



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 site will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

Interesting Downingtown area news 36 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* in April 1978.

The **Downingtown Area School Board** discussed the possibility of eliminating the per capita tax, which was characterized as a “nuisance” for senior citizens by Norma Smith, school board representative from Uwchlan. The tax was projected to generate \$160,000 the following year, and the cost of collecting the tax was estimated to be 15 percent of the revenue received.

Jack McCausland, who was born in the township in 1903, recalled that his 160-acre farm in **East Brandywine** once touched 13 other farms. He also estimated that there were *only* 25 working farms in the township.

After a **West Pikeland** woman had been shot, the township’s supervisors considered establishing a full-time police force. However, the supervisors acknowledged that a police department would mean the township’s real estate tax rate would have to be tripled.

The **Uwchlan Ambulance Corps** had an open house at its new headquarters on Welsh Pool Road, Lionville. The Corps had been operating out of the Lionville Fire Company’s garage on Village Avenue. Organized in 1974, with 35 men and women, the unit’s first ambulance was delivered in July 1975. Officers in 1978 were Cal Wilhelm, president; Mary Ellen Morrissey, vice president; Joan Pladek, secretary; Lois Norwood, financial secretary; Jim Hart and Donald Dockstader, trustees; and Ed Milham, operations director.

Recent **property transfers** included: 106 Hilltop Road, East Brandywine, \$43, 118; 1411 Carriage Lane, West Bradford, \$51,000; 120 Washington Ave., Downingtown, \$41,000; 505 Carmarthen Court, Uwchlan, \$60,990; 18 Gunning Lane, East Caln, \$54,600; 1 Carriage Drive, Upper Uwchlan, \$63,000;

Newly elected officers at **St. Anthony’s Lodge**, Downingtown, were Josephine Pacinelli, president; Florence Mascherino, vice president; Josephine Carbo, treasurer; Rose Castaldi, recording secretary; and Mary Celii, corresponding secretary.

Mrs. Margareta Mahan Helm received the Distinguished Service Award at the **DHS Alumni Association’s** banquet. And Anne Dowlin and John Dagher were named the Class of 1978’s outstanding seniors. Also at the banquet, Emily Lewis, Class of 1928, reminisced that when she was a first grader at East Ward School, students used dried corn to form words on their desktops as part of their spelling lessons. The corn also was used for math instruction.

Members of the cast of the musical, put on by **Lionville Junior High** students, included: Wayne Ritchie, John Hurst, Robert McClarin, Matthew Smith, Jennifer Abrams, Carol Styer, Tracy DeRocco, Brian Robison, and Richard Rush.

Dr. Charles Micken, superintendent of schools, told a group of **West Pikeland** parents, who were protesting against a plan to transfer 87 students from Pickering Valley School to Lionville Elementary School, that the only alternative was hiring two more teachers which the School Board was reluctant to do.

Confirmed at **Downingtown Methodist Church** were Patrick Borst, Fred Bradley, Douglas Bullock, Craig Davis, Michael Duffy, Harold Elmquist, Douglas Espenlaub, John Kosatka, Dennis McCarraher and Jackie Stevens.

A fashion show and luncheon was held to benefit the **Historic Yellow Springs Foundation**. Those responsible for planning the event were Mrs. Richard McDonald, Mrs. Gustave Orr, Mrs. Roger Smith, Mrs. Boulton Alexander, Mrs. Edward Blitz and Mrs. Bruce Armstrong.

The parking lot was expanded, and a garage was built at **Windsor Baptist Church**, Upper Uwchlan. Also, Joe Cura was appointed assistant Sunday School superintendent.

The **DHS lacrosse team** beat Unionville 9-3. Anne Kennedy and Kathy Herion scored three goals each, and Jenny Ward, Colleen Murtaugh and Joy Branyan each tallied one.

The **Whippet baseball team**, defending Ches-Mont champs, opened its season with an 11-1 win over Octorara. Buddy Trego was the winning pitcher, and designated hitter Jamie Bogush had four RBIs.

Top typists among seventh graders at **Lionville Junior High** were Lynne Caggiano, Austin Kirkbride, Lisa Nagy and Stacy Welker.

The **School Board** planned to build a new gymnasium, plus construction of nine classrooms, a computer center and a corridor on the second level of DHS. The proposed project, whose estimated cost would be \$2.2 million, also included expansion of the band room, enlargement of the cafeteria, conversion of two storage spaces into an art room, and expansion of the School District offices.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 70**, who went on a winter encampment, were Grant Angeny, Dave Bishop, Tom Horblinski, Lane Jarvis, Mike and Eric Raysor, Brian and Tim Gardiner, Joe Handoe, Scott Millward, Jeff Holstein, Lester Doubts and Scott Bell. Their leaders were Scott Stevenson and Ken Bell.

Winners in **Cub Pack 23's** father/son cake decorating contest were Todd Roberts, John Leeper, Steve Schoenberger, Matt Wagner, Steve MacCall, Eric Montgomery, Spike Lane, Kirk Reece, Tim McKim, John Sisforth, Chris Esposito, Joe Butler, Mark Wenger, Donny Bertram, Mike Shaw, Brian Firth, Billy Hoffman, Brian Gottier and Billy Schell.

It's at 325 Jefferis Road in East Brandywine



Linda Cohen is a truly perceptive scholar because she was the first person to correctly identify the historic house in the photo above as 325 Jefferis Road, at the intersection of Dilworth Road in East Brandywine.

Mickey Rooney spent time in Downingtown area

As many of you know, actor Mickey Rooney, one of Hollywood's biggest movie stars in the 1930s and later a character actor in a career that spanned several decades, died last Sunday. He was 93.

However, what some of you may not know is that Rooney spent a lot of time in the Downingtown area, while he was connected with the Downingtown Inn (located where the Brandywine Square Shopping Center is now) and the Tabas Hotel (now Ashbridge Manor) on Route 30 in East Caln. Mickey and his sons, Mickey Jr. and Tim, visited the Downingtown Inn so often that the actor was given his own cottage on the grounds of the inn. For example, he loved going to the race track with Downingtown pharmacist Nick Giunta.

We believe there are many stories about Rooney and his encounters with folks in the Downingtown area. Please send them to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

Information on Dr. Richard Whittaker, DHS Hall of Fame inductee

This is another article on a DHS graduate who will be inducted into the Hall of Fame, which was recently established by the Downingtown Area School District and the Downingtown Area High School Alumni Association. The information is based on data noted on the nominations forms submitted to the selection committee.

The honorees will be inducted at the Alumni Association's 130th annual banquet at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 W. Church St., Downingtown, on Saturday evening, April 26. More information about the banquet can be provided by calling Caryn Menna at (610) 883-3917.

Tickets can be purchased via

www.downingtownalumni.org/Documents/DAHSAABanquetReservation%202014.pdf.

Noted below are details on Richard Whittaker, Class of 1958, Achievements in Medicine and Humanitarian Service. According to the nomination form, submitted by classmate Jack McCombs. Whittaker's accomplishments included:

- Whittaker earned his medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in 1966 and completed an orthopedic surgery residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in 1971. He started his orthopedic practice in Pottstown in 1974, and has been affiliated with the Pottstown Memorial Medical Center ever since. He has written numerous articles in orthopedic medicine and surgery publications, received many medals and awards, and has been a lecturer at many conferences, and a clinical professor at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, from 1978 to the present.
- As part of the Army Reserve, Medical Corps, from 1971 to 2002, Whittaker provided medical care to soldiers and citizens in Panama, Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia in 1991, the Bosnia Peace Mission in 1996 and the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. He has earned many humanitarian honors, including the Salvation Army Gold Crest (1985), Rotary International Service Award (1996 and 2004).

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Free ads for Non-Profits

Citizen and Business of the Year Awards

The Downingtown-Thorndale Regional Chamber of Commerce will present its Outstanding Citizen and Business of the Year Awards at the Chamber's 69th annual dinner on Thursday, May 1, at the Downingtown Country Club. For tickets and additional info about the dinner, see:

[http://dtrcc.com/Documents/2014%20Chamber%20Annual%20Dinner%20-%20Invitation%20\(1\).pdf](http://dtrcc.com/Documents/2014%20Chamber%20Annual%20Dinner%20-%20Invitation%20(1).pdf).

Drug Take-Back Day

On Saturday, April 26, from 10 AM to 2 PM, the Downingtown Police Department will again partner with the U. S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to participate in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. This is an opportunity for the public to safely discard unwanted, unused and expired prescription drugs. Bring your medications for disposal to Downingtown Borough Hall Annex Building at 4 W.

Lancaster Avenue. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. For more information, call 610-269-0344, ext. 200.

Flea market

Spring Flea Market. 4-7 PM Friday, April 11 and 9 AM to 4 PM Saturday, April 12

Donations now being accepted. All proceeds benefit the Downingtown Library.

Also, Meditation for Creativity: 6:30 PM Monday, April 28. Program focuses on drawing inspiration from meditation. For more info on these activities, call the library at 610-269-2741.

Flower sale

Marshallton United Methodist Church's Men's Flower Sale will begin Friday, May 9 and will continue through Wednesday, May 28. The church is located at 1282 W. Strasburg Road, Marshallton. Hours are 9 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Saturday. The sale will feature large hanging baskets, annuals, geraniums, climbing mandevilles, perennials, vegetables, herbs, patio planters and more. Proceeds will help support local, regional, and global outreach. For more information, contact the church office at [\(610\) 696-5247](tel:6106965247).

East Brandywine Baptist's history

The East Brandywine Township Historical Commission will present a lecture on the history of East Brandywine Baptist Church, will be held at the church at 3:30 PM on Sunday, April 27.

Alert Fire Co. golf outing

The Alert Fire Co. will hold a golf outing on Monday, May 5, at the Downingtown Country Club. Entry fee for each golfer is \$100, which includes greens fee, cart, lunch, beverages on the course, awards dinner and five competitions. See www.alertgolfouting.org for registration and contest details.

Kentucky Derby Nite at the Races

The Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Committee, sponsors of the Halloween and Christmas parades, will have a "Kentucky Derby Nite at the Races" on Saturday, May 3 at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 Church St., Downingtown. Doors will open at 5:30 PM. Buffet begins at 6 PM. Horse racing will begin immediately following the actual Kentucky Derby. For more details, see: www.dtownchristmas.com.

Soccer for players with special needs

The Glenmoore Eagle Youth Association's High 5 soccer program will be held at Fellowship Fields, 275 Fellowship Road, Chester Springs, from 3-4 PM on Saturdays, beginning April 12. The free program is for players, between 5 and 19 years of age, who have special needs. For more info, go to: www.geyasoccer.org.

Brochure on DARC classes & activities

You can gain access to the latest DARC brochure, listing all classes and activities, at: www.darcinfo.com. For more info, call 610-269-9260, or stop by the DARC office (8:30 AM-4:30 PM, Monday thru Friday), 114 Bell Tavern Road Downingtown.

Downingtown Farmers' Market

The Downingtown Farmers' Market will be open on Thursday April 17, at the Williamson Masonic Hall; 210 Manor Ave., Downingtown, from 4 - 6 PM. 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.

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