



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

Vol. 7, No. 22

June 9, 2016

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 first two weeks of June 1980:

- The **Downingtown Lions Club** made a commitment to raise \$4,225 to help extend the length of the Struble Trail by five-sixth of mile, by moving the starting point from Norwood Road in East Caln, into Kardon Park in the borough. The Lions kicked off the campaign by selling the Chester County Sampler, \$20 books of 150 certificates redeemable with local merchants. Most of the trail extension's total cost, \$16,900, was to be federally funded. The trail's original 3.5 miles was opened in October 1979. It followed the abandoned roadbed of the New Holland branch of the former Pennsylvania Railroad, which was known as the East Brandywine and Waynesburg Railroad when it was established in 1854, to serve dairy farms and paper mills along the east branch of the Brandywine Creek.
- An overflow crowd attended the **commencement exercises**, held in the new Wagner Gymnasium due to rainy weather, as 525 seniors graduated from DHS. Representatives of the Class of 1980 who spoke were Victoria Schlomann and John Armstrong.
- The **Downingtown Savings and Loan Association** opened a branch at the North Bailey Road intersection of Route 30 in Thorndale. Those who made new deposits of \$5,000 or more were offered a 40-piece ratchet/socket set or a "Rolls Royce" table radio.
- New members of the **Greater Downingtown Chamber of Commerce** were Princess Lee Housecleaning, 137 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, and the Barbara Painter School of Dance in Exton.
- Five past presidents of the **Downingtown Rotary Club**—Grey Olliver, Dick Radcliff, Bob Schaefer, Mil Ryan and Joe McCahon—were honored when a grove of trees were planted in Kerr Park.
- Members of **Cub Pack 8**, who received Webelos awards for citizen activity, were Jim Conway, Kevin Hughes, Scott MacKenzie, Frank McComsey, David Ronca and Erik Schaible. And those who earned Webelos badges for scholar activity included Bob Brown, Gary Davis and Donnie Lynn.
- Named to the building committee at **Central Presbyterian Church** were Preston Insley, David Haddock, Lacy Lackey, Cookie Pannebaker, Wallace Strevell, James Sciandra, Fred Brubaker, Robert Hankes and Richard Nippes.
- Officers and board members of the Lutheran Church Women group at **St. Pauls' Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Mary Lammey, president; Nancy Heydt, vice president; Louise Mullings, secretary; Sandy Service, treasurer; Mary McCurdy and Dorothy Hrynko, faith and life committee; Karen Ely, hospitality; Elsa Green, membership; and Barbara Meier, Christian action.
- Members of the **DHS softball squad**, who were named to the All-Ches-Mont team, were Judy O'Connell, pitcher; Sherri Clayton, Infielder; and Dianne Repp, infielder. Also, **DHS lacrosse players**, who made the All-Ches-Mont team were Barrie Benjamin, Doreen Warihay and Debbie Miller.
- Women who modeled in a fashion show at the **Downingtown Area Senior Center** included Blanche Dawson, Betty Bennetch, Anna DelPaggio, Gertie Woodward and Emma Musselman.

- Former **DHS lacrosse standouts**, who participated in the U.S. Women's National Lacrosse Tournament at Swarthmore College, were Diane Horsey, Dottie Dunn, Laurie Blair, Anne Kennedy, Sandy Bireley, Sharon Watson, Jeanne Minahan and Edy Lyons.
- Earl Cooke, president of the **Glen Moore Fire Co.**, announced that a parade through the village would kick off a Community Day celebration. The parade, comprised of fire trucks, Scout troops and Little League baseball players, would proceed from the village to Wagenseller Park, where there would be a carnival. The events also included a water ball and a tug-of-war contests between attending fire companies.
- **Becky Desmond**, who had been coach of the DHS girls' tennis team since 1968, was hired as West Chester Golf and Country Club's tennis pro. Desmond had established instructional tennis programs at five public sites in the Downingtown area. And she had been girls' tennis chairman of PIAA's District I since 1973.
- Recent **property transfers** included: 525 Grant Ave., Downingtown, \$45,000; 1518 Hillcrest Lane, West Bradford, \$66,500; 704 Brainerd, Uwchlan, \$114,000; 7 Stirrup Lane, Chester Springs, \$80,000.

Group Photo of the Week



Officers of the Future Teachers of America chapter at DHS during the 1967-68 school year were, left to right: Ann Bishop, vice president; Ron Donnon, president; Janis Mento, secretary; and Katie Hallman, treasurer.

Items published in *The Archive* 88 years ago

Noted below are news items found in the *Downingtown Archives* articles in January and February of 1928.

- Downingtown boys became part of the nationwide harmonica band craze, when a local band was formed after Albert Hoxie, a wealthy Philadelphia textile merchant, visited local schools in January 1928. Hoxie created the harmonica band craze the early 1920s when he established the Philadelphia Harmonica Band, an elite ensemble of 50 to 60 boys, dressed in military-style uniforms, which traveled the country and played for presidents, visiting dignitaries, and special events such as the Philadelphia celebration of Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight. By February, 47 boys of the 150 boys who tried out of the band were members of the **Downingtown Harmonica Band**, which practiced for an hour every Thursday afternoon at East Ward School. And the newly-formed DHS band was practicing two nights a week at West Ward School, under the direction of Amos Miley.

- Children in the Downingtown School District were given the first of three “anti-toxin serum” injections to prevent them from getting **diphtheria**. And when one student was diagnosed with having the disease, the schools were closed for one-half day so all the classrooms could be cleaned and ventilated. In the 1920s, there were an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 cases of diphtheria per year in the United States, causing 13,000 to 15,000 deaths per year.

- A landscape engineer from the State Bureau of Municipalities met with some 30 interested citizens and members of the Business Men’s Club to review plans for the **Kerr Memorial Park** in Downingtown. Officers of the park’s board of managers were Guyon Miller, president; Walter McIlvain, vice president; Ernest Smedley, treasurer; and John Noll, secretary. In addition to those officers, other member of the board were Mrs. E.P. Fisher, representing the Woman’s Club; Frank Parke and Frank McGraw, representing the Rotary Club; Perry Tyson, representing the American Legion; Park Plank and John Noll, representing the Business Men’s Club.

- The **DHS boys’ basketball team** “somehow managed to beat Berwyn 26-19, but the victory must have “unnerved” the players. Perhaps that’s why they “reverted to form. . .in a horrible exhibition of basketball” in the next game, when they lost to West Chester, according to a student reporter for the *Archive*. “We are told that Coach Remer intends to bench the entire team and use the second string in the rest of games.”

Meanwhile, the **girls’ basketball team** “completely outclassed the maidens from Unionville,” by a 26-13 margin.

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.

Vintage Ad of the Week

Al Martinis
Dutch Arms
RESTAURANT &
COCKTAIL BAR



ROUTE 340
between U.S. 30 and Thorndale
Exit of New Downingtown-Coates-
ville By-Pass.
THORNDALE, PA.

LUNCHEONS 11:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.	DINNERS 5:00 P.M. to 10 P.M.
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Sunday dinners
Noon to 7 P.M. **269-8994**

**We Cater Bowling League
Luncheons and Dinners**

This ad first appeared in the May 7, 1964 edition of the Daily Local News. Currently, the site on Bondsville Road is known as the Thorndale Inn.

Brief, but important

- While rummaging through our archival collection of newspaper clippings, we came across an interesting article about the **Downingtown Lions Club**, published in the January 15, 1931 edition of the *Downingtown News*.

The article noted that the local Lions Club's Welfare Committee was operating a Community Welfare Room at 129 E. Lancaster Avenue in Downingtown. The Community Room operation, during those Great Depression days, served families living in an area that stretched between Thorndale, Lionville and Brandywine Manor. It was managed by Jane Guthrie Davidson, a visiting nurse. And support for the Community Room came from many individuals, businesses, churches and organizations in the Downingtown area.

Although the article didn't note how many months were covered in a report put out by the Lions Club in January 1931, its service summary included these data on the distribution of food and clothing for a period during 1930: 83 families, representing 274 individuals, received 153 grocery orders. Also, 250 quarts of milk and 150 loaves of bread were being distributed each week. At Christmas in 1930, 1,250 toys were distributed to 220 kids, and 30 baskets containing 4 pounds of sugar, 4 loaves of bread, 5 pounds of oatmeal, 2 cans of milk, 1 pound of coffee, 1 can of molasses, 2 pounds of lard, 3 pounds of soup beans, cans of corn and peas and 2 pounds of beef were distributed to needy families. That's one of the reasons why now-defunct local organizations such as the Downingtown Woman's Club and the Downingtown Lions Club, were recognized as service organizations. We miss them.

- We were thrilled to see the **DHS West track and field squad** nearly win the AAA team state championship at the PIAA meet held at Shippensburg University over Memorial Day weekend. The Whippets missed winning the team crown by just one point, to the State College team. Although DHS West wasn't a powerhouse in that sport until recently (the Whippets also won the PIAA cross-country championship this past fall) Downingtown had competitive track teams as far back as 1918. That's the year when a quartet of DHS runners—Wilmer Dolbey, John Francella, Harry Haines and Hathaway Frain—beat relay teams from much larger schools and came in second in the high school relays at the Penn Relays held at the University of Pennsylvania's Franklin Field. And the Historical Society recently received, from Austin Windle (DHS Class of 1947), a copy of the program for the 50th annual Penn Relay Carnival, the nation's biggest and oldest track and field meet, held in 1945. The program noted that the DHS team—comprised of Andrew Hertel, George Windolph, Austin Windle, Emerson King and Robert Frain—competed in the Philadelphia suburban high schools one-mile relay.

- Well, we've done it again. In our haste to put out the June 2 edition of our Hist-O-Gram during a holiday week, we incorrectly reported on the election of officers of a Ladies Auxiliary of a local fire company. The item should have noted that the newly elected officers of the **Ladies Auxiliary of the Lionville Fire Co.** (not the West Bradford Fire Co.) in 1964 were: Mrs. Harold Trego, president; Mrs. Chester Mull, vice president; Lydia Bell, secretary; and Mrs. Robert Fowler, treasurer. And we didn't notice the error until two eagle-eyed, former township managers—Ed Hill, of East Caln, and Jack Hines, of West Bradford—brought the error to our attention.

It was the Shryock Paper Co. in Upper Uwchlan



Nancy and Pete Duca are truly perceptive scholars because they were the first persons to correctly identify the site in the photo above as the former Shryock Paper Co. on Dorlan Mill Road, near Route 282, in Upper Uwchlan.

In 1833, James Dorlan bought the nearby Davis and Cooper paper mill, where he began producing waterproof wallpaper. After a change in ownership, followed by a destructive fire and reconstruction in the late 19th Century, the mill began to produce binder board. The plant was taken over by the Shryock Brothers in 1915 and by Robert McIlvain in 1952. McIlvain sold it to his son-in-law, Charles Barber, in 1989. Shortly after the business closed, John and Linda Shelton purchased the property for \$1.3 million in 2005. In 2008, the Natural Lands Trust bought part of the property, to enhance access to Marsh Creek State Park and the Struble Trail.

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.

If you need more info about any of these requests, please send an email to:
Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

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.

5K for Aidan K

The fifth annual 5K for Aidan J Run/Walk for Heart-Safe Communities will begin at 9:15 AM on Saturday, June 20, on the Struble Trail, Downingtown. For details, see: www.aidansheart.org/5k-for-aidan-j-runwalk-62015.html.

On the Home Front During the American Revolution

Susannah Brody will present a program "On the Homefront, Stories of the American Revolution" at the quarterly meeting of the Historical Society of Phoenixville Area at 7:30 PM on Wednesday, June 15 at the Phoenixville Federal Bank & Trust Conference Center, 564 Nutt Road, Phoenixville. Ms. Brody will share stories of real people who lived in Southeastern PA at the time of the American Revolution. Light refreshments will be served after the meeting. All are welcome.

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/downingtownt-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.