



Downingtown Area Historical Society
Hist-O-Gram

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

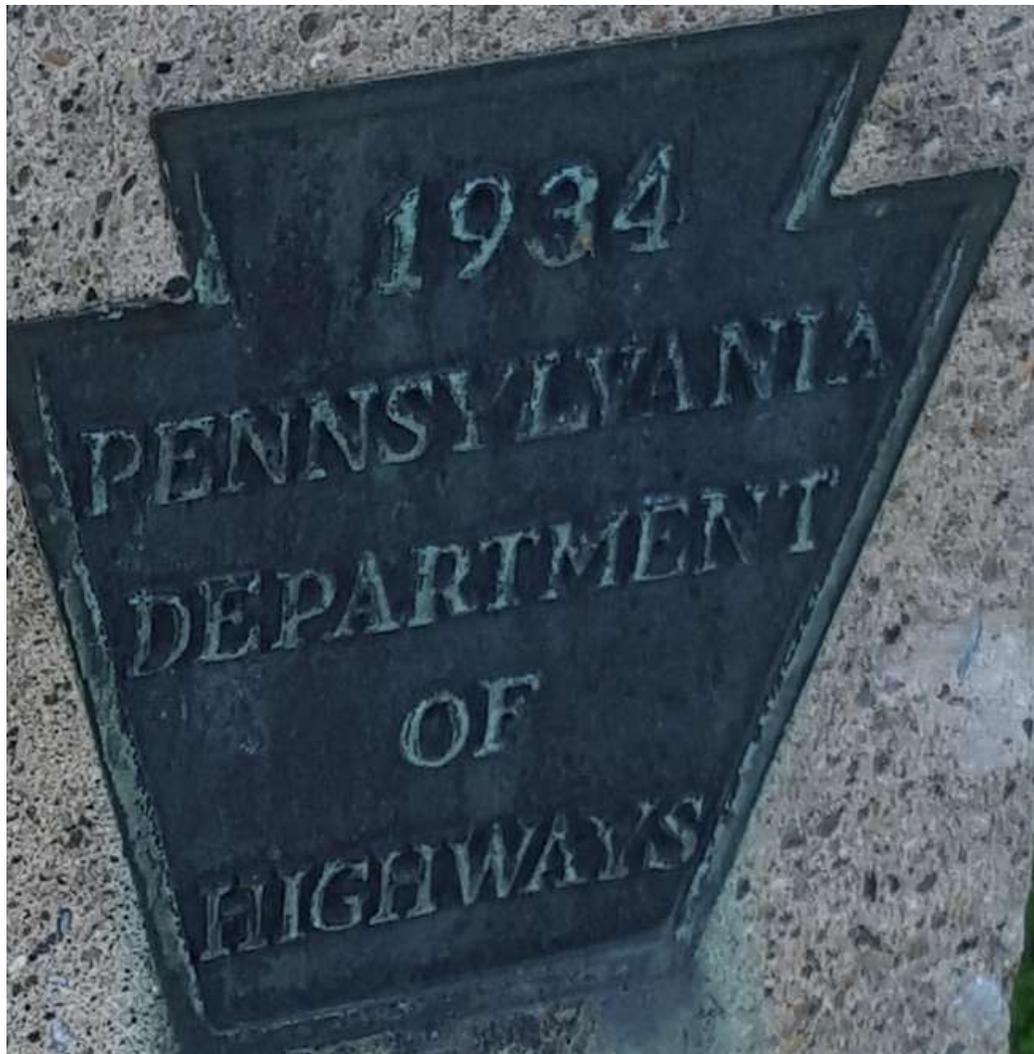
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The past is never done. It is not even past--William Faulkner

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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.

Local news items in the latter part of September 1979

Noted below are news items, originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* 36 years:

- The **Downingtown School Board** agreed to study the possibility of changing how many representatives each municipality should have on the board. When the school district was consolidated in the 1960s, Downingtown borough had two seats on the board because it was the largest municipality in the jointure back then. However, two townships—Uwchlan and West Bradford—had grown in the ensuing years to the point that they now had larger populations than the borough. And Norma Smith, school director representing Uwchlan Township, and Andrew Dinniman, East Caln's representative on the board, said they planned to resign from the school board because they both were buying homes outside of the school district.

- Downingtown's **Good Neighbor Day Committee** contributed \$1,800 each to three area ambulance or rescue squads—Minquas, Uwchlan and East Brandywine. The contributions were proceeds from the Run For Life road race on July Fourth.

- Ron Smalley, the fire company's engineer who had kept the aerial unit in top shape, and fire chief Dr. Brent Follweiler were honored at the **East Brandywine Fire Co.'s** 17th annual banquet. Also, the Ladies Auxiliary presented a \$9,000 check to the fire company at the banquet. Officers of the fire company were John Piersol, president; John Neff, vice president; Ron Rambo, recording secretary; Scott Piersol, membership secretary; Lewis Laird, treasurer; Howard Laird, chaplain; and trustees Walter Crandall, Jay Lammey and Charles Thomas. Auxiliary officers were Corrine O'Neill, president; Kathryn Rambo, vice president; Dorothy Piersol, treasurer; Myra Thomas, secretary; Judi O'Neill, chaplain; trustees Judy Neff and Hazel Laird; and Beverly McCarty, membership chairman.

- The Sunday School staff at **Windsor Baptist Church** in Eagle included Suzanne Murdoch, Bev Cura, Sue Nesspor, Bev Runylen, Janet Supplee, Judy Shaw, Adell Anthony, Esther Popjoy, Chuck and Sarah Bixler, Sandy Styer, Carolyn Miller, Nancy Pyle, Bill Butler, John Meissner, Ed and Elsa Popjoy, Charles Popjoy, Janna Cracas, Joe Cura and Ed Pyle.

- Ricky Stonewall scored three TDs, as the **DHS football team** trounced Pottstown 35-0. Linebackers Todd McNeill and Glenn Davis led the defense with 11 and 10 tackles, respectively. And fleet-footed Stonewall racked up 251 yards on 25 carries the following week, as the Whippets beat Phoenixville 21-13 in a come-from-behind battle. Offensive lineman Horace Sorenson and defensive tackle Bob Ricci were cited by coach Chic Chicchino for their outstanding play.

- Honored at the **Downingtown-Lionville Babe Ruth League's** annual banquet were Bob Stevens, all-star team manager; Dan Dougherty, the National league's most valuable player; Michael Lynch, the American League's MVP; and Don Forbes, who won the Philip Burns memorial trophy.

- Recent **property transfers** included: 209 Karen Drive, Downingtown, \$48,200; 128 Lambeth Court, East Brandywine, \$58,000; 1409 Price Lane, West Bradford, \$49,900; 1200 Black Horse Hill, Caln, \$40,000; 216 Concord Avenue, Uwchlan, \$73,000; 201 Township Line Road, West Whiteland, \$74,000; 17 Indian Run Road, Wallace, \$53,000.

- DHS history teacher **Alan Petty** was writing a history of the high school over the past 50 years. Much of the research was being done by these students: Diane Davis, Mary Dougherty, Jeanne Minahan, Rich Altringer, Jane Thompson and Martha Wagoner.

- DHS seniors who were named semi-finalists in the **National Merit Scholarship** program were Larry Williams, Scott Kohler, Lori Schwabenbauer, Arch Robison and John Armstrong.

- Rob Sanders set a new course record (15:29) as he came in first in a win over Coatesville for the **DHS boys' cross-country squad**. And Kristin Brandl, Melanie Wix, Lee McIntyre, Megan McAuliffe and Ann Borland scored points, as the **Whippet girls' team** beat the Red Raiders.

- Coach Paul Hurley's **DHS soccer team** beat Marple-Newtown 3-2 and Conestoga 4-2 in non-league matches, but the Whippet kickers lost 2-0 to West Chester East. The victory over Marple was a struggle because DHS had to rally twice for the win, as Mike Pastino and Vince Forgiore each scored. Hurley cited the play of Jeff Davis, John McClung, Bob Trauger and Kurt Perrson in the Conestoga match.

- After losing a match to Pottsgrove by a 6-1 margin, the **DHS girls' tennis team** rebounded with a 4-3 victory over West Chester East. Points were tallied by Downingtown singles players Judy O'Connell, Chris Lefko and Pam Smith and the doubles team of Lisa Diehl and Sue Sabellico.

- Following a 4-1 loss to West Chester Henderson, the **Whippet field hockey team** came back and beat Boyertown 2-0. Coach Sally Anderson praised Doreen Warihay and Ann Hayes for their efforts against the Bears.

Here are more reasons why 1921 was significant in the borough's history

We noted in recent Hist-O-Grams that 1921 was important in Downingtown's history because steps were taken to consolidate the borough's two Post Office. Here are several more news items, retrieved from editions of the *Downingtown Archive*, published in the summer of 1921, which illustrate that there was a lot going on in the borough at that time.

- The Downingtown Business Men's Club agreed to underwrite the cost of **building a second bridge across the Brandywine**, in addition to the bridge on Lancaster Avenue. Since the project would include the acquisition of privately owned property, the Business Men's Club agreed to cover those costs as well. In addition to building a bridge at Pennsylvania Avenue, the project included an eastern extension of Pennsylvania Avenue beyond Manor Avenue. The new bridge and eastward extension of Pennsylvania Avenue were two projects which the private Town Planning Committee claimed should be pursued immediately because of traffic congestion on Lancaster Avenue. However, the Committee opposed the creation of a public park along the Brandywine, adjacent to Wallace Avenue, because it would inhibit further industrial development in that area.

- The **Downingtown School Board** voted to replace the grade school in the east end of the borough with a new, 14-room elementary school on East Lancaster Avenue. However, borrowing money to construct the new building would have to be approved by borough residents in a referendum in the November general election. Meanwhile, the board agreed to purchase two portable structures to temporarily meet the immediate classroom needs of the old, overcrowded East Ward School.

- At the DHS commencement, Esther Eppheimer won a medal, presented by **Downingtown's Charles F. Moran American Legion Post**, for writing the best essay on the subject of Americanization. (*Editor's note: The following year, the local post's School Medal program was adopted by the American Legion as a national program to foster the ideals of*

Americanism. And today, nearly 100 years later, the School Medals continue to be presented by local American Legion posts to students across America).

- A **Twilight Baseball League** was established in the borough. The league's teams included the Moose, the Red Men, the Downingtown Manufacturing Co. and the Field team. Games were played on the high school diamond on West Lancaster Avenue. After several weeks of play, it was ruled that each team's roster was limited to 15 players and players could only compete for one team. Games typically attracted 400-500 spectators, when the borough's population was only 4,500.

Clip joint to be open this Sunday; evening sessions to begin Sept. 15

If you want to rest up in preparation for a wild Labor Day, we suggest that you consider coming to the Historical Society's restful, but gossip-filled Clip Joint session, which will be conducted from 1-4 PM on Sunday, September 6.

And if your social or work obligations have made it impossible for you to come to the Clip Joint sessions on the first Sunday each month, we will start having evening sessions. The first one will be from 6:30-8:30 PM on Tuesday, September 15 at Ashbridge House, our 306-year-old headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. You're welcome to arrive and leave either session at your convenience.

Our Wish List

The items listed below in our Wish List notes the materials the Historical Society especially needs to reach its archival goals. Obviously, we'd also love to have ANY artifact or printed material, which has a Downingtown connection, as well:

- 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 team, and the Downingtown Girls' Softball League.
- Any printed materials related to the Lionville Youth Association, West Bradford Youth Association, or the East Brandywine Youth Athletics.
- A digital SLR camera (one that's more than a basic point-and-shooter) which we'll use to photograph donated artifacts in our archival collection. That means we'll need one that's capable of taking pictures, which include tiny details.

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

Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org. And if you wish to bring ANY item that has a Downingtown connection to Ashbridge House, our 306-year-old headquarters on Route 30, next to the Chick-Fil-A restaurant, we're open 1-4 PM every Sunday afternoon.

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.

It's the original Messiah Lutheran Church



Jeff Stevens is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the original Messiah Lutheran Church on West Lancaster Avenue in Downingtown.

Constructed in 1860 for the First Presbyterian Church of Downingtown, which disbanded during the Civil War; subsequently, the building was sold to the Downingtown National Bank, which used it as a bank facility. In 1870, the building was sold to Thomas Binns, who turned it into a community center known as Central Hall, where itinerant entertainment, concerts, wrestling matches, public meetings, and high school commencements were held. In 1883, some 20 people, who subsequently formed the nucleus of the forthcoming First Baptist Church, held religious services there. In 1893, the site was sold to the Christian Temperance League of Downingtown for \$2,300.

A 1902, survey determined that there were enough Lutherans living in Downingtown to warrant establishing a Lutheran Church. Many of them worked for the Cohansey Glass Manufacturing

Co., which was located on Chestnut Street, at a site later occupied for decades by Pepperidge Farm. The first preparatory meeting before the church was organized in 1902, was held in Central Presbyterian Church. Shortly thereafter, the newly organized congregation bought the former Central Hall for \$2,105, and used it as its church until 1986, when a new church was constructed on a site, partially occupied by a strip mall, next to the original church, which was razed later that year.

(Information noted above was gleaned from church histories authored by Jane Davidson and Elaine Burgess.)

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.

Free ads for Non-Profits

Clam Bake

The Lionville Fire Co. will have its annual clam bake from 1-7 PM on Sunday, Sept. 6 at the firehouse on Village Avenue. Tickets (\$40 for adults) can be ordered via: www.ticketriver.com/event/15728. Food includes 3 dozen clams, plus corn on the cob, hamburgers, hot dogs, deli salads, clam chowder and drinks including beer. Tickets for kids between 3 and 12 are \$20; they don't include clams or beer. Kids under 3 are free. Activities include live entertainment and a horseshoe tournament.

Join the Girl Scouts

An open registration for Downingtown Girl Scouts will be held from 7-8:30 PM on Thursday, September 10, at Downingtown United Methodist Church. Registration to join the Girl Scouts is open to girls between 5 and 17 years old, or in grades K-12. Adult volunteers are also needed, and those interested can obtain information that evening. For more info, see: GirlScoutsDtown@gmail.com.

Teri's Run

The 14th annual Teri's Run and Twilight Walk will be on Friday, September **11**, beginning on Green Street in Downingtown. The event is dedicated to the memory of Downingtown's Teri Valocchi and all those who have lost their battle with Scleroderma. This year's Run will also raise funds for research and raise awareness of Chiari Malformation, Syringomyelia. The Run donated \$15,000 last year to the National Scleroderma Foundation, and it has raised over \$125,000 over the past 13 years for research into the cause and someday a cure for this debilitating disease. The Kids' Run begins at 6:30 PM, followed at 7 PM by the 5K Run and the 1.5 mile Walk. The deadline for pre-registering (\$25) is August 28. Registration cost after August 28 is \$30 for adults, \$20 for students 18 and under, and \$5 for the Kids Run. For more info, see: www.terisrun.org/

Caln Community Day

The Caln Township and the Caln Township Business Group are co-sponsors of the 9th annual Caln Community Day, from 11 AM to 3 PM on Saturday, Sept. 12 at the Caln Municipal Park in Thorndale. The event will include live entertainment, food, a children's area, a flea market sponsored by the Thorndale United Methodist Church and much more. New this year will be a Caln Police vs Thorndale Fire Department softball game at 2 PM.

Parking Lot Sale

Boy Scout Troop 216, Lionville, will hold a parking lot sale from 9 AM to 2 PM on Saturday, Sept. 12 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 104 South Village Ave., Lionville. For more info and to reserve a space, contact Karen Momot via kaz.creations@yahoo.com.

Drug Take Back Day

The Downingtown Police Department will again partner with the U. S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to participate in a Prescription Drug Take-Back Day from 10 AM to 2 PM on Saturday, Sept. 12. This is an opportunity for the public to safely discard unwanted, unused and expired prescription drugs. Bring your medications for disposal to Downingtown Borough Hall Annex Building at 4 W. Lancaster Avenue. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. For more information, call 610-269-0344, ext. 200.

MultiSport Festival

An all-day Downingtown MultiSport Festival will be held on Sunday, Sept. 13 at Kerr Park, Downingtown, beginning at 9 AM. Events include; a kids' fun run, a group bike ride, and an adventure challenge, plus CrossFit and skateboarding tournaments and tae kwon do, roller derby and tennis demonstrations. Proceeds go to Downingtown Library, Downingtown Skate Park, the Team CMMMD Foundation, and the Chester County Hero Fund. For more info, see: <http://downingtownmultisportfestival.org/>.

Amish Quilts

Janneken Smucker, WCU History professor and author, will give a talk on "Amish Quilts: Crafting an American Icon," when the West Caln Historical Society's meets at 7 PM on Tuesday, September 15 at the township building, 721 W. Kings Highway in Wagontown. The meetings are free and open to the public.

Field Day

Downingtown's Parks and Recreation Commission will sponsor a Field Day from 10 AM to 1 PM on Saturday, September 19 at Kerr Park. Activities include: games for kids, prizes, raffles (prizes from Phila. Eagles and Flyers, Downingtown Playdium, Longwood Gardens) and a DJ. If you can be a volunteer that day, send an email to: downingtownparksandrec@gmail.com.

Flea Market

The Eagle/Glenmoore Lions Club will have a flea market and craft sale from 8 AM to 1 PM on Saturday, September 19 at the corner of Park Road and Little Conestoga Road in Eagle. Rain date is 9 AM to 2 PM on Sunday, September 20. Those who wish to have a space should contact: rebecca.nash@verizon.net.

Art & Craft Show

Downingtown Borough's Historic Commission will hold its annual Log House Art & Craft Show on Saturday, September 19, from noon – 4 PM at Kerr Park. Spaces are \$25. Vendor applications and information can be found on the website: www.downingtown.org/LogHouseArtCraftShow.html

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. Winner will win a Dinner for 4 people at the Log House in early November. The dinner will be catered by St. Anthony's Restaurant. Ticket cost: \$50. To purchase tickets, please contact Val at Borough Hall via: Vdilugi@downingtown.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: JPC Cheryl@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.