



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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

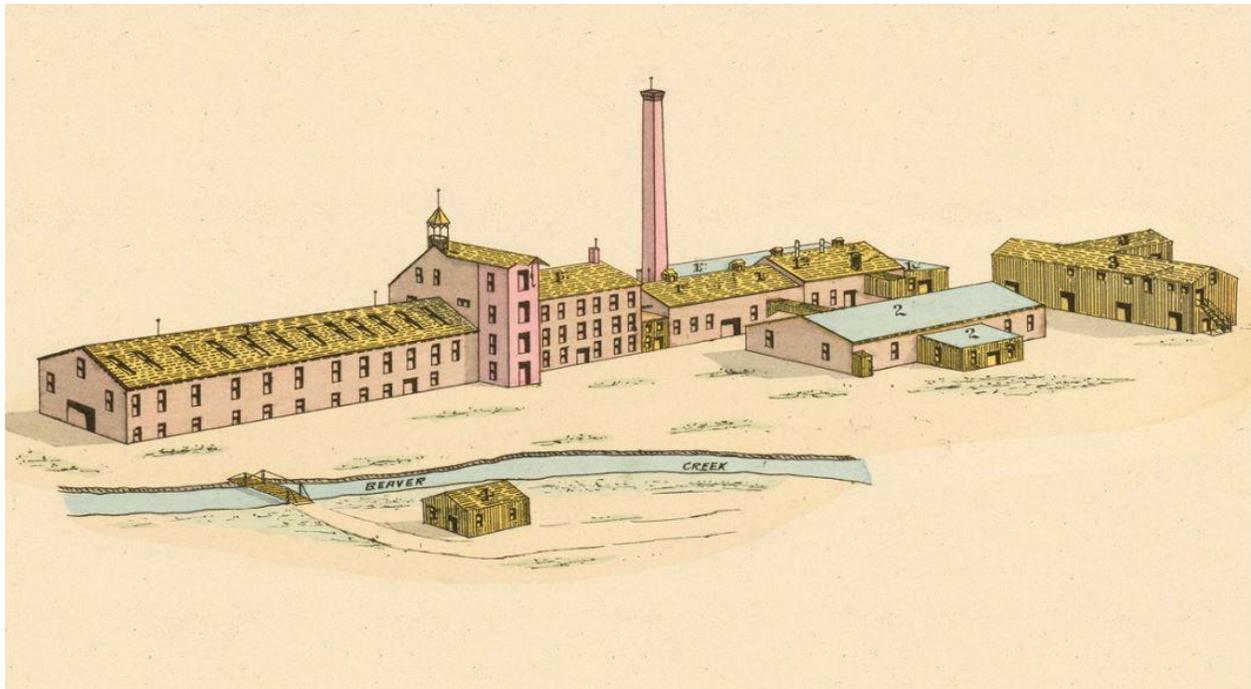
www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

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

Vol. 8, No. 20

May 18, 2017

What & Where Was 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: 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 early February 1950:

- When the **West Pikeland Township School Board** requested permission to continue sending its high school students to DHS, members of the Downingtown Joint School said they wouldn't have a decision on the issue until the next month's meeting. The Joint School Board demurred because West Pikeland was the only township that failed to support a bond issue in 1949, to finance the construction of an addition to the Junior-Senior High School, needed to eliminate overcrowded conditions.
- Committee heads for the Downingtown Chamber of Commerce's fourth sponsorship of the **Chester County Talent Pageant** to be held in the DHS auditorium in May, included: Mrs. Penrose Davis and Jack Brownstein, co-chairmen; Edward Baldwin, scholarship award; Creston Shoemaker, budget; Victoria DeMentis and James Fennelly, printed programs; Fred Howe and Walter Hadfield, staging and judges; Mrs. Frederick Bicking and Mrs. John Forbes, awards; Mrs. Robinson McIlvaine and Mrs. Walter McClure, publicity; Sam Charles, tellers; Mrs. Leo Hamilton and Mrs. John Fisher, contestant chaperones; Andrew Eppolito, photographer.
- **New teachers**, who were welcomed at a dinner given by the Downingtown School Board, included: Louise Brinker, art instructor; Frances Savage, commercial department; Ray DiSerafino, phys-ed teacher, as well as junior high football coach and seventh grade basketball coach; Jean Pollock, seventh grade teacher; Florence Haggerty, librarian; Allen McAfee, seventh grade teacher; Joseph Poltrone, music teacher; and Robert Whitney, science teacher.
- Officers of the Young People's group at **First Baptist Church** in Downingtown were Austin Windle, president; Joseph Ashenfelder, vice president; Russell Wilkins, secretary; Shirley Habecker, treasurer; Frank Gregory, assistant treasurer; and Charles Habecker, advisor. Committee included Mary Ella Nichols and Dorothy Wilkins, programs; Clarence Miller, music; Elma Ibaugh, friendliness; Ethel and Jean Mercer, decorations; and Mrs. George Mercer, publicity.
- **DHS musicians** who performed at an assembly included: the Spike Burns Band, comprised of Robert Burns, Christy Christ, Marvin Fredericks, John Shisler, James Zaferes, Richard Hedricks and Jean Eckbold; a piano duet by Joan Lenhardt and Barbara Seibert; a piano solo by Elaine Russell; vocal solos by Virginia Burgess, Cookie Brewer and Jack Williams; and a trombone solo by Clifford Short.
- Featured soloists. when the 30-voice **Men's Chorus of the Downingtown Young Men's Association** performed in a concert at DHS, were Dr. Walter Snyder, Joseph Travaglini and Earl Thomas.
- Members of the **Glen Valley Hunt Club**, plus more than 100 of their friends and families, enjoyed a venison banquet at the Glen Moore Fire Co. The deer were shot in Potter County by Kenneth Comstock, Winfield Ford, Charles and Granville McCardell, Guy Mercer and Gilbert Cornog.

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.

It was the Guernsey Cow sign in Exton



Anthony D'Addezio is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first of many people who correctly identified the site in the above photo as the sign for the Guernsey Cow Restaurant, which was established near the Exton Crossroad by Larry and Gladys Polite in 1931. The restaurant was famous for its hand-crafted cream caramels as well as its ice cream. The boy in the photo is Ed Pusey, who provided the photo.

Some of the responders to last week's Hist-O-Gram recalled the mystery about the theft of head of the cow sign, in 1985. According to Sean McGlinchey's blog about the Guernsey Cow, the 35-foot-tall sign, installed across Route 30 from the restaurant, was an iconic fixture for 40 years before the restaurant was closed in 1985. That's when Larry Polite decided to tear down the sign because it was beginning to rot and fade.

However, plans for the sign removal were thwarted after the project was publicized in an article in the July 17, 1985 edition of the *Daily Local News*, when Polite said the sign being razed, "would be a conversation piece, though, if somebody wanted to pull it up. If you want a cow to put on your front lawn, it's yours."

About a week later, someone took up Polite's offer, literally, and stole the head of the cow, according to a story in the July 24, 1985 issue of the *Daily Local News*. It noted that the four

steel sections, making up the head of the cow on each side of the sign, were apparently unhinged and dragged away during the wee hours of the morning when traffic on Route 30 was light. Polite said he would offer a reward for return of the sign or information leading to its recovery. And he donated the other sections of the sign to West Whiteland, and they're stored in a township barn.

Meanwhile, 32 years have passed since the theft, and the cow's head has never been found, and the vandals haven't been arrested.

The former restaurant has housed the Exton branch of the DNBFirst Bank for many years.

Editor's note: You can find skads of info and many photos about the Guernsey Cow's history and many interesting stories at McGlinchey's blog via: <https://theguernseycow.com/about/>. McGlinchey is the grandson of Larry Polite.

What locals were talking about 85 years ago

Noted below are new items originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* in January 1932:

- The Downingtown **Lions Club's welfare committee** put 12 volunteer-men to work in the borough, clearing silt and sand from the Brandywine Creek below the Lancaster Avenue Bridge. Each man was given a week's groceries in return for a day's work. Also, employees of the Chester Valley Electric Co. agreed to **donate one day's wages**, which totaled about \$60 per month, in support of the Lions Club shelter on Brandywine Avenue, where 30-40 persons were fed daily.
- Also during the Great Depression, Borough Council members stewed over the budget issue of whether to either retain or cut the **salaries of police officers**. George Foreman, council president, broke a tie and voted in favor of maintaining the current salary schedule, which included \$2,100 for Chief Chester Glisson and \$1,800 for Patrolman Joseph Newlin.
- Librarian Jane Boone reported to the board of the **Downingtown Library** that 101 new books had been added to the collection in 1931, and that 165 new borrowers had registered during the past year, bringing the total number of borrowers to 1,118.

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, and typing your email address into the sign-up box on the home page. .

You also can find on the **right side of the home page of our website**, 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.

Vintage Ad of the Week

VISIT 

Barrett's
Branch
Bake Shop

**in the old East Down-
ingtown Post Office**

Where you will find the
usual assortment of

Daily Baking

Phone 359-W

This ad was originally published in the December 4, 1931 edition of the *Downingtown Archive*.

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Spring Boutique

You'll be able to shop your heart out at the Spring Boutique from 1-3 PM Saturday, May 20 at the Downingtown Library, 122 Wallace Avenue. More than 20 vendors will be selling neat items.

Memorial Day

There will be a Memorial Day parade in the village of Marshallton in West Bradford at 1 PM on Sunday, May 28. The Memorial Day service at Marinelli Park on Chestnut Street, Downingtown, will begin at noon on Sunday, May 28. And Downingtown's Memorial Day parade will begin at Beaver Creek School on West Pennsylvania in the borough, at 10 AM on Monday, May 29, followed by a service at Kerr Park.

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. Admission to Music at The Mill is \$35 for adults and \$15 for children 12 and under until May 22nd. Tickets purchased after May 22nd 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, go to 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.

Movie Night in Kerr Park

Downingtown's Parks and Recreation Commission will host its first Movie Nite near the gazebo in Kerr Park at 8 PM on Saturday, May 20. The movie of the night is TROLLS! This is a free family-friendly event. The commission will provide popcorn while supplies last. Please bring refreshments, chairs and blankets for your family.

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://relay.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY17EC?fr_id=79649&pg=entry.

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/

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 additional information, call 610-280-9522.

Milford Mills, a Lost Village

Author and historian Catherine Quillman will speak at 3:30 PM on Sunday, May 21, about Milford Mills, a village that was "lost" with the creation of Marsh Creek State Park. The program will be conducted at the Park's west boat launch area. In the event of bad weather, the program will be offered at the Township Building on Horseshoe Pike in Guthriesville.

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>.

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 for directions and program information.

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.dtowchristmas.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.