



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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

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Where and What Is This?



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

Interesting local news 36 years ago

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

Downingtown's Borough Council voted unanimously to fire **Robin Harp** from the borough police force, after he admitted he had shot a cat owned by Mrs. Leonard Cassenta, 438 Grant Ave., Downingtown.

The U.S. House of Representative's proposal to provide a tax credit of up to \$250 per year for tuition-paying students drew mixed reactions from **Downingtown school officials**. For example, school director Norma Smith said, "the private and parochial schools will skim many of our best students." However, Jonathan Kulp, another board member who also was on the faculty of a private school, claimed, "I don't believe this will be a major blow against the public school system." And superintendent of schools Dr. Charles Micken opined, "We would face a mass exodus of many able students."

Recent **property transfers** included: 1104 Worthington Dr., Uwchlan, \$52,762; 1571 Kelly Ann Dr., West Bradford, \$67,000; 136 Woodland Cir., East Caln, \$89,800; 501 Grant Ave., Downingtown, \$38,000; 8 Meadow Ln., Upper Uwchlan, \$61,000; and 110 Wildbriar Rd., East Brandywine. \$66,885.

Installed as officers of the **Ladies of St. Joseph's Catholic Church**, Downingtown, were Mary Rita Schiltz, president; Rosemary Brady, vice president; Sue Golden, recording secretary; Janet Alway, treasurer; and Sara Irwin, corresponding secretary.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 83**, Lionville, who attended a camporee were Dave Mundy, Larry Beaver, Chris Pond, Doug Bullock, Chris Giblin, Chris Cincotta, Brian Place and Kurt Kessler.

Officers elected by members of the Garden Class of the **Woman's Community Club of Uwchlan** were Mrs. Elmer Hartwick, chairman; Mrs. Edward Burghart, vice chairman; Mrs. Joseph Taylor, recording secretary; Mrs. James Strausser, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. William Edgerton, treasurer.

Specials at **Talucci's Butcher Shop**, located in Four J's Mini Mall on East Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, included boneless hams, \$2.09/lb.; and Delmonico steaks, \$1.89/lb.

Members of the **Lionville Fire Co.** who received service pins at the annual banquet were Harry Ruth, 50 years, and Carl Ruth, 25 years. Rick Gilbert was named firefighter of the year.

The **DHS softball team** clinched its second consecutive Ches-Mont League championship by beating Boyertown 13-5. Whippet coach John Davidson said shortstop Lorraine Spadaro was the star of the game, robbing Bear hitters of three likely hits.

John Chilla and Kathy Herion were named the **outstanding athletes** at the annual DHS sports banquet. Herion starred on the lacrosse, basketball and field hockey teams. Chilla was captain of the baseball squad, co-captain of the football team, and the basketball team's tri-captain.

Fred Della Motta won three first places as the **Lionville Junior High track team** won the Northern Junior Ches-Mont title for the second straight year.

Members of the **DHS lacrosse team** who made All Ches-Mont were Ronnie Della Motta and Dottie Dunn, first team, and Anne Kennedy, second team.

Leaders of the **Downingtown Girls Softball League** were steaming after the Downingtown Little League turned down their request to use the Little League field for the Softball League playoffs.

Installed as officers of the **Downingtown Lions Club** were Horace Schanley, president; John Canning, first vice president; David Swindin, second vice president; Fred Longenecker, third vice president; Bob Bowker, secretary; and Bob Shoffner, treasurer.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 52**, Marshallton, who went on a 36-mile canoe trip down the Brandywine were Neal and Todd Bowser, Bill Jemison, Ken Klunk, Chuck and Keith McCann, John Sanner, Charles Whiteman, Chuck Woolford and Jeff Young.

Officers elected by the members of **St. James Church's** Episcopal Women were Jean Revucky, president; Dixie Gailey, vice president; Harriet MacDonald, secretary; and Anne Buell, treasurer.

Downingtown Methodist Church's building committee included: chairman Bill Brookover, Len Kosatka, C.R. Schollenberger, Lee Bradley, Fran Swisher, John Hamilton, Charles Espenlaub, Dot Sykes, Charles Glass, Gilbert Algier, Jeff Stevens and Rev. Richard Wolfe.

Elected as leaders of the Hope-Twos at **Hopewell Methodist Church** were Ray and Dana Neyman, president; Ron and Lorraine Holt, vice president; Ed and Sue Young, secretary; and Ron and Diane Langford, treasurer.

DHS alma mater mystery continues

We're still not sure who wrote the lyrics to the DHS alma mater, but we found a big clue in the February 1922 edition of *The Cuckoo*, a pamphlet-sized publication put out by DHS students several times a year. Launched in February 1919, *The Cuckoo's* content in the early days, was a hybrid of a student newspaper and a literary magazine, including several pages of jokes. In a few years, it evolved into a typical high school yearbook. In the mid-1950s, DHS finally changed the title of the yearbook to *Our Year*.

The March 1922 issue contained a brief article on the bottom of page 15, which was headlined "Hail! Downingtown High School." Although the article included the lyrics of DHS alma mater, there was no mention that they were the words to the alma mater.

There were two other bits of relevant information in the article: The Russian National Anthem was the music the lyrics were to be sung to, and the letters "C.C.S." were printed underneath the lyrics.

Since many articles in *The Cuckoo* had the author's initials below the text, we searched through every issue published in the early 1920s, but we couldn't find one instance where a student's or teacher's name matched up with the letters "C.C.S."

So, we'll continue the quest to determine the lyricist of the DHS alma mater. If you wish to help us solve this mystery, please contact us via Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

Since there have been suspicions that the alma mater's lyrics were "tweaked" over the years, here's the original version from the February 1922 *Cuckoo*:

*Hail! Downingtown High School,
To thee we sing,
And to thine altars our praises we bring
Love, truth and noble deeds
Have won for thee great fame.
Hail! Downingtown! We laud thy fair name.*

*Loyal may we ever be
Through all our days,
And of thy tireless work we'll shout endless praise
Thy love and faith have filled
Our hearts with noble aim.
Hail! Downingtown! We laud thy fair name.*

C.C.S.

Ladies charted a delicious course at The Historic Ship Inn

Here's another restaurant write-up by Karen Meacham. She and her husband, Ron, won the grand prize—meals at 12 Downingtown area restaurants—in the “A Taste of Chester County” restaurant raffle, conducted by the Historical Society this past fall.

Where do five ladies go to have lunch? The Historic Ship Inn in Exton, where else? The Ship Inn, built in 1796 by John Bowen, was one of the earliest public houses that met the needs of travelers along the Lancaster Turnpike. The original sign bore the picture of a ship for the benefit of many travelers who could not read or who did not speak English. All could recognize the “sign of the ship”.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, The Ship Inn charged stagecoach passengers and its aristocratic clientele a premium of 31 and 1/4 cents per meal. But regulars, including the Lafayette Rangers of the 143rd Regiment, Pennsylvania Militia, were charged less, probably an early type of a frequent stay program.

Our modern day lunches were served on elegantly set tables in one of their intimate dining rooms. Several ladies chose The Crispy Jumbo Shrimp, covered in a batter of coconut and macadamia nuts, and served with a sweet and hot apricot glaze. I chose the Southwestern Chicken Eggroll, a unique combination of grilled chicken, corn, black beans and cheddar cheese, wrapped in a tortilla and served with mustard and tomato salsa sides. All were deliciously prepared.

Our meals were complemented nicely by a selection of wines and we ended with scrumptious desserts including apple pie with warm vanilla sauce, white and dark chocolate mousse and English toffee pudding, with mocha ice cream.

A sweet sailing experience was had by all at The Ship Inn. And we want to thank The Ship Inn for their gracious donation to the Downingtown Area Historical Society's “A Taste of Chester County” fundraiser.

Graphic evidence of the painful process of school consolidation

The 1961 DHS yearbook—which focused on the first class to graduate from the high school which had opened in September 1960 and now is DHS West—indirectly offers some interesting information.

Yes, it was a different world 53 years ago, when there were only 123 DHS graduates that year, and the plans for the new high school had included a cattle shed, to be used by the Agriculture majors.

But what we found most intriguing were two group photos in the yearbook. One photo is of the Joint Area High School Board, comprised of 38 representatives of the eight municipalities that are still part of the Downingtown Area School District today, and the other photo is of the 26 teachers on the DHS faculty in 1961.

Hmmm, 38 bosses for 26 underlings? Too many cooks, perhaps?

That pictorial disparity shows that the consolidation of school districts in Pennsylvania, back in the early 1960s, was a slow and sometimes painful transitional process, because many leaders of small communities lacked enthusiasm for the state-mandated mergers.

Despite all the rural townships' anxiety back then, about losing local control of their local schools, they seem to have succeeded.

It's at 515 Broad Run Road, West Bradford Twp.



We were absolutely crushed when we realized that not one of our readers recognized that the location of the 18th Century farmhouse in the photo above (taken by Mike Dunn) as 515 Broad Run Road in the southern end of West Bradford Township. But we'll get over it.....somehow.

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.downtownareahistoricalociety.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.downtownareahistoricalociety.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.

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, Dick Lehr, Mike Dunn and Phil Dague.

Paid ads for businesses

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

Free ads for Non-Profits

Mac n Cheese Cook-Off

The Thorndale-Downingtown Rotary Club is sponsoring a Mac n Cheese Cook-Off in the gazebo area of Kerr Park, Downingtown, from noon until 4 M Sunday, June 8.

Ice Cream Social

The Friends of Martin's Tavern will host an Ice Cream Social on Sunday, June 8, from 1 to 4 PM at the Marshallton Blacksmith Shop on Strasburg Road. Activities include old-fashion ice cream making, a historic blacksmith demonstration by craftsman Ben Rohrback and more. Family fun for all ages. For information on this and other FOMT events, visit www.martinstavern.org.

Library Groundbreaking

The Downingtown Library will have a groundbreaking ceremony at 9 AM Tuesday, June 10, at its new location--the former Micken Building at 122 Wallace Ave., Downingtown. For more information, please contact Karen Miller at klmiller@ccls.org

Community Festival

St. Joseph's Catholic Church is sponsoring a Community Festival on the church grounds on Manor Avenue in Downingtown. The festival will be held 6-10 PM Tuesday, June 17 through Thursday, June 19, and 6-11 PM on Friday, June 20 and Saturday, June 21. The attractions include rides for children and adults, live bands, games and food. For discounted ride deals, access <http://stjoesfestival.com> or the church's Facebook page. Also, there will be fireworks Friday night, June 20.

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 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.