



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

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

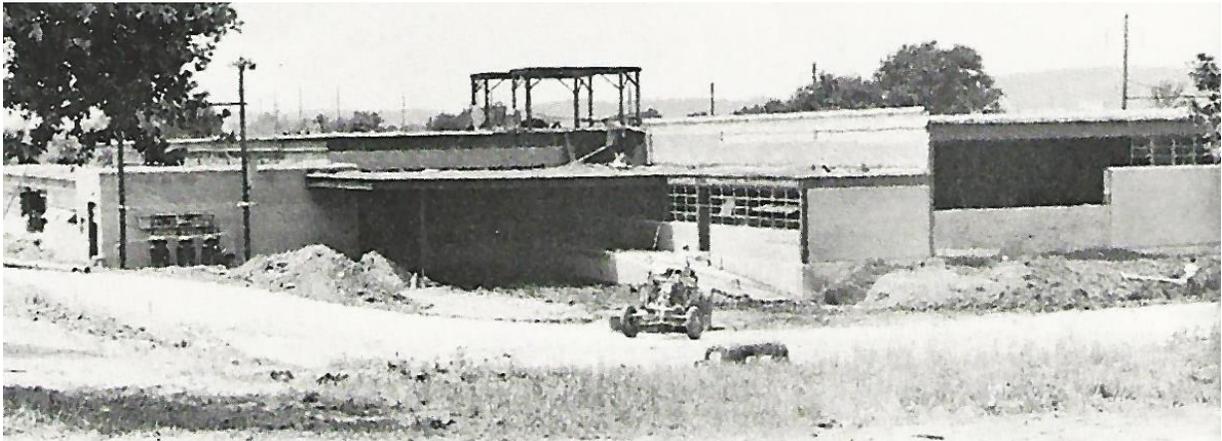
[www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org)

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

Vol. 8, No. 38

September 21, 2017

## Where and What Is This?



The first person who correctly identifies the site in the photo above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to: [dahs19335@gmail.com](mailto:dahs19335@gmail.com)

## Historical Society will have a booth at FallFest on Sunday

We hope you'll bring gently used books for our October Used Book Sale when you visit our booth on Green Street at the Downingtown FallFest, sponsored by the Downingtown-Thorndale Regional Chamber of Commerce, which will be held from 11 AM to 4 PM on Sunday, September 24 (rain date: Sunday, October 1). Types of books we're looking for include: Children's, History, Non-Fiction and Biographies, Sets, Fiction, Self-Help and Computer books. And please bring your VDs and CDs, as well as books.

Otherwise, please bring them, between 1-4 PM on Sundays, to Ashbridge House, our headquarters in the Ashbridge Square shopping center, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant, on Route 30 in East Caln. Or arrange to have someone from the Historical Society pick them up at your home or business by calling 610-269-1709 or by sending an email to:

[dths1709@gmail.com](mailto:dths1709@gmail.com).

# What locals were talking about 67 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in local papers in the latter part of April 1950:

- **St. Anthony's Lodge** sought bids on constructing a proposed \$75,000, two-story addition to its quarters on Church Street in Downingtown. The plans called for widening the club by 20 feet on the west side, to accommodate a new kitchen, office and meeting rooms, and redecorate the exterior of the current building. Elected as officers of St. Anthony's Ladies Auxiliary were Mrs. Samuel Mento, president; Margaret Sciarretta, vice president; Mrs. Joseph Mento and Mrs. Louis Mascherino, secretary; and Mrs. Walter McClure, treasurer. Proceeds from the minstrel put on by the Auxiliary were donated to the organ fund of St. Joseph's Church. Eva Taraschi, the minstrel's interlocutor was supported by a cast of 50 women. They included "endmen" Laura Reutter, Mary Sbei, Mary Ciarlone and Josephine Manetta.

- A tentative agreement had been reached between the **Downingtown Iron Works** and the local United Steel Workers Union, relative to a pension and social welfare plan. The pension trust, voluntarily installed by the Iron Works in 1942, was amended to include minimum monthly payments, including Social Security benefits, of \$60 for 15 years of service, and pro-rated for up to \$100 per month for 25 or more years of service. The cost of the pension plan was covered entirely by company contributions, as had been the practice in the past.

- Members of Downingtown's **American Legion Post**, who were assigned to decorate veterans' grave sites, included: Joseph Miller, Hopewell Methodist and East Baptist cemeteries; Amberto Mattioni and Howard Kennedy, St. Joseph's cemetery; William Wharry, William Zittle Edward Spamer, Northwood and Lindley Hill cemeteries; Jonathan Windle, Windsor Baptist, St. Paul's UCC and St. Paul's Lutheran in Lionville. Also, installed as officers of the **Legion's Auxiliary** were Mrs. William Wilmot, president; Mrs. Daniel Massimini, senior vice president; Betty Fennelly, junior vice president; Mrs. Earl Parker, secretary; Mrs. Joseph Eby, treasurer; Mrs. Henry Thomas, chaplain; Mrs. James Echols, guard; Dolly Colella, conductress; Kathryn Ceulers, patriotic instructor; and trustees Mary Warren and Mrs. Arthur Harrison.

- Exhibits in the **Marshallton School PTA's Hobby Show** included: the 75 dolls of Mrs. James Sheetz and daughter, Anna; and Mrs. Sarah Otter's more than 100 butterflies, moths and beetles. And officers elected to lead the PTA for the next two years were Mrs. Ralph Wilson, president; Mrs. Norman Moulder, vice president; Mrs. Milton Durnall, treasurer; and Mrs. David Johnson.

- The **Downingtown Lions Club** revealed plans for the third annual Soap Box Derby, to be conducted in June on the Chestnut Street hill in the borough. A parade, which included kids on decorated bikes as well as the derby competitors, was to start at Kerr Park. Leebert Chambers was general chairman, assisted by William Rowland and William Allen. Appointed as committee chairmen were Herbert Kreider and Edward Towson, registration; Stanley Walters, Irwin Pollock, Nelson Norris and Jack Forbes, parade; Nelson Dennis, Dr. George Bousum, Clifford Orr, Morse Garwood and Allison Hallowell, judges; Horace Miller, William McNamara, Chandler Roberts and Clinton Law, prizes; Edward Foreman, Edward Peterson, John DeTar and Jack Galt, inspection; and Dr. Harlan Sharp and Rev. George bass, first aid.

- Officers of the Sunday School at **Windsor Baptist Church**, Eagle, were Oscar Darlington, superintendent; Mrs. Walter Garvine, assistant superintendent; Martha Funderwhite, treasurer; Barbara Trego, treasurer; Loretta Frank, assistant treasurer; Caryn Supplee, pianist; and Mrs. James Peterson, assistant pianist.

- Herbert Windolph, president of the **West Pikeland School District**, told the West Pikeland PTA that he had a recent meeting with the Charlestown School Board, to explore the possibility of some kind of educational cooperation between the two townships' school districts.
- Officers of the **Uwchlan Community Club** for the next two years included Mrs. Elmer Matthews, president; Mrs. C. C. Galbreath, first vice president; Mrs. Carl Thomas, second vice president; Mrs. Gilbert Smedley, secretary; Mrs. Ernest Cornwall, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Earle Leslie, treasurer.
- Highlights of the Junior-Senior High School **annual band concert** included a xylophone solo by Janet Krieble, a saxophone solo by Ernest McNeil, and selections by the Tonette Band, comprised of third graders at West Ward School.
- Installed as officers of the **Odd Fellows Lodge** in Lionville were Warren Supplee, noble grand; Ronald Peoples, vice grand; Kenneth Kirkner, chaplain; Melvin Stewart, warden; John Benner, conductor.
- Elected as officers of the **Glen Moore Improvement Society** were Jack Kelly, president; Mrs. Walter Russell, vice president; Mrs. Lloyd Johnson, secretary; H. F. Beumer, treasurer; and directors Eleanor Bartol, Frank Henderson and Mrs. Noah Sensenig.
- Mrs. Gerald Lambert, president; Mrs. George Meacham, vice president; Mrs. Charles Lynam, secretary; and Mrs. Walter Esworthy, treasurer; were elected as leaders of the Philathea Sunday School Class at **First Baptist Church**, Downingtown.
- Re-elected as officers of the **East Ward School Mothers Club** were Mrs. John Miller, president; Mrs. John Moyer, vice president; Mrs. Ross Dague, secretary; Mrs. John Snyder, treasurer.

### Group Photo of the Week



Although we usually provide the names of all the individuals in our group photos, the huge number of people who attended the Downingtown Paper Company's annual employee banquet at a catering hall in 1948, make that impossible. However, Bob Stevens, who donated the photo to the Historical Society, says he can pick out his mother, father, grandfather, grandmother, uncle and aunt in the photo.

## It was the Belle School in East Caln Township



Dan Rothas is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person who correctly identified the building in the undated photo above as the Belle School in East Caln. Many people thought it was the octagonal school in Caln Township. The photo was provided by Francis Taraschi. According to the 1933 Historic American Buildings Survey, the stuccoed, two-story, octagonal schoolhouse, with a polygonal hip roof and louvered cupola, was built ca. 1818. The building was sold, for \$6,900, to Louis Downing in 1924. Although this information has not been confirmed, some sources claim that the school building was enveloped into the garage of the Town Motors, after the dealership moved from the center of Downingtown to East Caln in the 1960s. Now, the Wawa Store, at the intersection of Route 30 and Bell Tavern Road, is the site where the school was once located.

## **Part II: Paper mill celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

*Editor's note: This is the second installment of a two-part series about the Downingtown Paper Co. (DOPACO). The first installment was published in the September 14 Hist-O-Gram.*

The second generation of the McIlvain family was named to the company's executive board, after J. Gibson McIlvain died in 1920. And DOPACO's production capacity continued to increase, with additional paperboard mills being constructed in 1917, 1927 and 1936. Expansion and modernization continued into the 1950s, when three boilers, capable of producing more than 300,000 pounds of steam an hour, were installed in a new building, which also contained sophisticated water treatment equipment.

And in 1958, a year after the firm celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the company absorbed two paper box companies, which became the packaging division of DOPACO. They were the Downingtown Paper Box Co., a family-owned firm based in the borough, and the Simplex Paper Box Corp. in Lititz, PA. Also underway during that period, were a \$4 million expansion program, which included a new eight-cylinder paperboard machine, and \$400,000 was invested in a new facility for the proper treatment of industrial water. The third generation of the McIlvain family—F. Huston as president and his brother, Robert, as vice president—had already joined the executive board.

In June 1968, DOPACO was purchased by Sonoco Products, Hartsville, SC. The acquisition provided greater access to capital needed for upgrading the Downingtown facilities. However, all of the paperboard manufactured in the Downingtown mill continued to be produced from the scrap paper hauled to the mill by truck. And many of the company's 153 workers in 1981 were second and third generation employees, and the annual payroll was \$3million.

In addition to a different ownership, other changes at the mill included discontinuing supplying the folding carton market and switching the product to a high-quality heavyweight paperboard sector, which was more profitable. That decision resulted in the shutdown of two of the mills in 1974.

Although it still took about 7,000 gallons of water from Brandywine Creek to produce a ton of paperboard, the Downingtown facility also continued to improve its treatment of waste water. As a result, claimed Jim Gilpin, general sales manager, the water dumped back into Brandywine was purer than it was when it was taken into the mill.

By 1981, the Downingtown operation was cranking out 175 tons of paperboard a day. And its customers included Eastman Kodak, Hallmark, American Can and Georgia Pacific. Locally, Lukens Steel and G.O. Carlson used huge paperboard protective sheets, from the Downingtown mill, to be placed between large steel plates during storage and shipment. The Downingtown mill also manufactured paperboard that ultimately used in the production of point-of-purchase displays, hardcover books, three-ring binders, and game boards and puzzles.

Sonoco Products announced in 2005 that it wouldn't reopen its Downingtown paperboard mill following a fire on March 20, which caused about \$500,000 in damage. The plant had 71 employees at the time. The company said significant investments would be needed to repair the fire damage, and productivity improvements across its paper mill system created adequate capacity to absorb the volume currently produced at Downingtown.

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

You can access the September 14 issue of our Hist-O-Gram by clicking on:

[www.downtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/September%2014%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf](http://www.downtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/September%2014%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf)

### **Vintage Ad of the Week**

**Strawberry  
Festival**  
at  
**Hopewell M. E.  
Church**  
**Thursday Evening**  
**JUNE 15, '33**  
**Dr. Frescoln Band**  
**Rain or Shine**

This ad was originally published in the June 9, 1933 edition of the *Downingtown Archive*.

## 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, you'll find access to an archive of every edition of the Hist-O-Gram we have published since 2010 via: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html)

## Access to latest historic "Then & Now" photo sequences

You can see all of the "Then & Now" morphed photo sequences of local historic sites via: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Then and Now.html](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Then_and_Now.html)

## How to trace your property'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)

## Free Ads for Non-Profits

### *Cavalcade of Bands*

The Downingtown Music Parents Association will host a Cavalcade of Bands competition at Kottmeyer Stadium on the DHS West campus at 7:15 PM on Saturday, September 30. Over a dozen high school marching bands will compete. Also, the Boston University and University of New Haven bands will execute college-level performances, as well. Tickets available at the gate: \$10 for adults, \$8 for children, seniors and veterans. For more questions, contact: [mpa.concessions@gmail.com](mailto:mpa.concessions@gmail.com)

### *DHS All-Alumni 5K*

The class of '97 presents the inaugural DHS All-Alumni 5K/1 mile Walk /Kids' Run at 9 AM on Saturday, October 14, on the campus of DHS West. Come and see how much your alma mater has changed, while reconnecting with old friends at this family-friendly event! Event details can be found here: <https://runsignup.com/dhsalumni5k>  
All proceeds from the race will be used for 3 scholarships, to be given out by the DHS Alumni Association to a student in each DASD high school.

### *Flea Market*

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Minquas Fire Co., 141 Wallace Ave., Downingtown, from 9 AM until noon on Saturday, September 30. If you need more info, contact: [minquaslax46@gmail.com](mailto:minquaslax46@gmail.com)

### *Library Love Fundraiser*

The Library Love fundraiser will be held from 6-9 PM on Thursday, September 28, at the Downingtown Country Club. Proceeds from live auction bidding and raffles go to the Downingtown Library. Tickets are \$40. Contact [francine.dague@gmail.com](mailto:francine.dague@gmail.com) or [gwood1139@comcast.net](mailto:gwood1139@comcast.net) regarding auction item donations or sponsorship opportunities.

### *Roast Beef Dinner*

Marshallton Methodist Church, 1282 W. Strasburg Road, will have a Roast Beef Dinner (eat-in or take-out) from 4:30-6:30 PM on Saturday, October 21. Menu includes: roast beef, mushroom & brown gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, cole slaw, applesauce, rolls, dessert and a beverage. To order tickets, send an email to: [office@marshalltonchurch.org](mailto:office@marshalltonchurch.org) or call 610-696-5247. If ordered before October 17, tickets are \$13 for adults and \$5 for children (ages 5-12). Tickets bought at the door, are \$15 for adults and \$5 for children.

### ***Mayor's 5K***

Downingtown Mayor Josh Maxwell is sponsoring a 5K "Run to End Gender-Based Violence" to be conducted on the Struble Trail, beginning at 9:30 AM on Saturday, October 14. Proceeds from the race will be distributed to: the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County, the Chester County Fund for Women and Girls, and the Crime Victims Center of Chester County. For more details on the run, see: [www.mayors5K.com](http://www.mayors5K.com)

### ***More on Milford Mills***

Due to popular demand, author and historian Catherine Quillman has been invited by the East Brandywine Township Historical Commission to give another presentation on "Milford Mills: the Lost Village" at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 27 at the Township Building on Route 322, Guthriesville.. The lecture is free and open to the public. The evening will include time-to-share stories, as well as early photos taken from Quillman's expanded book, *The Story of Milford Mills and The Marsh Creek Valley*. The author welcomes any photos that you might want to share such as those of other "lost" communities, including the former village of Eagle, Byers, Dorlan's Mills and Bondsville. Refreshments will be served.

### ***Mill at Anselma***

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](mailto:info@anselmamill.org), or visit [www.anselmamill.org](http://www.anselmamill.org).

### ***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/)

### ***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. 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).