



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. 38

September 29, 2016

Where and What Was 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.

What was happening in here 67 years ago

Noted below are items originally published in local papers in early March 1949:

- Although DHS was offering excellent academic programs, a Middle States Evaluation team determined that the **high school was “overcrowded.”**
- Downingtown’s Borough Council authorized the advertising for \$100,000 worth of bonds to pay for a new sewage treatment operation, after the Pennsylvania Sanitary Water Board approved Downingtown’s plans to build a **new waste disposal facility**. Also discussed at length at a Council meeting was the issue of the fire whistle not being heard throughout the borough.
- Members of the **DHS Alumni Association**, who were assigned to make arrangement for the annual banquet at the Alert Fire Co. in April, were Vinton Smedley, chairman; Thomas Brookover, nominations; Stella Ballentine and Paul Dague, necrology; Marion Phillips, reception; Frank Bishop and Ann McGraw, publicity; Mary Mahan, decorations; and Mrs. Edgar Hutchison, awards.
- The **American Legion Post** held an open house at the recently renovated post home at 336 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. Guests were given a cigarette lighter when they arrived. The committee responsible for the affair included Paul Martin and William Wharry, plus Ladies Auxiliary members Mrs. Paul McCombs, Mrs. Paul Dague, Mrs. Mark Bareford and Esther Williams.
- When the **DHS Music Association** met, several of Marion Phillips’ Problems of Democracy students offered a program on “Federal Aid to Education.” The participants were Caroline Matthews, Nancy Wagoner, Joseph Eby, John Windle and Rogers Bender.
- Elected as officers of the **Ladies Auxiliary of St. Anthony’s Lodge** were Agnes Sciarretta, president; Mary Mento, vice president; Eva Taraschi, secretary; and Florence Pomento, treasurer.
- Amos Summers was elected president of the **Downingtown Sportsmen’s Club**. Also elected were Yerkes People, vice president; Edward Dunmore, secretary; George Aumiller, treasurer; and directors Clyde Esworthy, Norman Roberts, Dr. George Bousum, Curtis Dowlin and Elmer Schrupf. The club had purchased 37 pheasants, at a cost of \$3 each, for a shoot.
- Robert Ash, Oscar Darlington, Frank Swarner and Evans Miller were the four members of the **Patriotic Order of Sons of America** camp in Downingtown, who were honored for having been POSA members for 50 years. Elected as officers of the POSA camp were Weldon Bicking, president; Marvin Shirk, vice president; Thomas Phillips, master of forms; Graham Bentley, recording secretary; Leland Wilson treasurer; Gilbert Fox, financial secretary; Atmore Pollock, conductor; Parke Darlington, inspector; and Allen Keim, sentinel.
- Jack Helm canned 10 points, as the **DHS boys’ basketball team** defeated Bridgeport 42-37 in the first round of the Spring City Lions Club Tournament, which apparently involved teams which had not qualified for the PIAA playoffs. And although DHS was ahead 22-15 at the end of the first half, the Whippets lost to Amity by a 43-40 margin in the next round. Once again, Downingtown’s offense was led by Helm, 12 points, and Ron Hogg, 10.

Have you ever wondered about the History where you live?

“SLICES OF DOWNINGTOWN HISTORY”

A *‘Free to the Public’* Multi-Part Program presented by
The Downingtown Area Historical Society and the Downingtown Library

SLICE 1:
Friday, October 7
6:30PM
“MILLTOWN”

SLICE 2:
Thursday, Jan. 26
6:30PM
“Iron Horse Comes to
Downingtown”

Location:
Downingtown Library
122 Wallace Avenue
Downingtown, PA 19335

Register your spot for
either or both sessions
today!

Call the Library
@ **610 269 2741**, or,
Register Online:
www.downingtownlibrary.org

- Why was it called “Milltown”?
- Who started Downingtown?
- Who was here first and why?
- How does a Mill work?
- Does the area where I live have history?
- What is a “Mill Race”?

- How did people move around in the 19th Century?
- Who built the roads and railroads?
- What is the Pennsylvania Railroad?
- What did the road and railroad system look like?
- How did the road and railroad system attribute to the growth of Downingtown?

Come “Grab a Slice” of History!

Park Commission wanted to move Log House in 1929

Noted below are items originally published in the Downingtown Archive in the winter of 1929:

- The Downingtown Memorial Park Commission was considering the option of moving the **Log House**, the borough's oldest building, from East Lancaster Avenue to a spot near the tennis courts in Kerr Park. The relocation proposal also called for installing the Log House on top of a cement basement foundation, which would include showers and a dressing room on the lower level, to be used by athletes competing in the park. And it was suggested that the Log House would become a museum where antiques were displayed

- Downingtown residents turned down the proposition to **use voting machines** in future elections, by a 738-437 margin.

- Installation of three bowling alleys on the ground floor of the **Minquas Fire Co.** was completed. The alleys were located in the rear of the fire station, in the area formerly used by the Downingtown Motor Co. to store cars. The pool tables were relocated from the second floor to the bowling alley area. The gymnasium on the second floor continued to be used for DHS physical education classes, as well as DHS's home court for basketball games.

- Members of the **Downingtown Rotary Club** took some 45 borough boys and girls in eight cars to Philadelphia for a Christmas treat, which included touring historic sites in the city, a visit to Gimbel's Department Store to see the toyland and eat lunch, and attended a Christmas party at the Mastbaum Theatre.

- Extensive renovations at the **Pennsylvania House** in the borough by new owner Albert Goldberg, included six store fronts on West Lancaster Avenue and creation of nine apartments on the second floor. Two of the six stores were already occupied, by Candyland and Albert's, a men's haberdashery.

- The Sunbeam Class, comprised of young ladies in the congregation of **Hopewell Methodist Church**, East Brandywine, sponsored a children's birthday party. Entertainment at the party included several songs played by the Sunday School's orchestra.

- The Cheerio Club, which was connected with the **Glenmoore Fire Co.**, conducted a card party at the fire station. Proceeds were to be used to finance the purchase of a fire engine.

- Leaders of the **Downingtown Business Men's Club** were assured by State Senator William Clark that he would help secure the funding needed to complete the macadamizing of the road between Downingtown and Lionville, which was often called Cemetery Road, and is now known as Route 113.

- Although the **DHS football team** had only won two games--against Glen Nor and Spring City-- and lost to Phoenixville, Berwyn and West Chester, the lighter Whippets essentially pulled off a major upset when they tied Coatesville, 14-14 in their final home game. Players who received varsity letters at the annual post-season banquet were Earl Fulton, William Showalter, Nelson Norris, George Snyder, Donald Dixon, Joseph Mento, Harold Forbes, Charles Horning, Harry Deets, Newlin Moore, Ross Dague, Junior Pawling, David Heilig and Morris Yohn. Student manager James Mahan also received a letters. *(Editor's note: Downingtown had not yet begun its annual rivalry against Pottstown on Thanksgiving morning.)*

It was a protest against speeders on Route 322 in Guthriesville



Dean Krapf is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person who correctly identified the scene in the photo above as a protest in the late 1970s against PennDOT's failure to lower the speed limit to 35 miles per hour on Route 322, and its refusal to install a traffic light at the crossroads in Guthriesville in East Brandywine Township. The protest occurred after a local youngster was killed on that highway while delivering newspapers on his bicycle.

What local folks were talking about 52 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in area newspapers in late August 1964:

- The new **Pickering Valley Elementary School** was opened, according to principal Walter Hessinger and Glen Wagner, president of the Pickering-Brandywine Joint School District. Personnel hired to work in the new school's cafeteria were manager Alma Arrowwood, Mary Styer and Dorothy Greenleaf.
- Richard Warren was named president of **Downingtown National Bank**, following the death of Joseph Miller. Other promotions included: Jacob Lammey, executive vice president, Raymond Schollenberger, vice president, and Spencer Windle, cashier, William Sheridan, assistant cashier, and Gilbert Algier, teller.
- **Helen Pawling** sold her house and store at the intersection of West Lancaster and Viaduct Avenues in the borough to **Peter Bonaduce**. Many West Ward School students bought penny candy at Mrs. Pawling's store for decades. Bonaduce razed the buildings on the Pawling property, to add space and remodel his service station at the site.

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.

Group Photo of the Week



The DHS Class of 1956 recently had its 60th reunion. Those who attended included, left to right, seated: Judy Moulder Ellingsworth, Amelia Talucci D’Ginto, Elsie Sinex Tarr, Betty Roberts Marcocci, Joan Piersol Burks, Geddy Manzi; second row: Florence Smith McKeever, Ginny Law Pierce, Sam Matthews, Philomena DiBerardinis Kanouse, Joe Francella, Patty Hilton O’Reilly, Carol Bloom Cook, Joan Miley Stanford, Patty Mason Simmons, Mary Jane Perella Bulotta, Ed Delio, Danny Marcocci, Ralph Hall; third row: Jack Skiles, Don Mull, John Bousum, Jack Dawson, Tom Lee, Corrine Cook Bailiff, Donald Ray, Jim Wells, John Carmichael, Fred Whitely, Roger Manley.

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.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.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.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html.

Please come to our Clip/Paste sessions

We’re looking for volunteers to participate in the Historical Society’s clip/paste sessions, to be held from 1-4 PM on Sunday, October 2. The session, which will involve clipping and pasting newspaper articles for our archival collection, will be held at Ashbridge House, our 307-year-old headquarters, next to the Chick-Fil-A restaurant in the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on Route 30 in East Caln.

Vintage Ad of the Week

**Grand
Opening
TONIGHT
Exton Roller Rink**
ROUTE 30—JUST EAST OF EXTON CROSSROADS

SKATING
7 P.M. 'TIL 10 P.M.
Watermelon Party
10 P.M.
Record Hop
10 P.M. 'TIL MIDNIGHT
ADMISSION ONLY **5c**
SKATE TO LIVE ORGAN
MUSIC ALL NIGHT

This ad originally appeared in the September 12, 1948 edition of the *Daily Local News*.

Mascherino mystery has been solved

As many of you know, the extended Mascherino family in Downingtown is HUUUUUUGE! And when many in the Mascherino clan saw that one of the players on the Downingtown Junior High basketball team in the late 1930s, which was included in the Group Photo in last week's Hist-O-Gram (www.downingtowntownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/September%202022%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf) was listed as "M. Mascherino," they were perplexed. Yes, they recognized John "Topy" Mascherino who also in that team photo, but they claimed there was no "M. Mascherino" in that generation.

Thankfully, Michael Lyons came to our rescue, when he not only advised us that the little guy on the far left in the photo was his uncle, Jack Lyons, who passed in the past year, but he also noted that the big guy on the far right was Michael Moschitta.

Don't forget, we used the names listed on the back of the original photo, when we published picture last week. But back in those days, names of individuals in a group photo in the DHS yearbook were unnecessary because it was a small community and everyone knew everybody. Maybe that's the real reason why the DHS yearbook was known as "The Cuckoo" until 1955.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

DHS West Homecoming

Homecoming weekend begins with a parade at 6:30 PM on Thursday, September 29, followed by a football game at 7 PM on Friday, September 30.

Tour of National 9/11 Memorial Museum

Lukens Veterans Guild is sponsoring a trip to the National 9/11 Memorial Museum in New York City on November 2. An Elite bus coach leaves Coatesville at 8 AM. Trip, which costs \$95 a person, includes a timed museum ticket, dinner at Hometown Buffet Restaurant and driver gratuity. Reservation deadline is September 29. For more details and to make a reservation, call Sharon Tandarich at 610-715-2993.

Del-Val Olds Show

The Delaware Valley Oldsmobile Club will have its 14th annual show at Kerr Park at 9 AM on Sunday, October 9. For more info, see: <http://clubs.hemmings.com/delvaloldsclub/DVOCfallshow2016.pdf>.

Fall Craft Festival & Chili Cook-off

There will be a Fall Craft Festival and Chili Cook-off, plus hand-crafted items galore and treasures from Granny's Attic, at Simpson Meadows, 101 Plaza drive, Downingtown, from 9 AM until 2 PM on Saturday, October 22.

Operation Military Christmas Care

Hibernia United Methodist Church will be sending much-needed care packages to servicemen and women overseas this holiday season. Operation Military Christmas Care Package runs from September 20 through October 17. Drop-off locations include the East Brandywine Township Building and Village Hardware. Downingtown drop-off locations are: Downingtown Borough Hall, Dad n Jac's This & That, and Dane Décor. For more details and a o view flyer a list of suggested items, click on:

www.downingtowntown.org/Documents/Operation%20Military%20Christmas%20flyer%202016.pdf<http://www.downingtowntown.org/Documents/Operation%20Military%20Christmas%20flyer%202016.pdf>, or call Jane Bracken at 610-733-1212.

Open House at Fire Companies

The Downingtown Fire Department will have open houses from 6:30 PM until 9 PM on Wednesday, October 12 at the Alert Fire Co., 122 W. Pennsylvania Ave. and the Minquas Fire Co., 141 Wallace Ave.

Roast Beef Dinner

Marshallton United Methodist Church, 1282 West Strasburg Road, will host a Roast Beef Dinner on Saturday, October 15. The menu will also include mushroom & brown gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, cole slaw, applesauce, rolls & butter, dessert and beverage. Hours for the "Eat-in" or "Take-out" option are from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. Cost is \$12/adult and \$5/child (5 to 12 years of age). Contact the church office at (610) 696-5247 or via office@marshalltonchurch.org with any questions.

Jim Croce

Carol Sinex Schmidt, a member of the East Brandywine Historical Commission, will speak about the life and times of singer/songwriter Jim Croce, who lived in Chester County, at 7 PM Tuesday, October 18 when the West Caln Historical Society meets at the township building 721 W. Kings Highway, Wagontown. The meeting is free and open to the public.

Senior Expo & Octoberfest

The Downingtown Area Senior Center will have a Senior Expo, sponsored by State Rep. Harry Lewis, from 10 AM until 2 PM on Tuesday, October 11. It will include county, and state agencies, as well as local businesses and non-profits, which provide services to seniors. And from 6:30 to 11 PM. on Saturday, October 22, the Senior Center will have an Octoberfest, which will feature dinner and dancing. To purchase tickets (\$35 per person), call the Senior Center, 610-269-3939.

Library Love

Roberts Subaru will sponsor the Library Love fun night from 6-9 PM on Thursday, September 29 at the Downingtown Country Club. In addition to cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, there will be auctions and a raffle. Tickets are \$40. Proceeds go to the Downingtown Library. For more info, see: <http://downingtown.org/Documents/Temporary%20Documents/LibraryLove9-29-16.jpg>,

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 <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.