



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. 8, No. 15

April 13, 2017

What & Where 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: dahs19335@gmail.com.

Officers of the Downingtown Area Historical Society are: Phil Dague, president; Jim Sundman, vice president; Marion Piccolomini, recording secretary; Lauren Fagan, treasurer; and Donna Capriotti, corresponding secretary. The board of directors includes: Harry Helms, Mike Dunn, Dennis Walton and Jay Worrall. Carol Grigson is the archivist.

What was happening here 67 years ago

Noted below are items originally published in local newspapers in the early part of January 1950:

- Plans to add 12 classrooms and two industrial arts shops to the **Junior-Senior High School** were discussed by the School Board. Also, Supervising Principal Charles Emery projected that enrollment at the school would increase to over 300 pupils by 1955.
- The planned extension of Pennsylvania Avenue in the borough, from Uwchlan Avenue to Wallace Avenue; arranging for a permanent bronze plaque to replace the Honor Roll of those who served in the military during World War II, which had been next to Borough Hall; and the Chamber renting the Log House to be used as its office were discussed by the **Downingtown Chamber of Commerce**.
- Re-elected officers of the **Downingtown Building & Loan Association** were Josiah Phillips, president; Edgar Griffith, first vice president; George Foreman, second vice president; Chandler Roberts, secretary; Joseph Miller, treasurer; and Asa Pannebaker, solicitor. The board also included George Perry, Parke Plank, Ray Sheeler, Howard Baldwin, Robert Ash, Lewis Downing, Sherman Kirkpatrick, Raymond Greenleaf, Edwin Baldwin and John Fisher.
- Inducted as members of the **Downingtown Lions Club** were Frank Bicking, Stanley Walter, Edwin Ellmore, Allison Hallowell, Clifford Orr and Charles Raysor. The club was the sponsor of a new Cub Scout Pack, led by Robert Plank, cubmaster.
- Chaplain Daniel Zittle installed the following officers of the **Minquas Fire Co.**: George Perry, president; Everett Hoopes, vice president; Vinton Smedley, treasurer; Hallan Usher, recording secretary; and Percy Hyde, trustee. More than 200 guests came to the fire company's New Year's Eve party.
- Elected as officers of the **Lionville Fire Co.** were Harry Ruth, president; Morris Griffith, vice president; Harvey Happersett, secretary; Ira Smedley, treasurer; Schuyler Rennard, chief; and Elmer Kochel, assistant chief.
- Some 80 employees and guests of the **Shyrock Paper Co.** were entertained at a turkey dinner, served at the Glen Moore Fire Co. by the Ladies Auxiliary.
- Dr. Thomas Parke was re-elected president of the **Downingtown Library**. Also re-elected were Joseph Huggins, vice president; William MacFarland, treasurer; Jay Lammey, assistant treasurer; and Mrs. George Fisher, secretary. Also elected to the board were Gibson McIlvaine, Anna McI. Miller and Theodore Griffith. Librarian Mary Rogers reported that there were 145 subscribers to the library.
- Elected as leaders of the Sunday School at **St. Pauls' Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were George Taylor, superintendent; Isabel Acker, assistant superintendent; Charles Thompson, second assistant superintendent; Mrs. John Trego, recording secretary; Elizabeth Pyle, treasurer; Robert Miller, assistant financial secretary; Elizabeth Happersett, primary superintendent; Mrs. Jonathan Miller, assistant primary superintendent; Edith Cornwall, missionary superintendent; Mrs. Frank Walton, cradle roll superintendent; and Mrs. Elmer Ruth, home department superintendent.
- Musicians from the Junior-Senior High who made the Southeastern Pennsylvania **District Band** were Louise Bartelmo, clarinet; Joan Lenhardt, cornet; Joseph Streamer, bass clarinet; and Paul Miller, bass horn.
- Members of **Marshallton Boy Scout Troop 52**, who hiked to Harvey's Rocks and cooked a dinner there, were Dale Ellingsworth, Robert McCue, Charles Brooks, Ralph Hall,

Harold Trimble, Malcolm Preston and Don Lambert. They were accompanied by leaders Kenneth Trimble and Robert Bunting.

- Mr. and Mrs. Harry Peoples, James Casenta and Norman Howe were winners of cash prizes for their Christmas decorations in front of their homes in a competition sponsored by the **Downingtown Christmas Committee**. However, the Committee revealed that it had to dip into the surplus from 1948, in order to cover the \$170.58 deficit it incurred in 1949.

- The Red Heads All-American girls' basketball squad from Missouri, entertained a capacity crowd at the DHS gym, as they beat a "team" comprised of Downingtown men. Proceeds from the exhibit game were to be used to support the Downingtown Community Basketball League, sponsored by the **Downingtown Young Men's Association**.

- The Sunday School at **Messiah Lutheran Church** was led by Hathaway Frain, superintendent; Dr. George Bousum, assistant superintendent; Marvin Taylor, secretary; and Ralph Kinsey, treasurer. And the teachers were Mrs. Clair Skiles, Dorothy Bransford, Mrs. Elwood Farra, Mrs. B. M. Hashinger, Mrs. George Bousum, Mrs. Joseph Streamer, Mrs. Edward Murray and Hope Runk.

- Officers elected by members of the **Ladies Auxiliary of the American Legion Post** included Mrs. Elmer Schrupf, president; Mrs. Clifton Walton, vice president; Mrs. James Hurtt, financial secretary; Mrs. Joseph Brown, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Warren Yocum, treasurer.

What locals were talking about 61 years ago

Noted below are items originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* in March 1956:

- Mrs. William Keen was elected president of the **Downingtown Woman's Club**. Other officers were Mrs. David Kohlhas, vice president; Mrs. Robert Kaster, recording secretary; Mrs. James Echols, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Joseph Travaglini, treasurer.

- Officers of the Woman's Society of Christian Service at **Glen Moore Methodist Church** were Freda Johnson, president; Lois Craig, vice president; Mrs. Rodney Ray, secretary; and Romaine Garrett, treasurer.

- Models in the millinery show at **Fairview Presbyterian Church**, Glen Moore, were Mrs. John Galt, Roberta Davis, Mrs. Howard Van Meter, Mrs. Oscar Miller, Mrs. John Hoffman and Dianne Hoffman.

- New officers of the **Downingtown Optimists Club** were Thomas Byerly, president; Allen Hughes and Cliff Walton, vice presidents; Paul McCombs, sergeant-at-arms; Raymond Brown, Luigi D'Addezio, Edward Peterson and James Morris, directors.

- Mrs. James McCahon was elected president of the **Downingtown Woman's Club**. Other officers were Mrs. William Gibb, first vice president; Mrs. Henry Stewart, second vice president; Mrs. Arthur Simmers, recording secretary; Mrs. William Mittel, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. John Phillips, treasurer.

- Winners of the essay contest, sponsored by the **American Legion Auxiliary**, were Roseann Mannion, St. Joseph's School; Jeanne Emery, Downingtown Junior High School; and Beatrice Rubincam, DHS.

Vintage Ad of the Week



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●

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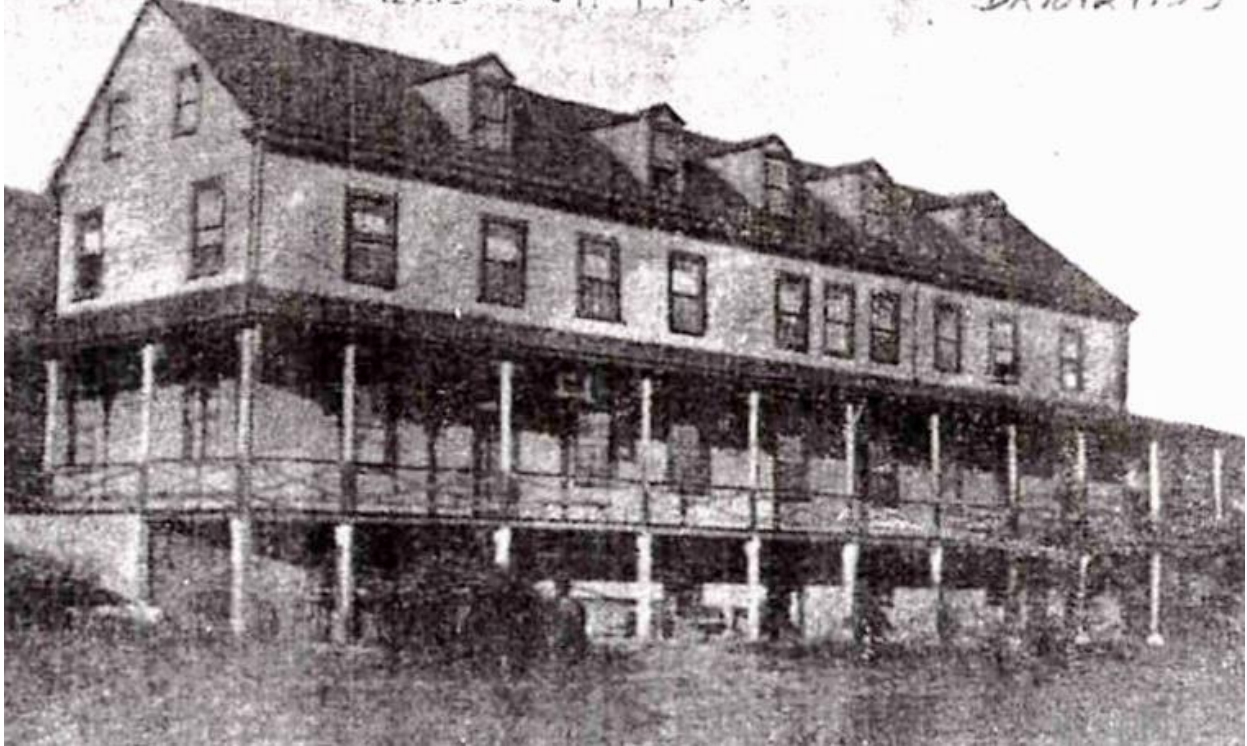
This ad was originally published in the August 21, 1931 edition of the *Downingtown Archive*.

What was happening here 36 years ago

Noted below are items originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* in the latter part of 1981:

- Local home builders and realtors turned out en masse to the Downingtown Area School Board meeting, to protest against the planned **\$1,000 building fee** to be assessed for each new structure in the district.
- Some 45 local residents had begun to **commute between Downingtown and Philadelphia** via 15-passenger, leased vans because SEPTA wasn't offering regional service between those two points, and the cost of Amtrak service had increased to \$162 per month, while van pooling only cost \$75 each month.
- Upper Uwchlan officials learned that Harrisburg had decided to lease out the operation of the **swimming pool at Marsh Creek State Park**.
- Tony Madiro Jr. (Alert) and Steve Miller (Minquas) received the Outstanding Firefighter awards at the **Downingtown Fire Department's** annual banquet. Tony Madiro Sr., of the Minquas Ambulance Corps, was named the Outstanding Corpsman.
- Jane Thompson and Brian Geschwindt received the **Outstanding Seniors Awards** at the DHS Alumni Association banquet.
- Wallace Township supervisors donated \$200 to **Boy Scout Troop 79, Glen Moore**, to show their appreciation for the scouts collecting some 800 bags of trash along the community's roads.
- Recent **property transfers** included: 608 Brainerd Place, Uwchlan, \$138,500; 523 Grant Ave., Downingtown, \$20,346; 3 Hessian Court, East Brandywine, \$79,892.
- East Brandywine's Recreation Commission donated \$1,500 to the township's **baseball program**, in order to establish and equip four teams. Also, improvements had been made to the baseball fields at the Spring Knoll development and at East Brandywine Baptist Church.
- The Lionville Youth Association's new Little League was named in **Dorothy Foster's** honor. Foster, the LYA's administrative vice president, spearheaded the project.
- The **DHS baseball team** extended its unbeaten streak to six games, as it swept a doubleheader with Kennett, 11-2 and 6-0, and upended Twin Valley 4-2. Penn Fry got two hits, Vic Johnson slammed a two-run triple, Bob Trauger chipped in two RBIs, and Greg Barrow limited the Blue Demons to three hits in the Kennett opener.
- The **DHS tennis squad** came in second in the Whippets' Invitational Tournament, by beating Lower Merion 4-3 in the opening round and dropping the championship match to Penncrest. Frank Englund was Downingtown's sole singles winner against Lower Merion. But the doubles teams of Mike Biddle-Mike Gaul, Rich Kaluza-Andy Lefko and Jeff Heckman-John Foster were all victorious.
- The **DHS girls' lacrosse team** crushed Twin Valley 16-3, as Amy Horne tallied seven goals, Fern Faller got four, Lisa Lynch, two; and Terry Bright, one.
- When the **DHS girls' track team** defeated Boyertown 102-29, Michele Jacecko, Jane Dickson, Sue Punt and Linda Easton combined to win the 400M relay. Kim Cumens, Cheryl Latshaw and Lisa Hauptert, finished first, second and third, respectively, in the shot put event.
- Winners in the **Fish Rodeo**, sponsored by the Downingtown Sportsmen's Association, were Brad Haldeman, first and biggest (16.5 inches) rainbow; Mark Tyson, first catfish; Milton Burrell, biggest (12.5 inches) catfish; James Tarasca, first blue gill; Jeff Hetrick, largest (7.5 inches) blue gill. Brian Petrella caught the only perch.

It's the Washington Building at Yellow Springs



Local historian Dan Lindley is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person who correctly identified the site in the photo above as the Washington Building at Yellow Springs in West Pikeland Township. The earliest record of the structure is a permit for use as a tavern in 1750, when Yellow Springs was a fashionable spa. By the 1760's, the original log cabin structure had been replaced with additions through 1876. Its name is derived when George Washington used it as a temporary headquarters. The building has also served as an inn/restaurant/hotel and place of entertainment during both Spa eras (1722-1777 and 1781-1865), a boy's dormitory and dining room for the Soldiers' Orphans School (1869-1912), a men's dormitory and dining room for the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Country School (1916-1952), and a cafeteria and housing for employees of Good News Productions, which produced the film classic *The Blob* (1952-1974). The building was a restaurant until 2005.

Brief but important

Noted in late 19th Century issues of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* were these two local news items:

- When the \$14,000 **Downingtown Methodist Church** was dedicated on May 25, 1890, there was a \$7,000 debt to pay for the new edifice on Brandywine Avenue. However, that tab was reduced to just \$2,000 by the time the dedication service was over that day. G. Thompson Guthrie was the contractor, and T. Roney Williamson was the architect.
- The **Prohibition movement** was thriving in Chester County long before the 1920s. According to the June 18, 1899 edition of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, residents of Downingtown borough were divided over the outlawing of booze. East Ward folks were in favor of Prohibition by a 122-61 margin; while West Warders were against it by 135-68.

- We failed, in last week's Hist-O-Gram, to include **Bob Stevens'** name in the caption under the photo, taken in 2001, of the past presidents of the Alert Fire Co. Mistakes like that happen when the Hist-O-Gram editor is in his 80th year. You'll find Bob's smiling face in the back row, second from the left, in the Group Photo of the Week on page 8 of the April 6 Hist-O-Gram, which you can access via: www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/April%206%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf.
- The Historical Society's headquarters will be closed on **Easter Sunday**, April 16.

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/ReseachingGuide_De edAbstract.pdf

Free Ads for Non-Profit

Paper Shredding

Wiggins Shredding will conduct a free paper shredding event at Bradford heights Elementary School, 1330 Romig Road, West Bradford, from 9 AM until noon on Saturday, April 22. You can bring up to four packing boxes of paper materials—no cardboard—to be shredded.

Chamber Dinner

The Downingtown-Thorndale Chamber will have its 72nd annual dinner at the Downingtown Country Club at 5 PM on Thursday, April 27. The event include presentation of the Citizen of the Year award to Jack Hines and the Business of the Year award to the DeMatteo Insurance Agency. To order tickets and for more details, see: <http://dtrcc.com/ChamberDinner.html>

History of Dowlin Forge

Susannah Brody will present a program on the History of Dowlin Forge at 2 PM on Sunday May 7, at Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site in Elverson. Susannah is a storyteller, historian and author of several books on local history. The free program is sponsored by the Friends of Hopewell Furnace.

Demonstration Grind at the Mill at Anselma

Saturday, April 8 will be the first grind of the season at The Mill at Anselma. Come and experience the rumble of the wooden cogs, the turning of the iron water wheel and the grinding of corn into feed this coming Saturday, and every second Saturday of the month until the end of the year. The Mill at Anselma, at 1730 Conestoga Road in Chester Springs is open 10am - 4pm, Saturday and Sunday. Admission \$3 - \$5, depending on age. Membership available. See www.anselmamill.org for more information.

St. Anthony's Fundraiser

The Women's Auxiliary of St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 Church St., Downingtown, will have its quarterly fundraiser on Sunday afternoon, April 23. For details, see: <http://saintanthonyslodge.com/Documents/2017%20Event%20Flyers/QuarterRaffle%204-23-17.pdf>

Drug Take-Back Event

On Saturday, April 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the Downingtown Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will give the public an opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. Bring your pills for disposal to the Downingtown Borough Hall Annex Building at 4 W. Lancaster Avenue, Downingtown. (The DEA cannot accept liquids or needles or sharps, only pills or patches.) The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. For more information, call 610-269-0344, ext. 200 or email info@downingtowntown.org.

Plant Sale

The Garden Class of The Woman's Community Club of Uwchlan will hold its annual plant sale on Saturday, May 6, 2017 from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. at the 1756 Uwchlan Meeting House, 5 North Village Avenue, Exton. Come early for the best selection of member-grown perennials, grasses, shrubs, and trees. Container gardens, gourd birdhouses, herbs, vegetables, annuals, and information on native gardening and pollinators are also offered. Proceeds from the sale benefit the 1756 Uwchlan Meeting House, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. For additional information, please call 610-363-9726.

Liberty Ships of WWII

Larry Freeman, a docent on Liberty Ship living history tours on SS John Brown cruises from Baltimore, will speak at a meeting of the West Caln Historical Society about the 2,710 Liberty Ships built for WWII; 200 were lost in battle, and only two remaining in operation today. Meeting will be held at West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Highway, Wagontown, at 7 PM on Tuesday, April 18. The meetings are free and open to the public; all are welcome.

Mulch Sale

Members of the DHS football team are selling mulch, and they are willing to come to your home to spread the mulch you purchase. The mulch is provided by Sweetwater100 Inc., which deliver it to your home. The cost is \$28 per yard of mulch. For more details call: Karen Laughman, 484-574-9728, or Tim Glennon, 484-999-7590.

Community Christmas Tree

In 2016, the Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Committee celebrated the start of the holiday season by purchasing a live Christmas tree, which was placed next to the Log House next to Kerr Park, where a well-attended tree lighting ceremony—with music, refreshments and Santa—was conducted. However, the Committee's search for a large, live tree for Christmas 2017 has proved to be difficult and expensive. So, the Committee has decided to purchase a 17-foot-tall Giant Everest artificial tree, with a 3-foot-tall lighted star for the 2017 Community Christmas Tree, which will last for many years. To cover the cost of making that one-time purchase, the Committee has undertaken a fundraising effort. If you would like to help the Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Committee buy this tree, please visit the website: www.dtownchristmas.com, where you'll find all the information about sponsorship levels, or contact Dianne at 484-678-6835 for more information.

Craft/Antique/Flea Market & Ross Kershey

Table space is available for craft/antique/flea market to be held from 9 AM until 2 PM on Saturday, May 13 on the grounds of the Caln Township Municipal Building, Municipal Drive, Thorndale. Sponsored by the Old Caln Historical Society; call Joan 610-384-9496 or Lois 610-384-8153 for information. The Old Caln Historical Society also will sponsor the program when Ross Kershey speaks about Aaron Burr - Hero or Villain? The program, which is free and open to the public, will be held at 2 PM on Sunday, April 23. Also at the Caln Township Municipal Building. Parking is available. Reservations not required. For information, call 610-384-8153.

Free Trout Rodeo

The Brandywine Trout and Conservation Club's Free Trout Rodeo, for kids 15 and younger, will be held from 9 AM until 2 PM on Saturday, April 25. Registration starts at 8 AM at the shed in the Kerr Park parking lot near the playground.

Readers on the Run

The Readers on the Run races, to benefit the Downingtown Library, will be held on Saturday, April 22. Events include a 5K, 1.5-mile timed walk, and a kids' dash. Registration at Green Street and East Pennsylvania Avenue, Downingtown, begins at 7 AM. Cash prizes of \$150, \$100 and \$50 will be awarded to the three top male and female runners in the 5K race. There also will be team competition. For more details, see: <https://www.runtheday.com/register/detail/readers-on-the-run>

East Brandywine Speakers

At 3:30 PM on Sunday, April 23, the East Brandywine Historical Commission will offer a program by Marion Piccolomini, local author and historian, on her book, "World War II and Chester County," which describes how life

changed for local residents, businesses and institutions during the World War II years. The program will be conducted at the township building, 1214 Horseshoe Pike in Guthriesville.

Oldies Night

Jerry Blavat, the Geator, will appear at the Oldies Night dance party, sponsored by the Downingtown Area Senior Center from 7-11 PM on Saturday, April 29 in the covered bridge room at the Kimberton Fire Co. on Route 113. Tickets, \$75 each, include food, beer and wine. With reserved seating, tickets must be pre-ordered by calling 610-269-3939.

Alert's Golf Outing

The Alert Fire Co. will have its fourth annual golf outing on Monday, May 8 at the Downingtown Country Club. Entry fee is \$110 for each golfer includes: registration and lunch starting at 11:30 AM, shotgun start at 1 PM, greens fees, cart, beverages on the course, awards dinner, various prizes and door prizes Proceeds benefit Alert Fire Co. For more info, see: <http://alertgolfouting.org/>.

Nite at the Races

Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas committee will hold a Nite at the Races fundraiser at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 Church Street, Downingtown, on Saturday, May 20. Doors open at 6 PM. Tickets are \$25 which includes food, beer & soda. Information about the event, how to buy tickets and horses can be found on the Christmas website at www.dtownchristmas.com or by calling Dianne at 484-678-6835. The Committee is hunting for raffle prizes and businesses to place ads in the event program. Deadline is May 10. Proceeds will go towards the 2017 Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas event.

Brochure on DARC classes & activities

You can gain access to the latest Downingtown Area Recreational Consortium brochure, listing all classes and activities, at: www.darc.info/. 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, <http://josephspeople.org/our-chapters/downingtown/>, 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: cheryl.spaulding@josephspeople.org.