



**Downingtown Area Historical Society**

## **Hist-O-Gram**

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

[www.downtowntownareahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.downtowntownareahistoricalsociety.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. Send your responses to: [Info@downtowntownareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:Info@downtowntownareahistoricalsociety.org).

## More Downingtown area news published 36 years ago

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

Sharon and Catherine Clark, who had been living at 357 Washington Ave., Downingtown, for five years, were being **investigated by the U.S. Secret Service** because they mailed threatening letters to President Jimmy Carter and other government officials. They also threatened to take over the Philadelphia Art Museum. The two sisters had been charged in 1976 by Washington Avenue neighbors, who alleged the pair “did cause alarm and seriously annoy the neighbors by hollering obscenities in the street, and did threaten to sic large German shepherd upon said neighbors.” Both women pleaded guilty to the charges of disorderly conduct and harassment, and District Magistrate C. Burtis Coxe fined them a total of \$1,200, plus court costs. *(Editor’s Note: After the article on the Clark sisters was published, the East Branch Citizen sent a copy of the story to Jody Powell, White House Press Secretary. In response, Patricia Bario, associate press secretary, wrote: “Jody asked me to say thanks for sending along the story of the Clark sisters. He says, at last report, the President was planning to stay in residence at the White House for a number of years, and we hope that that pleases you as much as it does him.”)*

### Other news published in July 1978

Recent property transfers were: 7 Surrey Lane, Upper Uwchlan, \$70,180; 113 Jefferson Ave., Downingtown, \$32,000; 1520 Walton Drive, West Bradford, \$50,000; 312 Gwynedd Court, Uwchlan, \$45,490; 118 Whitford Hills Road, East Caln, \$95,000; and 3 Wyndham Court, East Brandywine, \$38,000.

**Bill Keen**, of Downingtown, the Alert Fire Company’s chief engineer, owned more than 200 toy fire trucks. His 25-year-old collection ranged from horse-drawn fire wagons to modern diesel-powered units.

Emma Pyle, a secretary in **Uwchlan Township’s** office, was tired of receiving telephone calls from people who were trying to call **Upper Uwchlan Township** officials. The basic problem was Upper Uwchlan Township didn’t have a listed phone number. To rectify the situation, Uwchlan Township sent their neighboring township a bill for telephone answering services. In turn, Upper Uwchlan supervisors chuckled about the bill, and apparently ignored paying the invoice for the answering services.

Members of the **Woman’s Club of Uwchlan** who organized a flower show were Mrs. William Balderston, Mrs. Walter Uhler, Mrs. Warren Patterson, Mrs. Joseph Taylor and Mrs. Elmer Hartwick. The show’s sweepstakes award for horticulture was won by Mrs. Arthur Matthews.

Two performances of the **Hoxie Brothers Circus** were offered on the former G.O. Carlson parking lot (then located on the northwest corner of Pennsylvania and Wallace Avenues in Downingtown, where a strip mall is located today). The circus was sponsored by the Chester County Sertoma Club.

Members of the staff of the Vacation Bible School at **Marshallton Methodist Church** included Shirley Coulter, Joan and Catherine Trimble, Dorothy Perdue, Lynn Seegers, Melody Herr, Alice Shoemaker, Linda Reiter, Brenda Johnson, Carol Chapmen, Jennie Lowery, Ellen Barker, Clint and Debbie Fetterman, Richard Purcell, Sandy Martin, Cathy Cantelmi and Kim Wyatt.

Thorndale artist **Esther Zittle** won a first place award for her watercolor painting at a major art show in Cape May, NJ.

Dr. Charles Micken, **Downingtown school superintendent**, reported that only two other Chester County school districts—Avon Grove and Oxford—spent less per pupil than Downingtown did in the 1976-77 school year. Downingtown's spent \$1,474.74, while the per pupil average for all 12 school districts in the county was \$279.92 higher than Downingtown's average.

Winners in the eight and nine-year-old bracket of the fifth annual **Home Run Derby**, held at Kerr Park, were: Chris Silvestri, first; Tom Lane, second; Robert Brown, third. Those who won in the 10, 11 and 12-year-old division were: Rob Broderick, first; Kipper Guyon, second; and John Domblesky, third. And winners in the 13, 14 and 15-year-old bracket were: Domenic D'Ginto, first; Ron Savastio, second; and Bret Urbine, third.

Members of the **Downingtown Girls Softball League's** 9-12-year-old division all-star team were Bernadette Bonaduce, Helen Kugler, Anne Marie Cipollini, Ellen Formica, Mary Jacobson, Eileen Ferris, Christine Pelzar, Krista Lang, Jamie Natalie, Lauren Nixdorf, Kimberly Goleash, Mindy Titus, Johnna Warihay, Emily Hornung, Brenda Brown and Stephanie Marcocci.

Winners of the kickball competition at the **Wagenseller Park** playground in Glenmoore were Greg Hannum, Andrea Cory, Sean Mooney, Bryan McDonough and Ike Tipton. And girls who placed in the arm-hanging contest at the **New East Ward School** playground were Bev Eldridge, first; Jenny Brown, second; and Margie Barrett, third.

## **We're still seeking former military nurses**

Madeleine Woodruff, who was an Army nurse during WW II, has offered to participate in a Historical Society program that will focus on the experiences of nurses who served in the military during wartime periods. The program will be offered this Fall.

Obviously, we can't expect Mrs. Woodruff, who subsequently was a school nurse and guidance counselor for many years at Downingtown Junior High School, to be the only former military nurses to discuss her wartime experiences. That means we still need additional former nurses from the Downingtown area who served while the U.S. was at war in Korea, Viet Nam, Iraq or Afghanistan to participate in the program.. Nurses who wish to tell local residents about their wartime experiences should send us an email via

[Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org), or call Parry Desmond at 610-269-8037.

On a related note, Mary Letitia Staneski Webb, who grew up on Highland Avenue in Downingtown, sent us an interesting message after she read about our plan to have former military nurses participate in a Historical Society program. Mary moved to California in 1967, five years after she graduated from DHS in 1962. Here's what Mary wrote:

*My aunt, Mary Letitia Tweed Thomas, who also grew up on Highland Avenue and graduated from DHS, was an Army nurse during the Second World War. She earned her nursing diploma from Chester County Hospital's Nursing School. While serving in Africa, Aunt Mary developed malaria and was medically discharged. In fact, I have her discharge papers. In later years, Aunt Mary married Earl Thomas of West Chester; they had no children. I was named after Aunt Mary, and we were especially close because I was the daughter she never had. In 1992, after Aunt Mary passed away, I had her name placed on the Women in Military Service memorial, which is located by the gates of Arlington National Cemetery.*

## **It's at 1319 Romig Road, and it has an interesting history**



Not one soul tried to guess the location of the house in the photo above. It's at 1319 Romig Road, West Bradford. However, Rob Doerr, the current owner, provided this info about the house and the properties nearby on Romig Road:

*The original part of Doerr's house was built by a member of the Romig family in the 1920's. The property also includes the original barn, built in the mid-1800s, which was part of the old Romig orchard. The fruit farm was established in 1912 by Calvin Romig. The Romig's farmhouse is the white house immediately to the left of Doerr's house on Romig's Road. In 1949, Calvin's son and daughter-in-law, Robert and Susanna Romig, both deceased, moved into the former schoolhouse, which is a residence across the street from Doerr's property and next to Bradford Heights Elementary School.*

## **Rotarians donate \$1,200 to new library**

The Rotary Club of Thorndale-Downingtown has donated \$1,200 to support the new Downingtown Library, at 122 Wallace Avenue. The Rotary Club donated the proceeds from the entry fees paid to participate in the canoe race conducted during the Good Neighbor Day festivities on July 4<sup>th</sup>. The Rotarians combined funds from their treasury with the canoe race fees in order to make the \$1,200 donation. The donation will be used for the purchase and renovation of the new library.

## **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](http://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](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html).

**Hist-O-Grams are emailed weekly to members and friends of the Downingtown Area Historical Society. If you want to send us information or make a comment, contact us at: [Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.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.*

## **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**

### ***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](http://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](http://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 on Wallace Avenue, between Lancaster and Pennsylvania Avenues, in Downingtown. Local crafts people, restaurants and businesses that wish to participate should contact:

[manager@downingtownmainstreet.com](mailto:manager@downingtownmainstreet.com) for booth space applications and more details.

### ***Bats for Matt***

The Bats for Matt Softball Tournament will be held at the Downingtown Little League field on Manor Avenue, Saturday, July, 19 and Sunday, July 20. See <http://batsformatt.com/> for more details.

### ***DHS Class of 1964 reunion***

Reservations for the DHS Class of 1964's 50<sup>th</sup> class reunion are due by **July 31 (new deadline)**. 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/> or contact Judi (Grubb) Supplee, via [jsupplee@x-coretechnologies.com](mailto:jsupplee@x-coretechnologies.com) or call 610-220-6138.

### ***Chicken BBQ***

The Marshallton United Methodist Church, 1282 West Strasburg Road, will host a Chicken BBQ dinner on Saturday, July 26. The menu includes BBQ chicken (leg/thigh), cole slaw, corn on the cob, baked beans, roll & butter, dessert, and a beverage. Hours for the "Eat-in" or "Take-out" option are from 4:30 to 6 PM. Cost is \$10/adult and \$5/child (5 to 12 years of age). Contact the church office at 610-696-5247 or via [office@marshalltonchurch.org](mailto:office@marshalltonchurch.org).

### ***Downingtown Library activities & events***

The monthly giving program of Bob Wagner's Flooring America is supporting the Downingtown Library in July. All participants are asked to take a picture of their favorite book cover and email it, with your name and snail mail address, to: [media@bobwagner.com](mailto:media@bobwagner.com). For every book cover received by Bob Wagner's, they will donate \$1 to the Downingtown Library. Also, Bob Wagner's will randomly select one book cover photo from those received each week in July and contribute an additional \$5 in that person's name to the Library.

Entries are limited to five photos per email address and/or social user.

### ***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](http://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](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 at 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday 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).