



Downingtown Area Historical Society
Hist-O-Gram

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

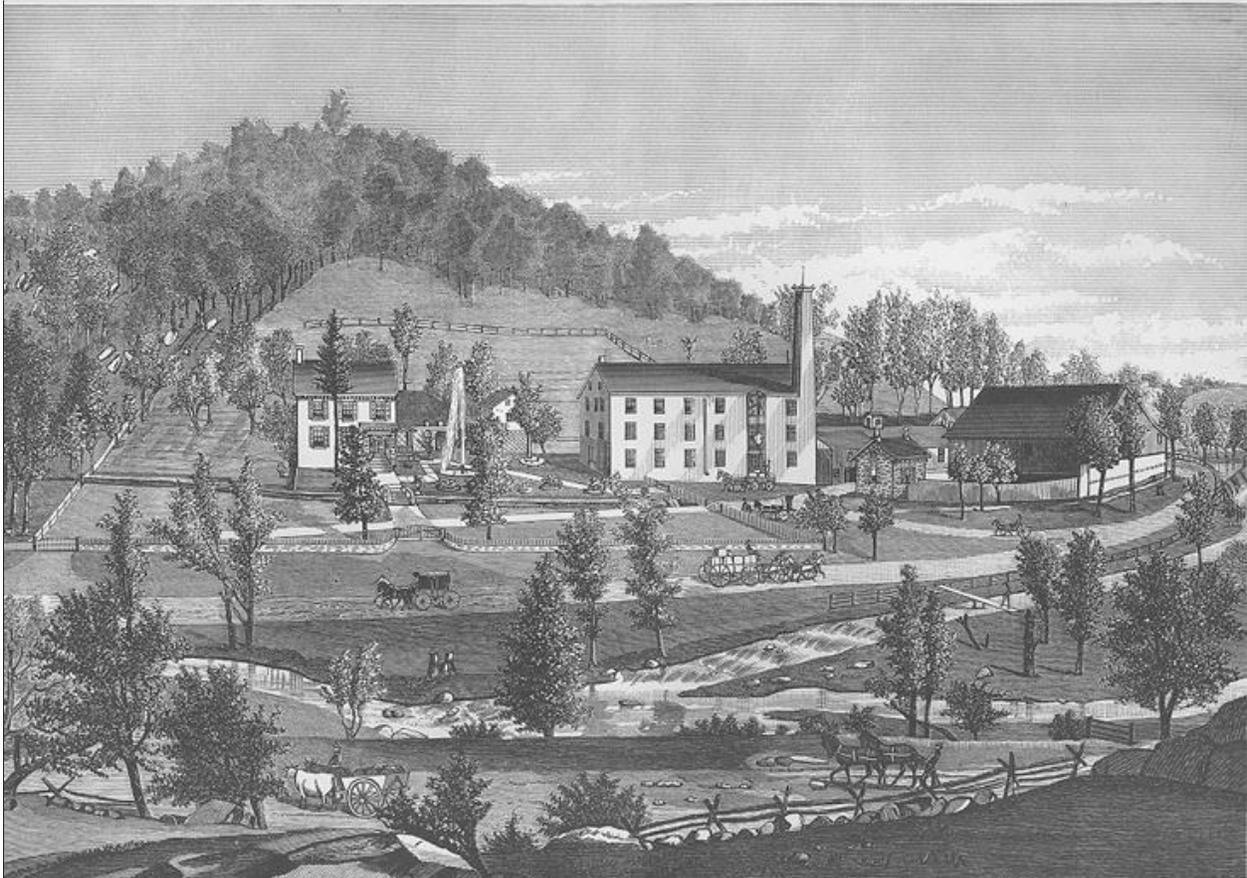
www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

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

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August 24, 2017

What and 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

What was happening here 52 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in local papers in the latter part of March 1965:

- The **School Board** approved the conversion of storage space at DHS into four classrooms, and adopted a new salary schedule, which paid new teachers \$4,800 a year.
- The **American Viscose division** of the FMC Corp. was expected to start manufacturing plastic film in a plant in the industrial complex developed by Charles and Daniel Tabas on Boot Road in East Caln.
- Delaware Valley area residents had an opportunity to learn about the Downingtown via a broadcast of the “Salute to Downingtown” program on **WFIL’s TV and radio stations**. Interviewed on the 30-minute program were Warren Strawsnyder, president of the Downingtown Chamber of Commerce; Rev. Robert Taylor, president of the Downingtown Ministerium; Raymond Baugher, superintendent of the Downingtown Area School District; and Walter Leland, borough manager.
- Members of Junior **Girl Scout Troop 151 of Lionville** conducted a Mother-Daughter banquet at Byers Hall. The honor Guard for the event was comprised of Lynn Hayhurst, Maryalis Worthington and Terry Smith.
- The **Ladies of St. Joseph Catholic Church**, Downingtown, had a fashion show in the school auditorium. Mrs. Wilbert Bertoncini and Mrs. Richard Short were co-chairmen. Committee chairmen included Mrs. Joseph Creamer, Mrs. Alfred Singer, Mrs. George Dailey and Mrs. Anthony Mattioni, tickets; Mrs. Joseph Sabellico, decorations, Josephine Valentino, refreshments; Mrs. William Sheridan, programs; Mrs. Joseph Cipollini, publicity; and Mrs. Lewis Capriotti, prizes.
- James Patterson was the general manager of the **Sloan Motors** Ford dealership, which had its grand opening on Route 30, east of Downingtown.
- Members of **Boy Scout Troop 83, Lionville**, who went on a weekend camping trip in the Poconos, were James Young, Steve Behrntd, Tom and George Shreiner, Chuck Thomas, Paul Draper, Gary Morinelli, David Coover, Leon Stewart, Robert Baker, Dan Hayes, and Bill and Tom Perkins.
- The **Downingtown Little League** decided to increase its size from four to six teams, and establish a minor league program. Chester County Motors, Warren Pontiac, and Downingtown Paper & Paint agreed to sponsor minor league teams, according to Ed Campbell, president. The expansion plans included a second playing field, adjacent to the diamond on Manor Avenue.
- Mrs. Jeanette Milne’s second graders at **East Ward School** who recited poems in an assembly program were George Murphy, Thomas Peppernick, Holly Root, Dennis Walton, Anthony Williams, Becky Bartholomew, Robin Keller, William Cooper, Carol Klocke and Marie Falcone.
- **Brownies from Glen Moore**, who made favors for residents of the Forrest Manor Convalescent Home in Wallace Township, were Sue Roeder, Beth Ann Zulker, Jeanne MacDougal, Sherry Carr, Stacey Fetters, Sandra Lang, Cindy Smith, Vickie Irey, Gwen Swavely and Irene Streeter.
- Members of the Bowling Bunnies, who won the **intramural bowling** competition at DHS, were Linda McCombs, Sandy Irwin, Cheryl Krapf, Mina McGuckin and Donna Hilton.
- In a pre-season interview, **DHS baseball** coach Bob Boyer said, “We have a green team, with a lot of sophomores.” The only experienced players from the 1964 squad were shortstop Roy Nellius, second baseman John Piersol and catcher Terry Knox.

It's the tunnel under the railroad tracks in Downingtown



Ford Greenleaf is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above as the stairway leading from the tunnel under the railroad tracks in Downingtown to West Lancaster Avenue. Ford obviously recognized the stores across from the tunnel on West Lancaster Avenue, because one of them was Greenleaf's Pharmacy, owned by his grandfather, Raymond Greenleaf.

And for some history on the tunnel, Jim Sundman, railroad historian and vice president of the Downingtown Area Historical Society, provided the following information:

The pedestrian tunnel at the station was built in 1873. That was the year the Bradford Avenue grade crossing over the tracks was closed because it was deemed too dangerous because there were too many fast trains and too many slow horses! The Pennsylvania RR had a long practice of closing grade crossings along the Main Line and replacing them with either bridges or tunnels. There are a number of tunnels like the one in Downingtown along the Main Line. So when the PRR closed off the Bradford Avenue grade crossing over the tracks, it built the pedestrian tunnel at the station and also extended Viaduct Avenue a short distance to the east and built the tunnel under the tracks for vehicular access to and from Johnstown. In 1905, the railroad station was moved 17 feet to the south in order to make room for a track which provided access to the rail yard to the west of the station. In doing so, the pedestrian tunnel also was extended 17 feet. That's why you can see different brickwork on the south end of the tunnel. The station was built in 1892, and burned down in February 1992. So it was in service about 100 years.

You'll find an extensive write-up on Sundman's pictorial history about the Pennsylvania Railroad stations along the Main Line in the July 28, 2016 Hist-O-Gram:

www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/July%2028%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf

What locals were talking about 84 years ago

Noted below are items originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* in April and May of 1933:

- Thirty-six young men from the Downingtown area left for Camp Meade, MD, for two weeks of training before they reported for work at the Mount Pocono Reforestation Camp in Mount Pocono, PA. They were participants in the federal **Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)**, a public work relief program that was established in 1933 for unemployed, unmarried men from relief families as part of the New Deal during the Great Depression. The young men were selected via the Downingtown Lions Club's Welfare committee. Their compensation was \$30 a month; \$25 of which went to their families.

- One of the unique prizes featured at the **Alert Fire Company's Carnival**, planned for mid-summer, was an all-expenses paid trip to the Chicago World's Fair, to be awarded to the winner of the Most Popular Woman in the Downingtown competition.

- At the annual board meeting of the **Downingtown Woman's Club Corporation**, it was decided to begin, following a brief respite, preparing and serving dinners again for the Downingtown Rotary Club's weekly meetings. Also, the **Downingtown Junior Woman's Club** was established. Founding officers were Ida Lillard, president; Sara Young, vice president; Lillian Perry, recording secretary; Mrs. William Wharry, corresponding secretary; and Alice Windle, treasurer.

And the Woman Club's Garden Class was encouraging local organizations to underwrite the planting of **memorial cherry trees** in Kerr Park. John Hershey offered to sell trees at reduced prices, and to supervise planting the trees. The club women said they'd keep a record of each donor and the name of the person who was being memorialized via each planted tree.

- Although they wouldn't graduate from DHS until June, Joe Sciarretta and Buzz Yohn were participating in the **spring football practices** of LaSalle College and Temple University, respectively. Both had been stars on the high school's football, basketball and baseball teams since they were in ninth grade.

- A **flagpole** was installed in the veterans' memorial triangle at Kerr Park. Downingtown's American Legion Post was planning to erect a memorial there.

- A minstrel put on by **Greenleaf's Cowboys**, a group of local young men under the guidance of borough pharmacist Ray Greenleaf, was the highlight of the Minquas Fire Company 25th anniversary celebration. Sid Mento, James Snyder, James Mahan and George Ciarlone were the end men, and Talbert Swarner, Thomas Pollock and Joe Travaglini were the soloists.

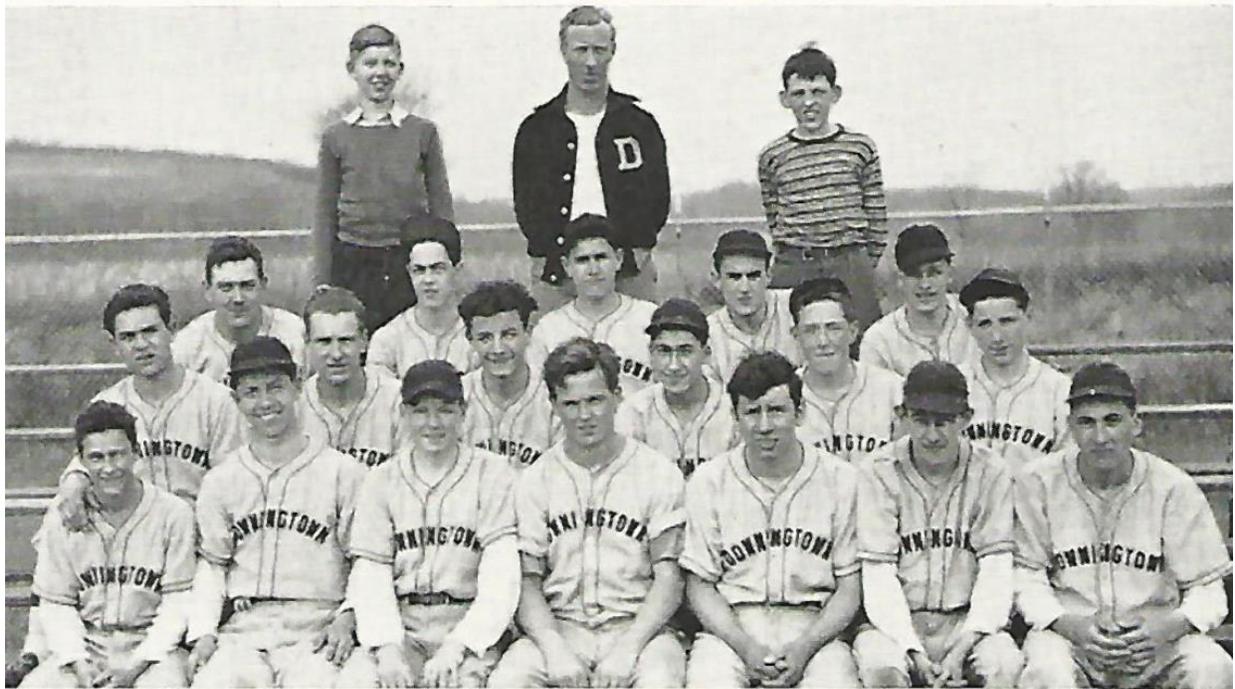
- The Downingtown School Board **bowed to public pressure** and reversed its decision to cut expenses by eliminating the district's sole school nurse position

The board also dropped Mrs. James McCahon, popular music director from the staff, because the district had adopted a policy in 1932, which **prohibited the employment of married women as teachers**.

Access to latest historic "Then & Now" photo sequences

You can see all of the "Then & Now" morphed photo sequences of local historic sites on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCIh25kTu3B_uVb6lhZku7mw

Group Photo of the Week



Members of the DHS baseball team in 1942 were, left to right: front row, Robert Richards, Abe McCulley, Donald Tyson, George Paige, Andrew Cozzone, George Logan, Michael Castaldi; second row, Calvin Mingione, Edward Vail, John DiBernardi, Charles Forte, John Doran, Philip Burns; third row, Harold Miller, William Fleck, Gerald Kline, Robert Laird, Herbert Berkey; fourth row, Coach Don White, flanked by managers Albert Skiles on the left, and Jack Lyons on the right.

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.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org, and typing your email address into the sign-up box on the home page. Also, you'll find access to an archive of every edition of the Hist-O-Gram we have published since 2010 via: www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms.html

In case you missed last week's Hist-O-Gram

You can access the August 17 issue of our Hist-O-Gram by clicking on:
www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/August%2017%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf

Vintage Ad of the Week

***There Will Be a Hot
Time in the Old
Town Tonight!***

if you burn

**MAXWELL'S
GOOD COAL**

All Kinds--Both Hard and Soft

***"Buy Coal that acts well
From J. W. Maxwell"***

J. W. MAXWELL & SON
PHONE 34 **DOWNINGTOWN**

This ad was originally published in the October 6, 1932 edition of the *Downingtown Archive*.

Historical Society seeks books for October book sale

Those who wish to donate used books for the Downingtown Area Historical Society's Book Sale in October can either bring them to Ashbridge House, our headquarters in the Ashbridge Square Shopping center, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, on Route 30 in East Caln between 1-4 PM on Sundays. Book donations also can be arranged by calling 610-269-1709 or by sending an email to: dths1709@gmail.com to schedule a pick-up day and time.

Types of books we're looking for include: Children's, History, Non-Fiction and Biographies, Fiction, current Self-Help and Computer books.

Used books that aren't acceptable for the Book Sale include: Textbooks, Old Self-Help Books, Water-Damaged Books, Books with hand-writing in them, Books with damaged or torn covers and Sets of books, encyclopedias.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Summer Jam Series

The Downingtown Main Street Association's third annual Summer Jam series will end at Kerr Park in Downingtown on Friday night, August 25. In addition to the music, the jams will include craft and food vendors. For more info, see: www.downingtownmainstreet.com/

Blood Drive

You can register for the American Red Cross blood drive, to be conducted at the Borough Hall Annex, 4 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, at 2-7 PM on Thursday, August 31, by accessing: www.redcrossblood.org/rcbmobile/drive/chooseDonationTime.jsp

Kids Day in East Caln

East Caln will be held in East Caln Park from 10 AM until 2 PM on Saturday, September 16; rain date is Sunday, September 17. Fun activities include petting zoo, pony rides, sand art, moon bounce, rock climbing wall, face painting, police fingerprinting, music, free popcorn, cotton candy and water ice.

Community Day in Caln

The 11th annual Community Day, sponsored by Hatt's True Value Hardware and the Downingtown Library, will be held from 3-8:30 PM on Saturday, September 9. Events will include fireworks, music, vendors, food, a beer garden and activities such as a photo booth, mini golf course and knockerballs.

State Police History

State Trooper Gonzales will talk about the History of the PA State Police Historical and Memorial Center at the West Caln Historical Society's meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, September 19. The meetings are held at West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy, Wagontown, and are free and open to the public.

Strikeouts for Katie

The fourth annual Strikeouts for Katie Softball Tournament will be held on Saturday, August 26 on the Downingtown Little League field on Manor Avenue, Downingtown. Proceeds will be used for scholarships to active participants attending the Technical College High School-Brandywine Campus, cosmetology program, and to a graduating senior from DHS West girls' softball program, as well as being used for sponsoring numerous charity events. For more details, see: www.strikeoutsforkatie.com.

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Mill at Anselma

The Mill at Anselma will host Ryan Conroy, historian and president of the Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area, who will lead a discussion about the men and woman of Northern Chester County who served in the military during WWI. This event will be held on Thursday evening, September 7, in Bell Hall at Montgomery School, 1141 Kimberton Road, Chester Springs. It will begin at 6:30 PM with a wine & cheese reception, followed by the evening's topic at 7 PM. Tickets may be purchased at the door for \$5. Members of the Mill at Anselma attend free of charge. The talk will also provide a glimpse into the current exhibit "Over There and Over Here: Phoenixville in WWI" at The Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area.

And The Mill at Anselma will host the 97th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, from 10 AM to 4 PM, on Saturday, September 9. The 97th PVI is a family-friendly organization of local Civil War reenactors who join in battles and camps throughout the year to preserve the memories of the soldiers and civilians that lived during the Civil War. The event includes Civil War tents on site, a rifle demonstration, a display of mid-19th century ladies clothing and children's games, and members of the 97th PVI will educating visitors on the life of a Union soldier.

The Mill at Anselma, on Rte. 401 (1730 Conestoga Road), ½ mile west of Route. 113 in Chester Springs, open for tours Thursday through Sunday from 10 AM to 4 PM. Visitors will learn how a mill was operated, see the 16 foot water wheel power Colonial-era gears and mill stones, and see and feel the final product as it flows from the stones. Admission to the Mill is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$3 for children ages 4-14. Children under 4 are free. For more information, contact the Mill at 610-827-1906, email info@anselmamill.org, or visit www.anselmamill.org.

Log House Art & Craft Show

Downingtown's Historic Commission is looking for exhibitors who plan to sell original, hand-crafted items at the annual Art & Craft Show from 9 AM to 2 PM Saturday, September 9 at Kerr Park. For details, see:

<http://downingtowntown.org/Documents/Log%20House%20Craft%20Show/2017/2017LOGHOUSEARTCRAFTSHOWAPP.pdf>

Senior Center programs & activities

You'll find information about the programs and activities at the Downingtown Area Senior Center in its monthly newsletter at: www.downingtowntownseniors.org/programs/newsletter/

Open Houses in Lionville

The Uwchlan Township Historical Commission will offer several open house events in the Lionville National Historic District on the first Sunday of the month, from April through November, at the John Cadwalader House and the Edith P. Moore School. Both are located on North Village Avenue and are staffed and open from 2 - 4 PM. The Moore School is the original one-room building where children can try on clothing replicas of the period and sit at historical desks. For more info, call 610-280-9522.

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 for directions and program information.

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/downingtowntown/>, 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.