



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 building, shown above, will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

More interesting local news in March 1978

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

Sue Donaldson, president, said the Uwchlan Township Civic Association planned to meet with local groups so they could effectively protest the **Marchwood Theatre's** showing of x-rated films. Chester County's legal attacks against the theatre were ineffective because the state's obscenity laws at the time would have required the County to go to court each time an x-rated movie was to be shown.

East Brandywine parents protested against the **Downingtown Area School District's** plan to require students who lived east of Route 322 to transfer from Lionville Junior High School to

Downingtown Junior High the following school year. The school district claimed the change was needed because Lionville's projected enrollment for the 1978-79 school year was 964 students, while Downingtown was expected to have 676 pupils. The capacity of both schools was 908 students.

Five DHS students had reached the final stage of the selection process for those who wished to attend the **Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts**. They were: Margie Caldwell, Judy Honey, David Carr, Kathleen Fiedler and Lindley Werkheiser.

Based on a budgeted **cost-per-pupil** (\$1,689), Downingtown ranked 10th among the 12 Chester County school districts for the 1977-78 school year, according to Dr. Charles Micken, superintendent of schools. The average was \$1,948, and Great Valley's \$2,207 was the highest.

Appointed to Downingtown's **Recreation Commission** were: Frank DiOttavio, Tom Woodward, William Klunk, Vince Massimini and Sharon Clayton.

The **Downingtown-Lionville Babe Ruth League's** recently elected officers. They were Mike Whiteman, president; Ron Savastio, vice president; Pat Murphy, secretary; and Tom Shirey, treasurer.

Recent **property transfers** included: 138 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, \$77,500; 3310 Hazelwood Ave., Thorndale, \$40,500; 1479 Federal Dr., West Bradford, \$49,500; 396 Devon Dr., Uwchlan, \$59,500; 62 Somerset Ct., East Brandywine, \$44,650; 10 Carriage Dr., Upper Uwchlan, \$64,000; 13 Downing Circle, East Caln, \$80,000.

Mrs. Helen Watson was named **Citizen of the Year** by the Greater Downingtown Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Watson, who had been employed as a dietician at the Atkinson memorial Hospital, Coatesville, for 16 years, also had been actively involved with the Bethel AME Church, Visiting Nurses of Central Chester County, Homemakers Services of Chester County, Girl Scouts, Well Baby Clinic, Order of the Eastern Star and the Downingtown Golden Agers Club.

The DHS **Concert Band and Concert Choir** entertained Needham (MA) High School, as part of a cultural exchange program. Needham High School's musicians and choristers offered reciprocal concerts at Downingtown in April 1978.

Newly elected officers of **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Robert Testa, president; Milton Maslin, vice president; Richard Edwin, recording secretary; Fred Jaeschke, financial secretary; Anne Bennett, treasurer, general fund; and Joseph Vasile, treasurer, building fund.

Michelle Mathis, president of the DHS Student Council, was one of the Chester County high school students who received a Good Citizen Award from the Chester County **Daughters of the American Revolution**.

Marshallton Methodist Church's team won the Downingtown Church Basketball League by beating Central Presbyterian 98-82. Ed McGeehan and Mark Myers, with 22 points each, led Marshallton's scoring.

Richard Byerly, principal of Beaver Creek School, learned that he had been exposed to radioactive contamination when he was one of the military service personnel assigned to the Atomic Energy Commission's testing of the atomic bomb in 1954.

The **Downingtown Jaycees** hid 65 dozen eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt in Kerr Park, Downingtown.

Info on Hank Hamilton, DHS Alumni Hall of Fame inductee

We will provide excerpts in this and subsequent Hist-O-Grams, on the DHS graduates who will be inducted into the Hall of Fame, recently established by the Downingtown Area School District and the Downingtown Area High School Alumni Association. The information is based on data noted on the nominations forms submitted to the selection committee.

The honorees will be inducted at the Alumni Association's 130th annual banquet at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 W. Church St., Downingtown, on Saturday evening, April 26. More information about the banquet can be provided by calling Caryn Menna at (610) 883-3917. Tickets can be purchased via

www.downingtowntalumni.org/Documents/DAHSAA_BanquetReservation%202014.pdf.

Since the information on the inductees will be offered in alphabetical order, we will begin with James (Hank) Hamilton, Class of '68 - Achievement in Business, Community Service.

- At DHS, he was a speaker at the 1968 DHS commencement, having graduated third in his class. He won nine varsity letters in football, wrestling and track.
- In 1972, he graduated, with honors, from Lehigh University, where he was chairman of the Fraternity Management Association, lettered for four years in lacrosse, and was intra-mural wrestling champion for three years.
- Currently, he is chairman of the board of directors of Dane Décor furniture store in Downingtown. He has been an active member of the Downingtown Main Street Association, the Downingtown-Thorndale Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Downingtown Municipal Water Authority for many years. He was the Downingtown Chamber's Person of the Year in 2000.

Details on inductee Bonnie MacDougal Kistler will be provided in next week's edition.

Grigson played major role in National History Day

The 25th annual National History Day (NHD) for Southeastern Pennsylvania was conducted at the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, this past weekend. The academic competition is a national event, involving more than one-half million middle and high school students, representing public, parochial and private schools. Entrants do extensive research on a particular historic issue and present their findings via presentations, using one of many formats. Winners this past weekend will compete in the state contest at Cumberland Valley High School, Mechanicsburg, PA, on May 3 and 4.

One of the persons responsible for the regional NHD's success over the past quarter century is Carol Grigson, who also has been responsible for the Downingtown Area Historical Society's archival collection, as well as treasurer of the organization.

She was the NHD coordinator, representing the Chester County Historical Society, from 1998 through 2010. In that role, her responsibilities included organizing the competition and visiting schools to work with students to prepare for the competition. She also helped schools create their own contests, from which the participants for the regional competition were chosen.

Grigson had been a history teacher at Abraham Lincoln High School in Denver, CO, from 1963-1985. She earned a BA in History at Loretto Heights College, Denver, CO, and an MA in History at the University of Denver. She also was part of the first group of 22 teachers ever invited to South Korea. They had been awarded Fulbright Scholarships to study there for six weeks during the summer of 1982.

It's at 32 South Village Avenue, Lionville



Eagle-eyed Rahn Brackin is a truly perceptive scholar because, once again, he was the first person to correctly identify the building in the photo above as a house at 32 South Village Avenue in downtown Lionville. For more information on the house, see: www.trulia.com/property/3039380701-32-S-Village-Ave-Exton-PA-19341.

Why and where did Irish patriot stay in Downingtown?

Since we'll be soon celebrating St. Patrick's Day soon, we've been wondering why Theobald Wolfe Tone, an Irish patriot, reportedly stayed in Downingtown in the late 18th Century.

Frankly, we never heard of Tone until we saw, on several web sites about Downingtown history, that he stayed here (and in West Chester, where there's the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Wolfe Tone Division) after he landed in Philadelphia in 1795, according to the *New American Encyclopedia*. For more info on Tone, see: www.freewebs.com/irish32/historyofwolfetone.htm.

Please contact us at Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org if you have any info on Tone's brief stay in Downingtown.

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.downingtowntownareahistoricalsociety.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@downingtowntownareahistoricalsociety.org. By the way, you can access previously published Hist-O-Grams at: www.downingtowntownareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms.html.

Paid ads for businesses

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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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Free ads for Non-Profits

Library Programs

Holistic Weight Loss: 6:30 PM Monday, March 10--Learn healthy ways to make lifestyle changes to help keep weight off.

Meditation for Creativity: 6:30 PM Monday, April 28--Program focuses on drawing inspiration from meditation.

For more info on any of these activities, call the library at 610-269-2741.

Chicken Cordon Bleu Dinner

The Marshallton United Methodist Church will host a Chicken Cordon Bleu Dinner on Saturday, March 22. Seating is continuous from 4:30 until 6 PM. Menu includes Chicken Cordon Bleu, mashed potatoes, green beans, cole slaw, apple sauce, rolls, dessert and beverage. Cost is \$10 per adult and \$5 per child (aged 5 to 12 years). Eat-In or Take-Out. The church is located at 1282 West Strasburg Road, West Chester, PA. Contact the church office at [\(610\) 696-5247](tel:6106965247) or via office@marshalltonchurch.org with any questions.

Lecture series

The East Brandywine Township Historical Commission will present a lecture on the Bondsville Mill at 3:30 PM Sunday, March 30 at the township building on Route 322, Guthriesville. The third lecture, about the history of East Brandywine Baptist Church, will be held at the church at 3:30 PM on Sunday, April 27.

Register soccer players with special needs

The Glenmoore Eagle Youth Association's registration for the High 5 soccer program, will be held at Fellowship Fields, 275 Fellowship Road, Chester Springs, from 3-4 PM on Saturdays, beginning on April 12. The free program is for players, between 5 and 19 years of age, who have special needs. For more info, go to: www.geyasoccer.org.

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.

Downingtown Farmers' Market

The Downingtown Farmers' Market will be open over the winter months on the following Thursdays: March 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.

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 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