



## 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*

Vol. 6, No. 28

July 9, 2015

## Where and Who 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).

## Stories about “colored” students at DHS and other articles in *Downingtown Archive* in December 1920

- The following verbatim news item, related to a second “colored” teacher being hired by the **Downingtown School Board**, was published in the *Downingtown Archive* on December 9, 1920:

*“This will make the second colored instructor in our corps of teachers since the colored people were provided with a special room a few years ago. The colored people are making unusual progress both in conduct and their studies. They are more healthy, better dressed, and more obedient and polite than some of the other rooms in our system. Many of them are fighting their way into High School and into teaching positions. There were more colored students graduated from the High School in the last five years, than were graduated from 1882 (when DHS was established) down to 1915, and the way conditions are running now, the number of colored graduates is destined to increase to larger numbers from year to year.”*

- The Minquas Fire Company’s gym was the scene of a college basketball game between **Penn State and Dartmouth**, which the Nittany Lions won by a 48-34 score. Charlie Way of Downingtown, who had been named the left halfback on Walter Camp’s 1920 All-American football team, and Glenn Killinger, who later became a legendary football coach at West Chester State College, were two star football players who also played on Penn State’s basketball squad. It was an important game for Dartmouth because the Big Green wanted to avenge its football team’s 14-7 loss to Penn State two months earlier, when Killinger’s 52-yard return of an intercepted Dartmouth pass, sewed up the victory. That contest, billed at the time as “the greatest football game in the eastern part of the country,” was played before 12,000 fans in the new Beaver Field, whose wooden bleachers could only accommodate 5,000 spectators.

- The possibility of building a bigger fire house, to replace the original one on Downing Avenue in the borough, was a topic of discussion after a meeting of the **Alert Fire Co.** Some of the possibilities considered were: a three-story building, whose third floor could be used as lodge rooms, to bring in needed revenue; a building that could include a cigar store, which would be a “place to loaf in;” one floor of the building could include a community auditorium for recitals, musicals, lectures and meetings; and making the new edifice a municipal building, where the cellar or horse stalls could be used as a jail, and there would be offices for the burgess and police chief. However those ideas were just fantasies, because the company still owed \$1,000 on the Seagrave pumper bought two years earlier. And there wouldn’t be a new fire house until 1941.

- The store, which had been operated for 40 years by **Howard Simmons** at the corner of Bradford Avenue and Church Street in the Johnstontown section of the borough, was sold to **Joseph Petrella**.

- Members of the Downingtown **American Legion Post** organized a Community Christmas program that included a Christmas tree, installed just east of the Swan Hotel and decorated with electric lights illuminated by the Electric Light Co. Choral concerts were held in the evenings.

- DHS students Helen Pollock, Catherine McCool, Charles Hertel, William Perry and Isadore Bloom earned **typewriting diplomas** for accurately typing at least 50 words per minute.

## What local residents were talking about 36 years ago

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

- **Chemical Leaman Tank Lines**, the world's largest tank truck hauler, revealed that it was planning to move its headquarters from East Lancaster Avenue in the borough to a five-story building in the Pickering Creek Industrial Park in Exton. The trucking firm, which had been a major employer in Downingtown since 1925, continued to operate a terminal on Wallace Avenue in the borough. In its early years, the company also had franchises to sell Pierce-Arrow, Hudson-Exsex and Chrysler-Plymouth cars, and Westinghouse appliances.

- Downingtown was considering the possibility that the **Exton-Lionville YMCA** would take over the programs offered by the **Downingtown-Lionville Recreation Commission**. Borough officials wanted to get out of the recreation business and not compete with the YMCA. However, Uwchlan officials appeared to be reluctant for the township to bow out of recreation programming.

- Plus Discount Foods, was a new supermarket in Downingtown, on the former site of the **A & P**, which had been located on the Roberts property, across from Kerr Park on Pennsylvania Avenue. The A & P had been moved one block away, to the Downing Center.

- **Ed Spang**, a teacher, coach and administrator in the Avon-Grove School District for 14 years, was hired as a vice principal and athletic director at DHS.

- The winning team in the kickball competition at **Wagenseller Park** in Glenmoore were: Mike Painter, Fred Davison, Scott Kirkpatrick, Becca Spinks, Amy Harpel and Rosie Forrest.

- David Swindin of East Caln was elected president of the **Downingtown Lions Club**. He succeeded Horace Schanely. Other new officers were Fred Longenecker, first vice president; Jim Zaferes, second vice president; Jim Ney, third vice president; Hank Pollock, secretary; and Bill Reed, treasurer.

- The J.B. Zynn Builders team won the **Downingtown Little League** minor league crown by beating the Downingtown Bike Shop team in a three-game playoff. Down 8-6 after three innings in the third game, the Builders responded with a 23-hit attack to win 17-9. Offensive leaders for the Builders were: Owen Brown, two singles and a triple; Benny Beck, two singles and a double; and Chris Silvestri and John Gray, who each hit three singles.

- The **Downingtown 13-15 year-old girls softball all-stars** defeated Methacton in the first round of tournament play. Winning pitcher Nici DiAntonio was relieved by Julie Ippolito. Leaders on offense were DiAntonio and Colleen Lyons, who each had three hits, and Sheila Lyons, Krista Lang and Sharon Draper, who had two hits apiece.

- And the **Downingtown Little League 11 and 12-year-old girls' softball all-stars** beat Chester Valley 10-7, as Lauren Nixdorf struck out five batters. With a 6-6 tie after six innings, Tracy Davis led off a four-run extra inning surge with an inside-the-park homer.

- The **LYA all-stars** won their opener by beating Bridgeport 2-1. Kevin Beaupit, the winning hurler, struck out seven batters, and slammed a bases-loaded single to bring in John O'Malley and John Talierco. In the third round, Beaupit tossed a no-hitter, as Lionville beat Exeter 5-0.

- The **Pennypacker Country Club** team won its first three meets in Brandywine Swim League competition. In a 275-199 win over Chester Valley, team records were set by Ron Ungvary, Chuck Messa, Rob Zwack and Steve Petrie.
- Harry Perdue, who recalled that he was just a boy when the **Marshallton Grange** was established in 1908, said the Grange in West Bradford had grown to about 100 members. However, Perdue acknowledged that he believed that all the local Granges would eventually fold.
- Recent **property transfers** included: 190 Beech St., Uwchlan, \$83,250; 441 Garfield Ave., Downingtown, \$37,000; 1319 Kerwood Ln., West Bradford, \$62,759; 1 Hillcrest Dr., Caln, \$59,000; 4 Carriage Ln., Upper Uwchlan, \$70,697; 2 Sussex Pl., East Brandywine; \$74,280; and 313 Anglesey Terr., West Whiteland, \$45,400.
- New members of **Central Presbyterian Church**, Downingtown, were: Dan and Jean Beam, Bill and Jan Dilworth, Fred and Susan Glazier, Walter and Gertrude Horrocks, Judith Mulhern, Wallace and Elise Strevell, Sally Stewart, and Diane Vale.
- Members of **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were surprised when no historical documents were found when the church's 1852 cornerstone was opened. The cornerstone opening was part of a series of events, which ultimately led to the dedication of a new church.
- The **Downingtown Babe Ruth League** all-star team included: Dave Zynn, Dan Dougherty, Scott Fennely, Tom Dooley, Ron Savastio, Penn Frey, Mike Lynch, Larry Lark, Jim Knapp, Brian Pomento, Eric Presson, Mark Ciarlone, Greg Barrow, Joe Schmidt, Bill Snyder and Don Forbes. Bob Stevens was the coach, and Ken Dunn and Frank Piper were the assistant coaches.

## News items published in *The Archive* 61 years ago

Noted below are news items retrieved from the *Downingtown Archive* in July 1954.

- Bill Osborne, catcher for Downingtown's **American Legion** team, was named to the Chester-Delaware Counties all-star baseball squad.
- Frank Hughes and Mark Bareford won the doubles competition in the Downingtown Young Men's Association **tennis tournament**.
- Newly elected officers of the **Downingtown Lions Club** were James Fennelly, president; Charles Raysor, first vice president; Wallace Houston, second vice president; Mylin Plank, third vice president; Horace Schanely, secretary; and Vinton Smedley, treasurer.
- Officers elected to lead the **Downingtown Junior Woman's Club** included Mrs. Leon Williams, president; Mrs. Francis Brown, vice president; Mrs. Francis Merkt, recording secretary; Mrs. Thomas Greenleaf, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. William Keen, treasurer.
- Members of the **Downingtown Teener Baseball League** all-star team were Richard Keers, Robert Sutter, Robert Thomas, Gerald Williams, Teddy Thompson, Eddie Aumiller, Nip Westmoreland, John Bousum, William Davis, Larry Dampman, Francis Valentino, Pete Sarmiento, Robert Hamilton, Robert McClure, James DiSante and Richard Draper.
- Dorothy Kipp of Downingtown was the second runner-up in the **Miss Chester County** competition

## It's the St. John Vianney Center in East Caln



No one identified the building in the photo above. It's the Saint John Vianney Center, at 151 Woodbine Road in East Caln. Founded in 1946, the Center is the longest running behavioral health treatment facility in North America for Catholic priests and nuns. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia purchased the former home, which was part of the 175-acre J. Gibson McIlvain Estate. The estate also included the Lowebrook dairy farm, managed by Frank Smedley, and in later years, it was the site of the Tabas family's Downingtown Motor Inn complex, most of which is the Downingtown Country Club today.

## Clip Joint will be open this Sunday

Since you probably all are rested after last weekend's Fourth of July celebrations, all of you 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. In addition to interesting gossip, you can clip and paste newspaper articles for our archival collection.

*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.*

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

## Free ads for Non-Profits

### *Uwchlan's Community Day*

The 16<sup>th</sup> annual Uwchlan Township Community Day will begin at 4 PM Saturday, July 11 in Lionville Park with musical entertainment. There also will be crafters and food vendors, as well as information about local non-profits in the community tent. The festivities end with fireworks at dusk. For more details, see: [www.uwchlancommunityday.com](http://www.uwchlancommunityday.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/).

### *Unstoppable Mom*

Mary Lou King, Cochranville farmer, Farm Bureau member, TV contest winner on the Kelly and Michael Show, as well as an "unstoppable Mom," will offer a touching story as the featured speaker at the West Caln Historical Commission's meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, July 21. The public is welcome.

### *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.

### *Summer Jam*

The second of a series of three Summer Jams will be held from 5-9 PM on Friday, July 31 in the Mill Alley Pocket Park, along East Lancaster Avenue, Downingtown. The event, sponsored by Kimberton Whole Foods, Synergema and the School of Rock, will include food, crafts and music. For more info, see: [www.downingtowmainstreet.com/calendar](http://www.downingtowmainstreet.com/calendar).

### *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.