



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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org

The past is never done. It is not even past-William Faulkner

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Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the house in the photo above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

Downingtown area news published 36 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* in the latter part of August 1978.

Plans for the Exton-Lionville **Medical Arts building**, next to the Uwchlan Ambulance Corps facility on Welsh Pool Road, were presented to the Uwchlan Township supervisors. Partners in the project were Dr. Glenn Burkland, an orthodontist; Dr. Martin Binder, an obstetrician; Dr. Nicholas Spyropoulos, a pediatrician; and Dr. Alfred Mauriello, an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Marjorie Knowlton was elected president of the **Downingtown Woman's Club**. Also elected were: Mrs. Joseph McCahon, first vice president; Mrs. Edward Plank, second vice president; Mrs. Edward Kirkbride, recording secretary; Mrs. William Ash, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Jay Lammey, treasurer. Members of the board included: Mrs. Ralph Ralston, Mrs. John Collins, Mrs. Gilbert Hamm, Mrs. Thomas Brookover, Emily Lewis and Mrs. Lawrence Billau.

Officers elected by members of the **Downingtown Lions Club** were Horace Schanley, president; David Swindin, first vice president; Fred Longenecker, second vice president; Terry Donohue, third vice president; Bob Bowker, secretary; Bob Shoffner, treasurer; Jim Zaferes, tail twister; Bob Wagner, assistant tail twister; Mike Bem, lion tamer; Jim Ney, assistant lion tamer; Ted Jacobs, greeter; and Wally Houston, chaplain.

Recent **property transfers** included: 1545 Broad Run Road, West Bradford, \$62,500; 114 Viaduct Ave., Downingtown, \$29,500; 132 Baker Drive, Uwchlan, \$66,500; 109 McIlvain Drive, East Caln, \$84,000; 27 Blakely Road, East Brandywine, \$83,010; 1 Milford Road, Upper Uwchlan, \$66,000; 532 Indiantown Road, Wallace, \$40,500.

Billy Null, age 9; Glenn Koser, 14; and Mike Koser, 8, were **medal winners** at the AAU Grand National Freestyle Wrestling Championships in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Nine members of the **Wallace Township Historical Commission** were participating in an archaeological dig at the site of the remnants of a building, constructed in the mid-18th Century, which burned down in 1890. Located at the intersection of Highspire and Springton Roads, the building probably had once housed a saddlery or harness shop, according to John Shrader, a member of the Historical Commission.

Harold "Bud" Thompson of Guthriesville, a doctoral candidate at Princeton University, was part of a team of scientists working on a fusion process as a safe source of energy.

Local contestants who were winners at the state **4-H competition** included Bonnie Shaw, Dorcas and Sarah Nothstine, Roberta Ekdahl and Lisa Kaplan.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 82** who won merit badges were Jeff Vincent, Dave Rowley, Paul Smith, Jake Edge, Robert and Chris McClarin, Mike Herthler and Peter Donia.

And members of **Boy Scout Troop 23** who went on a canoeing trip in Maine were Tom Waiboer, Bob Bayle, Vic Hagerstrom, John Goldman and Sean Sexton.

Downingtown area students returning to classes in September would be **prohibited from having tobacco** in their possession while attending school-sponsored activities and while riding on school buses. Punishment for first offenses was a five-day suspension, and a second offense would result in a 10-day suspension. Smoking by students in school had been prohibited for many years. And the School District's new **in-school suspension** policy required suspended students to stay at home during the school day, and then report to their respective schools to do assigned school work from 4 PM to 7 PM.

Medals given to local World War I veterans in 1919

We recently received a query from a collector about a medal with this inscription: "Welcome back from the service, July 4, 1919, Downingtown."

No, the medals were not given by the American Legion, because that group wasn't formed in Downingtown until 1920.

The medals were given to local World War I veterans by members of the Downingtown Business Men's Club at a 1919 banquet put on by the Downingtown Moose Lodge, at the Lincoln Stuart Building on Stuart Avenue.

We'd love to add one of those medals to our archival collection.

German POWs worked on Downingtown area farms

We know that German prisoners of war worked on several Downingtown area farms during World War II. And we're seeking information about those situations from local people who were related to the families that operated or helped on local farms where the POWs worked

Based on some information found at the Chester County Historical Society, we have determined that German POWs worked on these local farms:

West Bradford Township: Centerview Farm (now site of Broad Run Park), owned by the Hetricks family, plus the farms owned by the C. Harvey Young, Harold Martin and Harold Fellenbaum families.

West Whiteland Township: H. Russell Worthington's orchard, and the farms owned by the Henry Young and Charles Meredith families.

Upper Uwchlan Township: Farms owned by the Raymond Lynch and Anna Nott families.

Wallace Township: Farm owned by the Charles Wilson family

East Brandywine Township: Farm owned by the James Manley family.

All told, 425,000 German prisoners of war were brought to the U.S. during World War II. They stayed in 700 temporary camps located in 46 states. Most of the POWs who worked on local farms stayed in barracks in Philadelphia or Media. And they usually were transported to and from the farms in school buses.

They earned about 80 cents a day, which was roughly comparable to the pay American enlisted men received then. Part of their wages was used to help fund the POW program, a total of \$22 million in 1944. The balance of their pay (in "scrip" paper money) was pocket money they could spend at a POW camp canteen.

Information about POWs working in the U.S. wasn't publicized here during the war, to avoid fear of the enemy presence in such large numbers. But in areas where the camps were located and POWs worked, their presence was usually accepted. A 1943 poll showed that 74% of Americans blamed the German government for the war and they didn't hate German soldiers.

If you can provide us with information about German POWs working at any of the farms noted, or any other farms in the Downingtown area, please send it to:

Info@downingtowntownareahistoricalociety.org.

Officers of the Downingtown Area Historical Society are: Parry Desmond, president; Ernie Jameson, vice president; Carol Grigson, treasurer and archivist; Marion Piccolomini, recording secretary. The board of directors includes: Harry Helms, Mike Dunn, Francine Dague and Phil Dague.

Little League started in Downingtown 65 years ago

Little League Baseball is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, and since the 2014 Little League World Series will begin next week, we think it's appropriate to retrieve information from earlier Hist-O-Grams about when Little League Baseball was first played in Chester County. That was 65 years ago, when the Downingtown Little League was established on June 30, 1949.

The founding officers were: Dr. George Bousum, president; Francis Tweed, vice president; Charles Emery, secretary; and Vinton Smedley, treasurer. And the original sponsors of teams were Pepperidge Farm, St. Anthony's Lodge, the Loyal Order of the Moose and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Games were played on the vacant lot on the southwest corner of Manor and Pennsylvania Avenues; where a backstop, dugouts, scoreboard and fence were installed.

The first official games, a doubleheader, were played on June 10, 1950. Opening day ceremonies included musical selections by the DHS marching band and an invocation by Father Daniel Hoy of St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Burgess Lee Hamilton threw out the first ball.

In the opening contest, John Chilla, whose son and grandson eventually played in the league, tossed a five-hit gem for Pepperidge, beating the Moose 5-3. In the nightcap, Bill Stringer smacked the league's first homer, to help St. Anthony's edge the VFW 8-7.

Subsequently, Don Greenleaf informed Hist-O-Gram subscribers that the league's scoreboard was built by these local residents: Tab Swarner, carpenter; Messiah Lutheran Church's Rev. George Bass; Dr. George Bousum, dentist; Raymond Greenleaf, pharmacist, and others. Balls, strikes and outs on the scoreboard were displayed via red, green and yellow lenses donated by the Pennsylvania Railroad. Also, the first concession stand was adapted from the playhouse, formerly in the backyard of the Greenleaf property, where it had been used by his two sons.

And Bob Stevens told us that his father, Morris Stevens, an electrician, did the installation, wiring and hookup for the scoreboard. Bob also recalled, "I was ten years old at the time, and I was taught how to dig a trench from the backstop out to the scoreboard. Without saying, my dad did a lot more of the digging than I did."

Also, local residents watched the Downingtown Little League team win two televised games broadcasted on WCAU-TV in August 1951. John Bousum had six hits and struck out 11 batters. And Eddie Aumiller was on the mound and hit two doubles when the locals beat Hammonton, NJ, the previous year's national champions.

(Editor's Note: We wonder if any Hist-O-Gram reader has any part of a 1950s vintage Little League uniform, or photos of teams from that era or even years later? The Historical Society would love to add them to its archival collection. If you wish donate any Little League-related items, please contact us via Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org.)

Your friends and family can be Hist-O-Gram subscribers

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.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org, and type their email address into the sign-up box on the home page. We won't share or sell any email addresses. And you can access previously published Hist-O-Grams at: www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html.

It's at 521 W. Uwchlan Ave. (Route 113) in Uwchlan Twp.



Rahn Brackin is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the location of the house in the above photo (taken by Mike Dunn) as 521 West Uwchlan Avenue (Route 113) in Uwchlan Township. Rahn knew that because his maternal aunt and uncle, Richmond D. Hocker and Ruth Dahms Hocker lived there in the late 1930's or early 1940's before moving to a new home in West Brandywine Township. Rahn said he never heard anything about the house once being a gas station, but his mother told him that house's second floor was added on after the Hockers lived there.

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.
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Contact: vance_usher@netzero.com, 610-329-1056, 320 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, PA 19335.

Free ads for Non-Profits

Teri's Run & Walk

13th annual Teri's Run and Twilight Walk for Scleroderma will be held on Friday, September 5. The evening's events include: 6:30 PM – Kids Run, 7 PM – 5K Run & 1 Mile Walk, 8 PM – Awards Ceremony. Chip-Timed Walk and Run on fast, flat, spectator-friendly course that starts on Green Street in Downingtown. The run is dedicated to the memory of Teri Valocchi and all those who have lost their battle to Scleroderma. Register Online at www.terisrun.org.

Log House Art & Craft Show

The Borough of Downingtown is looking for vendors for its annual Log House Art & Craft Show, to be held Sunday, September 21, from noon - 4 PM at Kerr Park. Vendor spaces are available for \$25. Handmade art, crafts and photography only. Those interested in learning more or applying to participate can visit the website: www.downingtown.org or call 610-269-0344.

Blood Drive

There will be a Red Cross Blood Drive on Friday, August 8 from 2-7 PM at the Borough Hall Annex Building, 4 W. Lancaster Avenue, Downingtown, PA. Visit www.downingtown.org to sign up.

Swinging Summer Saturday

The Downingtown Main Street Association will have a street festival from 5 PM to 10 PM on Saturday, August 9 in the "pocket park" on East Lancaster Avenue (next to Downingtown Country Gifts) in the borough. Local crafts people, restaurants and businesses that wish to participate should contact: manager@downingtownmainstreet.com for booth space applications and more details.

DHS Class of 1964 reunion

Update: Although the registration deadline has passed, there is still room to reserve your spot for your 50th Class Reunion. Contact Judi Grubb Supplee at jsupplee@x-coretechnologies.com ASAP. The reunion will be held 6-11 PM at St. Anthony's Lodge in Downingtown on Saturday, Sept. 27. Cost is \$50 per person. Due to construction at DHS West, the homecoming date was moved to Oct. 17. So there will be no parade on Sept. 25. However, as part of the reunion, the class still plans to attend the football game on Friday night, Sept 26. For more information see: <http://dhsclassof64.org/>.

2 winners will get a playhouse

The Homebuilders of Chester and Delaware Counties are sponsoring a fundraiser in which two winners will win a backyard playhouse. The playhouses are 8 feet wide, 8 feet long and 8 feet tall. Proceeds from the fundraiser will go to Kenzie's Kure, whose mission is to cure Type 1 Diabetes. Tickets are \$25 each. The winning tickets will be drawn at the Fall Into Fabulous event at the Downingtown Country Club on October 2. For more details and buy tickets, click on: www2.jdrf.org/fallintofabulous.

Log House Dinner Raffle

Winner of the raffle will win a dinner for four at the Downingtown Log House on Lancaster Avenue. The dinner will be catered by St. Anthony's Restaurant. To purchase raffle tickets—\$50 each—call Ginny Pierce, 610-269-2750. Proceeds from the raffle will go to the Downingtown Area Senior Center. The winning ticket will be drawn at the Senior Center's Harvest Hop on November 8.

Farmers Market

The Downingtown Farmers Market is now held in Kerr Park, by the gazebo area of Kerr Park on Pennsylvania Avenue in the borough, on Saturdays, from 9 AM to 1 PM.

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.

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 at 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday 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.