



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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

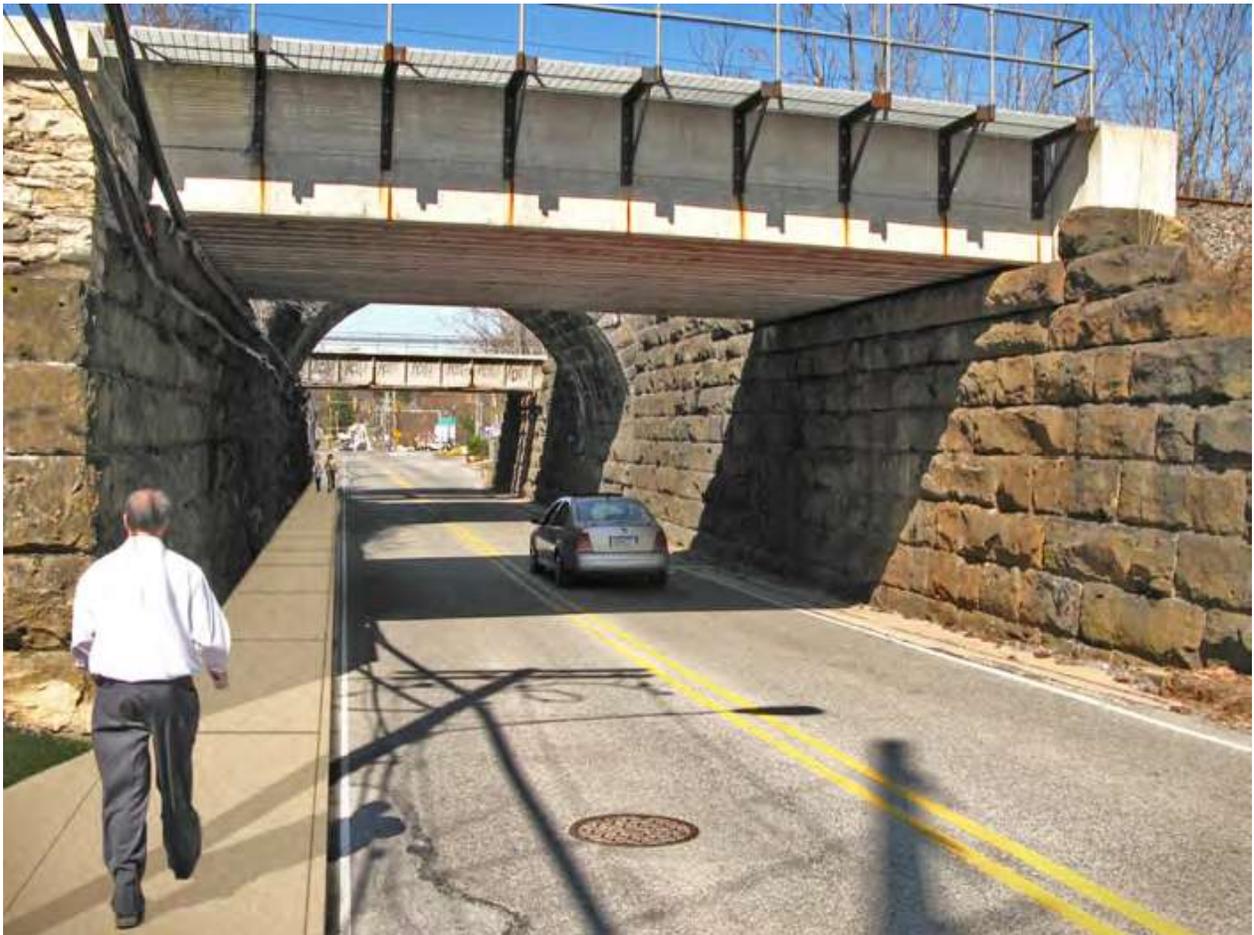
www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org

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

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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.

Unknown immigrant's gravestone dedicated at Northwood Cemetery

The photos below were taken on July 19, when ancestors of Fidel Buchel, who was killed in a train accident in Caln Township on July 18, 1881, had a dedications service on the 135th anniversary of his burial in Northwood Cemetery. The service at the cemetery, on Route 113 in East Caln, included the dedication of a 3,000-pound gravestone, which was quarried and carved in Liechtenstein and shipped to the United States. More than 30 members of the Buchel family, including a large contingent from Europe, participated in the service. Claudia Fritsche, Liechtenstein's ambassador to the U.S., was a participant.

Following the accident, Fidel's body was taken to the Downingtown train station, and a Downingtown undertaker arranged for his burial in the cemetery's potter's field section - where the bodies of indigent and unidentified souls were buried in unmarked graves - because there was no ID information in Fidel's pockets. A letter written in German, from Fidel's wife and a son back in Liechtenstein, was found in one of his pockets. That letter, translated into English and published in a West Chester newspaper, enabled local historical archivists to discover the identity of the unknown immigrant.

If you missed all the fascinating details on how local historians solved the mystery of the unknown immigrant, which were published in last week's Hist-O-Gram, you can read them via: www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/July%2014%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf.



This is a photo of the Buchel family, and representatives of local historical societies, members of the cemetery board+ and state legislators, who attended the gravestone dedication service.



Sue Buchel, left, spearheaded the search for information on where Fidel Buchel, her great-grandfather, was buried, and she arranged for the dedication of the 3,000-pound gravestone at Northwood Cemetery. Determining the unknown immigrant's identity was enabled through the efforts of Carol Grigson, center left, volunteer archivist at the Downingtown Area Historical Society, and Pam Powell, right, of the Chester County Historical Society.



Claudia Fritsche, Liechtenstein's ambassador to the U.S., is shown taking a picture of the page in the register of the Northwood Cemetery, which includes a listing for a burial of an unknown "German" on July 19, 1881. The register includes many details on every burial in the cemetery since its 1871 founding. The register is part of the archival collection at Ashbridge House, headquarters of Historical Society, where a reception was held, after the dedication service, for members of the Buchel family and other guests.

What locals were talking about 68 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in area newspapers in the latter part of November 1948:

- The **American Legion** moved into its new post home, at 336 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. Planned improvements on the first floor included a game room; a large lounge (but no bar) with a TV set and a radio-phonograph player donated by the Smedley and Aumiller Insurance Agency; and a large kitchen operated by the Ladies Auxiliary. A general meeting room, an executive meeting room, and temporary quarters for the caretaker were to be on the second floor. The legionnaires were seeking donations of a piano, a refrigerator, chairs and lamps. Also, Francis Summers and Robinson McIlvaine were appointed to represent the post on the Downingtown Chamber of Commerce's committee responsible for erecting a new permanent servicemen's plaque, to replace the one that was adjacent to Borough Hall.
- Telephone operators, who worked in the **Bell Telephone** office in Downingtown in 1948, included: Helen and Alice Doran, Grace Vernon, Eva Jane Marsh, Marjorie Lyons, Mary Thomas, Doris Howard, Nancy Jones, Lois Ross, Mary Hope, Mrs. John Moschitta, Mrs. John Muzii and Mrs. Charles Snyder.
- Appointed as committee chairmen for the **Downingtown Visiting Nurse Association** were Mrs. John Fisher, nursing; Mrs. Penrose Davis, ways and means; Mrs. William Mahood, transportation; Mrs. John Rogers, representative on the borough Christmas Committee; Mrs. Donald Edwards, publicity; and Mrs. Huston McIlvain, budget.
- **Lionville Elementary School** students who participated in a program on Armistice Day included Sam Matthews, Shirley Matlack, Doris Mull, Celestia Boyer, Bob Lytle, Barbara Simpkinson, Jerry Stinson, Bob Peoples, Jack Stewart, Alice and Cora Smedley, Marjorie Rickard, Carl Ruth, Marvin Jenkins, Kay Levengood, Susanne and Jacqueline Markey, Bob Ross, Arthur Fiester, Esther Supplee, Ronny Otter, Harry Dewees, Richard Taylor, Meredith Ruark and Jack Benner.
- More than 400 persons listened to eight church choirs on Choir Day held at **Bethel AME Church** in Downingtown.
- Elected as officers of **St. Anthony's Lodge**, Downingtown, were: Oscar DiBerardinis, president; Charles DiSante, vice president; Armando Taraschi, censor; Anthony Viscichini, financial secretary; Samuel Mento and Anthony Fazzini, corresponding secretaries; Frank Celii, treasurer; Albert DelPaggio and Joseph Mento, auditors; Michael Mento, John Mascherino, Vincent DiEuliis, Paul Taraschi, David D'Attilio, Edward Perley, George Ciarlone, Albert Donofrio, Americo DiLiberato, Oscar Fazzini, Ore Marino and Louis D'Addezio, counselors.
- Although the Whippets were way behind in offensive statistics (only three first downs and 13 yards gained) **DHS beat Pottstown 16-12** on Thanksgiving morning. Downingtown fullback Bill Hayes made the difference, as he scored two TDs and booted a 30-yard field goal. DHS had two wins, one loss and a tie since Downingtown started playing the Trojans in the season-ending classic four years earlier.
- **Hopewell Methodist Church**, East Brandywine, revived a custom, which had been discontinued during World War II, of having a turkey dinner, served at noontime, after a service on Thanksgiving morning. The dinner was prepared and served by Mrs. William Bixler, Mrs. John McCausland, Mrs. Earl Bryant and Mrs. Alex Jefferis.

It was the DOPACO loading dock



John Carbo is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above as a loading dock of the Downington Paper Co. (DOPACO). The photo was first published in the firm's 75th anniversary booklet, which noted that Frank Miller founded the original papermaking company in 1881. In 1956, when the photo was taken, DOPACO was about to expand its production to 325 tons of paperboard per day. In 1968, DOPACO was sold as a subsidiary to Sonoco Products Co., of Hartsville, S.C., and continued operating in Downington until 2005, when a large fire that caused approximately half a million dollars in damages, forcing Sonoco to permanently close the paperboard mill on Brandywine Avenue.

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Officers of the Downington Area Historical Society are: Parry Desmond, president; Ernie Jameson, vice 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.

Downingtown area news 88 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in *The Archive* in September and October of 1928:

- Several members of **Borough Council** were wary about the **Downingtown Fire Department's** proposal that they should have phone service installed—so both of the borough's two fire companies would have details about a reported fire before firefighters were dispatched—because of the costs, about \$6 per month. In the case of a recent house fire in the borough's east end, fire company officials pointed out, the existent alarm at the Minquas Fire Co. was inadequate because it “could scarcely be heard in the western portion of the town, and it is a safe bet that at least two-thirds of the firemen failed to hear the alarm and were unaware of the fire.”

- Students, who had graduated from a local elementary school but had failed in the spring to pass the entrance examination in order to continue to their education at **Downingtown Junior High School**, had an opportunity to take the entrance test again on August 31. The Downingtown School Board also established these tuition fees, to be paid by surrounding township school districts for each of their resident-students who attended a school in the borough: \$6 per month for students in the first through fourth grades; \$8 for those in the fifth through eighth grades; \$12 per month for those in the ninth through 12th grades. Tuition fees collected from the townships in the 1927-28 school year totaled \$11,067.

- The **Downingtown Rotary Club** had taken the new **DHS marching band** “under its wing,” and several members of the service club had offered to drive, in their cars, the musicians to away football games. That commitment enabled the funds for band transportation in the school district budget to be switched to the band's treasury for other purposes.

- The **Brandywine Rifle Club**, recently established for local boys by Downingtown's **American Legion Post**, had leased an indoor firing range, to accommodate five targets, in the Fisher Building on Washington Avenue in the borough. The club planned to become an affiliate of the National Rifle Association, and engage with other rifle clubs in the county. Officers of the club were H.C. Osman, president; Charles Nice, vice president; William Johnson, secretary; Joseph Miller, treasurer; and George Hibberd, executive officer. Member of the board of governors were Everett Hoopes, Robert Moore, Horace Mercer, Frank Parke, Paul Dague and Edgar Griffith.

- Male students at DHS, who were officers of the **Hi-Y Club**, included: Charles Ax, president; Carl Peterson, vice president; Dewitt Essick, secretary; Harry Brown, treasurer. The Hi-Y Club was affiliated with the town and country department of the Coatesville YMCA.

STOP — LOOK — READ

THANK YOU!

You, the people of Downingtown and community, were wonderful in the splendid support given to us at our opening last Wednesday and every day since.

The congratulatory cards, notes, telegrams, phone calls, verbal best wishes, and the profusion of beautiful baskets of flowers, which enhanced the beauty of the shop, were warmly and graciously received.

May we take this opportunity in expressing our sincere appreciation, and desire to continue to serve you in the best manner possible.

Colonial Bake Shop

140 East Lancaster Avenue
Downingtown, Phone 1036

Walter H. McClure and Edith Irwin McClure
Owners and Operators

This ad was originally published in the November 17, 1948 edition of the *Daily Local News*.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Shakespeare in the Park

The Downingtown Parks and Recreation Board will present “Midsummer’s Night Dream,” performed by the PA Leadership Charter School at 6 PM Saturday, July 23 at Kerr Park’s gazebo area. For more details on the free program, see:

<http://downingtown.org/Documents/Temporary%20Documents/Shakespeare%20in%20the%20Park%20flyer.pdf>.

Paper Shredding

State Rep. Harry Lewis is hosting a paper shredding event from 9 AM until noon on Saturday, July 30, at Bishop Shanahan High School, 220 Woodbine Road, Downingtown. The event, which will feature an industrial paper shredder, will be an opportunity for households and businesses to shred up to four packing boxes of materials. The boxes will be returned to residents; Wiggins Shredding will not keep nor shred the boxes. Only paper – no cardboard – will be accepted. Staples and paper clips need not be removed. All shredding takes place onsite. For more information, please contact Rep. Lewis’s office, (610) 269-1289.

Wall That Heals

Hopewell United Methodist Church and East Brandywine Township will host to *The Wall That Heals*, a 250-foot replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Part of a national tour, the replica memorial wall and accompanying mobile education center will be on display throughout the day and night, from Thursday, July 28 until Sunday, July 31, at East Brandywine Township Community Park, 440 Dilworth Road. The Wall will take a one-hour escorted route, beginning at 10 AM on July 27, from Calvary Fellowship Church on Route 113, Lionville, into Downingtown, where it will stop for a few minutes for wreath placement at the Veterans Memorial in Kerr Park, and then continue on to East Brandywine Community Park. For more details, see:

www.ebrandywine.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=74.

Links for the Library Golf Outing

All proceeds for this golf outing at the Downingtown Country Club on July 25 will benefit the Downingtown Library. For info on packages, sponsorships and dinner, see: www.downingtownlibrary.org/.

Farmers Market

The Downingtown Farmers Market has returned to Kerr Parks. It will be open from 9 AM to 1 PM on Saturdays. For more info, see: <http://growingrootspartners.com/downingtown-farmers-market>.

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: JPC Cheryl@verizon.net.