



Downingtown Area Historical Society *History Notes*

Interesting bits of Downingtown area history

October 25, 2018

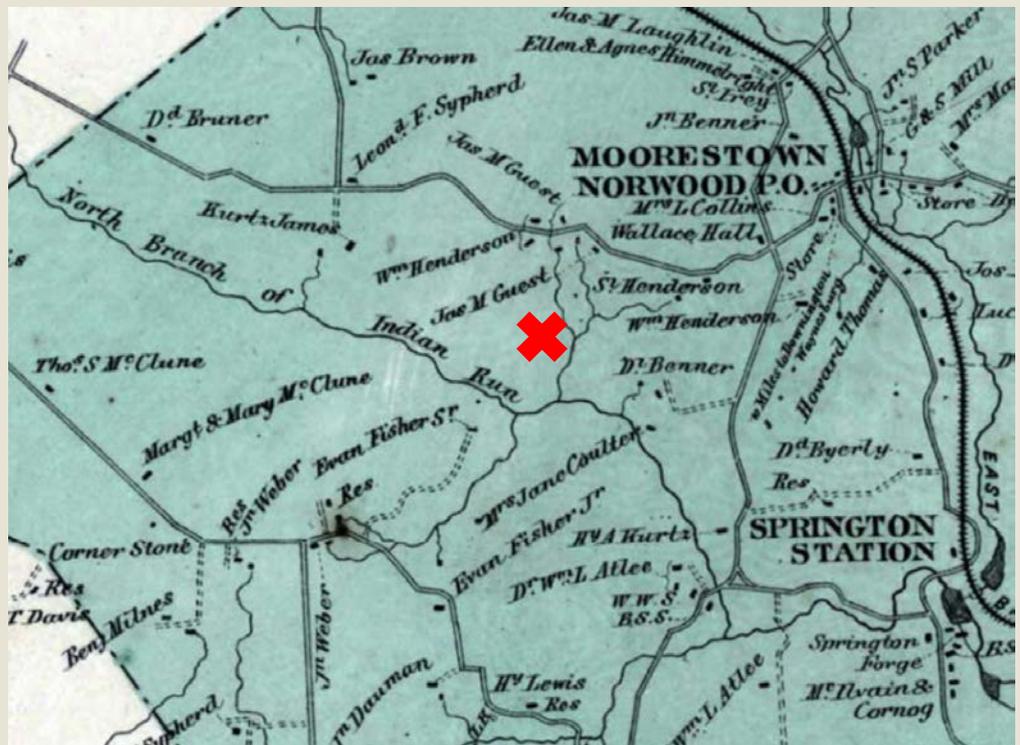
Volume 1, Issue 20

Glenmoore, Once an Indiantown

Sometime before 1725, Alexander and David Henderson, European pioneers, walked from Philadelphia to a site near the Brandywine where there were two springs. On the 1725 tax list, Alexander and David Henderson were listed as living in Indiantown. The Indian village was located in present day Glenmoore in Wallace Township. The former Indiantown School located at Indiantown Road and Fairview Road is a reminder of Glenmoore's past. Local historian John Shrader said that the Brandywine Band of Indians lived in Glenmoore from about 1720-1735. In 1733, the Henderson's purchased the tract of land along Indiantown Road, which included the Indian Village and Indian Burying Ground. The Henderson's promised the Native Americans, then called Indians by the European settlers, that they would not disturb the graves. Cornfields were planted around the burial ground. The land stayed in the Henderson family for several generations. A solitary chestnut tree marked the Indian Burying Ground, now just a stump of a tree.

In 1952, Gilbert Montgomery, owner of the former Henderson tract, sponsored an archaeological study to verify the burial ground and its location. Five members of the Archaeological Society of Delaware and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Cadbury of Glenmoore, who represented the Chester County Historical Society, conducted the investigation.

The investigators uncovered the disintegrating remains of an adult male Native American, considered to be an important person in the tribe. The body lay extended on its back with the head resting on a stone pillow, facing westward. The depth of the grave was 31 inches. According to C.A. Weslager, President of the Archaeological Society of Delaware, this burial ground custom had not been recorded before for the Brandywine Band of Indians in this area.



This map of from 1873 shows the western portion of Wallace Township. An "X" marks the approximately location of the Indian burial ground.

Buried with the Native American, for his journey to the next world, were three 18th century European white clay pipes, an embossed brass button, two gun flints, 61 glass beads, and several oxidized iron objects. It is believed that there were about 100 unmarked graves on this quarter-acre site.

In the early 1700s, the Lenni Lenape Indians lived in a village on the Brandywine at present day Glenmoore. Lenni Lenape, as they called themselves, means "Original People." The Europeans called the Lenni Lenape, the Brandywine Indians, named after their favorite fishing stream. They are also known as the Delawares.

The village consisted of thirty wigwams clustered in groups of five or six wigwams on the sheltered hillside for protection against enemies. The village was near two springs which provided a good supply of water. Narrow footpaths were worn bare by their travels.

In that time period fish were plentiful in the pure Brandywine and Indian Run. Also, the forests abounded with deer and small game. The Lenni Lenape had an abundant supply of fish and game to meet their simple needs. The timber was burned from the summits of the ridges making it easier to hunt the deer and make small clearings near the villages.

The open fields with charred tree trunks here and there, were prepared by the Indian women. They hoed the ground readying it for planting corn and tobacco. It was the boys' job to shoot arrows to frighten the crows as they scratched around the hills.

Lenni Lenape for miles around would gather at a favorite place along the banks of the Brandywine and lay in their supply of shad. The shad weighed between five and six pounds each. These fishing expeditions produced paths or trails that often led back into the Welsh Mountains and beyond.

Fish traps and fish nets used by the Brandywines were made of vines from honeysuckle, bittersweet, or from bark. Inner bark of various trees as white cedar, basswood, linden, or slippery elm was separated from the outer bark and cut into strips about a half-inch wide, then woven or braided into a strong twine that could be used to make traps or fish lines. Literally hundreds of hours were spent by the women working all winter to braid bark into enough twine to make nets 30 or 40 feet long that were put across the stream during the shad run in the spring.

Imagine that it is a fine spring day in the Indiantown along the Brandywine in 1730. Looking around, you see the hillsides of fine woods and the village of wigwams. Some of the women are preparing a meal and some are tilling the cornfields by turning the underbrush with stone tools. Some men and young boys are making bows from trees while others are fishing, and the younger children are playing. Some men are returning from the quarry with stone for their workshop where they hammer and flake it into arrowheads, drills, axes, and scrapers. The young girls are collecting kindling and wood for the fire. This is the Indiantown that Alexander and Daniel Henderson experienced.

Note: this article was written by Ruth Lowe and originally appeared in the Fall 2002 and Spring 2003 issues of the Turnpike Times. A former publication by the Downingtown Area Historical Society.

Downingtown Area Group Photo

This picture was taken on Pennsylvania Avenue in 1958 across from the Alert Fire Company. This trio of kids certainly looked happy to get their picture taken. Let us know if you know who they are.



Ashbridge Artifact

Hanging on a wall at the Ashbridge House is a relatively new artifact. It's a painting done by Jack Henry in 2009 of the inside of the Coffee Cup restaurant on Lancaster Avenue. Recognize anyone?



Downingtown Did-You-Know?

Did you know that along the East Branch Brandywine Trail there used to be a pond that was once part of the nearby YMCA camp. The camp was located on top of the ridge to the south. On that same ridge there was a spring-fed stream that flowed down to the Brandywine River. Near the Brandywine an area about a half acre in size was dug out and the water from the stream created a pond. The YMCA used the pond for fishing in the warm weather and ice skating in the winter.



In The (Old) News – Items that Made Headlines Back in the Day (a trolley focus in this issue)

1904 – In May, three boys were held for trial for “malicious mischief” when they tampered with a car parked on a siding of the West Chester-Downingtown trolley line. The car rolled off the siding and onto the main tracks narrowly avoiding a collision with a car filled with passengers.

1912 – In March, Constable George Hines was taking Frank Smith to the Chester County Prison from Coatesville to West Chester on the trolley. Smith was charged with chicken stealing. When the trolley reached Downingtown Hines gave his seat to a woman who was standing. As Hines got up, Smith bolted to the rear of the car and jumped off and vanished.

1912 – In September a horse wandered onto the trolley line near Downingtown and became stuck on a trestle, causing delays on the line for several hours.

1916 – On February 16th, Myers Moore, a motorman on the West Chester-Downingtown trolley was killed near Brookworth when the brakes of the trolley car he was operating failed and he crashed into another car. Moore stayed at his post as long as possible to try to avoid the collision.

1916 – On July 27th, three men in a new automobile crashed onto the trolley tracks south of Downingtown. The car turned over pinning two of the men in the wreckage. The third man fell clear of the car and was able to flag down an approaching trolley. After much effort, the trolley’s crew and passengers rescued the two trapped men who were brought to Chester County hospital for treatment.

1925 – In March, the crew of a West Chester-Downingtown trolley car had to stop and get off the car to remove a “kiddie car” from the tracks. Apparently the kiddie car was a homemade contraption kids were building to go up and down the trolley tracks.

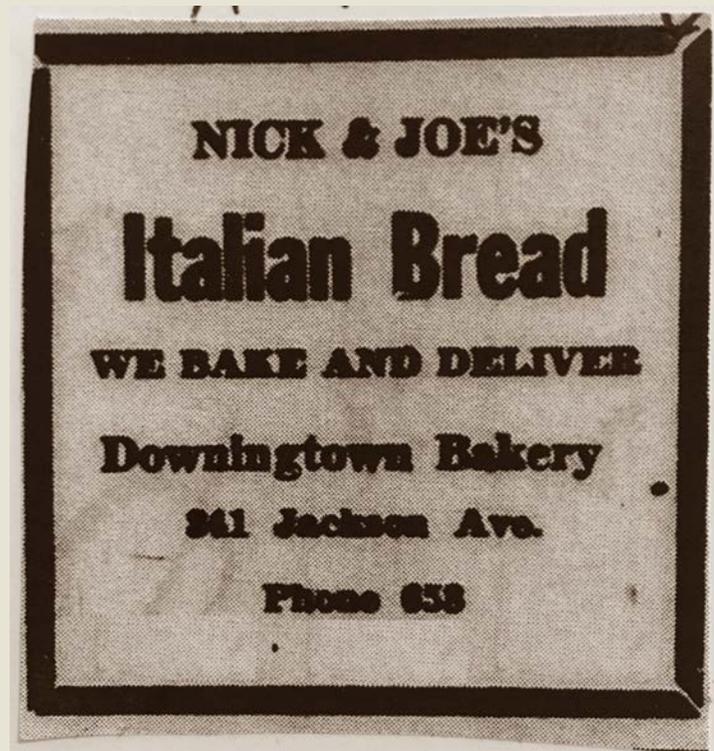
Downingtown Area Mystery Pic

Can you identify the location in the photograph below? The first person to correctly identify the location of this photo will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your response to: dahs19335@gmail.com.



Downingtown Vintage Ad

Some of us at the Historical Society had no idea that there was a bakery at 341 Jackson Avenue in Downingtown's east end. The Cipollini family lived at this home at the time, but we're not exactly sure who Nick and Joe are. Please let us know if you do. The ad is from 1947.



Last Issue's Mystery Pic

Dennis Irwin is truly a perceptive scholar because he was the first to identify the location of the Mystery Pic in the last issue. The photograph was taken during the fall of 1963 in East Brandywine Township on Bondsville Road at its intersection with North Bailey and Hadfield Roads. It faces northeast and shows Beaver Creek in the foreground and farm buildings in the background on a piece of property adjacent to what is now Bondsville Mill Park. Between the creek and buildings is a farm pond which Dennis remembers skating on as a child.

The photograph was one of several of this area sent to us by California resident Jeff Young. Jeff was ten in 1963 when his family moved to a large house on East Fisherville Road. Jeff's dad was transferred to Pennsylvania for his job, but the Young's were only in the area a year. However, during that year the family did a lot of exploring in the area and took numerous photographs, including the Mystery Pic taken by his mom. At the bottom is a Google Street View image of the same general view today.



Advertisements for Non-Profits

West Caln Historical Society

The West Caln Historical Society will hold a meeting on Tuesday, November 20, 2018 at 7:00 PM in the West Caln Municipal Building at 721 West Kings Highway in Wagontown. The subject will be ***They Conquer Who Endure***, a book by Jeanne M. Rap about local veterans and the Downingtown Veterans Memorial.

Fall 2018 East Brandywine Historical Commission Speakers Series. All programs are held at 3:30 p.m. at the East Brandywine Township Building

Sunday, November 18th - "Historic 1700's Pennsylvania Cooking" presentation by Nancy Bialy Daversa who has worked as a historic consultant for movies and television show, and has been called the "Hollywood Herbalist."

Community Luncheon

Central Presbyterian Church, 100 W Uwchlan Ave, Downingtown, holds a monthly Community Luncheon from 11 AM until 1 PM on the first Thursday of each month, October through May. Their popular chili, chicken corn noodle, vegetable beef, and cream of potato soups are sold, along with sandwiches, salad platters, homemade desserts and beverages. For take-out service, call 610-269-1576 and ask for the kitchen. Bring a friend, meet a neighbor, or come alone and enjoy good food and fellowship.

Uwchlan Township Historical Commission

The Uwchlan Township Historical Commission will open the Edith P. Moore schoolhouse on the first Sunday of the month from May to November. The hours are 2pm-4pm. The schoolhouse is located on North Village Avenue in Lionville.

Lyme Disease Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania

The Lyme Disease Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, an education and support group for patients and caregivers who have been affected by Lyme Disease, meets quarterly on the 3rd Wednesday of January, April, June, and October at 7PM at the Kennett Friends Meeting House on PA Rt 82 (125 W. Sickle St. Kennett Square, PA 19348). Meetings are free and all are welcome. Check www.lymepa.org for directions and programs.

Greater Downingtown Business and Professional Women (BPW)

Meets monthly on the 2nd Wednesday evening, at 6 pm, in the Thorndale Inn for a dinner, networking, program and meeting. All area women are welcome. Most nights there is a program such as a speaker. Call Mary Coyne for your reservation for dinner at 610-380-8869. We meet each month from September to June.

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.

Clipping Events

Did you know that as part of our archival collection we have about 14,000 cards in our files that contain newspaper clippings? During most months there are two opportunities at the Historical Society to help clip and paste newspaper articles for this collection. The sessions are held at the Ashbridge House, our 309-year-old headquarters, next to the Chick-Fil-A restaurant in the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on Route 30 in East Caln. The two sessions are usually:

- **The first Sunday of the month, 1:00-4:00 PM**
Next one November 4th @ 1:00 PM
- **The first Tuesday of the month, 6:30-8:00 PM (with pizza!)**
Next one November 6th @ 6:30 PM

Historical Society's Wish List

The Downingtown Area Historical Society is a non-profit organization proudly maintaining the 309-year-old Ashbridge House and a large archives. The society can always use gifts in kind with an immediate need for:

- General household items and office supplies including:
 - Light bulbs
 - Paper towels
 - Large and small trash bags
 - Glue sticks (used for our newspaper clippings)
- Amazon gift cards or gift cards to Home Depot or Lowes. Sometimes we need to make quick purchases so gift cards would come in very handy.

To make a tax-deductible cash donation, use this link or send a check to the address below. Thank you!



Downingtown Area Historical Society

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