Fame Phillies Tickets! (All race entries are included in raffle)

All kids participating in the ¼ K & ½ K Kids' Run receive finisher medals!

Downingtown Day

Downingtown Historical & Parks Commission will host the 2nd annual Downingtown Day at Kerr Park on Saturday, September 14 from 9 AM to 6 PM. This free event will feature entertainment, food, an art/craft show, First Responders ceremony, and live music from Nicole Ehinger and the Chester County Lawmen. For more information, visit www.dtownhpc.org.

Health & Wellness Coordinator

Needed for a busy, non-profit senior adult activity center in Downingtown. Ideal candidate will be a motivated self-starter who enjoys working independently and as a member of a team, and will

have a passion for working with the elderly. Candidate will ideally hold certification to instruct group exercise, though training can be provided. Position is part-time (28 hours per week). Position requires round-trip travel to and from Elverson, twice weekly; transportation is required. Salary range is \$12.54 - \$15.35 per hour; commensurate with experience. Interested applicants should submit their resume and salary requirements via email to:

bill.pierce@downingtownseniors.org. No phone inquiries please; EOE.

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