



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

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Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your response to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

What local people were talking about 52 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in local papers during the latter part of April 1963.

The **Upper Uwchland Home and School League** decided that the planned Marsh Creek State Park should be abandoned because it was impractical, as well as a burden on taxpayers.

Downingtown National Bank opened a branch in Lionville. Miss Pennsylvania greeted those who came to the grand opening. A second branch, in the east end of the borough, was to be opened in several months.

Those who clipped a coupon from a local newspaper could buy 5 gallons of gas for a total of \$1.15 at the gas island at the **Downingtown Farmers Market**.

Following a welcoming greeting by Donna Katherina, these second graders recited poems at an assembly program at **East Ward School**: Gary Miller, Robbie Sarmento, Walter Brown, Gary Miles, Kevin Stevenson, Debbie Mercer, Robert Stine, Linda Graybill, Joyce Pechin and Theresa Cortlessa.

The **Downingtown Lions Club** celebrated its 35th anniversary. Robert Ash had been the first president, and 38 percent of the charter members were still active in the club. Those who offered recollections of the club's earlier days included: George Bousum, Ted Griffith, Bill Reed, Anthony Ricci, Ray Sheeler, Vinton Smedley, Ed Towson, Elton Weikel and Stan Walters.

Dian Marie Hamilton, from the Bradford Hills section of Downingtown, was crowned **Miss Chester County**. Hamilton, a junior at West Chester State College, won the talent competition. Anne Earnshaw, a DHS senior, was one of the four finalists.

Winners of the essay competition, sponsored by the **American Legion Auxiliary**, were JoAnn Petrella, St. Joseph's School; Ralph Emery, the Junior High; and June Williamson, DHS. Williamson also won the county-wide competition, and was chosen to attend Keystone Girls State, held at Shippensburg State College.

Ninth graders on the **Junior High baseball team** were Michael Baer, Richard Biondi, Dwight Bowen, Michael Bruno, Leonard Collier, Joseph Kirkner, William Kline, Wesley Marion, David Moore and Roger Styer. William Latoff was the manager, and the coaches were Hayden Leffler and Leonard Arbuckle.

Members of **Brownie Troop 247**, who were winners in the poster contest sponsored by the **Downingtown Woman's Club**, were Nancy Kohlhas, Sharon Charles, Kathy Watters, Turie Hayes, Cindy Mitman and Robin Mendenhall. The posters promoted the Woman's Club annual flower show.

Newly elected officers of the **Lionville School PTA** were Mrs. Richard Plank, president; Douglas Pagett, vice president; Mrs. John Krisch, secretary; and Mrs. Charles Williman, treasurer.

Members of the **Future Teachers of America Club** at DHS observed Teaching Career Month by observing teachers in the Downingtown School District's schools. Those who were assigned to observe at Lionville Elementary School were Isabelle Scarborough, Barbara Warner, Susie Martin, Sandy Koppenhaver, Bill Kennedy and Mary Ellen Crosby.

Elected to lead the Live Wire Circle at **Central Presbyterian Church** were Esther Whiteside, president; Mrs. H.W. Adams, vice president; Mrs. William Woodward, treasurer; and Mrs. Donald Page, secretary.

New officers of the **Downingtown Optimists Club** were Don Collier, president; Jack Stine, vice president; and Glenn Echkhoff, sergeant-at-arms.

Mrs. Ronald Geedey was elected president of the **Marshallton PTA**. Other officers were Mrs. Joseph Fell, vice president; Mrs. James Andrien, secretary; and Mrs. Harry Perdue, treasurer. Members of the auditing committee were Mrs. Earl Barwell, Mrs. Herbert Phillips and Mrs. John Griggs.

The **DHS Band Fathers** group raised funds for new band uniforms by having a Coatesville Choraliers concert.

St. Anthony's Lodge in Downingtown was offering veal cutlet dinners for just \$1.50.

The **West Pikeland PTA** elected the following officers: Mrs. Harley Fink, president; James McClung, vice president; Mrs. Eric Kern, recording secretary; Mrs. Charles Alfieri, treasurer; and Mrs. John Scheirer, corresponding secretary.

Boys and girls, between the ages of 7 and 10 could attend the day camp at the **YMCA's Camp Castle** in West Bradford for two weeks for \$40.

"Terrible defensive ball" was the main reason why the **DHS baseball team** lost to Boyertown 15-3, acknowledged Downingtown coach Charlie Forte. Eleven deadly errors enabled the Bears to stretch seven hits into 13 runs. The other two runs resulted from two bases-empty homers. The loss would have been worse if DHS pitchers George Murphy and Bill Anderson had not struck out 14 Boyertown batters.

News retrieved from December 1918 issues of the *Archive*

Noted below are news items, which were originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* in December 1918.

Despite the fact that World War I had ended on November 11, 1918 when the victorious Allies signed an armistice with Germany, 45 of the 62 young men from the Downingtown area who were active members of the Home Guard agreed to continue drilling at the Minquas firehall.

Charles W. Havens & Sons, a Philadelphia textile manufacturer, bought a building on a 13-acre site on Wallace Avenue in Downingtown. The textile firm planned to move its two mills from Philadelphia to the borough site, where it would produce woolen yarns. The property had been occupied by the Rowe Motor Truck Manufacturing Co., until it recently relocated to Lancaster.

An ad for Howard Sides' pharmacy (forerunner of Raymond Greenleaf's drug store at the same site on West Lancaster Avenue in the borough) was offering a free box of candy to each child who came to the store between 8 AM and 10 AM on Christmas Day.

A Girls' Glee Club was formed at DHS. Those who were late for practice were fined 25 cents (nearly \$5 in today's economy). Officers of the club were Margaret Bray, president; Esther Ax, vice president; Anna Long, secretary; Olive Miller, treasurer; Mildred Barrett, librarian; and Christine Weis, pianist.

Brief, but important

After Jack Hines, retired West Bradford Township manager, read our article in last week's Hist-O-Gram about the Trestle Bridge, he advised us that the bridge is not located on the Downingtown-West Bradford border. It's on the East Caln-West Bradford border.

And we came across a clipping from the April 27, 1913 *Daily Local News* that noted five DHS runners—Charlie Way, who became an All-American and All-Pro halfback, Edgar Powell, Raymond Greenleaf and Howard Simmons, plus alternate Norman Brown—participated in a

one-mile relay race for high schoolers at the Penn Relays in Philadelphia. We haven't been able to determine how the Downingtown contingent made out in 1913, but that was the first year relay teams used batons at the Penn Relays.

We wouldn't be surprised if DHS did not have a real track team back then; just a bunch of fleet-footed guys from Downingtown who got together to compete in what now is the nation's oldest, largest track meet.

It's the Guthriesville School in East Brandywine



Paul Backenstose is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the building in the photo above as the Guthriesville School on Route 322 in East Brandywine. Built at a cost of \$2,000 in 1869, the two-story school had just one room on each floor, according to Barbara Paul's *A History of East Brandywine Township*, published by the township's Historical Commission in 1992. The township paid for construction of the first floor; the upper floor--initially used for civic purposes such as elections, meetings and lectures--was paid for via donations and subscriptions. In 1903, a two-year high school was established on the second floor, while grades 1-8 continued to be offered on the first floor. The bell and belfry were added in 1910. And after a well was dug there in 1912, water no longer had to be brought from homes in the village.

Elizabeth Funk, who was known as Mrs. Hadfield when she later taught English at DHS, was the high school's last principal when it closed in 1942. She had taught all the 10th grade subjects at Guthriesville High School, while all the ninth grade subjects were taught by another teacher, according to Linda Lamme Mento.

The building discontinued being used as an elementary school in 1961. Today, the building is part of the township headquarters complex. The first floor is a supplemental meeting room for smaller groups, and Boy Scout Troop 8 uses the second floor as a meeting room, according to township supervisor Jay Fisher.

Judy Orr Collier, who now lives in Florida, sent these recollections of when she attended the Guthriesville School in third, fourth and fifth grades:

I went to Guthriesville School for three years 1947-1950. As you walked in the front door, there was a cloak room for coats and boots. Half of the bottom floor was occupied by the third grade and the other half was used by the fourth grade, all taught by the same teacher. I cannot remember her name. The second floor was used by the fifth grade, with another teacher whose name I also do not remember. I think, as fifth graders, we were allowed to walk down to Bryant's luncheonette in the village for candy or whatever at lunch time.

What I remember the most is that there was NO indoor plumbing; just an outhouse out back, which in wintertime was quite an ordeal. My mother, Beatrice Orr, went to Harrisburg more than once trying to get indoor plumbing for Guthriesville School and for Hopewell School. Since I spent second grade in a one-room school without indoor plumbing in what is now the East Nantmeal Township Building when my family lived in Glenmoore before we moved to East Brandywine, I did not have indoor plumbing in school until I went to West Ward in Downingtown for sixth grade,

Clip joint will be open this Sunday

The Historical Society's Clip Joint will be open from 1-4 PM on Sunday, May 3. So if you want to spend a delightful afternoon on that day, catching up on the local gossip, as well as clipping and pasting newspaper articles, you're invited to come to Ashbridge House, our 306-year-old headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. Parking is available in the lot at the Chick-Fil-A restaurant next door, which is closed on Sundays. You're welcome to arrive and leave at your convenience.

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, Phil Dague, Rahn Brackin and Donna Capriotti.

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.

Free ads for Non-Profits

Muzzy Run

The annual Muzzy Run will be held Saturday morning, May 2 on the Struble Trail in Downingtown. For details and to register, access: www.signup2raceusa.com/ccrs/muzzy/.

Nite at the Races

A Kentucky Derby Nite at the Races will be offered on Saturday, May 2 at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 Church Street, Downingtown. Doors open at 6 PM. Races start after a viewing of the actual Kentucky Derby on TV. Cost: \$25 per person; limited number of tickets available for \$30 at the door. Includes beef and beer & soda. Cash bar. Adults over 21 only. Benefits Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Committee. To order tickets go to: www.dtownchristmas.com/Documents/NATR2015/TICKETS-HORSES%20FORM.pdf. For more info, see: www.dtownchristmas.com/.

Pancake breakfast

The Knights of Columbus Council of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 340 Manor Ave., Downingtown, will have a pancake breakfast from 6:30 AM to noon on Sunday, May 3 in the school cafeteria. Besides a wide variety of pancakes, the meal will include sausage, coffee, tea, juice and milk. Baked goods made by parishioners also will be on sale. Adults, \$6; children, 12 and under: \$3. Tickets sold at the door, but you can make a reservation by contacting John McCarraher at jrm227@verizon.net. Proceeds go to the Knights of Columbus Council's charitable activities.

Farmers Market re-opening

The Downingtown Farmers Market will re-open on Saturday, May 9 at a new site: behind the Dane Décor store on Washington Avenue. The market will be open from 9 AM to 1 PM. For more details, see: <http://growingrootspartners.com/downingtwn-farmers-market>.

Running for Kling

The third annual Running for Kling 5K road race will be conducted at 10 AM Saturday, May 9 at DHS West on Manor Avenue in Downingtown. The event will honor Tracy Kling LaManna, who played on the DHS girls' basketball team, which won state championships in 1997 and 1998. She died at age 33 of lung cancer in October 2013. Proceeds will be donated to several lung cancer programs. For more details and to register, see: www.runningforkling.com/.

Bike the Brandywine

Family event presented by the Downingtown Borough Parks & Rec Commission at Kerr Park, from 9 AM to noon Saturday, May 16. Activities include: bike consignment sale at 9 AM; bike safety tips and info from Downingtown Police Dept. at 10 AM; ride from Kerr Park to Johnstown Park and back; 11 AM, music at the gazebo in Kerr Park. For more info, access:

www.downingtwn.org/images/BiketheBrandywine%202015.jpg

Old Caln Historical Society events

The Old Caln Historical Society is sponsoring a Craft/Antique/Flea Market to be held on Saturday, May 9, from 9 AM-2 PM on the grounds of the Caln Township Municipal Building, Municipal Drive, Thorndale. For information or to reserve a table, please call 610-384-9496 or 610-384-8153.

Bus trip to Washington, DC

Phil Dague and the 97th PVI Civil War reenacting group are hosting a "Washington, DC on your own" bus trip on Sunday May 17, and the public is invited. Guests will meet at the Downingtown Library at 122 Wallace Ave. in Downingtown at 5:30 AM where they will board a Krapf luxury coach bus. Upon arrival in our nation's capital at 8 AM, you will be free to explore D.C. on your own. Washington will be bustling with activity on that spring day, including "The Grand Review 150th," a parade commemorating a parade that happened 150 years ago, marking the end of the Civil War. At 4:30 PM, we will start our return trip back

to Downingtown, with a stop along the way for dinner (not included), arriving back home at 8:30 PM. It's a long day, but you can nap on the bus! The cost is \$40 per person. If you are interested, please e-mail Phil at PRD1961@gmail.com, or call (610)873-7059.

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 unemployed or underemployed people. The group is entirely conducted by volunteers, and has been at St. Joseph's since 1995. Meets at 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays 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.