



Downingtown Area Historical Society **Hist-O-Gram**

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

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

Vol. 7, No. 49

December 15, 2016

What & Where 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@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, and 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.downingtownareahistoricalociety.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.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html.

What local folks were talking about 52 years ago

Noted below are items published in local newspapers in the early part of November 1964:

- The **Downingtown Farmers Market**, on Route 30 in East Caln, was celebrating its 12th anniversary. Back in 1952, when the market had its grand opening, cars trying to reach the market were lined up for three miles to the west, as far away as Thorndale, and for a comparable distance to the east, to Exton.
- The Downingtown Area School Board reviewed plans for a macadam **ice skating rink** to be installed at Lionville Elementary School. The school's PTA, which had proposed the rink, raised \$600 to help pay for its construction.
- Winners of a **political slogan contest**, conducted in the Problems of Democracy classes at DHS, included: Connie Webster, first prize—"Peace, not pieces...Vote Democratic," and James Clark, second prize—"Remember the Alamo: The Texans made a mess of that, too."
- Members of **Boy Scout Troop 23**, sponsored by Central Presbyterian Church, who were promoted at a Court of Honor included: Tom Hickey, life; John Nixdorf, star; Mike McCardell, Chuck Mitman and Palmer Raysor, first class; Doug Mecray, Brian Ricci, David Ratcliff, Douglas Kiernan and Frank Bishop, second class; and William Stevens, tenderfoot.
- Although the **Whippet offensive line** was outweighed by an average of 30 pounds per man, compared to O.J. Roberts' linemen, they provided DHS quarterback Bill Kline enough time to toss three touchdown passes, as Downingtown beat the Wildcats 21-6. And the defensive line bottled up the Bucktowners' ground attack and forced several interceptions and fumbles. Oscar Asparagus caught two TD receptions, and Roy Nellius pulled in the other.
- Winners in the costume competition at the Halloween party of the **Ladies of St. Joseph's Catholic Church**, included: Mrs. Samuel Filoromo, prettiest; Mrs. Richard Short, most original; Dolly Colella and Mrs. John Belnomi, ugliest; Mrs. Adam Ehling, funniest; Mrs. George Dailey and Mrs. Joseph Massucci, best couple; Mrs. Joseph Cipollini, most unusual; and Mrs. Joseph Driscoll, cutest.
- Committee chairmen of the **Pickering Valley School Association** were Mrs. Grover Hallman and Mrs. Norman Shea, programs; Mrs. Floyd Hilton, hospitality; Mrs. Maurice Garvine and Mrs. Robert Smiley, membership; Mrs. Harley Fink and Mrs. Robert MacDougal, by-laws; Mrs. Albert Merkle, ways and means; and Mrs. James Martin, publicity.
- Members of **Cub Pack 2**, Downingtown, who won prizes in the Halloween party costume competition, included: Blake Dorman, prettiest; Tommy Hipple, most original; and Jerry Keen, Eddie Miller, Roger Patrizio and Steve Hemberger, who were dressed as Goldilocks and the three bears.
- DHS students who auditioned for the Southeastern Pennsylvania **District Chorus** were Carol French, Patricia Whitely, Cindy Plank, Gina Myers, Barbara Peirson, Barbara Curry, Betty Mercer, Donald McDermott, Danny Yost, Gene Martin, Howard Fitzgerald and Jim Schofield.
- Youngsters who won prizes for their costumes at the Halloween party at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, included: In the 1-6 year old group, Joyce Rigel, Donald Satterthwait, Ann Bomberger and Kenny Stoudt; and Betty Davis, Judy Bittmann, Lynn Taylor, Vern Shaw, Charlene Barton and Edna Pivonka in the 6-14 year old group.
- **Ninth grade class officers** at the junior high school were Susie Seel, president; Tom Stern, vice president; Sherry Stong, secretary; and Kenny Baen, treasurer.

See page 6 for last chance to buy Restaurant Raffle tickets

It was the flour mill at Viaduct & Pennsylvania Avenues



Dennis Nelms is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above as the mill at Viaduct and West Lancaster Avenues in Downingtown. It was known as the Viaduct Roller Flour Mill, when it was built in 1889 by E. Vinton Philips. In recent years, the building has been occupied by Bob Wagner's Mill Carpet, WeatherMaster Windows and CarQuest Auto Parts. The team of horses and wagon, carrying a replica of Downingtown's Log House in the above photo, was ready to participate in the 1909 parade, celebrating Downingtown's 50th anniversary of its incorporation as a borough. The land on which the mill was built originally was purchased in 1886 to be used as the planned site for the First Baptist Church, which ultimately was built at Manor and West Lancaster Avenues.

Brief, but important

1. Francis Taraschi, trustee at St. Anthony's Lodge, Downingtown, tells us that one of the women pictured in the Group Photo in last week's Hist-O-Gram was incorrectly identified as Schollastra DiOttavio. The woman was Mary Sperduti. Also, the spelling for Mrs. Caporale's first name is Etorinda, not Dorinda. The photo was taken on November 29, 1949, when St. Anthony was celebrating its 30th anniversary. The 25th anniversary was not celebrated due to the war; members of the Lodge waited for the war to end and the return of family members. You can access the photo via: www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%208%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf.

2. Published in the September 20, 1903 edition of the Philadelphia Inquirer: *About 1,000 persons witnessed the harness races at the formal opening of the new Kerr Racetrack at Downingtown this afternoon.* The one-half mile track was located at the intersection of Brandywine Avenue and Boot Road. Downingtown High School's football team played its home games in the track's interior field in the early 20th Century.

See page 6 for last chance to buy a Restaurant Raffle ticket

What was happening here 67 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in local papers in the latter part of April 1949:

- Representatives of school boards from seven surrounding townships unanimously voted to help the Downingtown borough's school system accommodate the increasing enrollment at Downingtown Junior-Senior High School by participating in a **consolidation plan**. The plan included a \$300,000 addition to the junior-senior building, which had to be approved by neighboring township taxpayers in a referendum in the November elections. The plan also called for the establishment of a joint high school board, comprised of members from the townships as well as the borough.
- A fire of an undermined cause destroyed much of the **Fraser Feed Mill** on Reed Road in East Brandywine, which was owned and operated by John Fraser of Guthriesville.
- About 2,500 people came to the **Point-to-Point races** held on the Cann and Baldwin farms in Marshallton. Members of the Marshallton branch of the Chester County Hospital Auxiliary, who sold food at the event included Mrs. Clarence Moore, Mrs. Henry Moore, Mrs. Earl LeFevre, Mrs. Fred Hoopes, Mrs. Harry Cann, Mrs. Harvey Young, Mrs. D. Ciaffoni, Mrs. Andrew Brookover and Mary Wickersham.
- Elected to lead the **Glen Moore Improvement Society** were John Galt, president; Eleanor Bartol, vice president; Mrs. Noah Sensenig, secretary; and Niels Jensen, treasurer.
- New members of the **Downingtown Lions Club** were: William Rowland, Rev. George Bass, John Snyder, Earl Foreman, Anthony DiLuigi, Edward Peterson and Walter McClure.
- **Student-musicians from DHS**, chosen to participate in the Southeastern Pennsylvania District Music Festival held at the high school, included: Janet Kriebel, John Windle, Paul Miller, James Warnick, Everett Lang, Frank DiSilvestro, Christy Christ, Frances Mascherino, Barbara Seibert, Joseph Streamer, Joan Lenhardt, Margaret Sciarretta and Louise Bartelmo.
- Reelected as officers of the Downingtown branch of the **Ladies Auxiliary of Chester County Hospital** were: Mrs. Herbert Ash, president; Mrs. William Mittel, vice president; Mrs. Arthur Philips, secretary; and Mrs. Shartle Brookover, treasurer.
- Elected as officers of the **East Ward School Mothers Club** were Mrs. John Miller, president; Mrs. Ogier Norris, vice president; Mrs. Frederick Bicking, secretary; and Mrs. George Wagner, treasurer.
- New officers of the **St. Anthony's Lodge Ladies Auxiliary** were Agnes Girafalco, president; Mary Mento, vice president; Eva Taraschi, secretary; and Florence Pomento, treasurer.
- Officers elected to lead the **Junior Women's Club of Uwchlan** were Mrs. Samuel Windham, president; Mrs. Paul Otter, vice president; Mrs. Glenn Plank secretary; and Mrs. Wayne Bickel, treasurer.
- Mrs. John Hadfield was elected president of the **Downingtown Junior Woman's Club**. Also elected were Mrs. Arthur Anderson, first vice president; Mrs. Carl Engle, second vice president; Mrs. Charles Sigle, recording secretary; Mrs. Horace Miller, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. William Reed, treasurer.
- Gordon Carpenter's mound performance—six strikeouts and only one walk—helped the **DHS baseball team** beat West Chester 3-1. In the first inning, Bill Davis stole home to give the Whippets their first run. Additional runs were tallied by Ron Hogg and Johnny Talierco.

See page 6 for last chance to buy Restaurant Raffle tickets

Vintage Ad of the Week

*Come and see
for yourself...*



FREE DEMONSTRATION

**ELECTRIC COOKING
AND
HOME FREEZING
OF FOODS**

Expert home economists will present an exciting demonstration of electric cooking and home freezing. Come see an entire meal prepared.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 21
2:00 P. M.**

**DOWNINGTOWN DEPT. STORE
122 East Lancaster Ave.
Downingtown, Pa.**

This ad was originally published in the April 16, 1949 edition of the Daily Local News.

See page 6 for last chance to buy Restaurant Raffle tickets

Last chance to buy a Restaurant Raffle ticket

You can still buy a ticket for the Historical Society's fourth annual "A Taste of Chester County" Restaurant Raffle because the winning tickets won't be drawn Monday night, December 19. And you don't have to be at the drawing to win.

This year's raffle is bigger and better than ever. That's because each raffle ticket costs only \$30, and there will be three winners this year. By splitting the nine great, local restaurants participating in the raffle into three packages, each of the three winners will receive three \$50 restaurant gift cards, worth a total of \$150.

Proceeds from the raffle will enable the Historical Society to buy a laptop and special software, which will enable us to present unique programs at local schools, churches and other sites.

Downingtown area restaurants participating in the raffle include: Beaver Creek Tavern, Georgio's, Milito's, Pomodoro, St. Anthony's, The Station Tap/Bottle Room, The Thorndale Craft House, Downingtown Country Club, and the Thorndale Inn.

Tickets may be purchased online, via the Historical Society's website, www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org, or by coming to Ashbridge House, our headquarters, in the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on Route 30, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, from 1-4 PM on Sunday, December 18. You also can order them by calling the Historical Society, 610-269-1709; or by sending an email to:

Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

For more details on the raffle, including a disclaimer and individual restaurant's exclusions, go to: www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

Luminaria candles & historic tree ornaments are on sale on Sunday afternoon, December 18

Those who wish to buy Luminaria candles and bases, or Christmas tree ornaments depicting historic Downingtown sites may purchase them from 1-4 PM on Sunday, December 18 at Ashbridge House, the Historical Society's headquarters in the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on Route 30 in East Caln, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, where you can park.

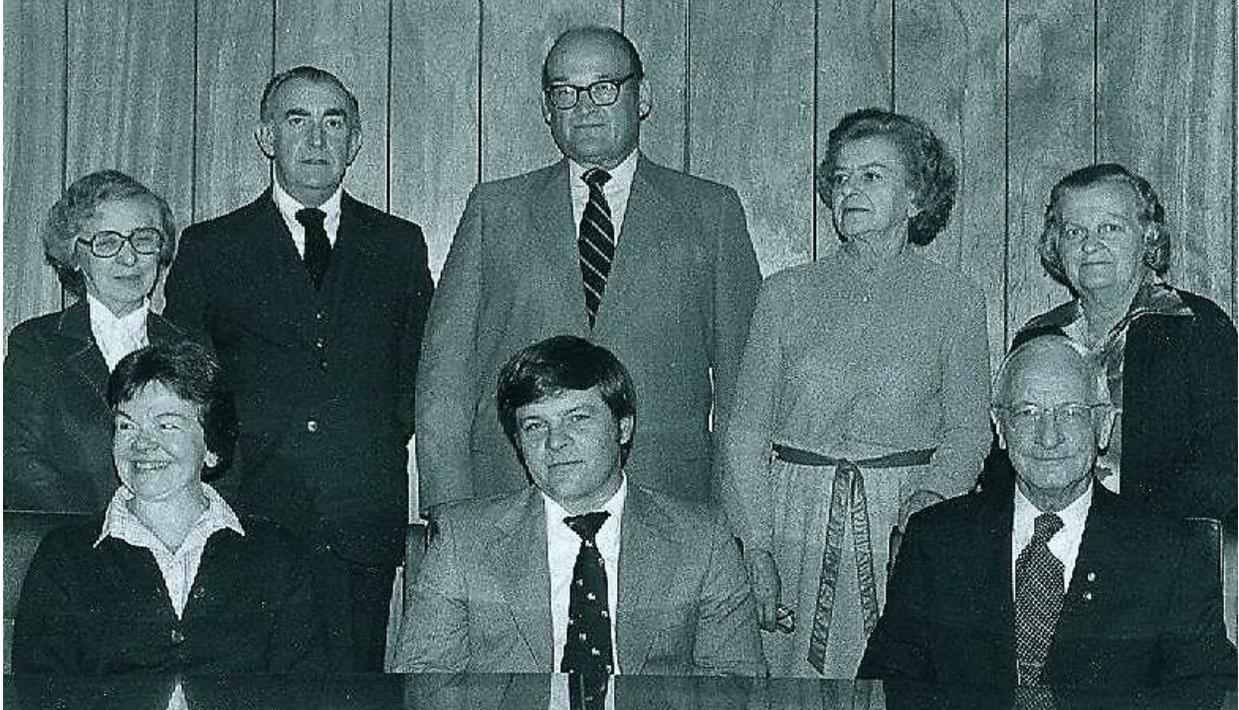
How to trace your home's history

If you're seeking the history of your residence or other property in Chester County, click on: http://spesvox.org/prammer/EBHC/Researching_Historic_Properties_files/ResearchingGuide_De edAbstract.pdf.

Officers of the Downingtown Area Historical Society are: Parry Desmond, president; Marion Piccolomini, recording secretary; Francine Dague, treasurer; and Donna Capriotti,

corresponding secretary. The board of directors includes: Harry Helms, Mike Dunn, Phil Dague and Dennis Walton. Carol Grigson is the archivist.

Group Photo



The Downingtown Historical Society's board of directors in the early 1980s was comprised of, left to right: front row, Eleanor Landis, Ray Waechter, and Thomas Brookover; back row, Fran Ash, Joe Crawford, Jim McGowan, unknown, and Sara Aumiller.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Madame Curie

Ann Atkins, author, historian, educator, will present Part 2 of her program on Madame Curie when the West Caln Historical Society meets 7 PM on Tuesday, January 17 at West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. Everyone is welcome and the meetings are free to all.

Outdoor Christmas Decorating Contest

A Home for the Holidays Outdoor Decorating contest, will be held in the borough. Prizes of \$200, \$100 and \$50 will be awarded to the residences that have the best outdoor Christmas decorations. The competition, co-sponsored by the Downingtown Parks and Recreation Commission and the Downingtown-Thorndale Chamber of Commerce, continues until Thursday, December 22. Info on voting are at:

<http://downingtowntown.org/Documents/Temporary%20Documents/Home%20for%20the%20holidays%20flyer%202016.pdf>.

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<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.