



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

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

[www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.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. Please send your responses to: [Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org).

# Local news originally published in August 1946

Noted below are news items, which were retrieved from local newspapers published 68 years ago.

After representatives of the **Downingtown American Legion and VFW Posts** met with borough leaders, the two veterans' groups agreed to merge their plans to conduct fund raising efforts so they each could buy or build a post home. They agreed to jointly conduct a house-to-house solicitation, in addition to selling chances for two cars. The VFW had recently announced that its goal was to raise \$25,000, and it was considering using a lot next to Arthur Petrella's garage in St. Joseph's Alley, which Petrella offered to donate, or a lot on Wallace Avenue, owned by the Bicking Paper Co.

Members of the Junior Boys Sunday School Class at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, who went to a double feature at a movie theatre in Wilmington, were: Jack Witmer, Charles Long, Dick Stoudt, Carl Ruth, and David, Richard and George Taylor.

Installed as officers of Camp 275, **Patriotic Sons of America**, Chester Springs, were Hibbert Wells, president; Hiram Twaddell, vice president; Robert Richards, master of forms; Ralph Miller, conductor; Frank Cale, inspector; Clayton Seaboldt, guard; Harry McBride, delegate to the state camp; Raymond McBride, recording secretary; Raymond McBride Jr., corresponding secretary; and Harold Hallman, treasurer.

**Downingtown firemen** who attended the state fire school at Lewistown, PA, for a week were Carmen Menna, Hallan Usher, Fred Jameson, Benjamin Summers and W.H. Backenstose.

The **Lyndell School** conducted its first reunion since 1941, and some 55 former students and guests came. When the village school was established in 1867, it was called the Brooklyn School. Officers of the Reunion Committee were Endora Freeman, president; Dr. Leonard Frescoln, vice president; Hannah Hughes Harner, secretary; and Clara Lewis Piersol, treasurer.

The **Donkey Club** of Downingtown was entertained at the Glen Isle Farm home (now the Orangery restaurant on South Lloyd Avenue) of Mrs. Norman Woodward. The bathing beauty contest was won by Mrs. Andrew Brookover Jr.

Members of the Intermediate Boys Sunday School at **Marshallton Methodist Church**, who enjoyed a swim and doggie roast at the home of John Morris, Sunday School superintendent, included: Robert Sellers, Dale Ellingsworth, Jerry Powell, Myrle English, Clarence Wallace and Sandy Morris.

Aubrey Goudie and Kermit Mountz returned to the **DHS faculty**, after serving in the Navy during WW II. Mountz, a history teacher, also was a line coach for the football team. Goudie taught mathematics and coached the boys' varsity basketball team.

Restricted building lots were being sold at the former **Happy Days Farm** in Lionville. According to owner Harold Durant, the property was unique because it was the only development in Chester County that had its own fire equipment, a 5-ton truck that carries 250 gallons of water.

**Camp Linden** in West Bradford was sponsored by the Southwark Settlement House of Philadelphia. The summer camp, which had been the site of the Greenwood Dell Board School in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, included a mansion and several cottages for some 40 campers.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the **Alert Fire Co.**, Downingtown, won \$50 "best appearance" prize in the opening parade for the Oxford Fair.

The **Romansville School**, which was operated from 1870 until 1926, held its 21<sup>st</sup> reunion. The school building was built from recycled stone from a former schoolhouse.

## Third graders at West Ward School in 1955-56



Gene Martin, who now lives in New Hampshire, sent us this photo and provided most of the names of the third graders in Jane Ulsh's class at West Ward School in Downingtown. Others who helped identify the kids were: Gail Katherman, Lois Quinn, Janet Strawsnyder and Jeff Swisher. The only unidentifiable student in the photo apparently is the boy in the sixth row, between Marty Martin and Bobby Green. Based on the consensus identifications by those noted above, the kids in the photo are: row 1, Jay Rambo, Jon Shepherd, Jeff Swisher, Lynn Dowlin, Ed Conner, Gene Martin and Miss Ulsh, teacher; row 2, Sharon Fennelly, Debbie Morrison, Oscar Asparagus, Marlyn Harmon, Sally Campbell and Janet Strawsnyder; row 3, Bobby Connor, Linda Farah, Kenny Sigle, Jane Kempfer and Jim Sanders; row 4, Diane Wilkerson, Virgil Grissom, Marty Menas, Audrey Strouse, Lois Quinn and Ruth Travaglini; row 5, Carol Ely, Howard Fitzgerald, Darlene Harris, Alvin Groff, Tommy Rogers and Ed Jenkins; row 6, Ethan Berry, Priscilla Asparagus, Bill Barlow, Marty Martin, (unidentified) and Bobby Green.

## ***Blue and Gold* news items from 1958-59 school year**

These news items from the *Blue and Gold* student newspaper at DHS reveal what life was like during the 1958-59 school year. The newspaper's staff that year included Jeanne Emery, editor-in-chief; Joan Kent and Pat Mitchell, associate editors; Sonia Raysor, art editor; Dallet Norris, managing editor; Helen Burkhart, music editor; Joanne Rice and Polly Weber, girls' sports editors; Bill Davies, boys' sports editor; Tom Johnson, features editor; Mike Echols, make-up editor; and Iva Darlington and Linda Smith, typists. Although no specific editor was assigned to the task, most issues included details on a student's "Dreamy Dragster."

## **October 1958**

Student Council members were: Bill Brookover, president; Dave DiEugenio, vice president; Anne Yerkes, secretary; Tom Booker, treasurer; Jakie Ax, Tribunal judge; and John Yamshak, Tribunal clerk.

Polly Pennypacker was elected Harvest Queen at the Farm Show. Officers of the Future Homemakers of America, which co-sponsored the show, included Judy Jones, president; Kathy McMinimee, vice president; Barbara Garris, secretary; Betty May, treasurer; Shirley Evans, reporter; and Linda Billman, historian.

Members of the Future Farmers of America, the show's other sponsor, who won awards at the event were Jack Hoffman, Albert Hultz, Lamar Howe, Henry Roth, Francis DuBosq, Walter Jankowski, Charles Stouff, Ronald Styer, Harry McMinimee and Ben Hash.

Cheerleaders were co-captains Gerry McCombs and Mary Jane Sabellico, Judy Scarborough, Karen Sigle, Polly Pennypacker, Nancy Lee, Shirley Jesse and Mary Ann Philips.

## **November 1958**

The Lettermen's Club paid \$171.60 to buy yard markers, used at football games.

Members of the Senior Class Play cast included Cookie Seibert, Pat Mitchell, SuSu Serafino, Tom Johnson, Charlie Crouse and Alan Wilson.

## **December 1958**

The football team beat Coatesville 7-6 on Thanksgiving morning, and the Whippets were co-champs of the Ches-Mont League for the second consecutive year. DHS players who made the all-league first team were Buddy White, Franny Henderson, Joe Arasim and Lamar Howe.

The School Board approved plans to build a new, \$2.5 million senior high school, designed to hold 1,000 students.

## **May 1959**

Students chosen to speak at the commencement were Frank Marcocci, Buddy White, Nancy Jefferis, Jim Beggs, Pat Kuhs and Alan Wilson.

DHS students who won awards for their entries in the Chester County Science Fair were Gary Kinzey, Charles Stimson and Paul Edelen.

Local students who showed their art work in the Regional Scholastic Award Exhibition were Frannie Moyer, Barb Crosby, Patsy Sue West, Joan Kent and Louis Pizzi.

*(Editor's Note: This article concludes our series of items gleaned from copies of the Blue and Gold from the late 1950s, which were donated by Caroline Ash. However, we will continue them if someone donates earlier or later editions of the student newspaper.)*

## **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](http://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. Or if you want your email address deleted from the list, contact us at: [Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org). By the way, you can access previously published Hist-O-Grams at: [www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html](http://www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html).

## **Tunnel under 341 E. Lancaster Avenue?**

Last week's Hist-O-Gram included information on the Meisel mansion, which was razed in the 1960s so the Downingtown East Apartment complex could be built on the site, across from the Downingtown Library. The article also noted that a tunnel (part of the pre-Civil War Underground Railroad operation for escaped slaves from the South) may have stretched from the Meisel house at 335 E. Lancaster Ave, to the Thomas Moore house at 341 E. Lancaster Ave. Noted below is a comment about that issue from local attorney, Jay Fischer.

“The article on the Meisel property is interesting. When Jeff (Valocchi) and I acquired the Thomas Moore House (341 East Lancaster Ave) Jane Davidson called and requested permission to inspect the property for evidence of the rumored tunnel. She spend several hours in the basement, but found nothing to substantiate the rumors. There have been many reports of a tunnel between Thomas Moore House and the library building, which I always found interesting. If it existed, I am sure it would have collapsed by now, with all the traffic on Lancaster Ave. When we did the initial renovations, we did find evidence of a cistern in the front yard, which could be what people remember as a tunnel.”

## **Monkey Ward catalog reveals the so-called good old days**

Teresa Talucci sent us an online copy of Montgomery Ward's 1934 Christmas catalog, accessible via: <http://grannykaye.com/wp-content/uploads/1934-Christmas-Catalogue-from-Montgomery-Ward.pdf>.

In addition to the incredibly low, Depression era prices, take note of the last line on the order form, which is the last item of the series of images.

## **Don't throw that stuff away**

You probably noticed that many of the articles we publish every week in the Hist-O-Gram are based on printed materials from the past, such as programs from schools, churches, businesses, clubs, Scout troops and teams with a Downingtown area connection.

So, whenever you come across these types of printed materials with a local connection, please don't toss them. Instead, donate them to the Historical Society. Please call us at 610-269-1709 or send us an email to [Info@downingtowntareahistoricalandsociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtowntareahistoricalandsociety.org), so you can arrange to donate the materials to us.

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By the way, you can access previously published Hist-O-Grams at: [www.downingtowntareahistoricalandsociety.org/Histograms.html](http://www.downingtowntareahistoricalandsociety.org/Histograms.html).

# It's at 771 Font Road in Upper Uwchlan



Russ Faller is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify this as house at 771 Font Road in Upper Uwchlan Township. You can see more details about this historic house at: [www.trulia.com/property/3049467001-771-Font-Rd-Glenmoore-PA-19343](http://www.trulia.com/property/3049467001-771-Font-Rd-Glenmoore-PA-19343).

## **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](mailto:vance_usher@netzero.com), 610-329-1056, 320 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, PA 19335.

## **Free ads for Non-Profits**

### ***Red Cross Blood Drive***

The Borough of Downingtown will host a Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, February 4 from 2 PM to 7 PM in the Downingtown Borough Hall Annex Building, at 4 W. Lancaster Ave. Use the borough's website, [www.downingtowntown.org](http://www.downingtowntown.org), to sign up to donate blood.

## **Food Fight**

The Thorndale Rotary Club has challenged the Coatesville Rotary Club to a food fight. The clubs are competing to collect the most non-perishable food goods through March 1. All donations can be delivered to the West Bradford Township Building, 1385 Campus Drive, during normal business hours, 7 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

All items collected will be delivered to the Chester County Food Bank, to benefit families in need throughout our local communities.

The Cupboard's food supply runs low every March. Your generosity will help feed hundreds of hungry families during this critical time of year.

These high-priority items that are always in short supply: canned tuna, macaroni and cheese, canned pasta, canned beef stew, chili and soups, canned fruits & vegetables, and cold and hot breakfast cereals. Please consider adding an extra item or two to your weekly shopping list.

## ***Downingtown Farmers' Market***

The Downingtown Farmers' Market will be open over the winter months on the following Thursdays: Jan. 16, Feb. 6 and 20, March 6 and 20, and April 3 and 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.

## ***Brochure on DARC classes & activities***

You can gain access to the latest DARC brochure, listing all classes and activities, at: [www.darcinfo.com](http://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 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Tues. of the month. All are welcome. Visit web page, [www.josephspeople.org](http://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](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net)