



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. 42

October 27, 2016

Where & What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the scene in the photo above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your response to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

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, and 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.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.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.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms.html.

What was happening here 52 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in local papers in the latter part of September 1964:

- The Downingtown Joint High School Board okayed plans for an **18-room addition to the high school**, which was built on Manor Avenue in 1960. The addition would increase the building's student capacity to 1,432; DHS enrollment in September 1964 was 727 pupils. Construction costs, plus some changes to the current building were projected to be \$1.2 million. The project was to begin in December 1964, and the anticipated completion date was January 1966.

- Downingtown became the site of the Chester County Redevelopment Authority's first Urban Renewal project. And **Donald Greenleaf** was appointed as the authority's executive director, a part-time position since he would continue to be Downingtown's assistant borough manager. The initial federal Urban Renewal project was to focus on the rejuvenation of 20 properties in the borough's business district.

- Joseph Mento, chairman of the **Downingtown Chamber of Commerce's** Christmas Lighting Committee, proposed that a "massive chandelier" be erected in the borough's Center Square as an organizational project. Mento also said the \$1,000 proceeds, generated via ad sales in the Chamber's business directory, plus private contributions, could cover the cost of the chandelier project. And Raymond Baugher, superintendent of schools, suggested that the \$1,000 worth of needed repairs to the Log House, where the Chamber had its office, might be accomplished by a group from DHS.

- **Downingtown School District teachers** who did graduate work at West Chester State College during the summer months included Edith Hille, Emily Lewis, Mary Costello, Glenda Bricker, Anne Siracuse, Elma Miller, Patricia Wentz, Barbara Miller, Emma Tweed, Eileen McCardell, Julia Pollock, Walter Millard, Michael Lipschultz, Charles Forte and John Rule.

- Officers of the Live Wire Class at **Downingtown Methodist Church** were Mrs. George Wagner, president; Elisabeth Carpenter, vice president; Mrs. Raymond Brookover, secretary; and Mrs. William Woodward, treasurer.

- Bibles were presented to Brenda Whitney, Barbara Martin, Robert Hodge, Larry Bickings, Libby Ekdahl, Jeffrey Sharp, Bonnie Hoxter and Michael Geddes when they were promoted to the Junior Department (seventh grade) of the Sunday School at **Marshallton Methodist Church**.

- Youngsters from Glenmoore who entered kindergarten at **Brandywine-Wallace Elementary School** included Dane Scott Colestock, Cynthia Lyn Comstock, John Wesley Gabriel, Patricia Ann Irely, Cynthia Gail Lewis, David Brian Lownes, Frank M. Styer and Judith Ann Wolfe. Their teacher was Elizabeth Wells. And officers of the school's PTA group were: Jay Lammey, president; Harry Martini, vice president; Mrs. Edward Ker, secretary; and Harry Yost, treasurer.

- Promoted to the Sunday School's third grade at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Kimberly Fleck, Robin Nethery, Billy Hawk, Butch Hurst, Russel Miller, Glen Taylor, Peter Forsberg, Lisa Pfeiffer, Gary Maga, Darrell Regal and Cathy Shaw. Mrs. Alfred Kochel was their teacher.

- The **DHS football team** nipped Spring-Ford 13-7 in its season opener, as Tom Price scored two TDs on passes tossed by sophomore quarterback Bill Kline.

It was the demolition of the Pennsylvania House



Gregg Nelms was is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first of many people who correctly identified the site in the photo above as the Pennsylvania House, on the south side of West Lancaster Avenue, in front of the railroad station in Downingtown. Henry Eicholtz took over the tavern he operated there in the 1840s, and expanded it into a railroad hotel, where train passengers could stay. The former hotel was turned into an apartment house in the 20th Century, as well as the location of several commercial establishments on the street level. The demolition was done in the early 1980s by the borough, after the building had been the scene of several fires, and a municipal parking lot was installed there. *Editor's note: Did you notice the black box attached to the utility pole in the photo above? That was one of the seven Gamewell System fire alarm boxes used by the Downingtown Fire Department until 1985. We'll have lots of info on the alarm system in next week's Hist-O-Gram.*

How to trace your home's history

If you're seeking the history of your residence or other property in Chester County, click on: http://spesvox.org/prammer/EBHC/Researching_Historic_Properties_files/ResearchingGuide_De edAbstract.pdf.

What local folks were talking about in May 1930

Noted below are news items originally published in the Downingtown Archive 86 years ago:

- Three young men burned to death when an airplane they were flying in **crashed to earth** at the Lewis Downing farm on Bell Tavern Road in East Caln. The plane was owned and piloted by one of the victims, Carmen Van Leer of Glen Loch. The other victims were Norman Donnelly of West Chester, and Robert Stanford of Glen Loch. Downingtown firemen and the Minquas ambulance responded to the crash site, to no avail.
- Based on the 1930 federal census, the population of the borough of Downingtown had grown from 4,024 in 1920 to 4,544 a decade later.
- The Downingtown Park Commission decided to pay W.I. Pollock \$1 per square yard for the removal of an island in the middle of Brandywine Creek. The island had contributed to flooding in **Kerr Park**. Tennis courts had been installed in the park recently, and the commission planned to build a baseball diamond and field hockey field there.
- Downingtown **Police Chief** Chester Glisson said he wouldn't tolerate borough residents parking their cars in the street overnight, in order to avoid paying rent for a garage space.
- The American Legion's plans for **Memorial Day** included the firing squad and trumpeters participating in an 8:30 AM gravesite service at St. Joseph's Cemetery. Then the Legionnaires met the Coatesville Drum and Bugle Corps at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in the Johnstown section of the borough, and they all marched to the Eachus Feed Mill at the intersection of Viaduct and West Lancaster Avenues, where a parade formed. In addition to members of the American Legion and the drum and bugle corps, the parade, included the veterans of the Civil War (GAR Post), the Spanish-American War, World War I, Boy and Girl Scout Troops, local school children, and the DHS band. The band route was limited to several streets in the west end of town, before the line of march ended at the Lancaster Avenue bridge, where there was an exercise to honor servicemen who were lost at sea. The final stop was a gravesite service at Northwood Cemetery.
- A **May Day Festival** was conducted on the grounds of East Ward School in the borough. The program began with the high school band and a large number of DHS students parading down Lancaster Avenue to the elementary school. Sara Diffenderfer was crowned May Queen. Each class performed May pole dances, songs and pantomimes.
- Mrs. Walter McIlvain gifted new Linotile flooring for the chancel and sanctuary of **St. James Episcopal Church** in Downingtown. The color scheme was cream and black, to match the church's walls and pews.
- The Gulf Refining Co. had opened a **gas station** at the corner of East Lancaster Avenue and Green Street in Downingtown.
- Downingtown women who **earned bachelor's degrees** from West Chester State Teachers College were Anna Murray, Martha Brown, Kathryn Brown, Emily Lewis and Martha Larkin.
- **Dick Thomas** had begun selling "real barbecue" at his shop on Lincoln Highway in the Whitford area.

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.

Our Restaurant Raffle is bigger & better than ever

The Historical Society's fourth annual "A Taste of Chester County" Restaurant Raffle is bigger and better than ever. That's because each raffle ticket costs only \$30, and there will be three winners this year. By splitting the nine great, local restaurants participating in the raffle into three packages, each of the three winners will receive three \$50 restaurant gift cards, worth a total of \$150.

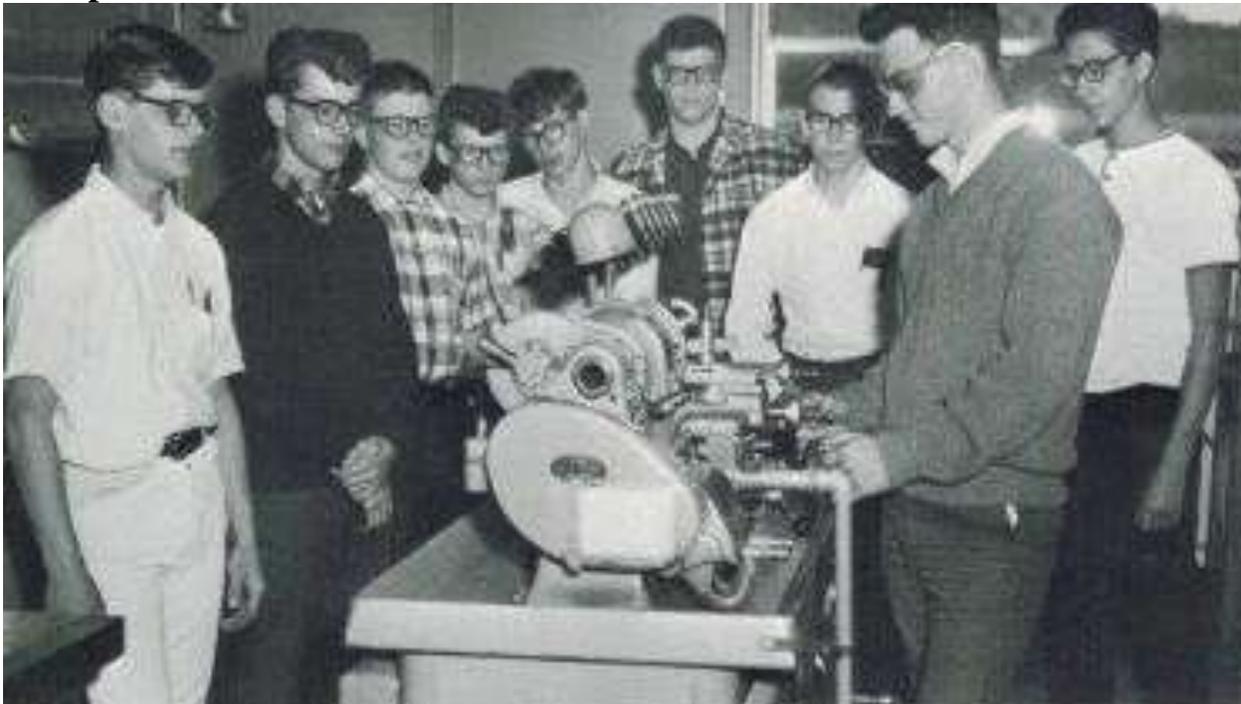
Proceeds from the raffle will enable the Historical Society to purchase a laptop and special software, which will enable us to present unique programs at local schools, churches and other sites.

Downingtown area restaurants participating in the raffle include: Beaver Creek Tavern, Georgio's, Milito's, Pomodoro, St. Anthony's, The Station Tap, The Thorndale Craft House, and the Thorndale Inn.

Tickets may be purchased online, via the Historical Society's website, www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org, or by coming to Ashbridge House, our headquarters, in the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on Route 30, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, from 1-4 PM on Sundays. You also can order them by calling the Historical Society, 610-269-1709; or by sending an email to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

The winning ticket will be drawn at 7 PM on Monday, December 19 at Ashbridge House. You don't have to be at the drawing to win. For more details on the raffle, including a disclaimer and individual restaurant's exclusions, go to: www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

Group Photo of the Week



Members of the Art Metal Club at DHS in the 1965-66 school year included, left to right: Brad Gregory, Dennis Forrester, James Harrington, James Slonaker, Donald DeGezzelle, Douglas Habecker, Robert Woodward, James Reber and Charles Williams.

Vintage Ad of the Week

Gabriel's
FRUIT MARKET
121 W' Lancaster Ave.

SPECIALS FOR SATURDAY ONLY

**Large Ripe
BANANAS
2 doz. for 25c**

**SPINACH
9c 1-4 pk.**

**Large Hand Heads of
ICEBERG LETTUCE - 7c**

**NEW BEETS
4 lb. for 15c**

**NEW CABBAGE
3 lb. for 25c**

FREE DELIVERY

This ad was originally published in the April 25, 1930 edition of the Daily Local News.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

History of Dowlin Forge

Chester County author and storyteller Susannah Brody will talk about the long-term business connections between three generations of the Dowlin family and Rebecca Lukens and her descendants. The program will be at 6 PM on Thursday, November 3 at the National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum, 50 South First Avenue, Coatesville. Cost is \$5; members free. Light refreshments will be served.

Lecture series

Sandra Momyer will talk about Historic Yellow and the Battle of the Clouds at the monthly lecture on Thursday, November 3, sponsored by the Mill at Anselma, which will be held at Bell Hall, Montgomery School on Route 113. \$5 per person; Anselma Mill members free. Wine and cheese reception at 6:30 PM; lecture starts at 7 PM.

Halloween Parade

Downingtown's Halloween Parade will be held at 3 PM on Saturday, October 29. The parade forms at Beaver Creek School, 601 W. Pennsylvania Ave. and ends at Kerr Park. For more details, see:

<http://downingtowntown.org/Documents/Temporary%20Documents/2016%20DTOWN%20HALLOWEEN.pdf>.

Dash of the Living Dead

The Downingtown Main Street's Dash of the Living Dead will begin at 2 PM on Saturday, October 29. The course begins at the Kerr Park tennis courts and continues to Aston Avenue, back to Kerr Park, and then continues on the path to Johnsontown, and then to the finish line in Log House field. For info on registration and other details, see:

www.runtheday.com/registration/race_info/dash-of-the-living-dead5.

Flag Raising Ceremony

The Downingtown-Thorndale Regional Chamber of Commerce will host a Veterans Day flag raising ceremony at the Veterans Memorial area in Kerr Park, Downingtown, at 10 AM on Friday, November 11.

Roast Beef Dinner

The Old Caln Historical Society will hold its annual, multi-course roast beef dinner at 5 PM on Saturday, November 5, at the Thorndale Inn. George Burns, a historical comedian files, will provide entertainment, and there may even be a "Gracie" sighting. Tickets are \$30 per person, including gratuity and the cost of entertainment. The public is invited. Call Joan 610-384-9496 or Lois 610-384-8153 for reservations. The deadline is October 30.

Christmas Bazaar

Crafters who wish to sell items at the Downingtown United Methodist Church's Christmas Bazaar must reserve a table space by Monday, November 7 by calling 484-678-3814. The bazaar will be held at the church, on Saturday, November 12.

Fine Arts & Craft Show

There will be a juried show, featuring original work in ceramics, glass, wood, paper, fiber arts, photography, jewelry and more, at the Lincoln and Washington buildings at Historic Yellow Springs in Chester Springs, from 10 AM to 5 PM on Friday, November 11, Saturday, November 12 & Sunday, November 13. Admission: \$5; free to members.

CMMD Run

The Team CMMD This Run's Personal 5K road race will be held at 9 AM on Saturday, November 5 at DHS West 445 Manor Ave., Downingtown. Proceeds go to the American Cancer Society. For more info, see:

www.racemenu.com/events/141009-Team-CMMD-This-Run-s-Personal.

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/downingtowntown-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<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.