

Happy New Year!



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

Vol. 6, No. 53

December 31, 2015

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.

Local news items published in May of 1948

Noted below are news items originally published in local newspapers 676 years ago:

- Eighty-three seniors **graduated from DHS**. Beverly Chandler and Duane Chesney were recognized as the seniors who had the highest scholastic standing in the class. The 66th annual commencement also included the DHS Alumni Association's presentation of a bronze plaque, listing these names of graduates who were killed in World War II: Joseph Bowman, Joseph Cozzone, Anthony DiChristofaro, Paul Entriiken, Alvin Gottier, Herbert Kennedy, Gerald Kline, Arthur Pickell, Robert Weimer and Richard Zook.

- Local talent featured in a musical put on at **Downingtown Methodist Church** included: pianists Virginia Bare, Mrs. William Kline, Arlene Hoskins and Mrs. Atlee Ney; an octette from DHS comprised of Eleanor Detterline, Shirley Habecker, Marguerite Ciarlone, Caroline Saylor, Mary Graden, Netha Beumer, Mena Cozzone and Margaret Sciarretta; trumpeter Pete Edgar; singers Edward Irwin and Clifford Morrow; and saxophonist Mrs. Elmer Schruppf. And newly elected officers of the Live Wire Bible Class at the church were Mrs. Vernon Yarnall, president; Sara Brown, vice president; Mrs. Gilbert Algiers, secretary; and Mrs. Benjamin Summers, treasurer.

- Mrs. Frank Lenhardt was elected president of the **DHS Music Association**. Other officers were Mrs. James Stauffer, vice president; Mrs. Frank Helms, secretary; and Mrs. Elmer Schruppf, treasurer. Mrs. Leo Hogg, Mrs. Henry Kriebel and Mrs. Paul Detterline were the directors.

- The **Downingtown Chamber of Commerce** decided to postpone the dates of the Miss Chester County Beauty Pageant, from June 23 to June 22, because two major events—the National Republican Convention and the Joe Louis vs. Jersey Joe Walcott heavyweight championship fight—were being televised on June 22.

- Third and fourth graders at the **Marshallton School** put on a musical program, which included these featured students: Anne Sheetz, Woodie Bossert, Eddie Martin, Barry Wickersham, Suzanne Robinson, Carole Anne Stouff, Gwen Curry, Shirley Mercer, Mary Brackbill, Kenneth Brooks, Richard Albertson, Lynn Klunder, Robert and Billy Shockley, Phoebe Nelson, Jane Sturgis, Mary-Jane Fennimore, Marjorie Lawn, Ruth Hunter, Patty Reeve, Joel Gee, Billy Bird and Donald Lambert.

- Members of the safety patrol at **Windsor School**, who were treated to a Phillies game at Shibe Park in Philadelphia, included Richard Patterson, Robert Chrisman, Barbara Powell, Alma Jane Thompson, Mildred Sorenson and Doris Gottier.

- Installed as officers of the Hi-Y Club at **Lionville School** were Cora Smedley, president; Carl Ruth, vice president; Ronald Otter, secretary; and Tommy Fisher, treasurer. Students who graduated from the eighth grade were Martha Matthews, Eleanor Matlack, Gwen Hamer, Janet Wallace, David Taylor and William Jackson.

- Members of the **Downingtown Junior Woman's Club** who modeled in the annual fashion show included: Mrs. John Miller, Mrs. Gerald Lyons, Mrs. Mylin Plank, Mrs. George Dowlin, Mrs. George Bousum, Mrs. Ruth King, Mrs. Alexis Staneski and Mrs. Penrose Davis.

- Elected to lead the Downingtown-Chester Valley **Girl Scout District** were Mrs. Donald White, president; Mrs. Helen Wooten, vice president; Mrs. Orville Brammer, secretary; and Mrs. Ruth King, treasurer.

- **Mount Airy School** students, who participated in a Chinese Shadow Show, included: Henry Hine, Betty Bird, Shirley Wenger, Billy Scott, Vivian Perkins, Theodore Graybill, and Jimmie and George Dinsdale.
- New officers of the **St. Anthony's Lodge Auxiliary** were Barbara Mento, president; Josephine Pizzi, vice president; Rose DiBerardinis, secretary; and Ann Viscichini, treasurer. Committee chairmen included: Alice Mascherino, entertainment; Mary Cortelessa, refreshments; Edith D'Attilio, hostesses; Emily DiEugenio, membership; Josephine Perella, hospitality; Florence Bartelmo, finance; and Mary LaFiata, publicity.

What locals were talking about 90 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in *The Archive* in the spring of 1925:

- Members of the **Alert Fire Co.** almost unanimously voted to purchase part of the Thomas Pedrick property on the north side of West Lancaster Avenue, between Downing and Stuart Avenues, in Downingtown for \$3,500. A new fire station was expected to be built on the site. (Editor's Note: Building a fire station on the Pedrick site never reached fruition. Instead, the Alerts bought the Ringwalt estate on West Pennsylvania in 1940, and the fire house there was dedicated in 1941).
- George Taylor, secretary of Minquas Fire Co., who raised the last \$3,000 needed to pay for the \$8,000 **ambulance**, drove the new vehicle from the York Body Co., to the fire house in Downingtown. The Downingtown Motor Co. provided the chassis.
- **St. Joseph's Parish** purchased about 2 acres of property at Manor and Pennsylvania Avenues in the borough, from Joseph Hoopes. The parish planned to build a church and parochial school on the site. (Editor's Note: a church was not built on the land, but a parochial school was opened there in 1954).
- Downingtown's **Moose Lodge** team won the Chester County Basketball League by beating West Chester's Knights of Columbus squad. The Moosers closed their season with a benefit game to aid Sam Charles, who suffered a serious knee injury in the championship game.
- Students from **Downingtown School District** competed in singing contests between the schools' grades during Music Week.
- Jacob Ringwalt, a prominent borough resident, visited the **West Ward School** and promised to reward 25 cents to the students in each of four grades who killed the most flies during the month of April. Those who won a quarter from Ringwalt and the number of the flies they killed were: Albert Donofrio, 1,014; Matthew Collins, 1,014; Clarence Myers, 133 (perhaps a typo?); and Mike Mento, 1,246.

First Clip Joint session in 2016 will be on Sunday, Jan. 3

We will be open from 1-4 PM on Sunday, January 3, because that's the day we'll have our first Clip Joint session in 2016 at Ashbridge House, the Historical Society's 307-year-old headquarters in Ashbridge Square, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, on Route 30 in East Caln. Better yet, we'll have our first evening clipping and pasting session on Tuesday, January 12.

Vintage ad of the week:

EXTON DRIVE-IN

GRAND OPENING

OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA'S NEWEST
AND MOST MODERN DRIVE-IN THEATRE

— OPENING TONITE —

★ 1000 CAR CAPACITY

★ CAFETERIA STYLE
FOOD SERVICE

★ PLAYGROUND
FOR THE KIDDIES

★ IN CAR HEATERS
FOR WINTER TIME
OPERATION!

★ MACADAMIZED
FIELD - NO DUST!

★ 105 FT. WIDE SCREEN
FOR THE FINEST IN
CINEMASCOPE
ENTERTAINMENT

★ WELL OFF THE HIGHWAY
NO DISTURBING NOISES!

★ TWO CONVENIENT
ENTRANCES ON ROUTE
100 and 30

CHILDREN UNDER 12 ADMITTED FREE - AT ALL TIMES

Whoever You Are...
Wherever You Are

★ ★

FOR YOU FOLKS on
Our WEST SIDE...

Take U. S. Route 30 from Coatesville or Downingtown and go East to Route 100 - the Exton Crossroads.

★

From the SOUTH... take Route 100 from West Chester going North to U. S. 30.

★

EXTON DRIVE-IN
... Is Easy To Reach
From Any Direction!

★ ★

FOR THE FOLKS on
... Our EAST SIDE

From Ardmore, Wayne or Paoil,
Take U. S. Route 30, West to
Route 100, the Exton Crossroads.

★

From WEST CHESTER or the
SOUTH, take Route 100, North to
U. S. 30 at the Exton Crossroads.

★

"OUR POLICY IS TO SHOW FILMS THAT ARE CLEAN AND WHOLESOME AND ENJOYABLE FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY"

BOX OFFICE OPEN 7 P.M. - SHOW STARTS AT DUSK

SEE SALLY STARR IN PERSON ON FRIDAY NIGHT

TIBURZIO AND GREENSPAN
GENERAL CONTRACTORS
PETER TIBURZIO
WILLOW GROVE 1342

BEST WISHES
RUSSEL GREENSPAN
TURNER 7-2511

W. ARNOLD BLYTH
EXCAVATING AND ROADWORK
DOYLESTOWN 2622
HARRISON THEATRE
WEST CHESTER 2-2622

This ad was originally published in the July 11, 1956 edition of the *Daily Local News*.

Group photo of the week:



The DHS Class of 1965 recently had its 50th reunion. One of the photos in the impressive reunion booklet, sent by Debbie Dunn Lutchkus, was this shot of the class officers: Paul Bien, president; Lois Quinn, vice president; Sally Campbell, secretary; and Gail Katherman, treasurer.

Story behind this bridge site continues to be a mystery



Not one soul even tried to identify the site of the bridge abutments in the photo above, which was provided by Jim Sundman, local railroad and Civil War historian. The site is in West Whiteland, less than a mile west of the Whitford Station. Here's what Jim wrote: "There used to be a road connecting Burgoyne Road and Clover Mill Road and this bridge was part of the road over the tracks. However, on an old map this road was called "Whites Road." He also noted: "These bridge abutments have been driving me crazy for years. I pass by them every day, but since there were no other recognizable features nearby along the tracks, I didn't know exactly where they were or why they are there...until I did a little exploring... My thinking is the bridge was torn down and the entire connecting road was done away with when this part of the line was electrified in 1938. There was no way the bridge could have stayed along with the overhead catenary lines."

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

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.

- Vintage uniforms worn by members of the DHS or Junior High marching bands and those worn by members of local fire departments in parades.
- 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.

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.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.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.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Civilian Conservation Corps

Bob Ford, historian horticulturist, war memorabilia collector and sportsman, will present a program on the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) at the West Caln Historical Society's meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, Jan. 19. The meeting will be held at the West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. All meetings are free and open to the public.

Farmers Community Market of Downingtown

The Community Market, at the Dane Décor Warehouse parking lot, 216 Washington Ave., Downingtown, will be open from 10 AM until noon on the first and third Saturdays, through March: Jan. 2 and 16, Feb. 6 and 20, March 5 and 19. For more info, call 724-454-3674; or contact gaukerfarms@gmail.com; or via Community Market of Downingtown on Facebook.

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 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.