



## 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).

## News items originally published 36 years ago

Noted below are items retrieved from local papers which were published in January of 1980:

- The **Downingtown School Board** approved the construction of additions at West Bradford and Pickering Valley Elementary Schools. The \$650,000 addition at West Bradford consisted of six classrooms, to be completed by July 1. And the Pickering Valley addition

included eight classrooms, a gym, conference rooms, and boiler and mechanical rooms, which were projected to be completed in August and to cost \$1.2 million.

- Installed as township supervisors were Winfield (Pete) Burkey in **East Brandywine**, and Jonathan Wood in **West Bradford**. Pete Karahalos was a new councilman in **Downingtown**.

- Some 30 residents of **Wallace Township** presented a petition, bearing 158 signatures, to the supervisors, asserting their protests against the last-minute elimination of one police officer from the 1980 budget, reportedly due to financial constraints.

- Mr. and Mrs. Robert Menna, Downingtown, won a trip to Las Vegas in a contest sponsored by **Palace Pizzeria**.

- Recent **property transfers** were: 2203 Cranberry Lane, West Bradford, \$74,880; 433 Brookwood Drive, Uwchlan, \$104,825; 38 Cambridge Court, East Brandywine, \$46,900; 361 Mary Street, Downingtown, \$40,900; 3520 Norwood Avenue, Caln, \$30,000; 11 Fox Chase Lane, Upper Uwchlan, \$85,500; 501 Clover Mill Road, West Whiteland, \$46,251.

- After they completed their social studies unit on Ancient Egypt, fourth graders at **Uwchlan Hills School** had a King Tut party. The participants included Kristine Dickinson, Amy Kockler, Tony Caggiano, Chris Gramca and Shannon Meadows.

- The **DHS girls' basketball team** won its holiday tournament for the first time since 1975, by beating Chichester 54-37 and defeating Conestoga 54-44. Tina Arcaro, Jeanine Cheek and Lisa Diehl were named to the all-tournament team.

- While plowing snow in a PennDOT truck in the Romansville area, three Downingtown residents—Ray Shea and Bruce and Steve Brown—contacted Jeff Young, a member of the West Bradford Fire Co., and reported a fire at the old barn that housed **Christopher's Restaurant** on Strasburg Road. The building was destroyed by the fire.

- Members of the **DHS indoor track squad** who set new school records at a meet at Lehigh University included: Matt Mingione, 1,000-yard race; Shawn Urbine, two mile race; and the mile relay team composed of Tom Mento, Dave Domblesky, Phil Grant and Scott Nichols.

- Downingtown councilman Jim McGowan, who also was president of the **Downingtown Historical Society** and a member of the borough's **Historical Commission**, said the borough should kick in \$7,500 toward a matching share, to help pay for the writing of an updated borough history. The matching funds were required for a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The estimated cost of doing research for the project and writing the book was \$28,000; printing and distribution costs would be extra.

- **DHS wrestlers** Glenn Koser and Duane Krapf were individual champs in the Conestoga Christmas Tournament. Whippets who were second place finishers were Keith Grant, Mark Mathis and Tom Urban.

- New line officers of the **Downingtown Fire Department** were: Minquas Fire Co.—Mike Davis assistant chief; Jim McGowan, captain; Vince Panetti, first lieutenant; Dave DiLuigi, second lieutenant; Rick Evoli, third lieutenant; and Mike Miller, chief engineer. The Alert Fire Co. line officers included: Tom Lee, assistant chief; Richard Keers, captain; Dave Caputo, first lieutenant; Brian Rambo, second lieutenant; Phil Burns, third lieutenant; and Jerry Keen, chief engineer.

- Although the **DHS boys' basketball squad** put on a dismal showing at its Christmas Tournament, the Whippets bounced back with a school-record 102-81 win over West Chester East. Bob Boyer's boys connected on 62 percent of its field goal attempts. Scoring in double figures were: Bob Melvin, 22 points; Brent Thompson, 21; Lee Holley, 19; Art Harlow, 14; and Mark Redfern, 12.

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



This is a photo of the DHS football squad, which won the Chester County championship in 1938. According to that school year's Cuckoo, the title of the DHS yearbook until 1955, none of the student-managers were identified with the photo, and we were only capable of identifying one, Woody Sbei, who is pictured in the front row, at the far left. The team's players and coaches in the photo were, left to right: front row, C. Menas, F. Brook, J. Travaglini, J. Miller, J. Girafalco, J. Donofrio, L. Capriotti, F. Jameson, J. Cozzone, A. Burkhart, A. Sciarretta; second row, assistant coach Lewis Laird, P. Gillespie, J. Lafiato, R. Hashinger, J. Raysor, R. Worrall, N. Lowry, V. Osborne, R. Williams, J. Mattioni, J. Ayers, A. Canestra, T. Peazzoni; and unknown; third row, P. Talierco, H. Frain, C. Wilkerson, H. Wonderland, F. Wilson, E. Mendenhall, W. Snyder, H. Baen, C. Daylor, G. Hilton, J. Gazzo, head coach Francis Tweed; fourth row, F. Pollock, A. Taraschi, E. Stoudt, A. Del Paggio, A. Taraschi, E. Clarke, A. DiChristifaro, A. DeBerardinis, R. Graveno, C. Wilson, E. Murray, E. Burkey and unknown.

## **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](mailto:Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org).

## It's on Marshall Road in Glenmoore



Bonnie Radford is a truly perceptive scholar because she correctly identified the house in the photo above. Built in 1741 by William Ferguson, the property on Marshall Road in Wallace Township includes a farmhouse and tenant houses. Edward Hunter, purchased the farm in 1827. He is notable was one of the founders of the Mormon Church of the Latter Day Saints. The area surrounding the farm has long been referred to by locals as Mormon Hollow. It was owned for many years by Albert and Barbara Greenfield. Their residence was converted in 1957, from a granary and a carriage house. The property was added to the National Register of Historical Places in 1980. (For more info on the site see: [www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGIS\\_Attachments/SiteResource/H001547\\_01H.pdf](http://www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGIS_Attachments/SiteResource/H001547_01H.pdf)).

## What locals were talking about 91 years ago

The news items noted below were published in *The Archive* during the summer of 1925.

- There were 37 graduating seniors in the 43<sup>rd</sup> **commencement at DHS**. Ruth Darlington Essick was the salutatorian and Alice Campbell was the valedictorian.
- Installation of a concrete surface on the Lincoln Highway (Route 30), **between Downingtown and Exton** was to begin in August. Motorists had to use the **newly paved Lionville Road** (Route 113) to travel between Exton and the borough until the two-month re-surfacing of Route 30 was completed.
- Each night of the **Alert Fire Company's** carnival in July began with a parade by that evening's featured entertainment. The Alert firemen sported their new dress uniforms. Music was provided by a different band each night. There also were vaudeville acts and a minstrel put on by members of the POSA, whose faces were done over with burned cork. Another attraction was the raffle for a Shetland pony. After all the expenses were paid, the Alerts netted \$3,000 from the extravaganza.

# Downingtown area happenings in 1955

Noted below are snippets of information published in *The Archive* 61 years ago:

- Employees who received service pins at the **Downingtown Manufacturing Co.**'s annual banquet included: Norman Woodward, 25 years; Maurice Yohn, Arthur Glauner, Francis Stinson and Enright Ellis, 20 years; and Jack Farrell, 15 years.
- Members of **Girl Scout Troop 181** who toured the Royersford tannery were Helen Burkhart, Patricia Daller, Beatrice Fernando, Jane Moore, Mary Jane Sabellico, Harriet Seibert, Frances Scarfino, Jean Shisler and Sandra Hadfield.
- Members of the **DHS boys' basketball team** included Sam Pierce, Johnny Chilla, Norris Miller, Lloyd Price, Jack Skiles, John Bousum, Harry Watson, Clyde Thomas and George Forbes.
- Cubs from **Pack 2** who earned Wolf badges were Charles Yamshak, Ronald Renshaw, Charles Backenstose, Joseph Merkt, Stephen Everhart and Stephen Charles.
- Officers of the **Glenmoore Fire Co.** were Gilbert Houck, president; Marvin Furlong, vice president; Ernest Phillips, treasurer; John Shrader, secretary; Elwood Earnshaw, assistant secretary; Russell Harrington, fire chief; and Frank Miller and Frank Kerstetter, assistant chiefs.
- Brownies invested into **Troop 88** were Frances Baldwin, Deborah Brown, Priscilla Brown, Donna Hilton, Sheila Loomis, Beverly Mitchell, Emily McIlvaine, Kathie Neff and Vickie Thompson.
- Wanda Radcliffe and Philomena DiBerardinis were student directors of the **DHS Christmas program**. Members of the cast included Pat Hilton, Phoebe Nelson, Peggy McCausland, Tom Brookover, Paul Fidler, Esther Zittle and Kathy D'Attilio.
- The Downingtown **A&P store** was selling sirloin steaks for 79 cents per pound.
- Frank Marcocci and Herman Detterline each received a \$1,000 check from the **Downingtown Paper Co.** for their suggestions on how to save money.

## *Making history today:*

### **DHS West Band won first place at TaxSlayer Bowl**



The DHS West Marching Band won first place in the field competition for Class AAA high schools at the Taxslayer Bowl in Jacksonville, FL, last weekend. It also was cited as having the best drum major and best percussion, and being the best overall band.

*Vintage ad of the week:*

**Citizens! Citizens! Citizens!**  
**Great Annual Fair**  
**AT**  
**St. Mary's Church**  
**Ship Road and Lincoln Highway**  
**(NEAR EXTON)**  
**Sat. Aternoon & Eve., Aug. 16, 1924**

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**BOXING EXHIBITION!**  
**Bud Cristiano vs. Al. Gordon**  
**Admission Free**

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**CAFETERIA SUPPER**  
**Admission—Adults, 50 Cts.; Children, 35 Cts.**

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**ST. FRANCIS DE SALES BAND**  
**(Thirty Pieces)**  
**O! Philadelphia, Will Supply the Music!**

This ad was published in the August 14, 1924 edition of the *Downingtown Archive*. St. Mary's Chapel, dedicated in 1873, was the sole Catholic church in the Exton area until Sts. Philip and James Parish was established across Route 30 in 1959. During the chapel's early years, priests would travel by train, from St. Joseph's Church in Downingtown to Exton, to say Mass, and then were transported from the train to the chapel by horse and wagon. After Mass, the priest would enjoy breakfast at some parishioner's table, until it was time for him to take the train back to Downingtown, according to the St. Mary's Chapel website.

And since boxing was a wildly popular sport in the 1920s and 1930s, Catholic parishes in the Delaware Valley often had well-known pro boxers put on an exhibition at their annual fairs and picnics to boost attendance by non-parishioners. Both fighters at St. Mary's fair were part of the nation's largest stable of pro boxers at the time, which was managed by Max "Boo Boo" Hoff, Philadelphia's biggest bootlegger. Hoff often relaxed at his mansion near Lyndell. (Editor's note: We're looking for more info on Hoff. Please send it to: [Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org).)

## **Evening clip & paste session to be held on Tuesday, Jan. 12**

Our next evening clipping and pasting session will be held at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, January 12, at Ashbridge House, our 307-year-old headquarters in Ashbridge Square, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, on Route 30 in East Caln.

*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.*

## **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.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://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](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html).

## **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.

### ***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 19. 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).