



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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org

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

Vol. 8, No. 39

September 28, 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

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

You can access the September 21 issue of our Hist-O-Gram by clicking on:

<http://www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org/Histograms/2017%20Hist-O-Grams/September%2021%202017%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf>

What locals were talking about 52 years ago

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

- Lionville was having an identity crisis. That's because it was possible that the village in growing Uwchlan Township would lose its designation as a third class Post Office, which was serving about 175 families who came to the Post Office in John Benner's store on Village Avenue to pick up and drop off their mail. However, other sections of the township were served by Post Offices in Downingtown, Exton and Chester Springs. So, U.S. Post Office officials in Washington were thinking about redesignating Lionville's Post Office as a rural station, a mounted route, or as an administrative branch of the Exton Post Office, which provided deliveries to homes and businesses. Meanwhile, Margaret Thackery, who had been Lionville's Postmaster since 1932, notified officials in Washington that she wanted to retire. She had succeeded her father, James Simpson, who held the post since 1914.

- Nineteen cars of an eastbound Pennsylvania Railroad freight train piled up behind the Thorndale Post Office in a **spectacular derailment**. Most of the train's 83 cars were loaded, and the contents of the derailed cars spilled out as they twisted and rolled over. About 500 feet of the track were torn up. The accident was caused by a broken assembly, which held the wheels and axles in place on a tank car.

- **Jamesway Corp.** announced that its sixth "junior department stores" was going to be built near the Acme supermarket in Thorndale. The cost to build the 50,000-square-foot structure was projected to be \$400,000, and 75 local employees would be working at the store.

- Mrs. Donald Shields was elected president of the **Downingtown branch of the Chester County Hospital Auxiliary**. She succeeded Mrs. Ralph Ralston. Also elected were Mrs. Thomas Brookover, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Stanley Seneff, treasurer.

- Installed as officers of the **Downingtown Moose Lodge** were Thomas Moffatt, governor; Dan Zittle, junior governor; trustees Percy Katherman, Richard Zittle and Clem Bradford; and Frank Gregory, prelate.

- Newly elected officers of the **Lyndell Christian Temperance League** included Anna Hannum, president; Myrtle Jefferis, first vice president; Alice Hall, second vice president; Mary Bennetch, treasurer; Hannah Harner, secretary; Reba Hershey, ways and means chairman; and Hattie Fisher, sunshine chairman.

- Winners in the 5-6 year-old age group in a **coloring competition**, sponsored by the Downingtown Savings and Loan Association, were Linda Costello, first; Mark McCoy, second; and Frances Ann Manetta, third. In the 7-8 year-old division, the winners were Betty Davis, first; William Murphy, second; and Barbara Coates, third.

- Soloists, who played at a **spring concert** put on by fourth, fifth and sixth graders in Downingtown elementary schools, included a trumpet trio comprised of Arthur Curtis, David Hemberger and John Marriott, and Frank Moore, who played an alto saxophone.

- Members of **Brownie Troop 69** of East Brandywine, who participated in an Easter egg hunt at the home of their leader, Mrs. Howard McGirk, included: Jan Forbes, Jane McGirk, Teresa Howard, Wendy Wallace, Elizabeth McClure, Sharon Ker and Adeline Ford.

- Although it had been a lean year for the Coach Herb Lee's **DHS track team**, Carl Styer usually could be counted on to tally first places in the 100 and 220-yard dashes and pole vault for the Whippets.

Local organizations receive checks from Woman's Club



The Downingtown Woman's Club recently distributed a total of more than \$160,000 to five local non-profit organizations before the club disbanded. Representatives of the non-profits who received the grant money, shown in the bottom row of the photo, were, left to right: Jan Leaf, director, the Lord's Pantry; Bob Stevens, past president, Alert Fire Co.; Tom Lee, assistant chief, Minquas Fire Co.; and Parry Desmond, past president, Downingtown Area Historical Society. Elizabeth Hess, director of the Downingtown Library was unable to be at the grant award ceremony, held at the Kerr Park gazebo. Woman's Club leaders in the photo were, left to right: Sue McClure, finance chair; Mary Alice Kottmeyer, secretary; Marie Hill, treasurer; Jean Walton Manning, vice president; Cynthia Lyman, president; and Eileen Schafer, outreach chair.

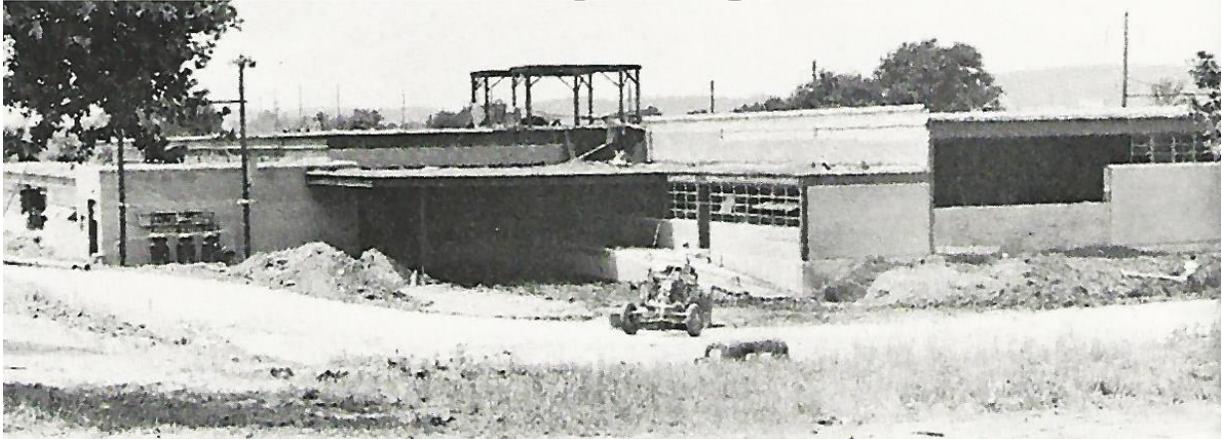
The Downingtown Woman's Club was founded 103 years ago by charter members, and the first official meeting was held in the Minquas Fire Co. parlor in 1914.

In 1922, the clubhouse at 121 Manor Avenue was purchased. To meet expenses and pay the mortgage, fundraising efforts for many years included: card parties, bake sales and suppers. Over the years, the club offered financial aid and many hours of service to the: Coatesville VA Hospital, Embreeville State Hospital, Pocopson Home, Salvation Army, Needlework Guild, Red Cross, CARE program, U.S Olympics, Special Olympics, American Field Service Foreign Exchange Student program, and Downingtown's Log House.

As costs related to maintaining the clubhouse continued to be prohibitive, members decided to sell it in 1989. However, the fruits of the property sale, plus two willed endowments, have enabled the club to provide, more than \$220,000 in educational and community grants to organizations such as the: Downingtown Library, Downingtown Area Historical Society, Good Neighbor Day, Meals on Wheels, Downingtown Senior Center, Brian's House, local fire companies, Association for the Blind, Brandywine YMCA, Bridge of Hope and Good Works. Contributions of particular note in recent years have been scholarships worth a total of \$175,000 to graduating seniors from four local high schools, and \$15,000 toward the 1998 construction of the gazebo in Kerr Park.

(Editor's note: The Historical Society used its share of Woman's Club grant to complete the repointing of three exterior stone walls of our 308-year-old headquarters on Route 30 in East Caln. The project was done by a masonry contractor, who specializes in working on historical buildings.)

It was DOPACO's "Box Shop" being built on Boot Road



Joe Bird is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person who correctly identified the site in the photo above as the DOPACO Packaging Division's office and production facility, near the intersection of Boot Road and Chestnut Street, while it was under construction in 1956, according to the June-July 1956 edition of the DOPACO Diary, a company publication. Joe should know because he "worked" in the DOPACO building for nearly five years in the 1960s. The building is currently occupied by several office/warehouse tenants. The former DOPACO packaging operation in Downingtown now is located at Woodbine Road and Lincoln Avenue, where it's now part of the Reynolds Group Holdings Ltd., a manufacturer and supplier of consumer food and beverage packaging and storage products.

Historical Society will pick up your used books

You can have someone from the Historical Society pick up your used books, CDs and VDs, for our Book Sale in October, at your home or business. That can be arranged by calling 610-269-1709 and leaving a message, or by sending an email to: dths1709@gmail.com.

Otherwise, you can bring the books and discs, from 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.

Types of hard cover books and paperback/soft cover books we're looking for include: Children's, History, Non-Fiction and Biographies, Sets, Fiction, and 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 encyclopedias.

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

Vintage Ad of the Week

Finest FABRICS



The economy in taking advantage of a regular cleaning and dyeing service is not confined solely to the pleasure in having clean and spotless frocks, but also includes the additional service enjoyed from each garment...Dirt rots fabrics and the finer the fabric the more essential it is that it be cleaned regularly... We clean the finest fabrics, scientifically and without harming the finest textiles. Woman's Coats and dresses cleaned for \$1.00

Prompt Service
Phone 94-J

MENTO and MAHAN
Cleaning and Pressing
WALLACE AVENUE DOWNINGTOWN

This ad was originally published in the February 23, 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.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.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.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.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_DeEdAbstract.pdf

Free Ads for Non-Profits

Fire Prevention Open House

There will be an Fire Prevention open house from 6:30-9 PM on Wednesday, October 11 at both of these Downingtown fire stations: Alert Fire Co., 122 W. Pennsylvania Ave., and Minquas Fire Co., 141 Wallace Ave. Includes fire prevention demos, fire trucks and refreshments.

Fall Fest

The Downingtown Friends Meeting will have its annual Fall Fest at the historic Quaker Meeting House, 809 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, from 9 AM until 4 PM on Saturday, October 14. Admission and parking are free. Featured will be thrift, garden and baked items for sale, plus games. For more details, see: <http://downingtowntownfriendsmeeting.org/fallfestival.htm>

DHS Class of 1967 Reunion

The DHS Class of 1967 will have its 50th reunion on the weekend of October 13-14. Following a tour of the STEM Academy, where the class attended Junior High School, they will get together at the Victory Brewing Co. on Friday. The main event will be held at 6 PM at St. Anthony's Lodge on Saturday evening. For details, see: www.downingtowntalumni.org/Documents/Reunions/Classof1967_50th_Oct2017.pdf

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

Freedom Isn't Free

Lt. Col. Henry (Hank) Detering (USMC-retired), decorated Viet Nam veteran and school administrator, will speak about Freedom Is Not Free at the West Caln Historical Society's meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, October 17, at the West Caln Municipal Bldg., 721 W. Kings Hwy., Wagontown. Meetings are free and open to the public.

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

Mill at Anselma

On Thursday evening, October 5, The Mill at Anselma will host Morris J. Farnum, coordinator of the Mill's collections team, as the monthly speaker. Morris will update the audience on the progress and discoveries of dedicated team, which has been cataloguing artifacts, photos and other treasures discovered amongst the archives at The Mill at Anselma. Guests will view an exhibit of some of the most interesting artifacts: antique flour bagging tools, a "spaghetti guitar," and old mill advertising, and enjoy a slide show of recently discovered photos from the mid-1980's restoration. In addition, excerpts from various oral histories and historical photos. This event will be held 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. For more information, contact the Mill at Anselma at [610-827-1906](tel:610-827-1906), email info@anselmamill.org, or visit www.anselmamill.org. The Mill at Anselma is on Rte. 401 (1730 Conestoga Road), ½ mile west of Route. 113 in Chester Springs.

And on Saturday, October 14, The Mill at Anselma will hold a Harvest Festival and Milling Demonstration from 10 AM to 4 PM. There also will be historical cooking demonstrations, quilting, cider making, and crafts for children. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for children, 4–14 years of age. Mill members admitted free of charge. The mill is 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.

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.

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.

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 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

Senior Center programs & activities

You'll find information about the programs and activities at the Downingtown Area Senior Center via: www.downingtownseniors.org

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 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/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.