



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

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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.

More local news published in November 1979

Noted below are items retrieved from area newspapers published 36 years ago:

- The **DHS football team** pulled a major upset when it crushed undefeated Pottsgrove 28-0. Highlights of the win were Brian Westmoreland's 90-yard, second-half kickoff return for a touchdown and the 22-yard scoring pass reception by league-leading receiver Dave Kucera. Coach Chic Chiccino claimed that defensive down linemen Ed LaSorda, Jeff Gehrlein and Bob

Ricci, plus ends Art Vellatuto and Bill Pitkin, had dominated a much bigger Falcon offensive line. The following week, Downingtown edged West Chester Henderson 21-18. Ricke Stonewall ran 70 yards for a touchdown on the Whippets' first play from scrimmage, and scored two more times. Downingtown completed the 1979 campaign with a 28-19 victory over Coatesville on Thanksgiving. Although the Whippets finished second in the Ches-Mont League, Coatesville coach Al Black acknowledged that he had projected the Papertowners to be league's top squad before the season started. However, the DHS coaching staff wasn't as optimistic, because of its concern about the offensive line. That group—Ricci, Horace Sorenson, LaSorda, Carl DiFrancesco, Jeff Gehrlein and Tom Honey—“came on faster than expected,” said Chiccino. He also noted that the defense “played like maniacs all year.” Glenn Davis was the leading tackler for the season, with 85; Greg Wilson had 71; Todd McNeill got 63; and Westmoreland had 60. As a result, opponents were held to an average of 8.1 points a game, while the DHS offense piled up an average of 24.1 points. Overall, Chiccino said the 1979 team was the “most potent and powerful” group he had ever coached.

- Recent **property transfers** included: 1603 Winfield Drive, West Bradford, \$61,650; 325 Peck Road, Uwchlan, \$84,500; 121 Governor's Circle, East Brandywine, \$70,870; 10 Downing Circle, East Caln, \$129,000; 9 Rabbit Run Lane, Upper Uwchlan, \$77,793; 306 Lincoln Avenue, Downingtown, \$38,000; 18 Lyn Boulevard, Caln, \$47,550.

- Borough officials said that **opening Green Street**, between Lancaster and Pennsylvania Avenues would help businesses in the Downing Center shopping center. However, the extension of Green Street couldn't be accomplished until 1981, at the earliest, due to “red tape,” explained Vince DiEuliis, council president.

- Plans to drop the **ski clubs** in the School District's secondary schools were defeated by the school board. More than 550 of the district's students were involved in the ski clubs.

- Dawn Boyer, Julianne Wilson, Katie Wright, April Bossert and Jason Hoch were honored at the Downingtown Library for reading more than 10 books while participating in the March of Dimes **Reading Olympics**.

- GTE Sylvania Inc. announced plans to open a plant in **Pickering Creek Industrial Park** in Uwchlan. Fifteen or more employees there were going to make components for electrical switch gears, said Gene Iborg, plant manager.

- Charles Shagren, coordinator of the **DHS Work Experience** program, reported that 110 students, participated in the program during the 1978-79 school year. They worked an average of 27 hours a week, and were paid about \$3 an hour.

- **Upper Uwchlan** supervisors agreed to amend the township's zoning ordinance to allow 6-foot-high windmills to be erected in the township.

- Hervey Painter, grand noble of **Downingtown's Odd Fellows** lodge, presented 50-year service pins to John McCausland, Vinton Smedley and Allen Woodward.

- The **Young Whippets'** 75-pound team won the Termite Bowl, held in Delaware County, by defeating Prospect Park 18-0. The Downingtown team broke into the scoring column on a 22-yard pass from quarterback Billy Straub to Drew Bradley. Other scores were tallied by Tom Wolfe on a 3-yard run, and by Kevin Doran on a 50-yard pass play.

- New officers of the Luther League at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Deanna Wood, vice president; Wendy Chikla, secretary; and Dan Lammey, treasurer.

- DHS students who won regional awards for their **welding projects** were Don Leach and Jerry Ware.

- Officers of the Downingtown branch of the **Needlework Guild of America** included: Mary Pollock, president; Margie McCombs, vice president; Estelle Kauffman, secretary; and Mary Jane Patrizio, treasurer.
- New officers of the **Downingtown School District's Secretaries Association** were Naomi Dunn, president; Joan Fink, vice president; Betty Ahern, secretary; and Loretta Savastio, treasurer.
- **David McNamara**, a member of Boy Scout Troop 23, received the Uwchlan Township Citizen Award for spearheading a tree-trimming and grounds clean-up of a park in the township, which was his Eagle Scout project.

Bondsville School students in 1923-24



Matt McCausland sent us this neat photo of the students who attended the Bondsville School in the 1923-24 school year in East Brandywine Township. According to Barbara Paul's *A History of Brandywine Township*, the one-room school was built ca. 1872 for \$1,400. Students from the Bondsville-Fisherville area attended the school until the early 1940s. The building, which also was used as a Sunday School, has been converted into a residence. Those pictured in the photo above were, left to right: first row, Martha Mitchell, Ethel Harple, Marie Osborne, Walter Hadfield, James Powell, Marple Guie, Norman Osborne, Warren Guie, Earl Parrott, Guy Slider, Elwood Davis, Marvin Zynn; second row, Helen Guie, Pearl Zynn, Earl Hart, Hamilton Mitchell, Alfred Zynn, John Hadfield, George Zynn, Howard Hart, Elmer Harple, George Powell, Adda Page, Melva Zynn, Catherine Kennedy, Frida Guie, Viola Mendenhall (teacher), Alberta Grayhill, Lydia Nailen, Mary Powell, Clara Guie

Please help the Historical Society by supporting our Restaurant Raffle

The Historical Society's third annual "A Taste of Chester County" restaurant raffle is bigger and better than ever, because those who buy a ticket will have an opportunity to win \$1,400 worth of dinners at seven great, local restaurants.

Proceeds from the raffle will enable the Historical Society to continue its efforts to repair the stone walls of Ashbridge House, our 306-year-old headquarters on Route 30 in the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center in East Caln Township. That means your continued support will enable us to continue re-pointing the house's leaking, exterior walls.

Those who generously supported last year's raffle allowed us to replace the crumbling mortar that bonded the stonework on the east side walls of the house, plus the exterior of the summer kitchen, which was built in the mid-19th Century.

The raffle winner will receive seven \$200 vouchers, with a total value of \$1,400, for meals at these seven area restaurants: Amani's BYOB, St. Anthony's Restaurant, The General Warren Inn, The Kimberton Inn, The Orangery, The Bordley House Grille and The Downingtown Country Club. Vouchers are good for one seating at each restaurant. Exclusions may apply.

Raffle tickets are \$50 each. They can be purchased at Ashbridge House, which is next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, from 1-4 PM on Sundays. You also can order them by calling the Historical Society, 610-269-1709; Francine Dague, 610-306-2904; or by sending an email to: Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org. The winning ticket will be drawn at 3 PM on Sunday, November 15. You don't have to be at the drawing to win. For more info on the raffle, including a disclaimer, go to: www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org.

What local people were talking about 61 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in The Archive in the fall of 1954:

- Howie Bedell, who went on to be an outstanding major league pitcher, led the Pottstown football team in a 33-12 victory over DHS on Thanksgiving.
- Downingtown quarterback Johnny Chilla and center Tony Doto were named to the All-Chest-Mont League first team. Paul McComsey, end, and Tom Woodward, fullback, were selected for the second team. Earning honorable mention were Tom Lee, guard, and Norris Miller, running back.
- The Hotel Crossroads, formerly known as DiSantis's Bar and Grill, opened on West Lancaster Avenue in the borough.
- Philomena DiPietro, Christine DiSantis, Patricia Sarmiento and Mrs. Albert Sarmiento were new members of the Ladies Auxiliary of St. Anthony's Lodge in Downingtown.
- Alice Smedley was named the Harvest Queen at the DHS Farm Show. Her court included Barbara Ford, Phoebe Nelson, Connie Osborn and Mary Ann Clayton.
- Officers of the Wallace Township Mothers Club were Rose Edelen president; Velma Moore, vice president; Margaret Miles, treasurer; and Jeanne Aaron, secretary.
- John Bousum received a trophy for having the highest batting average (.354) at the Downingtown Teener Baseball League's banquet.

Downingtown's social scene in the winter of 1923

Noted below are two interesting news items retrieved from issues of *The Downingtown Archive* in January and February of 1923:

- As many as 500 spectators were expected to come to see the boxing and wrestling matches on the “**Athletic Night**” to be held at the Minquas Fire Co. gymnasium. One of the special attractions were to be the “high class” prizefighters that Lewis Bailey, a Downingtown native, was going to bring out from Philadelphia, where he was a big time boxing promoter. And several local wrestlers were going to put on a “lively” exhibition before the prizefighters from Philly climbed into the ring. However, Downingtown Burgess Harry Reed refused to issue a permit for the event because he was concerned about the “morals and general interest” of the program. But when the fire company decided to drop the boxing bouts, Reed was willing to grant a permit. Although the exhibition attracted only 100 men, the show was considered a success. One of the highlights was the wrestling match between Norman Bird of the Downingtown Manufacturing Co. and Dick Wells from the Downingtown Paper Co. Wells won the match. Another crowd-pleaser was when Wells returned to the ring to wrestle Andy Milanese, who benefited from his 40-pound weight advantage and won. Also, the Minquas team beat the squad from the Downingtown Box Shop in a tug-of-war competition.

- The Minquas was more than just a haven for brawny brawlers during the winter of 1923. The firehouse gym had been gorgeously decorated when it was the scene of a **masquerade ball**, conducted by the Downingtown branch of the Chester County Hospital Auxiliary. A \$1 ticket entitled guests with access to the fruit punch bowl, and coffee and sandwiches, served by a French maid, were available for a minimal cost. The fundraiser, which opened with a grand march, included a minuet gracefully danced by four couples who wore colonial attire.

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.

Clip Joint will be open at Ashbridge House on Nov. 1 and Nov. 10

Our next clipping and pasting session will be held from 1-4 PM on Sunday, November 1 at Ashbridge House, our 306-year-old headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, next to the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. (Don't forget to reset your clocks because Daylight Savings Time will end that Sunday.) And we'll have our monthly evening Clip Joint session from 6:30-8:30 PM on Tuesday, November 10 at Ashbridge House, as well. You're all welcome to join us at either session, which involve lots of fun as well as local gossip (whoops, we meant history). And you can arrive and leave either session at your convenience.

It was the Downingtown Motor Inn on Route 30 in East Caln



Ben Bruton is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the site in the postcard artwork above as the Downingtown Motor Inn on Route 30 in East Caln, which opened in the summer of 1961. In addition to 100 guest-rooms, the 100- acre resort motel complex included convention and banquet facilities that could accommodate as many as 2,500 people, two swimming pools, and the 1896 Restaurant and cocktail lounge. The Motor Inn's owners were Samuel Tabas, founder; Charles Tabas, chairman; and Daniel Tabas, president. After an 18-hole golf course was built, it was known as the Downingtown Inn and Golf Club. In 1983, the Tabas family sold its holdings in the Inn to the Ramada Corp. in exchange for stock. The Inn was demolished in 1994, and a year later the 750,000 square foot Brandywine Square shopping center opened on the site.

Editor's Note: Since many of you Hist-O-Gram subscribers worked at the Motor Inn when you were younger (There were 3,500 employees during the summer peak season in the mid-1970s), we'd love to publish some of your interesting recollections of what it was like working there. Please send your recollections to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

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 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. Also, any printed materials related to the Lionville Youth Association, 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@downingtownareahistoricalociety.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

Dash of the Living Dead

At 2 PM Saturday, Oct. 31 the **Dash of the Living Dead** road race down will be conducted on Pennsylvania Ave. to Aston Ave., through Kerr Park, and continue on the path into Johnstown, then back to Kerr Park for the finish. The race, which is sponsored by Downingtown Main Street Association, will occur prior to Downingtown's Halloween Parade. Pre-Registration is \$35 (\$40 day of). The event includes Un-Dead After Party with a great spread from Downingtown restaurants, t-shirt, entertainment, and beer from Victory Brewing Co. Zombified runners will earn an extra beer for their extra effort. Get more details and register for the event, see: http://www.runtheday.com/registration/race_info/34099.

Halloween Parade

Downingtown's Halloween Parade will be held at 3 PM Saturday, October 31. The parade route will be along Pennsylvania Avenue between Beaver Creek Elementary School at 601 W. Pennsylvania Ave., heading east to the Kerr Park Gazebo. Participants in the parade must be at the staging area by 2:30 PM. Costumed participants will stage at Beaver Creek Elementary School and floats will stage at Grace Church at the corner of Lloyd and Pennsylvania Avenues. All participants will need a number in order to be judged. For more details, see: <http://downingtowntown.org/Documents/Temporary%20Documents/DTOWN%20HALLOWEEN%202015.pdf>.

This Run's Personal

The second annual Team CMMD "This Run's Personal" 5K Run and 1 Mile Walk will be held Saturday, Nov. 7 at DHS West. To register and for more details, see: <https://secondwind.webconnex.com/CMMD>.

Vendor & Craft Show

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Minquas Fire Co. will have a vendor and craft show from 11 AM to 3 PM on Saturday, Nov. 14 at the firehouse, 141 Wallace Ave., Downingtown.

Ghosts of St. Anthony's Lodge

The Downingtown Area Paranormal Investigators will make a presentation at the Alert Fire Co., 122 W. Pennsylvania Ave., Downingtown, from 7-8:30 PM Sunday, Nov. 15, on what they found in an investigation at St. Anthony's Lodge, Downingtown. Proceeds from \$5 donation will go to the fire company.

Sea-going Cowboys

Mark Nestleroth, historian, B&B host, farmer and Heifer Int'l advocate, will talk about sea-going cowboys during World War II, when the West Caln Historical Society meets at 7 PM on Tuesday, November 17 at the township building, 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. The meeting is free and open to the public.

Candlelight Dinner

Downingtown Borough's Historic Commission is holding a Log House Candlelight Dinner for 4 raffle to benefit the placement of the Minquas Cannon at the Veterans Memorial in Kerr Park. The dinner will be catered by St. Anthony's Restaurant. Ticket cost: \$50. To purchase tickets, please contact Val at Borough Hall via: Vdilugi@downingtowntown.org or 610-269-0344, ext. 200.

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.

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.

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.