



## 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 Where Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the building on the left in the photo above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your response to: [Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org).

## Interesting local news published in November 1963

Noted below are news items originally published in local newspapers 52 years ago:

- Downingtown became the first municipality in Chester County to authorize **fluoridation** of its public water system.

- Jack Helm, a former DHS and Villanova football star, was the **first Democrat** to be elected to Downingtown Borough Council in eight years. Helm, elected to represent the borough's West Ward, defeated GOP-hopeful Thomas Roberts, 577-487. In **West Bradford**, Edward Stouff was re-elected to the school board in a hotly contested race that created a larger-than-usual turnout because of a controversial sample ballot and Republicans working for Democrat candidate Gloria Hamilton.

- Jonathan Styer of the **Uwchlan Grange** turned the keys to the **Uwchlan Friends Meeting House** in Lionville over to Mrs. Theodore Rogers, president of the **Woman's Community Club of Uwchlan**. The event ensured the preservation of one of Chester County's historic treasures. The Uwchlan Meeting was established in 1714, and the meeting house was built in 1756. It was remodeled in 1875. During the Revolutionary War, military surgeon Dr. Bodo Otto, who established the American Army hospital at nearby Yellow Springs, commandeered the Uwchlan Meeting House and converted it into a military hospital. Beginning in 1904, Lionville High School used the meeting house for classes, until 1932 when the school closed. Subsequently, the building was occupied by Lionville Elementary, until 1960. The Uwchlan Grange, which had been meeting in the building since 1906, purchased the property in 1920. However, the graveyard continued to be owned by the Friends Meeting. The Woman's Community Club, which was formed in 1922, was committed to restoring the meeting house.

- The Downingtown Area Elementary School Board approved preliminary sketches of the proposed, two-story addition to the two-year-old **Lionville Elementary School**. The state was to cover 82 percent of the \$750,000 cost of building the addition, which increased the school's capacity to 700 pupils.

- Mrs. Warren Radcliffe was chairman of the Christmas bazaar at **St. James Episcopal Church**, Downingtown. Committee chairmen included: Mrs. W.P. Canby, Mrs. Jacob Edge and Mrs. Ellis Brown, pantry cupboard; Mrs. Thomas McIlvaine, bake table; Mrs. Guy Jordan, children's table; Mrs. Allen Powell, white elephant table; Margaret Fletcher and Mrs. Francis Tweed, Santa's Surprise; Mrs. Walter Leland and Mrs. Maurie Davis, lunch; and Mrs. Herbert Ash, waitresses.

- Winners in the costume competition at the Halloween party of **Cub Pack 2**, Downingtown, were: David Hemberger, Frank Bishop, Bill Dorman, Steve Massimini and Palmer Raysor. Judges were Lewis Capriotti, Palmer Raysor and Mrs. William Woodruff. Cubs who were recognized for earning badges and arrow points included: Joel Swisher, Vincent Cozzone, Joseph Miller, Ned Beamsderfer, Gordon Patrizio and Billy Woodruff.

- Sunday School teachers at **Marshallton Methodist Church**, who completed a six-week leadership training course, included: Mrs. William Ludwick, Mrs. Robert Martin, Mrs. Edith Young, Mrs. Harry Wickersham, Mrs. Lawrence Dampman, Mrs. Raymond McClure, Mrs. Martin McClure, Mrs. Esther Hendry, Mrs. Keeler and Clifford Queen.

- Kindergarten students at **Brandywine-Wallace School** who won prizes for their costumes at the school's Halloween party were: Sharon Capriotti, Robert Arters, Edward Thompson, Donald Yost, Jayne Hall, Jeff Martini, Anne Radcliffe, Jerry Lockhard and Kathy Zinn.

- Norman Geddes was the new leader of **Cub Pack 152 in Marshallton**, and the den mothers were Mrs. Francis Wood, Mrs. Jack Sellers and Mrs. Joseph Kirkner. A quartette, comprised of Don and Ray Wood, Kelly Fitzgerald and Steve Vergren sang Halloween songs at the Pack's October meeting.

- Winners of the costume competition at the **Ladies of St. Joseph's** Halloween party included Edith Filoromo, Carmen DiPietro, Rose Brown and Rose Marie Cipollini. Mrs. Charles Snyder, Mrs. Donald Stubbs and Mrs. Mary Jo DiEuliis were the judges.

- The **DHS field hockey team** won its seventh game by beating Phoenixville 1-0, as Judy Brown scored her eighth goal of the season, with an assist by Shrimp McElroy. The Whippet jayvees beat the Phantoms 2-0, as goals were tallied by Lynne Dowlin and Pat Findley. Downingtown players who were named to the All-Ches-Mont team were Brown, Shirley Smith and Suzie Martin.

- New members of the Junior Girl Scout Troop, sponsored by **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Debbie Austin, Nancy Brumgard, Mary Lou Demos, Leona Finkbiner, Christine Goodwyn, Leona Finkbiner, Lynn Hayhurst, Nancy Just, Gwyn Kiernan, Donna Klaebel, Mary Ellen MacCausland, Gay Mason, Kathy McQuail, Susan Pagett, Nan Shea, Kathleen Shreiner and Sally Wallace.

- Officers of the Downingtown Junior High School **Honor Society** were James long, president; Linda Broomell, vice president; Joanne Beam, secretary; and David Robbins, treasurer.

## Borough Fire Department leaders in 1926



Jeff Stevens, historian at the Alert Fire Co. in Downingtown, has responded to our constant quest for group photos (including individuals' names) of members of organizations, teams, scout troops, school classes, etc. by sending us the above photo, taken in 1926. In the picture are, left to right: John Bray, Assistant Chief, Minquas Fire Co.; John Corcoran, Assistant Chief, Alert Fire Co.; and J. Martin Binder, Chief Fire Marshall (Fire Chief), Downingtown Fire Department.

## What area residents were talking about 91 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in *The Archive* in the summer of 1924:

- Installation of an **electric power transmission line**, between Downingtown and Glen Moore, was expected to be completed in September. “It is not improbable that the village of Glen Moore will take on the appearance of a city, and illuminate its streets in the not distant future.” The line was completed in August as far north as Cornog, where the Keystone Trap Rock Co. was using electricity to crush stone from the quarry. Also benefitting from the newly-accessible electric line was the Sypherd Creamery in Lyndell. And there was “a prospect” that the often-inaccessible Route 282, north of Downingtown, would soon have a macadam surface.
- The **Downingtown Woolen Mills** filed for bankruptcy, and the receiver was authorized to sell the plant and its machinery, which was appraised at \$475,000. It was expected that most of the nine biggest stockholders would buy the equipment and plant, re-organize the corporation, and continue operation of the company. The firm’s assets totaled \$178,000, while its liabilities were \$275,000.
- The name of the **Frank Miller Paper Co.** was changed to the **Downingtown Paper Co.** Officers of the re-named firm were J. Gibson McIlvaine, president; Walter McIlvaine, vice president; Frank Parke, secretary-treasurer; Horace Pyle, assistant treasurer; and A.J. Brookover, superintendent.
- The recently closed **Bell School** on Bell Tavern Road, near Route 30, in East Caln was sold to Lewis Downing for \$6,900.
- Since the authorities at the **YMCA Camp** in West Bradford were opposed to trespassing on its grounds, an Italian woman (probably a resident of neighboring Downingtown) was arrested while gathering berries and was taken before a magistrate.
- An estimated 10,000 people came out on July 4th for the **Minquas Fire Co.** fireworks display, which cost \$1,000. Although there was no admission fee for the fireworks, the fire company had arranged for enough parking space for 1,500 cars, for a \$1 charge per car.

## How to buy Luminaria supplies & Xmas ornaments

You can purchase Luminaria supplies (candles, re-useable plastic bases and/or bags) and Christmas ornaments depicting historic Downingtown sites at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on Route 30 in East Caln (next to the Chick Fil-A restaurant) from 1-4 PM on these dates: Sunday, December 13; Saturday, Dec. 19; and Sunday, December 20.

Christmas ornaments depicting local historic sites include: Downingtown Borough Hall, West Ward School, Alert Fire Hall, Minquas Fire Hall and Downingtown Junior-Senior High School. They cost \$5 each or three for \$10.

## Here’s how YOU can receive a Hist-O-Gram every week

If you occasionally receive a pass-along copy of our Hist-O-Gram from a subscriber, you can receive a copy of our FREE Hist-O-Grams every week by accessing our website:

[www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org), and typing your 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.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms.html](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms.html).

## Vintage ad of the week:

**YOUR VOTE AGAINST PROJECT 70  
IS NOT A VOTE AGAINST WATER  
FOR DOWNINGTOWN and WEST CHESTER.  
IT IS NOT A VOTE AGAINST MARSH CREEK DAM  
IT IS A VOTE AGAINST THE EXPENDITURE  
OF \$70,000,000<sup>00</sup> OF TAXPAYERS MONEY  
FOR LAND ALONE.**

**VOTE NO ON PROJECT 70!**

Marsh Creek Area Taxpayers Association

This ad was published in local newspapers in November 1924.

## Our Wish List

The items listed below in our Wish List notes the materials with a Downingtown connection, the Historical Society especially needs to reach its archival goals.

- A copy of Barbara Carlson Travaglini's History of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Downingtown.
- All DHS yearbooks published since 1964. And any yearbooks or newspapers published by DHS, or by Downingtown and Lionville Junior High Schools.
- Any printed materials related to: the Downingtown Young Whippets, Downingtown Little League, Downingtown Babe Ruth League or the Downingtown American Legion Baseball teams, and the Downingtown Girls' Softball League, the Lionville Youth Association, the West Bradford Youth Association, or the East Brandywine Youth Athletics.

If you need more info about any of these requests, please send an email to:

[Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org).

## It's at 288 Church Street in Johnstown



Marybeth Fusco was the first of several people who correctly identified the location of the house in the photo above as 288 Church Street in the Johnstown section of the borough. One of the house's former owners was Michael Bartone, who passed away in 2002 from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) also known as Lou Gehrig's disease). His family and friends have since raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the ALS Society via annual, multi-event benefits. They also sponsor scholarships to attend Stephens Technical School, Michael's alma mater.

*Officers of the Downingtown Area Historical Society are: Parry Desmond, president; Ernie Jameson, vice president; Marion Piccolomini, recording secretary and Carol Grigson, treasurer. The board of directors includes: Harry Helms, Mike Dunn, Francine Dague, Phil Dague, Donna Capriotti and Annette Bethke.*

# **Free Ads for Non-Profits**

## ***Christmas Parade***

The Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Parade, with eight marching bands, will be held on Lancaster Avenue at 3 PM on Saturday, December 12. For details, see: [www.dtownchristmas.com/](http://www.dtownchristmas.com/).

## ***Holiday Food Drive***

Area residents are encouraged to drop off non-perishable item, such as canned vegetables and fruit, pancake mix and syrup, instant potatoes, peanut butter, pasta, rice, beans, stews and soups at the East Caln Township office, 110 Bell Tavern Road. For more info, call: 610-2691989.

## ***Craft Show***

Chester County Library, Exton Square, will have its 5th annual Craft Show from 10 AM–3 PM Saturday, Dec. 12. Vendors will be set up throughout the library to display and sell their crafts.

## ***Wreaths Across America***

Hopewell Cemetery, at 852 Hopewell Road, Downingtown, will be the site of the Wreaths Across America program at 11 AM on Saturday, December 12. This is a national day of recognition where wreaths are placed on the graves of veterans across the country, and this will be the second year that Hopewell has participated. You are invited to come and help or observe this incredible site. If you have a veteran relative buried at Hopewell and you would like to place their wreath, contact Linda Mento at [OCityLinda@aol.com](mailto:OCityLinda@aol.com) or call 484-798-5520.

## ***Community Sing***

Everyone is invited to the annual Christmas Community Sing at 11 AM on Sunday, December 20 at the Bradford Friends Meeting House, 1366 West Strasburg Road, Marshallton. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

## ***Warm Coat Drive***

The Downingtown Area Senior Center is sponsoring a Warm Coats Drive. New and gently used coats will be accepted at the Senior Center, 983 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, until Wednesday, Dec. 23. Call 610-269-3939 for details.

## ***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.

## ***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).

## ***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 reasonable. Call 610-269-3555 for more information.