



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

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

[www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](http://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](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org).

## Downingtown area news items 36 years ago

Noted below are snippets of news originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* in the latter part of April 1979.

**Marsh Creek State Park** officials said the new pool--replacing the one built there in 1972--was expected to be opened in July.

Jeanne Minahan and Robin Rambo received the Senior Awards at the **DHS Alumni Association's** 92<sup>nd</sup> annual banquet, held at the East Brandywine Fire Co. And Eloise Sigle, Class of 1938, won the Distinguished Service Award. She had been the Association's recording secretary from 1966 until 1973, and served on many committees.

The **East Brandywine Fire Co.** announced plans to inaugurate emergency medical service in July 1979. The service would not include an ambulance to transport people to area hospitals. However, it would involve stabilizing injured and acutely ill patients before an ambulance arrived, according to John Schmidt, the service's operations chief.

Fred Costello and Otto Preikszas were co-chairmen of the **Lionville Youth Association's** annual dinner dance, held at Sts. Philip and James Catholic Church in Exton. Other committee members were Peggy Coldren, Dick Lynch, Sue Buzzard, Andrea Bell, Dave Luning, RuthAnn Gillooly, Mary Preikszas and Dorothy Foster.

Members of **Cadette Girl Scout Troop 129**, Lionville, who participated in a child care course offered by the Red Cross, included Kathy Tharp, Cindy Good, Debbie Mundy, Tina Kerstetter, Diane Shivers, Sue Sanko, Anne and Denise Kane, Chris and Michelle Jaceko, Cindy Vogel, Sue Puritano, Lois Schmidt and Arlene Murtaugh.

James Wilson, owner of the **Marsh Creek Inn**, told Wallace Township officials that he wanted to cut the restaurant's utility costs at least 60 percent by installing a water turbine system to provide electrical power. Water would be drawn from the Brandywine Creek at a point near the Devereux Road bridge, and then it would go through a network of pipes and a canal to a section of Wilson's property, where the turbine and a generator were to be housed. Wilson hoped to finance the project via a \$50,000 grant from the U.S. Energy Department.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 70**, Thorndale, who went on a winter weekend camping trip, were Jeff and Scott Bell, Dave Bishop, Brian and Drew Gardiner, Lane Jarvis, Joe Leofsky, Bob McMillen, Scott Millward, Mike Raysor and Greg Steele.

Pitchers Ed Lasorda, Bob Ricci and Larry Protivnak combined their efforts for a no-hitter, as the **DHS baseball team** beat Octorara 9-0. Larry Mayo led the Whippet offense with four RBIs.

Recent **property transfers** included: 1100 Persimmon Drive, West Bradford, \$60,400; 15 Gunning Lane, East Caln, \$65,000; 24 Dorothy Lane, Upper Uwchlan, \$68,900; 123 Lambeth Court, East Brandywine, \$56,900; 604 Highland Avenue, Downingtown, \$44,500; 1801 Old Kings Highway, West Whiteland \$159,000; 421 Bianca Circle, Caln, \$44,900; 141 Glen Manor Road, Wallace, \$75,900.

Central Presbyterian won the **Downingtown Church Youth Basketball League**, as it blasted Hopewell Methodist 63-28. Mark Dague and Jimmy Schmitt each netted 16 points to lead Central's offense.

Members of the **LYA Intermediate** boys' basketball league all-stars were Kevin Beaupit, Hugh Burke, Frank DiOttavio, Jeff Guyon, Tim Leppick, Andy Lefko, Sam Means, Andy Rosenlieb, Craig Styer, Scott Talbert and Josh Woodward.

Missy Murdock took three firsts, as the **DHS girls' track team** beat OJ Roberts 74-58.

## Clip Joint will be open this Sunday

Volunteers are encouraged to come to Ashbridge House, the Historical Society's headquarters on Route 30 in East Caln, from 1-4 PM on Sunday, April 12 for the next Clip Joint session, where they can clip and paste newspaper articles for our archival collection.

## What Downingtown residents were talking about 68 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in local newspapers in the early part of October 1947.

Members of the **Downingtown Burial Association** met at the Minquas Fire Co. to decide if the 45-year-old organization should continue to function, despite a precipitous decline in membership. In the early days, the organization had 300 members, who contributed \$1 each to ensure that their heirs would receive several hundred dollars to help defray funeral expenses. The 1947 meeting was called by Horace Carpenter, association president; and its executive committee, comprised of Mrs. George Fisher, Mrs. Edgar Hutchison, E. I. Griffith and Charles Reel. Faced with a membership slightly greater than 100, a large turnout unanimously voted to carry on, and every member pledged to recruit a new member.

**East Ward School** marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its opening with a celebration arranged by the school's Mothers Club. Rhoda Yost, principal, introduced Mary Swayne and Endora Freeman, two of the school's first teachers who had retired, and Anna Hall, another "first" who was then teaching at the Junior-Senior High School.

The **Alert Fire Co. Ladies Auxiliary** won a \$75 first prize in the Pennsylvania State Fireman's Convention parade in Lancaster. The Downingtown marching unit included 50 women, led by Mrs. Elmer Schruppf, auxiliary president.

Dr. Charles Bruton was unanimously appointed to the **Downingtown Borough Council**. He filled the vacancy caused by C.O. Brown's resignation. Other members of Council at the time were Nelson Dennis, Charles Nice, A.L. Schneider, Mark Shaw and Ray Sheeler.

After winning its season opener with a 19-12 win over St. Patrick High School of Norristown, the **Whippet football team** was beaten 20-6 by Upper Merion and 12-0 by Phoenixville in the next two games.

Help Wanted ads placed by the **Collins and Aikman** plush mill in East Brandywine were soliciting "young men and women" who would be paid while learning to weave.

The **Lincoln School in Wallace Township** was reopened for third, fourth and fifth graders, all of whom were taught by Freda Johnson.

Elected as leaders of the WSCS group at **Marshallton Methodist Church** were: Mrs. Earl Johnson, president; Mrs. Earl Spellman, vice president; Mrs. Clinton Griffiths, secretary; Mrs. Joseph Fell, treasurer; Mrs. Harry Cann, chairman of social relations and church activities; Mrs. E.F. Henry, missionary and child life; Mrs. Ralph Keiser, literature and publications; Mrs. Edwin Keenan, membership; Mrs. John Trimble, fellowship; Mrs. D. Ciaffoni, publicity and printing; and Mrs. George McAllister, bank and cards.

**Woodland Products Inc.**, the first farm woodlot cooperative in Pennsylvania when it was established in 1945, had a sawmill on Boot Road. It was featured in an article in the *Pennsylvania Co-op Review*. Among those who had an active role in the cooperative were James McGowan and John Romig of Downingtown, and Russell Worthington of Lionville.

Installed as officers of the **Odd Fellows Lodge in Lionville** included: Schuyler Rennard, noble grand; Horace Wilson, vice grand; Russell Allison, secretary; Kenneth Fell, treasurer; Horace Reyburn, warden; Samuel Supplee, conductor; Harry Quay, chaplain; James Thackeray, inside guardian; and Leon Gordon, outside guardian.

Members, guests and supporters of the Downingtown team, which won the **Chester County Baseball League**, were feted by local businessmen and civic leaders at a party held at Frank Palumbo's Restaurant in South Philadelphia. The evening included a dinner and a show.

## Interested in the history of DHS football?

If you're interested in the history of football at Downingtown High School, you might want to check out this site: [www.facebook.com/groups/594722887247727/?ref=bookmarks](https://www.facebook.com/groups/594722887247727/?ref=bookmarks). Local lawyer John Kiefel is using the Facebook site to show what he has found while doing research for a book on that topic. It includes many photos and news articles he discovered in the Downingtown Area Historical Society's archives.

## It was Simpson's General Store in Eagle



Marybeth Fusco is a truly perceptive scholar because she was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above as the interior of Simpson's General Store, which was owned and operated by members of the Simpson family on Route 100 in Eagle for more than 100 years. The last owners of the iconic store were Bob and Nancy Simpson. Somehow, they were able to keep track of all their widely varied merchandise. The Simpsons retired in 2000, and the landmark building was demolished. The store's former site is now occupied by a bank, which is part of a shopping center in Eagle.

## **Sam Matthews to be inducted into Alumni Hall of Fame**

Sam Matthews, Class of 1956, is one of the six DHS graduates who will be inducted into the Alumni Association's Hall of Fame at the organization's 131<sup>st</sup> annual banquet at the Downingtown Country Club on Saturday evening, April 25. Details about the banquet and reservations for it can be made by accessing: [www.downingtowntownalumni.org/banquet.html](http://www.downingtowntownalumni.org/banquet.html).

Matthews, who is being recognized for his achievements in business and community service, grew up on a farm in Uwchlan Township, where he had the traditional chores. But he found time to become involved in extracurricular activities at school ranging from playing football to serving as President of his class. He earned a BA in history from Lehigh University in 1960, a master's from Yale Divinity School in 1963, and a master's in History from Brown University.

In 1971, Sam returned to Chester County where he worked as the Assistant Director of the Chester County Economic Development Council. Eventually he decided on full-time farming as his profession. Today, he is a member of the Chester/Delaware County Farm Bureau, the Pennsylvania Holstein Association, and the national Holstein Association. Sam has received numerous awards, including the Chester County Farmer of the Year Award in 1996 and the Pace Setter Award by the PA Dairy Stakeholder Association in 2005.

Today, Sam and his family run their beloved Milky Way Farm, which has been placed into the Chester County Farmland Preservation program to ensure that the farm will survive for future generations.

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

*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 and Rahn Brackin.*

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

# **Free ads for Non-Profits**

## ***Program on Dowlin Forge***

Susannah Brody will present a local history program on Dowlin Forge as part of the East Brandywine Historical Commission's lecture series at 3:30 PM on Sunday, April 19, at the East Brandywine Township building, 1214 Horseshoe Pike (Route 322 near Hopewell Road). A storyteller and historian, Brody will talk about and show slides of John Dowlin's properties, which straddled the Brandywine. Her presentation will help you envision just how important his forge was in the development of the area. No reservations required. Admission is free. All are welcome. For more information contact Carol Schmidt via [carolsinex@gmail.com](mailto:carolsinex@gmail.com) or 484 237-8071.

## ***Baked ziti dinner***

A baked ziti dinner will be held at Marshallton United Methodist Church from 4:30-7:30 PM on Saturday, April 18. There will be continuous seating. Menu includes ziti, bread, salad, drinks and dessert. Cost is \$10 per adult and \$5 per child. Proceeds to benefit the MUMC Youth who will be traveling to Bonafil, Mexico this summer on a mission project.

## ***Old Caln Historical Society events***

The Old Caln Historical Society is sponsoring these events:

An open house on Sunday, April 12 from 1- 3 PM, will include free tours of the Old Caln Meetinghouse and Museum (circa 1726) on Route 340, Thorndale and the Hexagonal Schoolhouse (circa 1837) on Municipal Drive, Thorndale. The tours will be given by members of the Old Caln Historical Society and the Caln Township Historical Commission. The public is invited and parking is available. For information call 610-384-8153.

A program on the Underground Railroad in Chester County will be given at 2 PM on Sunday, April 19 at the Caln Township Municipal Building. Christopher Desmond, director of the Friends Historical Library at both Swarthmore and Haverford Colleges, and well known writer and speaker on the Underground Railroad, will present the program. The program is free and parking is available. Please use the back door of the meeting room. For information call 610-384-8153.

Also, table space is available for the Historical Society's 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 please call 610-384-9496 or 610-384-8153.

## ***Senior Center's Spring Fling***

The Downingtown Area Senior Center will have a Spring Fling at the Lexus of Chester Springs dealership on 400 Pottstown Pike, from 7-11 PM on Saturday, April 25. The fundraiser will include a dinner cabaret, which begins at 9 PM. Cost is \$75 per person. For more details or to purchase tickets, please call Sue McIntyre, associate director, at 610-269-3939, or access:

[http://downingtownsensiors.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=40:spring-fling&catid=27:spring-fling&Itemid=22](http://downingtownsensiors.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=40:spring-fling&catid=27:spring-fling&Itemid=22).

## ***Trout Rodeo***

The Brandywine Trout and Conservation Club will have a free Kids Only (15 and younger) Trout Rodeo at Kerr Park in Downingtown on Saturday, April 18. Registration begins at 8 AM and the Rodeo will be from 9 AM to 2 PM.

## ***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.downingtown.org/images/BiketheBrandywine%202015.jpg](http://www.downingtown.org/images/BiketheBrandywine%202015.jpg)

### ***Basket Bingo for scholarship.***

Sponsored by the Downingtown-Thorndale Regional Chamber of Commerce and benefiting the Chamber's Amina C. Valocchi Scholarship Fund, the Longaberger/Vera Bradley Basket Bingo will be held Sunday, April 19 at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 Church St., Downingtown. Doors open at noon. Bingo begins at 1 PM. Tickets are \$20 (includes 20 regular games). Prizes are filled Longaberger Baskets & Longaberger Pottery and Vera Bradley items. Raffle and door prizes; (4) special games of Bingo; food available for purchase. For tickets or info, call Rochelle at 610-383-1114 or via [Dimatteo003@yahoo.com](mailto:Dimatteo003@yahoo.com)

### ***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](http://www.dtownchristmas.com/Documents/NATR2015/TICKETS-HORSES%20FORM.pdf). For more info, see: [www.dtownchristmas.com/](http://www.dtownchristmas.com/).

### ***Golf outing***

The Alert Fire Co. of Downingtown will be host its second annual Golf Outing at the Downingtown Country Club on Monday, May 4. Golfer Registration Deadline is Saturday, April 26. Entry fee for each golfer is \$100. The Outing includes lunch starting at 11:30 AM, shotgun start at 1 PM, greens fee, cart, beverages on the course, awards dinner and various contests and door prizes. For more information and on-line registration, access: [www.alertgolfouting.org](http://www.alertgolfouting.org).

### ***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 150<sup>th</sup>," 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](mailto:PRD1961@gmail.com), or call (610)873-7059.

### ***Registration for soccer players with special needs***

The Glenmoore Eagle Youth Association's HIGH 5 soccer program will be held at Fellowship Field #1, 241 Fellowship Road, Chester Springs, from 3-4 PM on Saturdays, from April 11 to May 30. This free program is for players between 5 and 19 years of age who have special needs. We need teens and adults to volunteer as "buddies" to work one-on-one with players. No soccer experience necessary -- just enthusiasm! For more info and to register, go to: [www.geyasoccer.org](http://www.geyasoccer.org)

### ***5K race for Downingtown Library***

The Readers on the Run 5K race and a 1 Mile walk, plus a Kids Dash will be held on Green Street in Downingtown on Saturday morning, April 11. The races will benefit the Downingtown Library. For details and to register on line, go to: <http://library5k.secondwindtiming.com> or you can pick up a registration form at the new Downingtown Library on Wallace Avenue.

### ***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 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](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).