



## 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).

## When Good Neighbor Day was revived in 1979

Good Neighbor Day was revived as Downingtown's Fourth of July celebration 36 years ago. The Run For Life road race allowed the some 400 entrants to run three, six or nine miles, according to the *East Branch Citizen*. The 3-mile race was won by Shawn Urbine, in 16:50 minutes. And Janis Frazer was the fastest female, 3-mile runner, with a 20:59 time.

The fastest 6-milers were Alfredo Gonzalez, 38:23, and Lex Ziobro, 39:56. And the winners of the 9-mile competition were Jerry Gluckman, 56:21, and Kathy Pomento Dodd, 63:19.

Also, Tony Przychodzien, who is the only runner to have competed in all 36 GND races, was the top fundraiser, with \$300 in pledges.

Good Neighbor Day also included a canoe race down the Brandywine, from Kerr Park to Georgia Farm in East Bradford. That race had been initiated several years earlier by the Downingtown Jaycees. Competing against 61 other canoes, Louise and Ed Ritti finished first in the 7.2-mile race, with a time of 1:11.12.

For a schedule of activities and other details on this year's GND, access:

[www.goodneighboraday.com](http://www.goodneighboraday.com).

### **Other news items published in early July 1979**

- Tabas Enterprises submitted plans for a 12-story addition to the **Tabas Hotel** on Route 30 in East Caln. If the plans were approved, the 168 additional rooms, would bring the hotel's capacity to a total of 359 rooms.

- The best crayon pictures were drawn by these budding artists at the **Lionville School** playground: Jenny Verstandig, Mike Nash, Cory Berg and Donna Sheinbach.

- Recent **property transfers** included: 111 Briarwood Drive, East Brandywine, \$70,900; 129 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, \$52,500; 415 Howell Road, Uwchlan, \$82,000; 1307 Dunsinane Circle, West Whiteland, \$60,000; 1302 Decator Court, West Bradford, \$52,760; and 3213 Raye Road, Caln, \$60,500.

- Larry Lark pitched a no-hitter as the **Downingtown-Lionville Babe Ruth League** 14-15 all-stars beat Coatesville 2-0 in a playoff game.

- And pitcher Wally McCue went the distance, as Pepperidge Farm defeated St. Anthony's and won the **Downintown Little League** major league title. Members of the Pepperidge team included: Brian Ceulers, Wally and Kevin McCue, Pete Moran, Keith Farnum, Eric Wolfe, David Grant, John Angeny, Drew Gardiner, Steve Cox, Wayne Clark, Jimmy Zynn, John Hayes and Pat Rucker.

## **Interesting local news 68 years ago**

Noted below are news items published in local newspapers the latter part of December 1947.

- The **Community Christmas program**, held in Downingtown's Kerr Park, was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the Downingtown Young Men's Association. The events included nearly 1,000 kids cheering when Santa Claus arrived by helicopter; and Christmas carols sung by about choristers from 20 local church choirs, under the direction of Stan Walters, director of the DYMA chorus. And the Chamber, the VFW, the Junior and Senior Woman's Clubs, the Rotary and Lions Clubs, plus several local churches made significant contributions so 40 baskets of food and toys could be distributed to needy families.

- Although Harold Martin's **Exton Lodge** suffered extensive damage when a Greyhound bus crashed into the main entrance a week earlier, repairs were done quickly and the restaurant still had a gala New Year's Eve party.

- Elected as officers of the **Wallace Township Mothers Club** were Mrs. Robert Mason, president; Mrs. William Hemplin, vice president; Mrs. Grier Miller, secretary; Mrs. Aaron Ward, treasurer; and Mrs. P.W. Bare, chaplain.

- Fifth and sixth grade students at **Marshallton School**, who had roles in a short Christmas play, included John Ramsay, Elmer Fred Lambert, Dolores Wilson, Wally McCue, Patsy Miller, Larry Williams, Caroline Ferri, Elsie Lambert, Dale Ellingsworth, Richard Busby, Malcom Preston and Harold Trimble.

- Elected as officers of the WSCS group at **Glen Moore Methodist Church** were Elva Bare, president; Lillian Matlack, vice president; Romaine Garrett, secretary; and Pearl Miller, treasurer. And participants in a one-act play at the church were Virginia and Thomas Bare, Joaquin Matlack, Merle and Shirley Hannum and Henry Beam.

- Members of the **Downingtown (Williamson) Masonic Lodge** elected the following officers: Edward Towson, worshipful master; John McCausland, senior warden; Charles Ezra, junior warden; Leland Wilson, treasurer; Arthur Walton, secretary; and trustees Arthur Glauner, John Fisher and Edgar Griffith.

- Following a Mother and Daughter Supper at **Marshallton Methodist Church**, these members of Girl Scout Troop 10 presented a play: Edith Albertson, Doris Cann, Mary Jane Place and June Ellingsworth.

- Members of the **DHS Dramatic Club**, who acted in a play during the high school's Christmas program, included John Windle, Netha Beumer, Robert Burns, Florence DeLuca, William Chalfant, Charles Fowler, Albert Palmateer, Marie Cozzone and Virginia Bare.

- By-laws of the recently formed **Junior Woman's Club of Uwchlan** were developed by Mrs. Carl Pfeil, Mrs. Otto Speis and Eleanor Ruth. Department chairmen included Elizabeth Happersett, home and citizenship; Mrs. Ted Hand, publicity; Mrs. Spencer Windle, ways and means; Doris Rosenbaum, drama; and Mrs. Wayne Bickel, literature.

- Six **Downingtown industries** pledged a total of \$57,332 to the Chester County Hospital Building Fund. Donations by the firms included: Downingtown Paper Co., \$20,000; Downingtown Manufacturing Co., \$15,000; Bicking Paper Co., \$10,000; Downingtown Iron Works, \$7,000; Davey Paper Co., \$4,000; and Shyrock Paper Co., \$1,332.

- Those who were cited for regular attendance at the Sunday School at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were: Harold Trego, 12 years; Franklin Glauner, 10 years; Robert Miller, 7 years; Joe Miller and Dorothy Underwood, 6 years; David Taylor, 3 years; Mary Drennan, Louise Shreiner, and Carl Ruth, 2 years; and Richard Ruth, one year.

- Officers elected by members of the **Glen Moore Fire Co.** were Leroy McConnell, president; Frank Miller, vice president; John Furlong, secretary; Harold Hannum, assistant secretary; Ernest Phillips; and Lloyd Johnson, trustee; Russell Harrington, fire chief; and John Reber and Frank Miller, assistant chiefs.

- Students from the **Lionville School** who had roles in a Christmas play included Alice Smedley, Margaret Detweiler, Sammy Matthews, Denny Ellmore, Bobby Peoples, Mary Drennan, Peggy and Dorothy LaRose, Lorraine and Louise Shreiner, Karen Rickard, Daniel Daylor, Elaine Smith, and Norman and Marvin Jenkins

- Although the **DHS basketball team** had a 19-16 lead at halftime, the Whippets lost to West Chester's St. Agnes High School by a 41-37 score. Bill Hayes and Joe Sciarretta scored eight points for Downingtown.

- Members of **St. Paul's Reformed (UCC) Church**, Lionville, who participated in a nativity scene at a Christmas service, were: Mr. and Mrs. William Whitely, Bayard and Audrey Samworth, Mildred and Horace Wilson, Harry Dewees, Chester Mull and Elmer Matthews.

## What local people were talking about in the autumn of 1920

Noted below are news items which have been retrieved from editions of the *Downingtown Archive*, published in the autumn months, 95 years ago.

- Tragedy was avoided in November 1920, when **Raymond Greenleaf**, a Downingtown pharmacist, spotted an early morning fire on McGraw's Alley in the Johnstontown section of the borough. When Greenleaf arrived at the scene, he discovered that the fire apparently had started at Adolph Rometsch's barn, and then quickly spread to the house rented by the Warnick family and a nearby barn owned by Harry Knauer. Greenleaf probably saved the lives of several members of the Warnick family when he roused them from their sleep by pounding on their front door. Then Greenleaf tried to telephone the Alert Fire Co., but that effort was inexplicably unsuccessful. So, Greenleaf dashed to the Alert firehouse on Downing Avenue and sounded the alarm himself. Then the responding Alert firefighters could not get the fire engine started. They finally got it running after they pushed it out onto the slightly hilly Downing Avenue so the engine could be turned over by gravity. Despite the significant fire damage—only the first floor of the Warnick home survived—no one was hurt. But the Alerts acknowledged that the property damage probably would have been much more extensive if Greenleaf had not come to the rescue. The Alerts also realized that the fire company should have an electric fire alarm system.

- Warren Harding, the Republican from Ohio, solidly won the hearts and votes of Downingtown residents, by a 636-383 margin, in the **U.S. presidential election**. However, Democrat James Cox won the majority of the votes (67-48) in West Ward's South precinct, the Johnstontown section of the borough.

- An investigation about why 14 borough residents had **typhoid fever** determined that much of the victims' milk, was supplied by a nearby, unnamed dairy farm. And many of the deliveries were made by the same milkman, including two members of his family.

- **Downingtown's fire companies** received plaudits for fighting a recent fire at the Shyrock Paper Co. at Dorlan's Mill in Uwchlan. However, Downingtown's Council said it was opposed to the fire companies responding to blazes that far outside borough.

- Although diners only had to pay \$1 for a dinner there, the dining room at the **Pennsylvania House**, a hotel on West Lancaster Avenue, next to the Downingtown railroad station, was closed due to low patronage.

- In a medical inspection at **East Ward School** in Downingtown, Dr. Edgar Hutchison found that 123 of the 194 students had decaying teeth.

- A Lancaster firm won the State Highway Department contract to **pave a section of Lancaster Avenue**, which was more than a mile long in the borough, for the first time. The contract called for the concrete construction to be 18 feet wide in the east end and 26 feet wide in the west end, to accommodate the trolley tracks. Construction was expected to begin the spring of 1921.

- The high school's Athletic Committee hired two new **football coaches** from Coatesville. John Johnson, the head coach, had played for Swarthmore, and assistant coach Joseph Atkinson, who had played for Penn State, was responsible for the linemen.

## **It's at 1587 Broad Run Road in West Bradford Twp.**



Although it's located near the United Sports Training Center in West Bradford, not one soul recognized the building in the photo above which is located at 1587 Broad Run Road in West Bradford. Known as the John Valentine log house, it was built in 1788.

### **Clip Joint session postponed until July 12**

The clip joint sessions are usually conducted at our Ashbridge House headquarters on the first Sunday of each month. However, since the first Sunday in July will occur on the Fourth of July weekend, volunteers will be clipping and pasting newspaper articles for our archival collection from 1-4 PM on Sunday, July 12.

## **Your past may be seen at our booth on Good Neighbor Day**

Remember when your teachers claimed that all your transgressions would go on your **permanent record**? Well, the Historical Society will enable you to see at least part of your **permanent record** at our booth on Good Neighbor Day on Saturday, July Fourth in Downingtown's Kerr Park.

We're talking about an opportunity for you to look up your name on our Family File index, which will be available on a computer at the booth. The index will include a computerized listing of some 30,000 newspaper articles we've clipped and organized. For example, the listing may note that we have an article about your parents' wedding, a cousin's obituary, or even when your Uncle John had an accident.

Although you won't be able to see the actual articles on a computer at the park on GND, you can get a copy of any article in our index that you're interested in for just 25 cents by coming, on a Sunday afternoon, to Ashbridge House, our headquarters on Route 30 in East Caln, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant.

We also will have some neat items on sale at our booth on GND. They include: beautiful quilts—suitable for tabletops or wall hanging—made by Debbie Petty; Christmas tree ornaments, depicting Downingtown historic sites; books on Downingtown's history; and the Downingtown Lions Club's recipe books.

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

## **Free ads for Non-Profits**

### ***Good Neighbor Day Celebration***

The 37<sup>th</sup> annual Downingtown Good Neighbor Day will be held Saturday, July 4. The day-long events start with the Run for Life (5K, 10K & 15K) and Freedom Walk at 8 AM, followed by the Canoe and Big Wheel races at 11 AM. Approximately 2,800 athletes participate each year. Good Neighbor Day activities benefit the ambulance and rescue squads within the Downingtown Area School District. Throughout the day, you can enjoy fabulous food, visit 80-100 craft exhibitors, see the Civil War cannon, tour the Log House, or simply enjoy one of the many activities and musical bands. The day is capped off with a Fireworks Grand Finale, which starts at dusk. For more info on the schedule of events, check: [www.goodneighborday.com](http://www.goodneighborday.com).

### ***Bats for Matt***

The seventh annual Bats for Matt co-ed softball tournament will be held on Friday, July 18 and Sunday, July 19. Registration closes July 13. For more details, access: [www.batsformatt.com/](http://www.batsformatt.com/).

### ***Chicken BBQ Dinner***

Marshallton United Methodist Church, 1282 West Strasburg Road, will host a Chicken BBQ Dinner on Saturday, July 25. The menu includes BBQ chicken (leg/thigh), cole slaw, corn on the cob, baked beans, roll & butter, dessert, and beverage. Hours for the "Eat-in" or "Take-out" option are from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. Cost is \$10/adult and \$5/child (5 to 12 years of age). Contact the church office at (610) 696-5247 or [office@marshalltonchurch.org](mailto:office@marshalltonchurch.org) with any questions.

### ***Links for the Library***

A golf outing, sponsored by Roberts Subaru in Downingtown, will benefit the Downingtown Library. The outing will take place on Monday, July 27 at Applecross Country Club in East Brandywine. Package includes lunch, golf, on-course refreshments, reception, & barbeque dinner. Prizes will be awarded to top teams, longest drive, and closest to the pin. Roberts Subaru will also host a hole-in-one contest in which the winner will win a new Subaru. To purchase tickets via PayPal, click the link below. Payment can also be made by check and mailed to: Francine Dague 122 Wallace Ave. Downingtown, PA 19335. For more info, see: [www.downingtownlibrary.org/](http://www.downingtownlibrary.org/).

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