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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

Where and What Is This?

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The first person to correctly identify the site, shown in the photo above, will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to:

Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

Downingtown area news in early November 1962

Noted below are news items originally published in local newspapers 52 years ago.

The University of Pennsylvania Educational Service Bureau, recommended that the **Downingtown Area School District** should immediately expand two elementary schools—Lionville and Beaver Creek—so both could accommodate 700 pupils, and that a new grade school, to replace the Windsor School in Eagle, should be built. Penn's Educational Service Bureau study also suggested that the East Ward School should be replaced and that old school in

the borough should be converted into an administrative building. Another recommendation was that the high school's capacity should be doubled, so it could house 1,100 students.

Central Presbyterian Church's 100th anniversary celebration began with a dinner attended by more than 250 people. Edith Stauffer briefly outlined the church's history. And Charles Seibert and Lee Hamilton, co-chairmen of long-range planning, noted that the church would soon need more room to accommodate the growing congregation.

Officers elected to lead the **Minquas Fire Co.** in Downingtown were George Perry, president; Everett Hoopes, vice president; Ernest Smedley, secretary; Vinton Smedley, treasurer; William Wilmot, financial secretary; and Daniel Rothas, Trustee.

Edward Dazio, a member of Boy Scout Troop 2, was installed as an Eagle Scout.

The DHS girls' **field hockey team** beat Conshohocken 4-1, as goals were scored by Linda McElroy, Maya Spies, Sandy Oppenaver and Susan Whittaker. Whippet coach Sonny Heller also cited the efforts of captain Donna McElroy and Anne Thompson.

The Mother's Group of **Downingtown Friends School** held a square dance and buffet supper at Camp Hilltop. Those responsible for the Affair were Mrs. Francis Brown, Mrs. Dale Hooper, Mrs. Robert Sommer, Mrs. William Goessel, Mrs. Fred Wooten, Mrs. Louis Seltzer, Mrs. Ralph Der, and Mrs. James McQuail.

Newly elected officers of the **West Bradford Fire Co. Ladies Auxiliary** were Mrs. Jack Hines, president; Mrs. Earl Barwell, vice president; Mrs. George March, secretary; and Mrs. John Trimble, treasurer.

Members of **Cub Pack 79**, sponsored by Fairview Presbyterian Church, Glenmoore, who won prizes for their costumes at a Halloween party, were Billy Hardy, Charles Keeseey and Gary Raysor. Judges were William Funk, Louis Waldmann and Mrs. Charles Earnshaw.

Mrs. Theodore Noll, head of the **Downingtown branch of the American Red Cross**, appointed the following committee chairmen: Mrs. David Ross, volunteer services; Earl Stern and Mrs. Fred Pollock, disaster; Mrs. Lee Hamilton, Junior Red Cross; and Mrs. Robert Garrett, Grey Ladies. Chairmen re-appointed included Richard Franklin and Mrs. Stanley Seneff, blood recruitment; Dr. Herman Kramm, safety services; Raymond Lemmon, first aid; Mrs. Edward Campbell, nursing services; Mrs. Anthony Serafino, staff aides; Mrs. Nathan Eachus, nurses' aides; Mrs. Maurie Davis, canteen; and Mrs. Howard Fitzgerald, motor service.

Elected as officers of the **Downingtown Opti-Mrs. Club** were Mrs. Francis Swisher, president; Mrs. Donald Collier, vice president; Mrs. Thomas Lee, secretary; and Mrs. Gary Albright, treasurer.

Gilbert Cox Jr., Thomas Haas and Gene Martin were the editors of a newsletter published by the young people at **First Baptist Church**, Downingtown.

Winners for their costumes at the Halloween party for seventh graders at **Downingtown Junior High** were Donna Usher, Benjamin Woodland, Doug Gindin, Kathy Fleming, Lynn Forbes, William Hardy, Diana Lynn, Daniel Hoxter, Daryl Moore, Cathy Thomas, Linda Sheesley, James Slonaker, Ann Bishop, Kathy Black, Martha Brown, Willard Bennett, Chris Pierson, James Reber, Cheryl Pitts, Ernie Cozzone, Patricia Dunn, Nick Costello and Catherine Cory.

Members of the **Junior High's Student Council** who attended the Suburban Student Council Conference were Gina Myers, Cindy Kent, Joan Acker and Joy Wertz.

Members of the Confirmation Class at **St. James Episcopal Church**, Downingtown, were Elaine Geiger, Lynn Forbes, Frank Gregory, Christine Jordan, Nancy Lawn, Neils Olsen,

Katherine and Mary Peoples, Stephen Phillips, Virginia Priest, Christopher Smith, Lauren Tweed and Marsha Waltz.

Those who came unmasked to the **Ladies of St. Joseph's** Halloween party were fined 25 cents. Winners of the costume competition included Mrs. Joseph Creamer, Mrs. Dominic Mascherino, Mrs. Frank Delio, Mrs. George Kalbitzer, Mrs. Joseph Cipollini, Mrs. Quindi Terriman and Mrs. Donald Lacy. New members were Mrs. Dominic Castaldi, Mrs. Raymond Dolan and Mrs. William Doohan.

Members of the safety patrol at **Beaver Creek School** were Capt. Steven Long, Lt. John Stoviak, Glenda Buckwalter, Helen Bittmann, Robert Ifert, Susan Patrizio, Brenda Habecker, Clair Koser, Joyce Robinson and Annawyn Menas.

Despite stormy weather, over 300 people came to the turkey dinner at **St. Pauls' Lutheran Church**, Lionville, which was prepared by Mrs. Charles Martin, Mrs. Jonathan Windle, Mrs. Louis Maga and Mrs. John Emberger.

Items found in 1917 editions of the *Downingtown Archive*

Noted below are examples of what was going on in the Downingtown area 97 years ago, according to the local weekly newspaper.

- Think Downingtown must have been a boring little burgh in 1917? Think again! One Friday night's entertainment at the Grand Opera House on Brandywine Avenue included: 10 vaudeville acts, with dancers, acrobats, singers and comedians, plus a concert orchestra and a "big silver" band. Tickets were only 25 and 35 cents.
- Another attraction were the basketball games played by the DHS boys' team, played at the Minquas Fire Co. In the first half of a game against West Chester High School, played in January 1917, Downingtown had a 17-14 lead, but the local team lost 27-26 in overtime. Also that month, the DHS girls' team travelled to Woodbury High School and were clobbered by the Jersey Girls, 30-5.
- In addition to basketball games, the Minquas also had a firing range, where the local Rifle Club practiced on Thursday nights.
- However, frivolity was constrained in the borough in March 1917, when the bars in Downingtown's two hotels—the Swan and the Pennsylvania House—were shut down by judges in the Chester County License Court.
- And that same month, Rev. Elmer Walker, pastor of Central Presbyterian Church, presented a petition to Borough Council, seeking to prohibit the boxing exhibitions at the Opera House. Based on information about the boxing matches, which had been passed on to him by someone who had attended one of the bouts, the clergyman claimed they were a "stigma to the good name of the town." Subsequently, Truman Wade, Chester County's District Attorney, decided to shut down the "sparring exhibitions" at the Opera House.
- Also, brothers D. Edgar Hutchison, M.D., and Corbin Hutchison, Ph.D., purchased the drug store at 116 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, which had been owned and operated by their father, D.W. Hutchison, for many years. In addition to prescription drugs, the store also offered Victor Victrolas and Breyer's ice cream.

Please show your appreciation for our Hist-O-Grams

We started sending our Hist-O-Gram to friends and members of the Historical Society on October 15, 2010. And with few interruptions over the past four years, we've continued to send our free, online newsletter to some 1,000 households every week.

We suspect that's what Woody Allen meant when he said, "Eighty percent of success is showing up."

Now we're asking you make a tax-deductible contribution to the Historical Society, in appreciation for the Hist-O-Grams we've been sending you over the years. We're asking for a generous donation because we're an all-volunteer, non-profit operation, whose annual budget adds up to only \$25,000. Much of that sum is absorbed by expenses such as utility bills, insurance costs and typical maintenance. And our membership fees don't come close to covering all those expenses. Also, we recently spent \$600 to have new shelving installed in our Archives room, and paid \$3,600 from our general operating funds to have the summer kitchen's stonework re-mortared.

Now we need to re-pair the leaking, 3-story high, stone wall on the east side of Ashbridge House, a project that will cost us \$16,600. So far, funds realized from our recent Restaurant Raffle, plus money in our capital reserve account, will only cover half that total.

That's why we're asking you to please send a donation to: DAHS, Post Office Box 9, Downingtown, PA 19335, (or to use Paypal: [click here](#)). We are most grateful for your generosity. And EVERY subscriber will continue to receive our free Hist-O-Grams every week.

Appreciatively yours,
Parry Desmond, President
Downingtown Area Historical Society

Forgot to order Luminaria candle sets?

You can buy luminaria candles and/or reuseable plastic bases from 1-4 PM on Sunday, Dec. 14, from 10 AM to 4 PM on Saturday, Dec. 20, and 1-4 PM on Sunday, Dec. 21 at Ashbridge House, our headquarters next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, in the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on Route 30 in East Caln. Candle and bag sets and bases cost 75 cents each.

Christmas tree ornaments, depicting Downingtown historic sites, will also be on sale at those times.

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.downingtownareahistoricalociety.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.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html.

**DECORATE YOUR TREE WITH ORNAMENTS
DEPICTING HISTORIC DOWNTOWN SITES**

\$5 each or 3 for \$10

Buy your tree ornaments at Ashbridge House (next to Chick-Fil-A)

1-4 PM SUNDAYS

Mail order info: www.downtownareahistoricalociety.org/Gift%20Shop.html



#1 Borough Hall



#2 Alert Fire Hall



#3 Minquas Fire Hall



#4 Old East Ward School



#5 West Ward School



#6 Jr-Sr High School



#7 Gazebo in Kerr Park

It's at 700 E. Lancaster Ave. in Downingtown



Linda Draper is a truly perceptive scholar because she was the first person to correctly identify the location of the house in the photo above, taken by Mike Dunn. For many years, it was the residence of Martha Englerth, a life-long Downingtown resident who passed away last August. She was a graduate of Downingtown High School and attended the University of Pennsylvania. She was a divisional personnel manager for Pepperidge Farm in Downingtown for 20 years and was the first female employee of Campbell Soup Co. to hold a titled management position.

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.

Please donate to our Hist-O-Gram appreciation drive

Paid ads for businesses

Vance Usher, registered representative

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

Free ads for Non-Profits

Christmas Parade

Downingtown's annual Christmas Parade will begin at 3 PM on Saturday, December 13. Other events that day will be: A Hospitality Suite, with refreshments and music, from 1-3 PM at the main branch of DNBFirst; Santa will be there from 1-2:30 PM. And the Touch of Class dancers will put on a performance at 2:30 at Lancaster and Wallace Avenues. Also at 2:30 PM, the Octorara Intermediate School Band will perform at the Armor Alley Pocket Park.

Toys for Tots

New, unused and unwrapped toys can be dropped off in the labeled box in the Downingtown Police Department lobby, next to Borough Hall, 9 AM–11 PM, Monday thru Friday. Deadline is December 15.

Roberts supports Downingtown Library

Roberts Subaru in Downingtown has named the Downingtown Library as its Hometown Charity for the 2014-15 "Share the Love" event. That means Subaru will donate \$250 for every Subaru vehicle it sells or leases between now and January 2, when the purchaser designates the Downingtown Library as their designated choice.

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.

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