



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

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

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

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

Vol. 8, No. 1

January 5, 2017

## What & Where Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your response to: [Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org).

# What was happening here 68 years ago

Noted below are items published in local newspapers in the early part of May 1949:

- The **Downingtown School Board** agreed to temporarily move the seventh grade class from the over-crowded DHS Junior-Senior High School on Manor Avenue to the West Ward School on West Lancaster Avenue.
- Margaret Doto and Joseph Sciarretta were crowned queen and king of the **DHS junior prom** by last year's king and queen, John Mingione and Helen Doran. The prom committees were headed by Louise Bartelmo, music; Joseph Forte, decorations; John Shisler, refreshments; and Clara Mancini, crowning.
- Installed as officers of the **Downingtown Woman's Club** were Mrs. Leo Hamilton, president; Mrs. Wesley Worrall, first vice president; Mrs. Austin Moore, second vice president; Mrs. William Bender, recording secretary; Mrs. Walter Snyder, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Herman Faucett, treasurer; Mrs. John Fisher, Mrs. Edgar Hutchison, Mrs. Nelson Dennis, Mrs. George Foreman, and Mrs. Frank Lenhardt, directors.
- Large "**safety signs**" were erected on Route 30, at the eastern and western borders of the borough. The signs included logos of these local organizations, each of which contributed \$50 to pay for the signs: Downingtown Young Men's Association, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Lions Club, VFW and American Legion.
- William Bixler, chairman of the **Soap Box Derby**, sponsored by the Downingtown Lions Club, announced the following committee chairmen for the race, to take place on the Chestnut Street hill on Saturday, June 25: Leebert Chambers, inspections; Horace Miller, solicitation and prizes; W.I. Pollock, parade; William Rowland, operations; James Fennelly and Duer Smedley, concessions; and Ralph Kinzey, publicity.
- Officers elected to lead the Women's Christian Service group at **Marshallton Methodist Church** were Mrs. Edwin Keenan, president; Mrs. Earl Spellman, vice president; Mrs. Harry Wickersham, treasurer; Mrs. D. Ciaffoni, secretary; Mrs. Harry Cann, Christian social relations; Mrs. Clarence Moore, membership; Mrs. John Trimble, fellowship; Mrs. Edwin Nichols, missionary and children's work; Mrs. F.E. Henry, spiritual life; and Mrs. Merrill Cann, literature and publications.
- The **DHS Music Association** elected these officers: Mrs. James Stauffer, president; Mrs. Joseph Streamer, vice president; Mrs. Leo Hogg, secretary; Mrs. Henry Kriebel, treasurer; and directors Mrs. Benjamin Summers, Mrs. Orville Brammer and Mrs. Frank Lenhardt.
- Fifth and sixth graders at **West Ward School**, who performed in the "Streamlined Cinderella" operetta, included Richard Short, Gail Lammey, Ronald Jefferis, Thomas McKeever, Edward Caudill, Susie Guest, Joan Hughes, Joy Ann Stevens, Patty Hilton, Harry Flinn, Joseph Mascherino, Wayne Lapp and John Bousum.
- Among the 67 members of the DHS band, musicians featured in the **annual spring concert**, were: Janet Kriebel, played a marimba solo accompanied by pianist Barbara Seibert; flute soloist Annabelle Warnick, accompanied by Margaret Sciarretta; and saxophonist Christy Christ, accompanied by Robert Lillard.
- Installed as officers of the **Odd Fellows lodge** in Lionville were John Benner, noble grand; John Miller, vice grand; Richard Locke, warden; Samuel Supplee, conductor; Kenneth Kirkner, chaplain; Horace Reyburn and Schuyler Rennard, scene supporters; Horace Wilson and Leon Gordon, guardians.

## It's a fish pond in Downingtown's Kerr Park



Phil Barlow is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above. It's one of the fish ponds created by the Brandywine Trout Club, which was established in 1955 by a dedicated group of local sportsmen. Initially, the private club raised trout for stocking in the three ponds in Downingtown's Kerr Park. After incorporating in 1980, the club took on conservation as part of its role of maintaining and improving 10 miles of the East Branch of the Brandywine's water quality, from Glenmoore to Downingtown, and changed its name to the Brandywine Trout and Conservation Club. The club also acquired three miles of nearby Beaver Creek, from the Lloyd Avenue bridge to where it meets the East Branch in Kerr Park. In 1999, the club played a vital role in acquiring a "Delayed Harvest/Artificial Lures" status for a 1.2-mile length of the creek, spanning from the Dorlan's Mill bridge to the bridge at Dowlin's Forge. That stretch of water is stocked by the state and none of the club's fish are stocked in these waters. The club has been part of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Angler's Coalition since 2007. And the organization sponsors a fishing rodeo for kids in the borough's First Lake every spring.

## 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](http://spesvox.org/prammer/EBHC/Researching_Historic_Properties_files/ResearchingGuide_De edAbstract.pdf).

## Vintage homecoming program offers DHS football history

Mary Anne Brookover Geary recently donated a copy of the football program for the first DHS homecoming game, on October 12, 1963, to the Historical Society. Among the interesting segments in the program are several vignettes about the high school football team's history:

- The first record of a DHS football game was found in the November 13, 1899 edition of the *Daily Local News*, which noted that Downingtown had hosted a game with the Athenians from West Chester. Although Downingtown scored first, “the final outcome of the game cannot be determined since the game was called on account of darkness. When the Athenians left the field, they took the ball with them, but it was recovered before the West Chester team left.”

- The next record of DHS gridiron history was reported in the October 1, 1901 edition of the *Daily Local News*, which included the observation that among Downingtown residents, “a number of enthusiasts suggest putting a team on the field. We have a suitable athletic field, and the team would receive support.” Several days later, DHS advertised for opponents who weighed an average of 125 pounds. The article included the names of the DHS roster: Walter Fox, left end; Sam Phelps, left tackle; Percy Guie, left guard; Wilmer Johnson, center; Howard Smedley, right guard; Norman Chrisman, right tackle; Eddie Dixon, right end; H. McClure, left halfback; Clarence Bicking, right halfback; Clyde Guthrie, fullback. There was no name listed for the quarterback. Two other players listed—Charles Fox and Ira Moore—apparently were substitutes.

### Group Photo of the Week



The first DHS Homecoming program included this photo of the high school football team in 1923. The players were, left to right: front row, Thomas Runk, Rocco Donato, William Dague, Coach Harvey Fishburn, Maurice Bird, George Irwin, Aaron McGowan; second row, Calvin Ax, Charles Deets, Lewis Laird, Carl Smith, Floyd Crisman, George Jefferis; third row, Tony Wando, William Mahood, Leon Brown, Albert Schrupf, Wendel Asburg, Edward Dixon, Emerson Weimer; back row, Allen Harris, Paul Tweed, Elmer Drake, George Foreman, Charles Ax; pillars on the sides of the steps, Percy Miller and Elmer Wilburn. The team only played three games that season, beating West Chester, 6-0, and Berwyn, 44-0. But it lost to Coatesville, 13-0.

## Missed any Hist-O-Gram published in December?

You can access any Hist-O-Gram published last month, if you missed any of them, by clicking on the URL addresses noted below:

December 1: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%201%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%201%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

December 8: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%208%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%208%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

December 15: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%2015%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%2015%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

December 22: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%2022%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%2022%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

December 29: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%2029%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2016%20Hist-O-Grams/December%2029%202016%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

## Vintage Ad of the Week



**GRAND  
OPENING WEEK  
NOVEMBER 4 to 8**

**Anita's Beauty Salon**  
A 10, 29, 69  
213 Chestnut Ave

**Downingtown**  
ANITA DOTO  
Proprietress

**Phone 269-1518**  
JODI HAMILTON  
Operator

**Salon Hours:**  
Tues., Wed., Sat.  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Thursday & Friday  
9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

**Come In and  
Register for  
FREE WIG  
Your Choice of Color  
and Styling  
Drawing Nov. 8**

This ad was originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* on October 29, 1969.

## **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. We won't share or sell any email addresses. And you can access previously published Hist-O-Grams at: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html).

## **Free Ads for Non-Profit**

### ***Madame Curie***

Ann Atkins, author, historian, educator, will present Part 2 of her program on Madame Curie when the West Caln Historical Society meets at 7 PM on Tuesday, January 17 at West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. Everyone is welcome and the meetings free to all.

### **A Midwinter's Night: A dram good time!**

The Thorndale-Downingtown Rotary Club will have its eighth annual Whisky Tasting and dinner at the Marshalton Inn on February 4th. Taste six single malt whisky's, receive your own tasting glass, plus a filet mignon dinner, tasting plate to match the whisky flavors, chocolate desert, silent auction, enter to bagpipe music. \$100 per person. Call 610.696.7442 or email [thorndalerotary@gmail.com](mailto:thorndalerotary@gmail.com). Sponsorships available. Showcase your business by calling the above number.

### ***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, [www.josephspeople.org](http://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](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).