



## Downingtown Area Historical Society **Hist-O-Gram**

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

[www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org)

*The past is never done. It is not even past--William Faulkner*

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## 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](mailto: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 52 years ago

Noted below are items originally published in local newspapers in the latter part of January 1965:

- The **Downingtown Savings and Loan Association** announced plans to relocate its offices to the former site of the **Swan Hotel**. The 54-room hotel, established in 1806, occupied the borough's Center Square until it was razed in 1965. The Savings and Loan's building committee included Ray Sheeler, Edwin Baldwin, Elmer Matthews, Robert Piersol, Ellen Ann Roberts and Lloyd Swarner.
- Elected as officers of **Central Presbyterian Church** were elders Charles Seibert, George Aumiller, Edward Towson, Robert White and Harry Rauch; deacons Mrs. John Fisher, Donald Kennedy and Mrs. Hallan Usher; trustees Robert Forrest, Robert Norris and Benjamin Peirson.
- Leaders elected in **Wallace Township** included supervisors William Funk and Charles Messner; roadmaster Marvin Furlong; and Roy Cummins, secretary-treasurer.
- Donald Fryberger, who previously served with the Kennett Square and Easttown Township Police Departments, was appointed **West Bradford Township's** chief of police. He succeeded David Johnson.
- **Apartment complexes** recently constructed or planned to be built in the borough included Black Hawk, on East Lancaster Avenue, 202 units; Town West, on West Lancaster Avenue, 34 units; Parke Run, on Chestnut Street, 52 units; and Downingtown Park, on East Pennsylvania Avenues, 55 units.
- **Pepperidge Farm**, the Downingtown area's largest employer, was building a 40,000-square-foot addition to its biscuit division plant.
- Installed as officers of the **Downingtown Opti-Mrs. Club** were Mrs. Clair Langham, president; Mrs. Anthony Viscichini, first vice president; Mrs. Clifton Walton, second vice president; Mrs. John Mascherino, secretary; and Mrs. Albert Burkhart, treasurer.
- DHS students, whose poems were accepted for publication by the **National Poetry Press's** Pennsylvania Anthology, included Linda McCombs, Sandra Thomas, Linda Lammey, Doreen Davis, William Behrndt, Howard McGirk and William Kline.
- Officers of the **Future Nurses Association** at DHS were Judy White, president; Pam Peppernick, vice president; Beverly Baen, secretary; Janice Cummins, treasurer; and Rojayne Ellis, historian.
- Installed as officers of the Evening Missionary Society of **First Baptist Church**, Downingtown, were Mrs. Benjamin Russell, president; Mrs. Henry Drumheller, vice president; Mrs. James Manley, recording secretary; Mrs. Donald McCue, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Lawrence Dilworth, treasurer.
- Elected as leaders of the Downingtown branch of the **Women's Symphony League** were Mrs. Raymond Williams and Mrs. Serge Oliel, co-chairman; Mrs. Edwin Johnson, recording secretary; Mrs. Campbell Sullivan, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Robert Flick, treasurer.
- The **DHS wrestling squad** nipped Great Valley 28-24. Whippets who scored pins were Mark Stephenson, Jay Rambo and Larry Smedley.

Vintage Ad of the Week

**COOK'S MARKET**

Swan Hotel Corner :: Downingtown

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**Saturday's BIG SPECIAL**

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Fancy, Home-Raised  
No. 1 White

**Potatoes** **30** C per basket

No. 2 Potatoes per basket **20c**

*Only 1 Basket to a Customer*

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Fresh Car of **JERSEY WATERMELONS** Right Off the Vine

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**ALL FRESH Vegetables and Fruits**  
**AT REMARKABLY LOW PRICES**

This ad was originally published in the March 13, 1931 edition of the *Daily Local News*.

# News about our area in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* published these news items about the Downingtown area in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century:

- The **Bicking Paper Mill**, at East Lancaster Avenue and Green Street (where McDonald's is now located) in the borough, was totally destroyed by fire on October 3, 1899. The fire, which originated on the mill's third floor among the paper stock, was thought to have been caused by rats.
- The **Downingtown Art Club's** annual exhibit of members' work was held in June 1895 at the Downingtown Library.
- Rev. James O'Reilly, pastor of **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**, Downingtown, caused a stir when he told parishioners in September 1895 that women riding bicycles was a "health-destroying exercise" and that wearing bloomers lowered the "character and dignity of a woman."
- The **Downingtown Athletic Association's** football team beat the Downingtown High School squad 5-0 on November 12, 1898. It was the second game of a series for the so-called borough championship. The high school "played stubbornly throughout," limiting the Downingtown AA to one touchdown in the waning minutes of the second half.
- Burglars used dynamite to blow up the safe in a Downingtown store in January 1892. All that was missing from the safe at **Griffith and Wollerton**, on East Lancaster Avenue, was some change and postage stamps, but the thieves grabbed about \$100 worth of goods, primarily guns and pistols.

## 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.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org), and typing your email address into the sign-up box on the home page. Also on our website's home page is access to an archive of every edition of the Hist-O-Gram we have published since 2010.

You also can find on the **right side of the home page of our website**, [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org), access to:

1. **Hist-O-Gram Archives**, which provides access to every Hist-O-Gram we have published since 2010.
2. **Then and Now Videos**, which provide short video clips depicting how local sites have changed over the years.

## 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\\_DedAbstract.pdf](http://spesvox.org/prammer/EBHC/Researching_Historic_Properties_files/ResearchingGuide_DedAbstract.pdf)

## What locals were talking about 86 years ago

Noted below are new items originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* in December 1931:

- Members of the **Downingtown Lions Club** painted and fixed up their welfare shelter on Brandywine Avenue, where a hot meal could be purchased for five cents. Local residents were encouraged to buy a pack of 20 meal tickets for \$1 at Hutchison's Drug Store, Groff's News Agency, Sharp's Confectionary, Greenleaf's Pharmacy, Mittel's Grocery and Bicking's Grocery, as well as from Lions Club members. The tickets were to be given to anyone who sought money for food. The shelter also had a large stock of clothing, which were donated by borough citizens. Also, local students brought toys to school so they could be given to needy kids on Christmas.

- Students who were elected to the high school's first **Student Council** included Helen Fahey, George Stine, Mary Bareford, Thomas Brookover, Wayne Raysor, Donald Schultz, Dorothy Brookover, Mildred Deputy, William Crawford, Ann McGraw, Martha Englerth, Helen Hyde, John LeFevre, Harry Elston, Ralph Entrekin, Ella Moore and George Peck.

- Members of the ticket committee for Downingtown's **Charity Ball**, to be held on December 30 at the Minquas Fire Co., were chairman Mrs. Alice Charles, Dr. George Bousum, Frank Diffenderfer, Emerson Weimer, Henry Lillard, Herbert Ash, Everett Hoopes, William Perry, George Irwin, Robert Ash, Corbin Hutchison, Taylor Buckley, Dr. Thomas Parke and Austin Moore.

- An Art Club was formed by Mary Mahan, school district art supervisor, for eighth graders at **East Ward School**. Members included George Schneider, Evelyn Petrella, Annawyn Moyer, Mary Miley, Elizabeth Greenleaf, Sara Griffith, Mary Garrett, Marjorie Holman, Evelyn Brown, Everett Pollock, Jeanette Hadfield, Leon Williams, Mary Christ, Anna McAllister, Lena Shaw and Samuel March.

- Fullback Buzz Yohn was named to the first team on the **All-Chester County football squad**. DHS players who made the second team were ends Mike Mento and Ralph Katherman, tackle John Francella, guard Wayne Raysor, and quarterback Joe Sciarretta.

## Clip/Paste sessions in coming weeks

We're looking for volunteers to participate in the Historical Society's clip/paste session, to be held from 6:30-8 PM on Tuesday, May 2 and from 1-4 PM on Sunday, May 7. The sessions, which involves clipping and pasting newspaper articles for our archival collection, will be held at Ashbridge House, our 308-year-old headquarters, next to the Chick-Fil-A restaurant in the Ashbridge Shopping Center on Route 30 in East Caln.

# It was the Marshall Farm in Lyndell



Shelley Francies is a truly perceptive scholar because she was the first person who correctly identified the site in the photo above. Known to longtime Lyndell residents like Shelley as the Marshall Farm, located at the intersection of Little Washington-Lyndell and Marshall Roads in East Brandywine Township. Also known as Bridge Mill Farm, the property included a late 18<sup>th</sup> Century stone grist mill, a farmhouse, an Italianate-style outhouse with four seats, and a late 19<sup>th</sup> Century carriage house, plus a double-arched stone bridge. The property was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

According to Barbara Paul's *A History of East Brandywine Township* (1992), the property was owned by several generations of the John Culbertson family, who operated a mill on the site, between 1739 and 1821. Following several short-time owners, Samuel Pancoast Harrison bought the property, and moved his family into the millhouse, while building the 1842 banked farmhouse.

Harrison's daughter, Ella, married William D. Marshall in 1887, and he revamped the mill into a creamery, to make butter. Soon Marshall was shipping 80-pound wooden boxes stamped "Yellow Rose Butter, Bridge Mill Creamery, Lyndell, PA" to a concession stand in the Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia. Several years later, Marshall relocated the mill to Lyndell to be closer to the railroad line. The property was purchased in 1981 by Horace Stellwagon, who restored many of the outbuildings on the site. You'll find more details about the site in the National Register of Historic Places application at:

[www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGIS\\_Attachments/SiteResource/H050672\\_01H.pdf](http://www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGIS_Attachments/SiteResource/H050672_01H.pdf)

# **Free Ads for Non-Profits**

## ***Relay for Life***

The Central Chester County Relay for Life will be held from 10 AM Saturday, May 20 until 10 AM Sunday, May 21 at DHS West, 445 Manor Ave., Downingtown. All proceeds go to the American Cancer Society. For more details, see: [http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY17EC?pg=entry&fr\\_id=79649](http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY17EC?pg=entry&fr_id=79649)

## ***All Wheels Consignment Sale***

The Downingtown Park and Recreation Commission will conduct a used bike consignment sale from 9 AM until noon on Saturday, May 13 in Kerr Park. People wanting to consign a bike for sale are welcome to drop it off beginning at 8 AM by the skate park. All recreation wheels are welcome to be dropped off. There is a \$100 price cap for consigning a bike. 25% of the proceeds of all sales will go the Park and Recreation Commission for future activities. There also will be a Bike Safety presentation, skateboarding exhibition and a DJ, plus games for the kids.

## ***Basket Bingo***

The Downingtown-Thorndale Regional Chamber of Commerce will sponsor a Longaberger/Vera Bradley Basket Bingo, to be held on Sunday afternoon, May 7 at St. Anthony's Lodge on West Church Street, Downingtown. All proceeds will go the Amina C. Valocchi Scholarship Foundation. For more info, see [www.downingtown.org/Documents/EVENT%20FLYERS/DTRCC\\_BasketBingo17.jpg](http://www.downingtown.org/Documents/EVENT%20FLYERS/DTRCC_BasketBingo17.jpg)

## ***Fine Arts Festival***

The Downingtown Fine Arts Festival will be held at 202 E. Lancaster Avenue in the borough, from 10 AM until 6 PM on Saturday, May 27 and from 10 AM until 5 PM on Sunday, May 28. The free festival is presented by David Oleski Events and the Downingtown Main Street Association, in partnership with the Borough of Downingtown. For more info on the festival, see: <http://downingtownfinearts.com/aboutdfaf.html>.

## ***Healthy Kids Day***

The Lionville Community YMCA will have a Healthy Kids Day at Kerr Park in Downingtown from 11 AM until 2 PM on Saturday, April 29 All are invited to participate in free activities such as family Zumba, yoga, fencing, Quiddich, and karate demos, a moon bounce and soccer exhibit. For more info, see: [www.ymcagbw.org/hkd](http://www.ymcagbw.org/hkd)

## ***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.

## ***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@downingtown.org](mailto:info@downingtown.org).

## ***Lyme Disease***

The Lyme Disease Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, an education and support group for patients and caregivers who have been affected by Lyme Disease, meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 7 PM at the Kennett Friends Meeting House on Route 82 (125 W. Sickel St. Kennett Square). Meetings are free and all are welcome. Check [www.lymepa.org](http://www.lymepa.org) for directions and program information.

## ***Plant Sale***

The Garden Class of The Woman's Community Club of Uwchlan will hold its annual plant sale on Saturday, May 6, from 8 A.M. to 2 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.

### **Surprising Martha Washington**

The Mill at Anselma will kick off its 2017 speaker series with a fascinating talk about Martha Washington on Thursday evening, May 4. Nancy K. Loane, Ed.D. will present a surprising take on our first “First Lady” at Bell Hall, Montgomery School, 1141 Kimberton Road, Chester Springs. The event will begin at 6:30 PM with a wine & cheese reception, followed by Dr. Loane’s talk at 7 PM. Tickets may be purchased at the door for \$5. Members of the Mill at Anselma attend free of charge.

### ***How Stars Work***

Fronfield Crawford III, PhD. professor of Astronomy, who teaches experimental methods of astrophysics at Franklin & Marshall College, will explain the basics of stars, physical mechanism by which they shine, their lives, etc. at the West Caln Historical Society’s meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, May 16, in the West Caln Municipal Building, 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. The meetings are free and open to the public.

### ***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](http://www.dtownchristmas.com), where you’ll find all the information about sponsorship levels, or contact Dianne at 484-678-6835 for more information.

### ***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](http://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/](http://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](mailto:cheryl.spaulding@josephspeople.org).