



## 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 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](mailto:dahs19335@gmail.com).

## Here's how YOU can receive a Hist-O-Gram every week

You can receive a copy of our free Hist-O-Gram every week, by accessing our website: [www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org), and typing your email address into the sign-up box on the right side of the home page.

# What was happening here 36 years ago

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

- Jane Thompson was the valedictorian and Brian Geschwindt was the salutatorian of the **DHS Class of 1981**. Class officers were Jeffrey Carey, president; Elizabeth Giffen, vice president; Caroline Farling, secretary; and Lois Isabella, treasurer.
- **Downing Center**, the shopping mall on the borough's East Pennsylvania Avenue, was purchased by B. W. Associates of Berwyn. The center had been first considered in 1962, according to borough manager Don Greenleaf, and ground was broken in 1974. Although the mall had not been a rousing success, the new management was encouraged because the center already had a high-volume store—the A&P supermarket.
- Local businessman Brian Formica was named the inspirational leader-foil for local runners to compete in **Good Neighbor Day's** third annual Run For Life road race over a three-mile course on borough streets on the Fourth of July.
- Florence Buttner, of West Bradford, and Ed Van Ocker, of Thorndale, were presented the **Horseshoe Trail Boy Scout District's Merit Award**. Members of the district committee were Charlotte Bowser, Pat Hemingway, Mike Melody, Tom Mest, Jim Hall, Lew Milford, Steve Grenz, Doug Tharp, Ron Novak and Glenn McCausland.
- New officers of the **Downingtown Jaycees** were Keith Douglas, president; Bob Young, state director; Lamar Oberholtzer, internal vice president; Donald Grick, external vice president; James Rakestraw, secretary; and Steven Miller, treasurer.
- The **Lionville Junior High School Band**, directed by Jeffrey Martini, received a superior rating (the highest rating possible) at the concert band competition at Lebanon Valley College.
- Members of **Central Presbyterian Church**, who helped prepare and serve a luncheon for residents of Hickory House, Honey Brook, were Mildred Basehore, Mary Ann Gitzendanner, Jane Klaebel, Edna Reinhardt, Shirley Schwartz, Bette Smith, Cindy Staggers, Audrey Komnick, Liz Barr, Dorothy Fenimore, Lynne Bertram and Ruth Jones.
- The **DHS softball team** captured its fourth Ches-Mont championship in six years, when it beat Pottsgrove 3-2 in a playoff game. The Whippets scored all of their runs in the first inning, on a Gwen Holton walk and singles by Sherri Clayton, Laura Kulkis, Melanie Massimini and Melinda Horne. Winning pitcher Kulkis limited the Falcons to five hits. The season came to a close when the Whippets lost a 7-2 decision to Neshaminy in District I playoffs. Players who made the All Ches-Mont team were Clayton, Kulkis, Massimini, and Jen Gerlach.
- The **DHS baseball squad** lost 1-0 to William Tennent in the opening round of District I playoffs. "In the 13 years I've been coaching, these were most enjoyable kids from a coaching perspective, said Coach Carl Houp, The Whippets had a 14-3 record overall, and a 9-2 slate, good for second place in Ches-Mont play.
- Amy Horne tallied three goals, but the **DHS lacrosse team** lost its final match 12-6 to Marple-Newtown. The Whippets finished in third place in league standings with an 8-5-1 record.
- Recent **property transfers** included: 111 Helm Way, East Brandywine, \$73,900; 1550 Whitford Road, Exton, \$80,000; 442 Grant Ave., Downingtown, \$56,000; 1421 Steeplechase Way, West Bradford, \$85,000; 2 Courtney Lane, Thorndale, \$52,900; 701 Brainerd Road, Uwchlan, \$115,000; 3 Krauser Road, Upper Uwchlan, \$102,568; 93 McIlvaine Drive, East Caln, \$104,000.

- **Mike Remetz**, who was a math and physics teacher, basketball coach and director of secondary education during his 33 years in the Downingtown School District, announced his retirement. He said the “New Math, as far as I’m concerned, was a failure”...because it was “put together by pure mathematicians, thinking everyone who learned it would be pure mathematicians.”

## **It’s when East Caln was mostly farmland, in 1937**



Tony Madiro is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person, who correctly identified the area shown in the aerial photo above, which was taken 80 years ago. The photo shows a section of East Caln Township, which is significantly developed today. Along that narrow white horizontal line (Route 30 when it was a two-lane, concrete highway) in the upper part of the photo now includes two major shopping centers—Brandywine Square and Ashbridge Square—and lots more commercial development. However, the Downingtown Country Club’s golf course still provides some green space, as it did in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it was part of the Tabas brothers’ Downingtown Motor Inn property. The lower part of the photo includes the PA Railroad tracks and Boot Road. The upper part doesn’t show the Route 30 Bypass, which wasn’t built until the early 1960s. Today, East Caln is home to many local offices and organizations, which had been located in the borough of Downingtown: the Downingtown Post Office and the Downingtown Area School District, along Boot Road; and the Downingtown Area Senior Center and the Downingtown Area Historical Society on Route 30.

# What locals were talking about 85 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in March and April 1932 editions of the *Downingtown Archive*:

- Sports writer “Pud” Ax’s weekly column focused on when Dowlin Forge, in 1882, was the “beautiful spot in the hills was notorious for miles around for its glorious ring battles, and great was the punishment that was dealt out to those who ventured into the ring at the Forge.”
- Local support for a \$160,000 bond issue to finance the construction of a junior-senior high school declined when the Downingtown Business Club—a precursor of the Chamber of Commerce—officially informed the School Board of its opposition to “building an additional school, or going into other expansion expenses at this time.” The businessmen also noted that school board should “reduce its tax rates, which our people cannot afford under the existing circumstances.”
- More than 400 spaghetti dinners were served at the Italian Fest, sponsored by parishioners of **St. Joseph’s Catholic Church**, Downingtown and held at the Minquas Fire Co., which was decorated for the occasion by the Dooley brothers. Credit for the event’s success went to Anthony Ciarlone and his committee.
- Officers elected to lead the **Downingtown Lions Club** were Chandler Roberts, president; Dr. George Bousum, first vice president; David Stewart, second vice president; John Heffner, third vice president; William Ash, secretary; Walter Shepherd, treasurer; Samuel Charles, tail twister; and directors Robert Ash, Henry Lillard, Joseph Miller and Corbin Hutchison.
- Elected to the vestry of **St. James Episcopal Church**, Downingtown, were Richard Ashbridge, John Noll, Gilbert McIlvaine, Chandler Roberts, Logan Rogers, C. H. R. Johnson, W. P. Canby, W. W. E. Ash, Joseph Ashbridge, Donald McIlvaine, and William Lloyd. Also, a new baptismal font—made of mother of pearl and with silver mountings by a British firm,—was blessed by Rev. Paul Musselman. It was donated by Chandler Roberts in memory of Anna Roberts, 1879-1928.
- At DHS, Amos Miley, marching band director, reported that the new blue **band uniforms**, trimmed with gold braid, were expected to be delivered in the summer. And **Charles Emery**, now teaching at Hinkletown, was appointed to be a sixth grade teacher in Downingtown; he would become the school district’s supervising principal (superintendent). Also, cheerleaders Dorothy Diffenderfer, Helen Hyde, Christine Travaglini, Charles Elston, Ralph Entrekin and Joseph Fennelly received their varsity “D” letters at an assembly.
- Madame Orva, a “**great mind reader**,” appeared in person between films every night for a week at the Roosevelt Theatre on Brandywine Avenue.
- Francis Tweed, coach of the revitalized (the first since 1924) **DHS track program**, was conducting practice sessions at Kerr Park, and Sam Peck, Bert Jefferis, Glen Wagner and Jack McNab were to compete in the Penn Relays. And Bill McAlpine, coach of the **DHS baseball squad**, had been preparing his players for the season opener against Phoenixville by practicing in the gym at the Minquas Fire Co., due to the cold, rainy weather. Although volunteers from the Lions Club had been getting the clay courts at Kerr Park in shape, “Pud” Ax’s plans to establish the **first DHS tennis team** went awry when the high school’s athletic board learned that the PA Interscholastic Athletic Association required all coaches to be certified, full-time teachers in the school district. Ax (the Archive’s sports columnist quoted at the top of this section) wouldn’t graduate from West Chester State College until 1933.

Sixth Annual

# Lawn Fete

of

## ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH

ON CHURCH LAWN

Bradford Ave.                      Downingtown

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<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>
<b>—31—</b>	<b>1-6-7-8</b>

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MUSIC—Every Night—GATE PRIZE

This ad was originally published in the July 24, 1931 edition of the *Downingtown Archive*.

# In case you missed a Hist-O-Gram in May

If you missed any of the Hist-O-Grams we published in May, you can access them via the listing below:

May 4: [www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%204%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%204%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

May 11: [www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%2011%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%2011%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

May 18: [www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%2018%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%2018%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

May 25: [www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%2025%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downingtowntareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/May%2025%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

## Group Photo of the Week



This was the DHS marching band in the fall of 1989. Jennifer Ables and Amber Fernald were drum majors. Color guard captains were Carol Tolley, Andi Morris, Lori Lukens, Stephanie Sololek, Lee Ann Coulter, Daryl O'Conner, Lynne Augenbaugh and Tara McClure. Percussion captains were Darrell Goslin and Michelle Cossetti. Brent Lewis was the director; Ed Otto and James Merwin were the co-directors. Other staff members were: Ed Middleton, production coordinator; Steven Vincent, Veronica Ferraro, Terry Kramer and Jim Buckley, color guard instructors; Kathleen Baroni, Jeff Mecco and Brett Kreiter, marching and music instructors; and Dave Rutherford and Garry Gill, drum instructors.

# Clip/Paste sessions slated for Sun. & Tues.

We're looking for volunteers to participate in the Historical Society's clip/paste session, to be held from 1-4 PM on Sunday, June 4, and from 6:30-8 PM on Tuesday, June 6. The sessions, which involve 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.

*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.*

## **Free Ads for Non-Profits**

### ***East Brandywine Community Park Events***

"Sing," a free, family-friendly movie will be shown at dusk on Friday, Jun 2. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets and join us for an evening of fun. Popcorn will be provided for the entire family!

DNR, a Rock & Roll group from Delaware County, will play at a free concert at 6:30 PM on Friday, June 9. Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy five guys who love playing the songs we heard on the FM airways: The Beatles, Bruce Springsteen, The Rolling Stones, Steely Dan, Elton John and more.

The Flatland Drive Bluegrass Band, which blends traditional hard-driving bluegrass with modern stylings will play at a concert at 6:30PM on Friday, July 14. This band has shared the stage with bluegrass giants such as The Seldom Scene, The Lonesome River Band, Dailey and Vincent and The Boxcars.

### ***Community Festival***

St. Joseph's Catholic Church's 10<sup>th</sup> annual Community Festival will be held June 22-24 at 332 Manor Ave., Downingtown. Festival hours are 6-10 PM Tuesday thru Thursday and 6-11 PM Friday and Saturday. Fireworks are Saturday nite. Wristbands for unlimited rides every nite are available for \$20 per person if purchased before June 19 or for \$25 each at the event. Live entertainment includes DeLaSalle String Band, Red Satins, D-Town School of Rock, 4 Play Band, and Bull Dogs. Bingo and Bake Sale every nite. Food service always available.

### ***News about 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.downingtownsensiors.org/programs/newsletter/](http://www.downingtownsensiors.org/programs/newsletter/)

### ***Iron Industry History in Northern Chester County***

Neil Hobbins, is the historic site manager for Pottsgrove Manor in Montgomery County and former executive director at the Mill at Anselma, will give a talk on the "History of the Iron Industry in Northern Chester County" at 7 PM Thursday, June 1 at Bell Hall, Montgomery School, 1141 Kimberton Road (Route 113), Chester Springs. Prior to the speech, there will be a complimentary wine and cheese reception from 6:30 to 7 PM. Cost: \$5 per person; no charge for members of Mill at Anselma.

### ***Mac & Cheese***

The Thorndale-Downingtown Rotary Club will have its sixth annual Chester County Mac & Cheese Cook-off at noon on Sunday, June 4 at Kerr Park in Downingtown. For more details, see: [www.maccheesecookoff.com/about/](http://www.maccheesecookoff.com/about/)

### ***Whippets selling mattresses***

The DHS West football is selling Lifestyle Adjustable Bed sleep systems in the Wagner Gym at DHS West from 10 AM until 5 PM on Saturday, June 10. You can save as much as 50% on new, brand-name mattresses. Funds raised on this project used for the team's equipment and transportation. For more details, see:

[www.facebook.com/thomas.wickersham.31/posts/10209528884763035](http://www.facebook.com/thomas.wickersham.31/posts/10209528884763035)

### ***Lindbergh Kidnapping***

Historian and educator Ross Kershey will provide a talk about the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby at the 7 PM June 20 meeting of the West Caln Historical Society, at West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. The meetings are free and open to the public.

### ***Music at the Mill***

An afternoon of music, food and fun for the whole family will take place at The Mill at Anselma from 3-7 PM on Sunday, June 4. Three local bands-- Good 2 Go, Caroline Reese and the Drifting Fifth, and Singles Going Steady-- will play over the course of the afternoon/evening. Although The Mill will be closed to general admissions that day, event attendees are invited to tour the mill, and watch a milling demonstration. Tickets purchased after May 22<sup>nd</sup> are \$40 for adults, and \$17 for children 12 and under. An alternative local venue has been designated in case of rain.

Proceeds will benefit The Mill at Anselma. For tickets and information, call (610)827-1906, email [Kathy@AnselmaMill.org](mailto:Kathy@AnselmaMill.org), go to [www.anselmamill.org](http://www.anselmamill.org) and click on the event, Music at The Mill. Throughout the summer, The Mill is open for tours Thursday through Sunday from 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission to the Mill is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$3 for children ages 4-14. Children under 4 are free. The Mill is located on Rt. 401 (1730 Conestoga Road), ½ mile west of Rt. 113 in Chester Springs, PA.

### ***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 Cadwalader House is featuring a guessing game to identify post cards featuring special Pennsylvania sites. Prizes will be awarded for the most correctly identified photos. The Moore School is the original one room building where children can try on clothing replicas of the period and sit at historical desks. Authentic schoolbooks can be read and children can ring the school bell used to summon them not to be late. 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. Sickle St. Kennett Square). Meetings are free and all are welcome. Check [www.lymepa.org](http://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/](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).