



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. 7, No. 15

April 14, 2016

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.

News items published 36 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* in the latter part of April 1980:

- A special showing of the science fiction film “**The Blob**” was put on at the Chester Springs Library by Vince Spangler of Chester Springs, who had been the chief set electrician, when the movie was made in the area during the summer of 1957. Much of the film’s interior scenes were shot in Good News Productions’ buildings now occupied by the **Historic Yellow Springs Foundation** in West Pikeland. The essence of the film was that 26-year-old Steve McQueen, in his first starring movie role, and his girlfriend in the movie were trying to warn people in their hometown about a monster, composed of a viscous silicone substance, enhanced with red gasoline dye so it would show better in the technicolor movie.

Scenes in the movie also were at Phoenixville’s Colonial Theatre, at a Royersford supermarket and at the former Spring City High School. The climactic scene was shot at the Downingtown Diner, at Downing and West Lancaster Avenues in the borough. That’s when the monster attacked the diner while most of the lead characters were trapped inside. The teenagers reached safety when the monster was sprayed with carbon dioxide.

The only local person who had a speaking role was Rev Thomas Ogden, pastor of **Downingtown Methodist Church**. Local firefighters who had non-speaking parts in the scene at Royersford supermarket were: Bob Pollock, Elmer Schrupf, Al Peterman, Richard Keers, Harry Flinn, Gerry Williams, Bill Dawson, Paul Backenstose and George Dowlin. Sonny Sciairretta drove the **Alert Fire Co.’s** Seagraves fire truck in that scene. Locals who were in the crowd outside the diner, with their hotrods, were Richard Cabott, John Walker (later DHS basketball coach) and Lou Rambo.

- Residents of the Rhondda Homeowners Association in **Uwchlan Township** wanted the **Downingtown School District** to reconsider its policy against school buses entering residential developments to pick up students. Parents of 51 children in that development expressed concern for the safety of their youngsters while they waited for a school bus to pick them up at the intersection of Ship and Llandoverly Roads. But Uwchlan Township officials didn’t want to open up a cul-de-sac at the other end of Llandoverly Road because it would create another hazardous intersection. Also, when the parents suggested that school district should hire a crossing guard to supervise the students while they waited for a bus, a school director said that was the parents’ responsibility.

- New members of the **Downingtown Chamber of Commerce** were Eagle Tavern, Donnolo’s Flowers and Thrift Drug. Anniversaries were celebrated by Romig Electronics, 35th; Albert Burkhardt, 20th; Downingtown Wallpaper and Paint, 18th; Southeast National Bank, 10th.

- Specials at **Giunta’s Downingtown Meat Market** in the 4 Js Mini-Mall at 123 E. Lancaster Ave., included boneless strip steaks and whole filets for \$4.29 per pound.

- Mrs. Lyle Shoemaker was elected president of the **Uwchlan Conservation Trust**. Other officers were Hervey Painter, vice president; Robert Rodkey, secretary; Lacy Lackey, treasurer; and Mrs. Joseph Hemphill, corresponding secretary. Mrs. Elmer Hartwick and John Young were directors.

- Elected as officers of the **Woman’s Community Club of Uwchlan** were Mrs. Richard Newman, president; Mrs. James Borrer, first vice president; Mrs. Walter Uhler, second vice president; Mrs. Robert Schломann, recording secretary; Mrs. Winfield Howe, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Lewis Frame, treasurer.

- New members of the **Downingtown Senior Center** were Beulah Compton, Audrey Thompson, Leota Stiper, Flora Stevenson, Ernestine Brown, Elizabeth Heisey, Dorothy Hogan and Ruth Beswick.
- Sixth graders at **Old East Ward School** sold sets of spices as a fundraiser to help defray the costs of their annual camping trip. As the top seller, Maurice Smith won a free camping trip.
- Patty Forbes and Matt Mingione received the Outstanding Senior Awards at the **DHS Alumni Association's** 93rd annual banquet.
- The **DHS track team** won the Chester County Relay Championship. Among the six relay teams that won an event were the 440 relay unit, comprised of Brent Sweeney, Reese Hunt, Ted Robinson and Rick Stonewall.
- After the **DHS baseball squad** suffered an 18-4 loss to West Chester Henderson in its Ches-Mont opener, Coach Carl Houpp's Whippets bounced back with a 5-2 win over Great Valley. Butch Williams went three-for-three, and Ed Novak enjoyed a two-for-two day, which included a homer and four RBIs. Winning pitcher Bob Trauger, who went the distance, also got two hits.
- The **DHS softball team** improved its record to 5-1, as it won four games in one week. The Whippets beat Phoenixville 3-1, despite collecting only three hits. Winning pitcher Dianne Repp, gave up only one hit and recorded six strikeouts. Then pitcher Judy O'Connor also gave up only one hit, as Downingtown blanked Great Valley 8-0. Repp, Dianne Stoner and Sherri Clayton each stroked two hits. Coach John Davidsson's squad closed out the week by winning a doubleheader over Octorara. Jenny Gerlach got four hits in the 8-1 opener. In the nightcap, winning hurler Laura Kulkis gave up only two hits and struck out nine. Leading the DHS offense were Repp, with three hits, and Melinda Horne and Melanie Massimini, each contributing two hits and two RBIs.
- Coach Sally Anderson's **DHS girls' lacrosse team** rallied to beat Pottstown 9-7. The Whippet offense was led by Barrie Benjamin, who tallied three goals, and Sue Widen, who scored two.
- After the **DHS boys' tennis squad** lost to Phoenixville by a 6-1 margin, the Whippets rallied to beat O.J. Roberts 6-1. Singles winners in that match were Frank Englund, Chris Blank and Dave Hammer. Downingtown also whitewashed Pottstown 7-0. Whippet doubles teams that won included Tom Lambert and Mike Biddle, Alvin Walton and Bill Jemison, and Lance Landgraf and Frank Pechin.
- Recent **property transfers** included: 126 Baker Drive, Uwchlan, \$72,500; 417 Bianca Circle, Caln, \$46,500; 331 Norwood Road, East Caln, \$55,500; 13 La Via Vida, East Brandywine, \$82,000; 100 Lloyd Avenue, Downingtown, \$66,500.
- Two **Downingtown Junior High students** won awards for the wood racers they designed for the American Industrial Arts Association competition, which involved students from 22 states. They were Shane Rodgers, first place, and John Sciandra third place.

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 sports teams or 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.

It was Gindy's office at Boot Road and Chestnut Street



Steve Marcocci is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above as the rear of the building that once housed the office of the Gindy Manufacturing Co., at the southeast corner of Chestnut Street and Boot Road in Downingtown. The Gindy plant was attached to the rear of the office building. The site is currently occupied by Sunbelt Rentals.

Founded by David Ginsburg in 1940, Gindy's 250 employees were producing enclosed aluminum truck trailers at the East Caln site by 1965. In January 1966, however, a fire destroyed the plant, and the operation was moved to Eagle. Budd Co. acquired Gindy in 1975. And in 1985, Budd sold the business to Thayer Trailer Co., which closed in 1987.

The photo was provided by Ron Tipton, who took the picture in 1955. Back then, Ron and his family lived on the second floor of the Gindy office building. Most interesting is the fact that the left side of the photo shows that trees once lined both sides of Boot Road.

What locals were talking about 72 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* in the spring and summer of 1944:

- **Monthly tuition rates** for the 1944-45 school year, which were paid by township school boards to the Downingtown School District for each student who lived outside borough, were: \$6.50 for elementary school pupils and \$10.25 for secondary school students.
- Sixty-four seniors received diplomas at the **high school's 62nd commencement**. Faculty award winners were: Mary Mingione, commercial; Paul Shuman, science; Howard Bicking, mathematics; Miriam Popjoy, languages (French and Latin); Miles Acker, social studies; William McNeal, vocational; and William Meoli and Elvin Welch, art.
- James McGowan was appointed to the Price Panel of the **Downingtown War Price and Rationing Board**, to supervise the administration of used car ceiling price regulations.
- The **Ivoryne Gum Co.** was seeking girls to wrap gum packs at its production facility at 143 West Lancaster Ave., Downingtown.
- **DHS football coach** Vince Daher reportedly signed a contract to be a lineman for the Philadelphia Eagles, whose ranks were depleted by many players serving in the military. However, Daher was still at the helm in August when some 30 Whippets went to the pre-season football camp for a week near Pughtown. Also, the DHS junior varsity and the Junior High School varsity football teams were scheduled to play several away games for the first time since gas rationing made that impossible during the WW II era.
- **Downingtown's Memorial Day Committee**—comprised of Leo Hamilton, Warren Yocum, Joseph Miller, Robert Dougherty and Paul Dague—made the following announcement: “Out of deference to the times and in keeping with the solemnity which should attend occasions such as this in wartime, the usual parade will be dispensed with this year.” However, the traditional services at St. Joseph's and Northwood cemeteries and the tossing of a wreath into the Brandywine in honor of those Navy personnel who died at sea were continued.
- The store in **Guthriesville**, which had been recently bought and remodeled by Earl Bryant, was destroyed by a fire, despite the efforts of six fire companies.
- An **Honor Roll**, in recognition of the 66 Wallace Township residents and members of the Glen Moore Fire Co. who were serving in the military during WW II, was dedicated in ceremonies at the fire hall. Mrs. Granville McCardell and Mrs. Marvin Furlong, who had sons in the military, assisted in the unveiling. Members of the Honor Roll committee included Rev. David Stewart, Ernest Philips, John Galt, Walter Davis, George Crosby and Walter Jones.
- Certificates were presented to these members of the **Safety Patrol** at West Ward School: Donald Greenleaf, captain; and Lucy DiCarlo, assistant captain; Rose Formica, Marie Doto, Eugene Davis, Leo Ciarlone, Frank DiPietro, Preston Miles, Anthony Mento, Beulah Wilkerson, Francis Cozzone and Emanuel Rodri.
- Frank Celii and Jane Fennelly were the King and Queen of the **DHS Junior Prom**.
- Those who bought an extra war bond received a pass to see “Pin Up Girl,” starring Betty Grable, at the **Roosevelt Theatre** on Brandywine Avenue.
- Members of the **Downingtown Lions Club** elected Nelson Dennis president. Also elected were Richard Burroughs, first vice president; Dr. Harlan Sharp, second vice president; Charles Emery, third vice president; Ralph Kinsey, secretary; Evans Miller, financial secretary; Joseph Matthewson, treasurer; Thomas Deets, tail twister; Fred Hill, lion tamer; and Arthur Lowry and Karl Snell, directors.

Vintage Ad of the Week:

A NEW COMMUNITY OF

SPLIT LEVEL HOMES

WITH A MINIMUM OF ½ ACRE LANDSCAPED LOT.

WELCOME TO

Marshallton Farms

ONLY
\$14,990.
10% Down

**Look at These
Exciting
Features:**

- 3 BEDROOMS
- DINING ROOM
- 1½ BATHS
- LIVING ROOM
- KITCHEN
(with GE Oven)
- FINISHED RECREATION ROOM
- FINISHED UTILITY ROOM
- HOT WATER BASEBOARD HEAT
- SLIDING PATIO DOOR



**ONLY 4 MILES WEST OF WEST CHESTER
ON RT. 162, FOLLOW THE SIGNS !!**

**THE
BUY OF A
LIFETIME!**

SEE IT NOW!
SAMPLE OPEN
SUNDAY 1 P.M.
TILL DARK

MARSHALLTON FARMS, INC.

This ad was published in the February 24, 1964 edition of the *Daily Local News*.

Wilson Pollock to be inducted into DHS Alumni Hall of Fame

Wilson F. Pollock, Jr. graduated from Downingtown High School in 1958, was Class President, and was voted “Most Likely Male to Succeed.” He went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in Architecture at Penn State and a master’s from Columbia University. After working at Cambridge Seven Associates in Cambridge, MA, in 1971, he founded ADD - Architectural Design Development.

ADD Inc. grew from two people at its founding in 1971 to over 200 employees and over \$20 million net fee revenues per year at the time Wilson retired. Projects designed and built by the firm in that timeframe included many new and renovated developer office buildings, high tech facilities, corporate headquarters, multi-building master plans, shopping centers, mixed use facilities, university dormitories, and residential condominium and multi-tenant rental buildings. Over 1,000 young people worked at ADD while Wilson was at the helm.

In 1984, Wilson, who by that year had received widespread recognition for his leadership of the very successful architecture company, joined the Boston Society of Architecture (BSA). In 1998, BSA launched a new magazine, *Architecture Boston*, and he served a three-year term on its editorial board. He then assumed the position of chair of the editorial board for six years as the magazine thrived.

One of his greatest legacies was to transform ADD through an employee stock ownership plan to ease the transition upon his retirement. He said, “I wanted the firm to continue on for years after my retirement because I cared about my legacy and ADD Inc.” Since his retirement in 2005, Wilson has served as a consultant to many firms in strategic management.

Wilson and his company have won too many awards to enumerate here, but they included having ADD chosen as the 1995 Small Business of the Year by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the first service provider so honored. Individually, he was honored with a Wilson F. Pollock, Jr. Day on April 23, 1995 for his dedicated service to his adopted hometown of Newton, Massachusetts. In 2011, he was awarded a Doctorate of Entrepreneurial Leadership degree from Boston Architectural College.

Wilson is an avid sailor, with years of experience in both coastal and off-shore sailing that includes races from the US East Coast to Bermuda and passages to islands in the Caribbean. As a member of the Jamestown Yacht Club in Rhode Island, he served on the Board of Trustees; and in several leadership positions. He also is a talented painter, getting his start at age 4 when he sent drawings to his Uncle Fred who was serving in Patton’s Third Army in Europe during World War II.

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’d like to receive a copy of our FREE Hist-O-Gram directly every week, you can do that by accessing our website: www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.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.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms.html.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Book Sale

The Friends of the Downingtown Library will hold a spring book sale on Friday April 15 from 5-7:30 PM and on Saturday April 16 from 9 AM to 4 PM. There will be a wide selection of adult fiction and non-fiction, young adult and children's books, audio books, movies and music CDs. Donations of gently used children's books, adult books, DVDs, CDs and books on tape for the sale are now being accepted. No textbooks, encyclopedias or magazines, please. For more details, contact the library at 610-269-2741.

Trout Rodeo

The Brandywine Trout and Conservation Club will have a free Trout Rodeo for kids who are 15 years old and younger, from 9 AM to 2 PM on Saturday, April 16 at Kerr Park. Registration opens at 8 AM in the park, near the playground.

Lecture series in E. Brandywine

East Brandywine's Historical Commission will present the following lectures at 3:30 PM on the Sundays noted: **April 17**, at Bondsville Mill Park, 1647 Bondsville Road, Bryan Thompson Nowak, Horticulturalist at Morris Arboretum, will take you on nature walk and sheds some light on our local landscape; **May 15**, Mathew Kalos will discuss what he's uncovered in his archaeological digs in Chester County, at the East Brandywine Township Building, 1214 Horseshoe Pike, Guthriesville.

USO Dance

The Downingtown Historic Commission is sponsoring a World War II-style USO dance at 5 PM Saturday, April 23 at Kerr Park. Music will be provided by DJ Paul. No rain date. If possible, come in 1940s or 1950s attire. Tickets—\$5 a person and \$8 a couple—are available at Margo's Ice Cream Parlor, The Orangery Restaurant, or at Downingtown's Borough Hall. Proceeds will be used for the construction and placement of the Civil War cannon at the Downingtown Veterans' Memorial in Kerr Park.

Nite at the Races

The Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Parade Committee will have a Kentucky Derby Nite at The Races at 6 PM on Saturday, May 7 at St. Anthony's Lodge on Church Street, Downingtown. Visit dtwonchristmas.com for tickets and more information. Tickets are \$25 per person and include "food and beer" and soda. There also will be raffles, 50/50, Lady with the Best Bonnet, Best Dressed Couple, and Gentleman with fanciest bowtie contests. Adults only. Must be 21 to attend.

True Story of Amelia Earhart's Disappearance

Richard (Ric) Gillespie, historian, author, executive director of TIGHAR and aeronautic researcher will present Finding Amelia - The True Story of the Earhart Disappearance in a West Caln Historical Society program at 7 PM on Tuesday, April 19 at the West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. The program is free and open to all.

Drug Take-Back Day

The Downingtown Police Department will again partner with the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to participate in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, from 10 AM to 2 PM on Saturday, April 30. This is an opportunity for the public to safely discard unwanted, unused and expired prescription drugs. Bring your medications for disposal to the Downingtown Borough Hall Annex Building at 4 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. For more info, call 610-269-0344, ext. 200.

Alert's Golf Outing

Downingtown's all-volunteer, Alert Fire Co. will host its third annual golf outing at Ron Jaworski's Downingtown Country Club as a fund-raising event, and they are asking for local and national sponsorship for this event. The outing will take place on Monday, May 2. You can access more details on the outing via www.alertgolfouting.org/.

East Brandywine Golf Outing

The 5th annual East Brandywine Fire & Police Golf Outing will be held on Monday, May 9. Sponsored by and held at Applecross Country Club. There are still available opportunities for sponsors. There also will be an auction and raffle opportunities. Additional information can be found at: www.ebfc49.org.

Flea Market/Craft & Antique Sale

Table space is available for a flea market/craft/antique sale from 9 AM to 2 PM on Saturday, May 14 (rain date May 21) to be held on the front lawn of the Caln Township Municipal Building, Municipal Drive, Thorndale. Sponsored by the Old Caln Historical Society. Call Joan at 610-384-9496 or Lois at 610-384-8153 for more information.

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.