



## 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*

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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](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org).

# More items first published in January of 1980

Noted below are items retrieved from editions of the *East Branch Citizen*, published in the latter part of January 1980:

- The **Downingtown Area School District** and **Downingtown Borough Council** were both considering buying an office building, near Kerr Park, on Wallace Avenue, which was owned by **Chemical Leaman Tank Lines**. Chemical Leaman had recently signed an agreement to occupy a five-story building in Pickering Industrial Park in Uwchlan. (*Editor's note: the school district ultimately bought the building and used it as its main office for a couple of decades, until the district office was moved to Trestle Place in East Caln several years ago. In 2015, the building became the new home of the Downingtown Library.*)
- Borough Council backed off from the possibility of developing a **parking lot for 50-60 cars** on leased land near the Pennsylvania Railroad in the Johnsontown section of Downingtown. Although the lot could relieve parking congestion in the Johnsontown area, as well as other parts of the borough's west end, Council decided to shelve that proposal because a group of Johnsontown residents, "don't want a parking lot over there. They resent it," said Council president Vince DiEuliis. However, DiEuliis acknowledged, "I still think we're going to have to do something over there." Another option under consideration was using part of the 13-acre Johnsontown Playground site, which the borough only had to pay a \$1,800 transfer fee to acquire the property from Sonoco Products Co.
- The **Roger Hunt Mill** (also known as Pollock's Mill), on Race Street, off Manor Avenue in Downingtown, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition to the grist mill, which was built in 1739, other structures on the property also placed on the national register were: the two-story main house, the miller's house, a turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-Century carriage house, and an 1850 tenant house. Jane Davidson, borough historian, noted that feed from the mill was not provided to soldiers during the Revolutionary War. But Revolutionary War soldiers were fed crops which had been milled at the Shelmire Mill, located where the McDonald's restaurant is now located on East Lancaster Avenue in the borough. However, soldiers who fought in the French and Indian War were fed staples processed at the Hunt Mill. To learn more about the mill property, see: [www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGIS\\_Attachments/SiteResource/H050987\\_01H.pdf](http://www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGIS_Attachments/SiteResource/H050987_01H.pdf).
- According to the Chester County Intermediate Unit's Statistical Brief of the county's schools, a comparison of budgeted expenditures per pupil in 1979-80 determined that the **Downingtown School District** ranked 10<sup>th</sup> among the 12 districts in the county. The county average was \$2,382 per student, while Downingtown planned to spend \$1,985 per pupil.
- PennDOT finally acknowledged to **Upper Uwchlan** supervisors that a hazardous situation existed on Route 100, between Byers Road and Little Conestoga Road in the township. The problem was created when Route 100 had been recently re-paved by the state at a higher elevation than before, without increasing the elevations of roads and driveways that connected with Route 100. However, PennDOT informed the supervisors that it didn't plan to make any adjustments in the affected area.
- Chester County's Parks and Recreation Commission announced that it was going to buy the historic **Springton Manor farm** in Wallace Township. The 260-acre property, which had recently been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, included a 25-room mansion. In recent years, the mansion had been recently leased to Vitae House, where recovering alcoholics were being rehabilitated, and the three-year lease would be transferred to the county.

- DHS students who were named to the **Regional District Band** were Tom Conway, oboe; Mark Dagher, baritone horn; and Sharon Nash, clarinet.

- Members of the **East Brandywine Fire Co.** elected the following line officers: Ron Rambo, chief; John Schmidt, first assistant chief; Jim Baker, second assistant chief; Dave Baldwin, captain; Scott Piersol, lieutenant; John Neff and Rich O'Neill, engineers; and Tucker Thomas, chief of fire police. Elected as corporate officers were John Piersol, president; Harold Thompson, vice president; John Neff, recording secretary; Lewis Laird, treasurer; Scott Piersol, membership secretary; and Walt Crandall, Tucker Thomas and Chester Smith, trustees.

- Members of **Boy Scout Troop 70**, who advanced to the rank of tenderfoot, included: Barry Angeny, Jeff Bell, Drew Gardiner, Steve Hurly, Jason Jarvis and Raymond Raysor.

- Officers elected to lead the Sunday School at **Windsor Baptist Church** in Upper Uwchlan included: James Runyen, superintendent; Joe Cura, assistant superintendent; Gail Kuhlkin, secretary; David Supplee, treasurer; Mark Bechtel, assistant secretary-treasurer; Rita German, librarian; Sandi Contner, Jenny Peterson, Dianne Fitzmier and Stan Miller, pianists.

- Officers elected to lead the **Alert Fire Co. Auxiliary** were Mary Jo Pacinelli, president; Sharon Seese, vice president; Mary Lynam, secretary; Emily Walton, financial secretary; and Doris Yocum, treasurer.

- Diane Kramer won the school-wide spelling bee at **East Ward School**, and Dayna Dunn was runner-up. Other finalists were Ken Burkey, Karen Brown, Joe Erhardt, Denise Hernandez, Steve Hurly, Christine Milward, Chris Petrangeli, Audra Riffey, Chris Ross and Kim Sigle.

- Dick Thatcher was elected president of the **Downingtown Rotary Club**. Also elected were: Frank Brouse, first vice president; Bruce Bredickas, second vice president; Albert Homan, secretary; David Kirkner, treasurer; Lewis Wilson, assistant treasurer; and directors Dr. Joseph McCahon, Leon Bixler, Bud Bruton, Bob Cropper and Bill Mason.

- Lew Wilson, who joined the **Downingtown Police Department** in 1948 and was chief for 11 years, retired. Lt. Vernon "Zeke" Osborne, was named acting chief.

- **Uwchlan Township's** Historical Commission was opposed to the Radnor Corp.'s (a division of the Sun Oil Co.) plans to build a shopping center at the intersection of Routes 100 and 113, because it would "adversely affect the Lionville Historic District."

- DHS seniors nominated to attend the nation's **four service academies** were: Scott Kohler, Air Force Academy; Eric Meyer, Annapolis; Kurt Thompson, West Point; and Bernard Dunham, Merchant Marine Academy.

- Corporate officers elected to lead the **Lionville Fire Co.** were Joel Gramling, president; Ed Milham, vice president; Cindy Gilbert, recording secretary; Dan Lyons, financial secretary; Harry Ruth, treasurer; Carl Ruth, trustee; and Jim Ferrante, membership secretary. Elected as line officers were Richard Ruth, chief; Robert Holmes and Rick Gilbert, assistant chiefs; Carl Ruth and Chester Hershey, captains; Jim Ferrante and Bill Trego, lieutenants; Mike Mihalo, mask instructor; Harold Trego, chief engineer; and Fred Donaghy, assistant engineer.

- Tom Perdue was elected president of the **West Bradford Fire Co.** Other corporate officers were Larry Amoriello, vice president; Kenny Buckwalter, secretary; Bob Adams, treasurer; Bob Allison, financial secretary; and David Oles, member-at-large. Line officers included Jack Hines, chief; Bob Allison, first assistant chief; Dennis Riggins, second assistant chief; Mern Bedsworth, chief of fire police; and Joe Solecki, rescue captain.

- Recent **property transfers** included: 449 Lionville Road, Uwchlan, \$75,000; 114 Hilltop Road, East Brandywine, \$107,200; 3 Marshall Drive, Caln, \$59,900; 1113 New Hampshire Road, West Bradford, \$49,240; and 128 Brandywine Ave., Downingtown, \$43,000.

- Winners of the Pinewood Derby, sponsored by **Cub Pack 23**, were Mitchell Kerns, Dennis Giancola, Jeff Zeiders and Bruce Bredickas.
- The **Uwchlan Ambulance Corps** elected the following officers: Bob Karr, president; Doug Whipple, vice president; Mary Ellen Morrissey, secretary; Joan Pladek, treasurer; Judith Whipple, financial secretary; John Carbutt, Mike Barbieri and Calvin Wilhelm, trustees; and Stephen Thomas, operations chief.

### **Group photo of the week:**



Cubs from Pack 23, Downingtown, and their parents came to Ashbridge House, our 307-year-old headquarters, to see a visual presentation of historic sites in the Downingtown area, presented by Historical Society board member Phil Dague.

## **Local news items first published in 1943**

Noted below are news items originally published in *The Archive* in 1943:

- The **Boys' Knitting Club**, comprised of seventh and eighth grade boys at Downingtown Junior High, completed two afghans, which were sent to military hospitals.
- Theresa Sciarretta was the May Queen in the May Procession at **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**. Girls who were attendants in the procession included Delores Sciarretta, Jean Esworthy, Antoinette Petrella, Irma Del Paggio, Theresa Mascherino, Sarah Jane Doran, Connie DiSilvestro, Amelie Panetti, Helen Rodri, Theresa DiBerardinis, Ada Celii and Mary DiPietro.

- Since “actions of certain groups of young boys have long passed the nuisance stage,” Downingtown’s Borough Council was considering a **10 PM curfew** for youngsters under the age of 17, unless they were accompanied by a parent or another responsible adult. However, the Downingtown Rotary and Lions Clubs were unanimously opposed to the proposal. Rev. Willis Nichols, pastor of D-town Meth for seven years, said borough youngsters were “better behaved,” and in less need of any official restrictions than any other town where he had served. However, Father Francis Fox of St. Joseph’s supported the proposal. But Council decided not to adopt a curfew ordinance.

- Downingtown’s Charles F. Moran Post participated in a campaign by American Legion posts throughout Pennsylvania to raise \$100,000 in order to **buy 40 million cigarettes** for military personnel serving overseas and on ships at sea.

- A meeting of the Downingtown **plane spotters** was held at West Ward School. Rev. Rankin Stewart, chaplain of the local American Legion Post, and an active spotter in Glen Moore, offered the Invocation. Leaders of the group were Paul Dague, chief spotter; William Wharry, assistant chief; and Paul Martin, Leroy Helms, Mrs. Paul Dague and Harrison Durant. It was noted that only the names of active spotters would be included on the WW II Honor Roll, displayed in Miller Brothers store on East Lancaster Avenue.

- Among the 90 students who **graduated from DHS** were four boys already serving in the military. During the 1942-43 school year, pre-induction courses offered at the high school included: refresher math, aeronautics, fundamentals of shop, fundamentals of machines and electricity, blueprint reading, and machine shop. And although the size of senior classes at DHS had been nearly 100 students in recent years, there were only 68 seniors enrolled at DHS for the 1943-44 school year.

- The Rotary Club decided to sponsor **Boy Scout Troop 2**, the second oldest troop in Chester County.

- The **ration book** of a borough resident was suspended for 90 days after he had been cited for reckless driving and misuse of gasoline. And borough cops were checking up on motorists “suspected of pleasure driving.”

- Downingtown and Exton area residents couldn’t have **telephone service** installed at their homes because the Bell Telephone Co. system’s capacity had been reached. New installations were limited to telephones “required for direct defense or for public health, welfare or security, as defined by the (federal) War Production Board.”

## **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).

Vintage ad of the week:

**ABBOT'S**  
**Milk and Cream Emporium**  
*Leave Your Order with us for Fresh Milk.*  
**Eggs, Butter and Dairy Products**  
**CREAM TO BE A SPECIALTY**  
Give it a trial at 25 cents a quart.  
**ABBOT'S DAIRY**  
West Lancaster Avenue,                      Downingtown, Pa.  
BELL PHONE 150 W

This ad was originally published in the June 24, 1911 edition of *The Archive*. Does anyone know anything about this business, which we usually connect with Philadelphia? Please send your response to: [Info@downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org).

*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

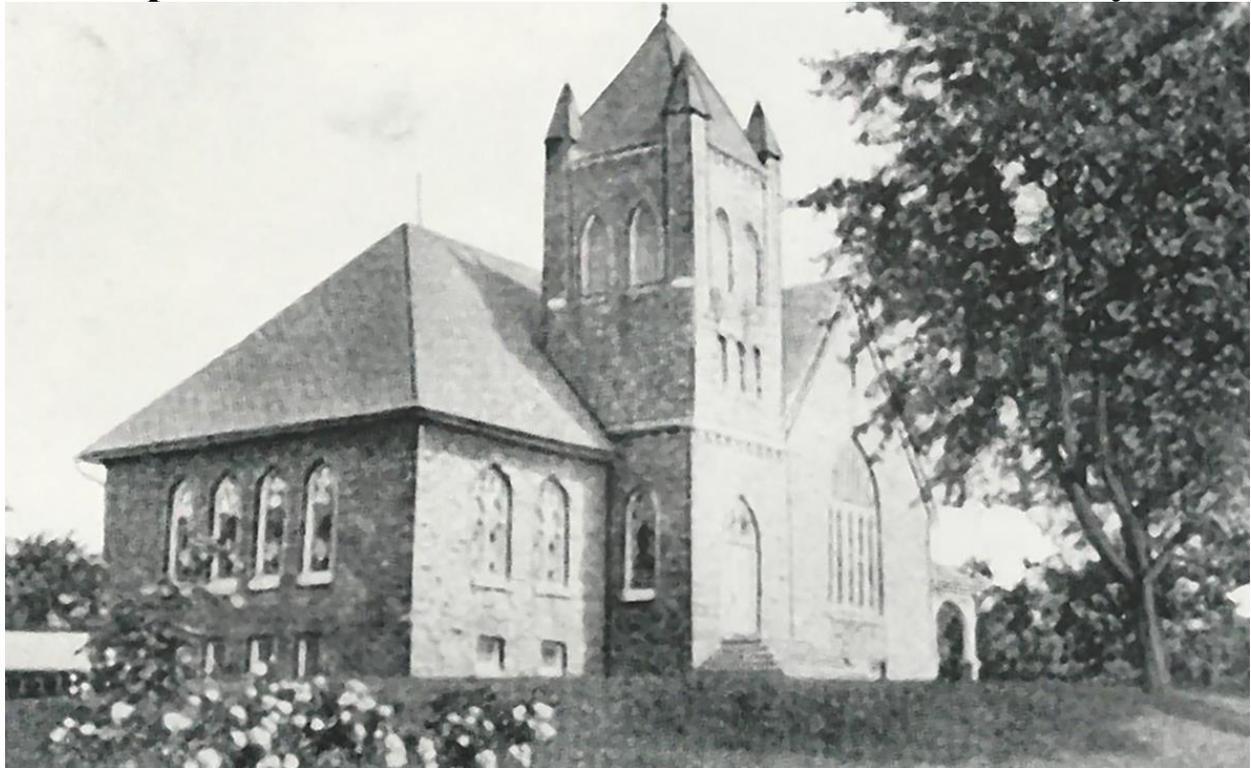
The items listed below in our Wish List notes the materials with a Downingtown connection the Historical Society especially needs to reach its archival goals. **It includes a new request: a portable projection screen, which we need for presentations.** The screen should measure at least 100 inches diagonally.

- 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](mailto:Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org).

## It's Hopewell United Methodist Church in East Brandywine



Becky Corbin is a truly perceptive scholar because she was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above as Hopewell United Methodist Church, on Hopewell Road in East Brandywine Township. The church shown above was built in 1913, after its 1867 predecessor was razed. An education building was constructed in 1959, and a new sanctuary was added in 1990.

# **Free Ads for Non-Profits**

## ***Interactive performance***

Maureen Barry, storyteller and children's author will perform her original tale Miss Fairfield's Beauty Pageant at 1 PM on Saturday, January 16 at the Downingtown Library. Following the performance, there will be a book signing by the author. The children will participate in an interactive performance where they are reminded that they are unique in their own special way just like the chickens on Fairfield's Farm. Children of all ages are invited. To learn more about Maureen Barry and her books, visit her website [www.maureenbarry.com](http://www.maureenbarry.com). To register for this event, visit: [www.downingtownlibrary.org](http://www.downingtownlibrary.org) and click on the Upcoming Programs tab.

## ***Civilian Conservation Corps***

Bob Ford, historian horticulturist, war memorabilia collector and sportsman, will present a program on the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) at the West Caln Historical Society's meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, Jan. 19. The meeting will be held at the West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. All meetings are free and open to the public.

## ***Blood drive***

The Borough of Downingtown will host a Red Cross Blood Drive from 1-6 PM on Friday, February 26 in the Borough Hall Annex Building. To sign up to make a donation, please use the link on the borough's website - [www.downingtown.org](http://www.downingtown.org).

## ***Farmers Community Market of Downingtown***

The Community Market, at the Dane Décor Warehouse parking lot, 216 Washington Ave., Downingtown, will be open from 10 AM until noon on the first and third Saturdays, through March: Jan. 16, Feb. 6 and 20, March 5 and 9. For more info, call 724-454-3674; or contact [gaukerfarms@gmail.com](mailto:gaukerfarms@gmail.com); or via Community Market of Downingtown on Facebook.

## ***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.

## ***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](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).