



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.

What locals were talking about 36 years ago

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

- Competency based educational programming, which required students to take a standardized test to measure if they were achieving acceptable standards in reading, math and other courses, was shot down by the **Downingtown School Board**.
- **Tony Proftay** recalled that he started cutting hair, at age 18, in Clarence Miller's barber shop on East Lancaster Avenue in Downingtown, in 1933. Proftay said haircuts cost 40 cents in the early days and, after he took over the shop and continued snipping and clipping for 47 years, the price had risen to \$3. Also, he stopped giving shaves with a straight razor in the mid-1960s. But he planned to continue cutting hair, "as long as my legs hold out."
- DHS student Lori Schwabenbauer won the Voice of Democracy contest, sponsored by the **Downingtown VFW Post**. Martha Silver and Drew Lehr, placed second and third, respectively.
- New officers of the **Industrial Arts Student Association** at DHS were Joe Sciandra, president; Bryant Ferris, vice president; Lena Trego, secretary; Asit Upadhyay, treasurer; Sandra Wood, reporter; and Jim Piersol, sergeant-at-arms. And officers of association's chapter at Downingtown Junior High included John Sciandra, president; Dianne Sanner, vice president; Steve Foster, secretary; Eileen Ferris, treasurer; Lou Cippolini, reporter; and Shane Rodgers, sergeant-at-arms.
- **East Brandywine Township** supervisors Bud Bruton, Alan McCausland and John Cropper, plus police chief John Harp, accepted a challenge to compete in a water ball contest with members of the East Brandywine Fire Co. at the fire company's open house, as long as four of the firefighters agreed to compete in the Run For Life road race in Downingtown on the Fourth of July. Also, chief Harp reported that 25 of the 320 complaints his department had responded to in the past month were caused by cows, which had broken out of their feed lots on the farm of Charles MacFarlan, and were wandering around North Buck Road.
- Changes in the second annual **Run For Life** road race, part of the **Good Neighbor Day** celebration in Downingtown on the Fourth of July, included age brackets for each gender of runners in the race. And **Downingtown National Bank** said it would add 10 cents a mile to the proceeds for the Run For Life's total mileage completed by all the runners in the road race. Proceeds from the race went to the ambulance and rescue squads based in the Downingtown School District area.
- Kristen Swartwout and Mark Zaccarelli were recognized at the commencement exercises at **St. Joseph's Catholic School**, Downingtown, as the eighth grade students with the highest academic average. Mary Ann Jacobson and Peter Donia received the American Legion medal. There were 36 students in the graduating class.
- Members of the **Downingtown Babe Ruth League** 13-year-old all-star team included Steve Byron, Kevin Conahan, Frank DiOttavio, Brian Lowe, Chris Thomas, John Hayes, Jeff Yearsley, Rick Goukler, Charles Mann, Darryl Dunn, Larry Stine, Howard Theckston, Shane Rodgers, and Wally McCue. Alternates were Bob Luminella, Jeff McCardy and Bill Golden.
- Recent **property transfers** included: 403 Brookwood Drive, Uwchlan, \$89,900; 111 Cheryl Drive, Upper Uwchlan, \$63,250; 1511 Walton Drive, West Bradford, \$64,000; 507 North Bailey Road, Thorndale, \$60,000; 408 Longwood Drive, Exton, \$82,900; 110 Stuart Avenue, Downingtown, \$48,000; 25 Raleigh Drive, East Brandywine, \$71,450.

It was the Chester Springs railroad station



No one correctly identified the site in the photo above as the railroad station, built ca. 1900 at Chester Springs, which was served by the Pickering Valley Railroad. Established in 1871, the 11.3-mile railroad primarily transported milk and other farm products to Phoenixville. In 1906, the railroad became the Pickering Valley branch of the Reading Railroad. Passenger service was discontinued in 1934. And after the portion of the line between Kimberton and Byers was abandoned in 1948, the remaining track served the Phoenix Steel Co. mill in Phoenixville until it was abandoned by Conrail (successor to the Reading in the 1980s).

What was going on at DHS 45 years ago

Rose Mascherino Ciarlone recently donated copies of the *Penny Press* (the former name of the DHS student newspaper) published during the 1971-72 school year. As a result, Hist-O-Gram subscribers will have an opportunity to recall or learn what was going on at the local high school and what its students were doing nearly a half century ago. Noted below are some of the items published in the *Penny Press* in the fall of 1971.

- An evergreen was planted in the school's courtyard, in memory of **John "Larry" Piersol**, Class of 1965, who was killed in 1970, while serving in the Army in Viet Nam.
- **Three DHS teachers**—Elma Miller, Charles Ax and William Skelly—were named Leaders of American Secondary Education.
- The **football team** kicked off the season with a 31-0 victory over Chichester. But the Whippets lost to St. James of Chester by a 27-6 margin. And they suffered a 20-14 upset loss to Pottsgrove. Coach Chic Chiccino's crew notched its first win by beating Great Valley 24-0. Although Joe Reutter blocked a Spring-Ford punt and Lauren Mayall pounced on the ball in the end zone, the Blue and Gold lost, 15-7. The Whippets got back in the win column with a 14-6 comeback victory over Boyertown. Then they upset OJ Roberts 7-6, as Chippy Gazzo ran 86

yards for Downingtown's sole TD, and Mike Eachus' PAT ensured the win. The Whippets made it three straight with a 31-8 win over Phoenixville. And a two-point conversion by Norman Raison after he scored a TD in the first quarter made the difference, as DHS edged 22-21 in a thriller. The Whippets closed the season with a stunning 26-20 victory over Coatesville on Thanksgiving morning, as Raison scored three times. The win, which was the 50th football game between the two neighboring schools, enabled DHS to rack up a 6-3 Ches-Mont record. Joe Reutter and Paul Givler were named to first team All-Ches-Mont squad.

- Ivy Bertoncini was elected **Homecoming Queen**. Her court included Sally Miller, Michele Guerrieri, Paula Swoyer, Debbie Dinwoodie, Linda Showalter, Trudy Smith, Sharon Gilley, Sandy Piersol and Rosie Short.

- DHS girls who were finalists in the **Chester County Junior Miss Pageant** were Karen Blanck, Kathy Hawthorn and Terri Pearson.

- The **field hockey squad** trampled Pottsgrove, 3-0 in the Whippettes' opener. And Lex Ziobro scored the lone goal as DHS tied OJ Roberts 1-1. Coach Jean Shiffer's team overwhelmed Coatesville 4-0 in the next match, and Hoppy Hayes and Jayne Tinson tallied two goals each as Downingtown spooked the Phoenixville Phantoms, 5-2.

- Officers of the **National Honor Society** were Karen Kipp, president; Pat Lyons, vice president; Sally Miller, secretary; and Alexis Ziobro, treasurer. And officers of the **Drama Club** were David Venditta, president; Tom Micken, vice president; Ruth Worthington, secretary-treasurer; Richard Hall and Julie Van Loan, senior representatives; Judy Sheeler and Jane Treptow, junior reps; and Jerry Cavanaugh and Pete Filiaci, sophomore reps. Also, **Art Club** officers were Terri Pearson, president; Mary Ellen McCausland, vice president; Kathy Shreiner, secretary; and Rosie Short, treasurer. And the **yearbook editorial staff** officers were Judy Boone, editor; Loraine Smith, faculty and administration; Carol Winkelman, seniors; Jill Hand, underclassmen; Tom Hannan, sports; and Mary Tocydlowski, clubs and special events. Leaders of the **Future Teachers of America** chapter were Joan Ottaviano, president; Kathy Watters, vice president; Rene Bowman, secretary; and Janice Hawk, treasurer. Leaders of the **Library Service Club** were Tony Gallucci, president; Pat Riggans, vice president; Sandy Lee, secretary; and Robert Tkachick, treasurer.

- After a tough loss to Boyertown, the **cross-country team** garnered its fifth victory by outpacing Great Valley. Then, Dave Kipp broke the tape, followed by Steve Hemberger, as DHS edged Phoenixville for their sixth win.

- Richard Caldwell was the sole DHS student to be a semi-finalist in the **National Merit Scholarship** competition. Seniors who earned Commended status were Michael Filoromo, Meredith Grady, Joanne Hoehing, Donna Klaebel, Nancy MacDonald and Bill Williamson.

- **DHS singers** who were chosen for the District Chorus were Craig Ardrey, Ed Miller and Susan McJilton.

- Pupils who attended the **Lukens Steel Student Management Conference** were James Hasson, Gary McKee, Paul Mullen and Ken Feldman.

- A proposed **Dress Code**, which would ban insignias or emblems of other schools, trousers or slacks of extreme proportions and sweat shirts, caused quite a flap among students.

Group Photo of the Week



Members of the Salesmanship Club at DHS in 1977 learned techniques on selling products. Those who belonged to the club included, left to right: front row, R. Stonewall, D. Miller and D. Hazzard; second row, A. Brown, G. Caldwell, T. Rogalis, M. Case and M. Cole; back row, K. Smith, L. Smith, S. Lasorda, J. Treptow and J. Waldenmaier.

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.

- T-shirts whose artwork and lettering promote a Downingtown area event, business, team or organization.
- 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.

Got some treasures in your backyard?



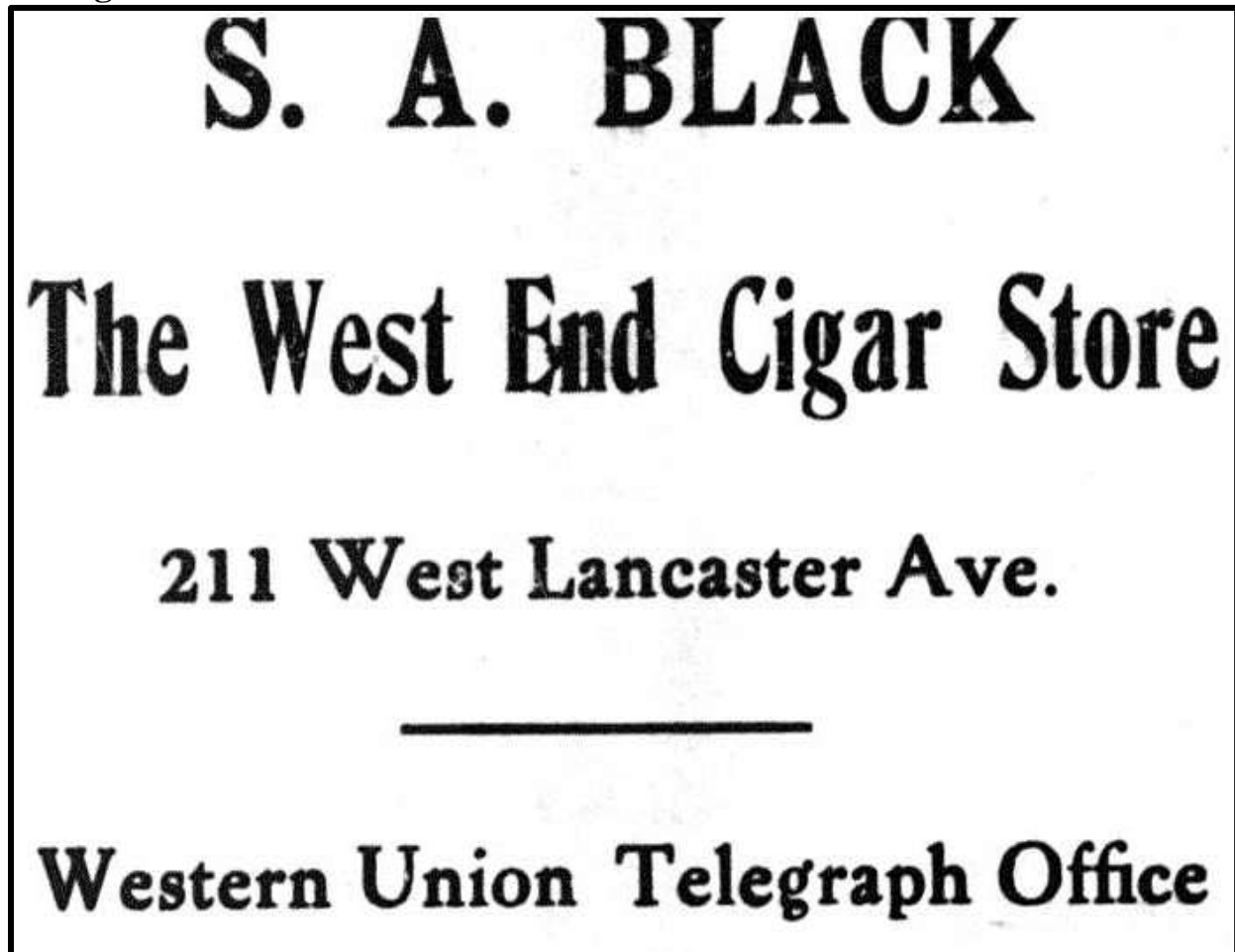
Steve Rettew, a member of the Downingtown Area Historical Society, found the items pictured above—those on the left include the tongue part of a belt buckle from a Civil War era military uniform, a collar disk worn on a World War II military uniform, a 1917 badge worn during World War I by members of the Boys Working Reserve; and on the right is an 1878 Chiantel Fondeur Saignelegier cow bell. Steve found them while doing a search, with a metal detector, of a Downingtown area property. If you think similar “treasures” are on your property and you want Steve to try to retrieve them, call him at (610) 269-7912.

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.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.

Officers of the Downingtown 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.

Vintage Photo of the Week



This ad originally appeared in the October 7, 1926 edition of *The Archive*.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Summer Jam Music Festival

The Summer Jam Music Festival series at Kerr Park will begin from 6-10 PM on Friday, June 24. The festival, sponsored by the Downingtown Main Street Association and Kimberton Whole Foods, will include music by: [The Happy Pita](#), [Mompops Artisan Popsicles](#), [Love Chunk Cookies](#), [Baba's Brew Kombucha](#) and a beer garden hosted by [Station Taproom](#). For more details, check out: <http://downingtownmainstreet.com/blog/summer-jam-series-friday-june-24>

Community Festival

St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Downingtown, will have its ninth annual Community Festival, starting each night at 6 PM, on Tuesday, June 21 through Saturday, June 25. Highlights include great food, live music and Bingo in the cafeteria every night; fireworks on Friday night, Shuttle service available from DHS West HS parking area, via Krapf's Buses, to Festival grounds. For more details and to buy discount wristbands, go to: www.stjoesfestival.com.

History of Weaving Art

Linda Beiler, historian, author, artist, educator, will talk about the “History of Weaving Art” when the West Caln Historical Society meets at 7 PM on Tuesday, June 21. Beiler wrote *Wheat Weaving & Straw Art*, part of Stackpole Books' Heritage Crafts Today Series. The meeting, which is free and open to the public, will be at West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown.

Golf Outing & BBQ

Supporters of the DHS West football team are sponsoring a golf outing, BBQ and silent auction at Whitford Country Club on Monday, June 20. For more info, see: www.dwhsfootball.com/golf-outing-auction.

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: JPCheryl@verizon.net.