



Downingtown Area Historical Society *History Notes*

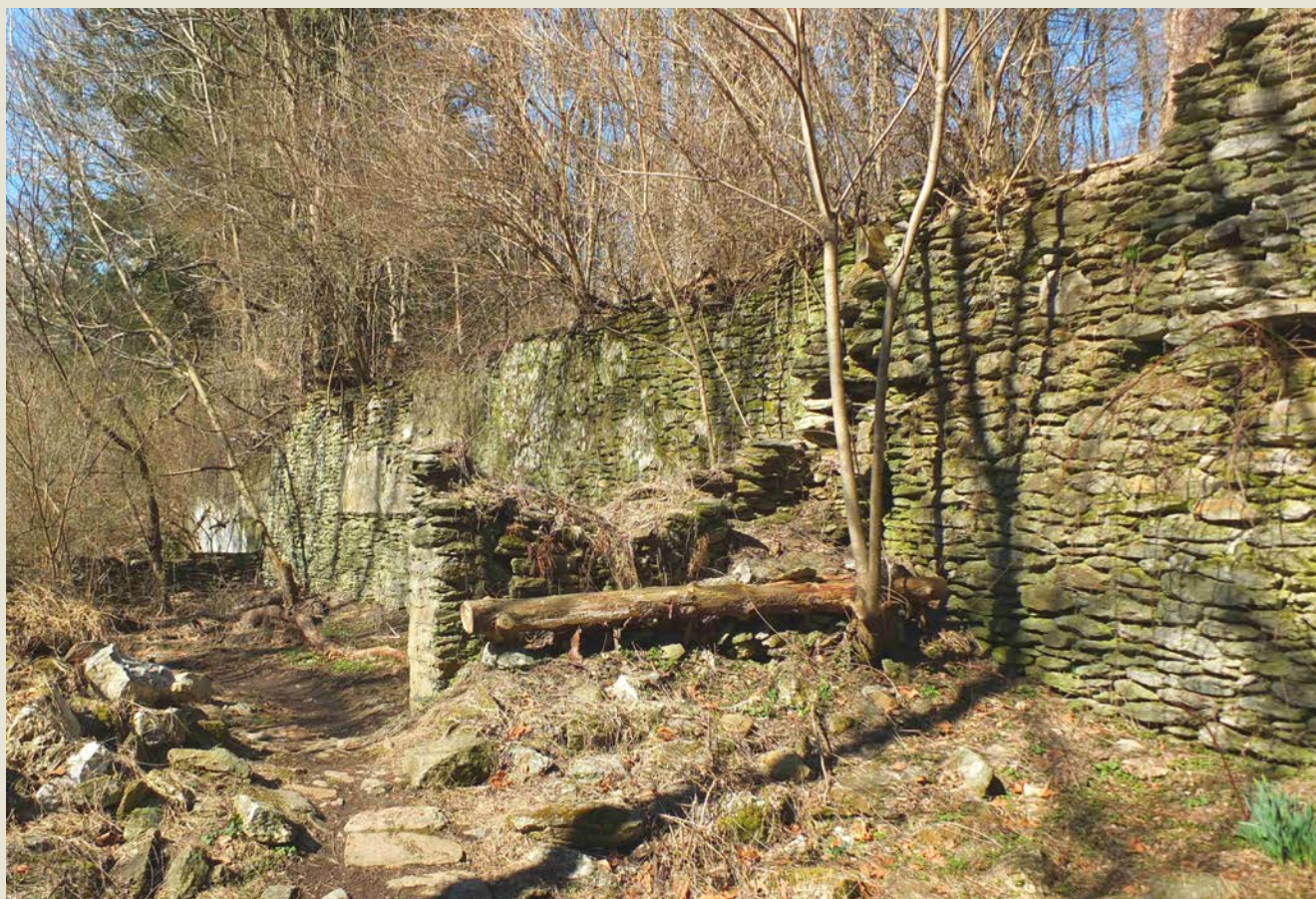
Interesting bits of Downingtown area history

March 14, 2019

Volume 2, Issue 5

Englamere Farm Revisited

The September 27, 2018 issue of *History Notes* featured the ruins on Englamere Farm in East Bradford Township. Englamere Farm was the former home of William Eades who purchased the property in 1927 and lived there with his second wife Persis and his daughter Emily from his first marriage. Persis died in 1946. William remarried in 1948 to Honora Ganoe and they lived on the farm until 1953 when they sold it to the East Caln Realty Company. In 1967, Downingtown Paper Company purchased the property, and in 2005 the former farm was acquired by East Bradford Township from Sonoco, Downingtown Paper's successor. The area is now part of the Township's Harmony Hill Nature Area and the farm's ruins are a popular, and mysterious, attraction just off the main paved trail.



We reported in a previous issue of History Notes that the ruins seen here was the farmhouse on Englamere Farm. However, after receiving a picture of the farmhouse and doing further research, we definitively concluded these ruins are the barn. The house was located a short distance away.

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After we put out this issue we continued to do more research on the property and were especially focused on finding any photographs taken on the farm. Fortunately, our efforts paid off through a little detective work. The Eades' would often spend their summers in Bar Harbor, Maine and when they sold Englamere in 1953, Bar Harbor became their permanent home (though they would often winter in Florida). William's daughter Emily moved to Maine as well where she worked as a nurse in a local hospital, married, and started a family. We were able to locate Emily's daughter in Maine who graciously provided us a photograph of Englamere's farmhouse!



Here is a picture of the main farmhouse on Englamere Farm. It was provided to us by the granddaughter of William Eades. It was taken the morning after a fresh snowfall but we do not know the year. The photographer was standing on the driveway just above the bridge over the Brandywine River.

However, when we received the photograph of the home it didn't seem to fit the ruins we identified in our previous article. Not only was the topography different but the home in the photograph was much smaller than what we assumed were the home's ruins. In our previous article we concluded the large stone ruins was the former Englamere farmhouse and that smaller stone ruins about 40 yards to the south was a tenant house. Our assumption was based on the long, rectangular shape of the ruins which seemed to preclude a traditional barn, and for the fact that former rooms on the ground level of the ruins having stucco walls which were indicative of living areas. In addition, the smaller stone ruins to the south seemed too small to be the main farmhouse. Hence the large ruins had to be the main farmhouse, or so we thought.

After receiving the photograph of the home from Emily's daughter we had to re-think our assumptions. The home in the picture had two dormer windows on at least one side and a 1937 aerial photograph of the large structure showed no dormers at all. Examining what we thought was the tenant house in the same aerial photograph was inconclusive as most of this structure was obscured by trees and shadows. But looking at another aerial photograph taken the same day in 1937, but on another flight path, yielded much better results. The house in the aerial photograph clearly shows dormer windows as well as the outline of a porch that matches the photograph of the home.

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A site visit to the smaller ruins gave us more information. Measuring them showed it was actually larger than we first thought. Also, two sycamore trees seen in the home's photograph still stand, though (obviously) they are considerably larger now. In addition, the home's porch in the photograph is held up by two stone pillars, one of which now lies on the ground next to the ruins. So, as a result, what we thought was the farm's tenant house was in fact the main house on Englamere. The large stone ruins were the barn, and the stuccoed interior rooms in the barn's ground level could have been living quarters for farm workers.



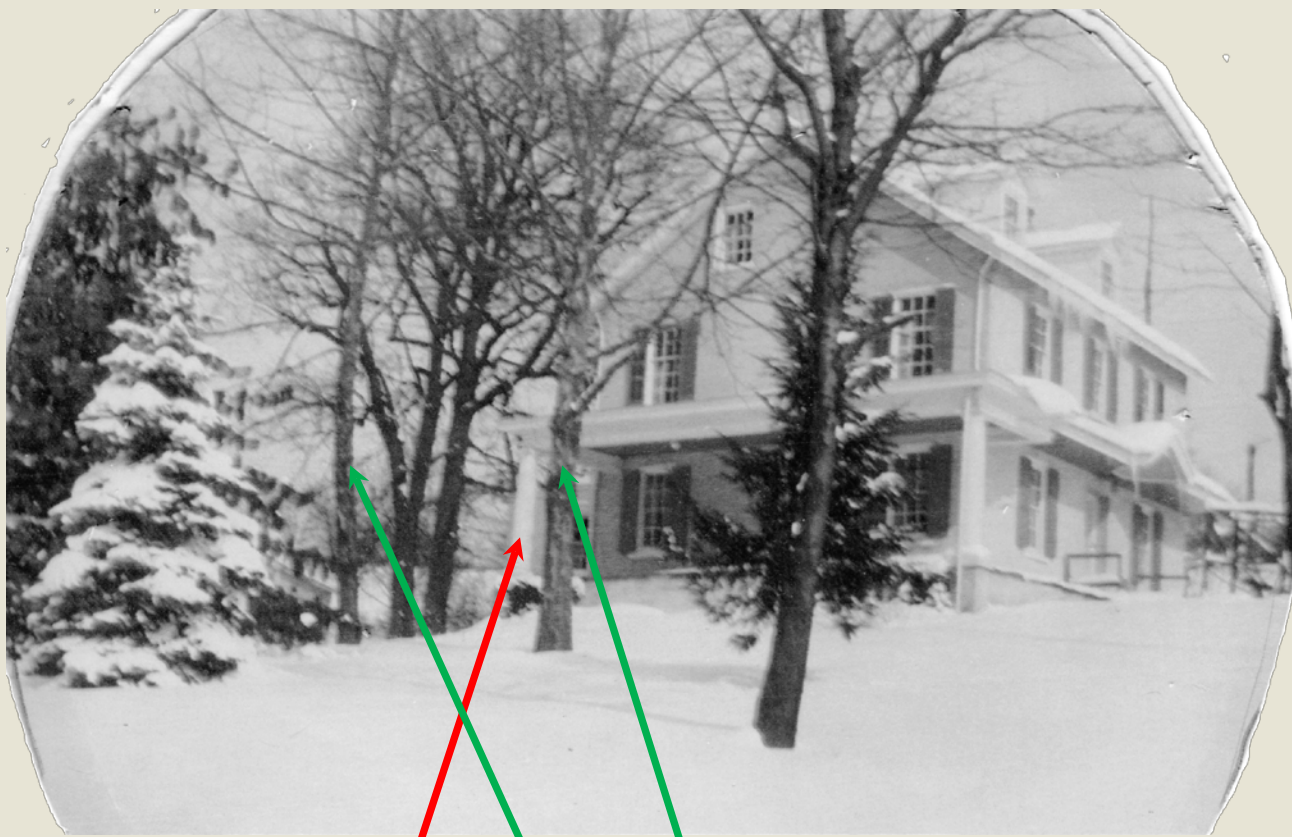
The home's ruins are a few steps off the orange trail just south of the barn ruins. The approximate outline of the home is highlighted above.

In our latest research we not only correct our assumption about the ruins on the farm, but we also came across plans that the Eades' had to build a large mansion on the property. It would have been four to five times larger than the main farmhouse and would have incorporated the farmhouse into the structure. The plans were dated September 1929. The stock market crash occurred at the end of October 1929 so we can assume this was the reason why the mansion was never built.

So we are again grateful to have received the photograph of the home from William Eades' granddaughter which changed our assumption about the ruins on Englamere Farm which is now part of the Harmony Hill Nature Area in East Bradford. If you get a chance, take a hike to the ruins, especially before the leaves come out this spring. You can park in the lot off Route 322 by the Trestle Bridge and follow the paved trail a little less than a mile to the bridge over the Brandywine River. Just past the bridge the trail to the ruins goes off to the left. Or you can park along Harmony Hill Road by the covered bridge and follow the paved trail about 0.7 miles westward to the trail just north of the bridge.

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The larger photograph at the bottom was taken from the approximate same spot from where the photographer was standing when the image of the home was taken. Two sycamore trees seen by the home in the older image still stand (green arrows). One of the stone porch columns in the photograph still lies by the ruins (red arrow).



In The (Old) News – Items that Made Headlines Back in the Day

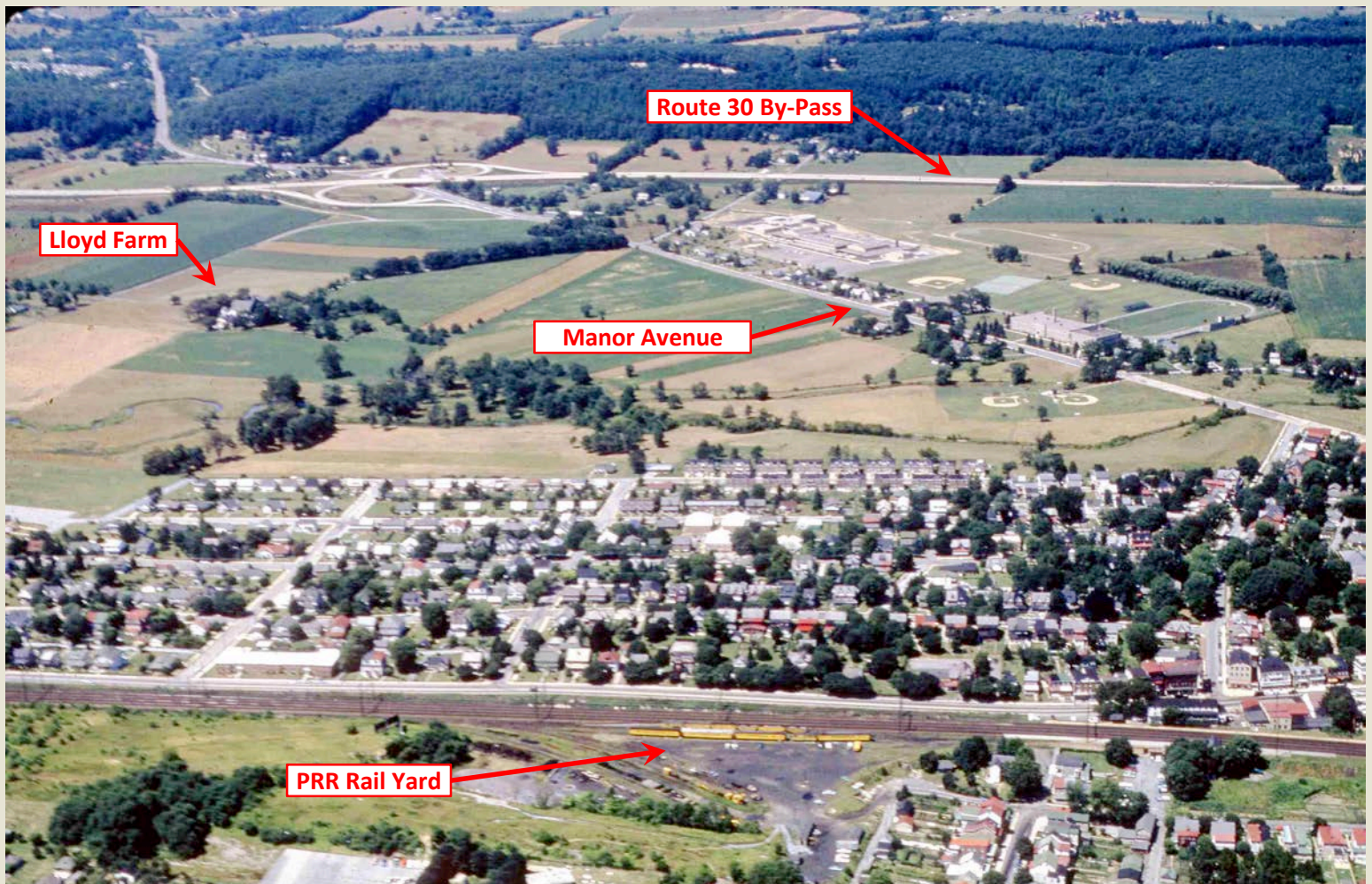
1883 – Miss Jennie Meredith and Miss Sarah Ashbridge of West Chester narrowly escaped injury or even death on July 31st as they drove their carriage through Downingtown. As they were driving along the Lancaster Turnpike in the west end of town near the train station, their horse became frightened by a locomotive and attempted to run away. The ladies jumped off the carriage right before the horse ran onto the tracks and collided with a freight train. The carriage was smashed and the horse continued to run along the tracks pulling only the axles of the carriage. The horse was stopped by a man in Thorndale but he was unable to secure it and it ran on to Coatesville. The ladies were not injured.

1926 – In July, Arthur Smith and Arthur Williams of Coatesville were arrested for reckless driving by police chief Thomas Gray after they rammed their automobile into a moving trolley car in the center of Downingtown. At a hearing Smith was fined \$29.50 while Williams was held in jail for a future hearing.

1945 – On June 10, 17-year-old E. J. McCarr of Atlanta, Georgia was delivering an airplane to an airport in northern Pennsylvania when he was forced to land in a farm field about a mile east of Downingtown. McCarr, a licensed civilian pilot, had to make the landing when he couldn't find Philadelphia's airport in thick fog and was running low on fuel. After being treated for a minor wrist injury, McCarr proceeded to Philadelphia by bus.

Downingtown Area From Above

This photograph faces north and was taken in 1966 over the west side of Downingtown.



Last Issue's Mystery Pic

Rahn Brackin is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first (and only) reader to identify the location of last issue's Mystery Pic (top image below) as 305 East Lancaster Avenue taken ca. 1900. It was originally the home of Jacob Downing but when the photograph was taken it was the home of Edward and Elizabeth Downing. It is now the chiropractic office of Dr. Mario Spoto as seen in the bottom image taken from a similar angle.



Downingtown Did-You-Know?

Did you know that there were originally four connected ponds in Kerr Park and they were constructed in 1931 to raise trout? William M. Lloyd of Valley Brook Farm was instrumental in their construction and it was therefore appropriate when his daughter Lucy Ruth Lloyd dedicated them on May 30 of that year. In 1955, the raising of trout in the ponds came under the auspices of the Brandywine Trout and Conservation Club which they continue to do to this day. Two of the ponds are gone. The western-most pond was converted to a raceway by the Club for the raising of trout, and another appears to have been filled in but the stream still runs through it.



The ponds are an especially attractive feature of Kerr Park and were a popular gathering place as seen in the above photograph taken in the early 1960s. However, from time to time the ponds needed to be drained and cleaned from the silt that had accumulated over the years as seen on the right.



Downingtown Vintage Ad

A Gulf service station opened on May 17, 1930 at the southeast corner of East Lancaster Avenue and Green Street (right) replacing twin homes that stood on the property for many years. The bottom photograph shows the corner in a photograph taken in the 1940s. The station was eventually torn down and replaced by a building that housed Giunta's Pharmacy (below) and most recently Low Riders Bikes and Boards.



GULF

Opening-

*Lincoln Highway and Green Street
Downingtown, Pa.*
SATURDAY, MAY, 17

TO meet the fast growing demand for Gulf Service... we are opening a Service Station at the above location. The usual prompt and efficient Gulf Service will be offered to motorists by courteous attendants.

*{ We Cordially Solicit
the Patronage of all
Motorists }*

GULF REFINING COMPANY

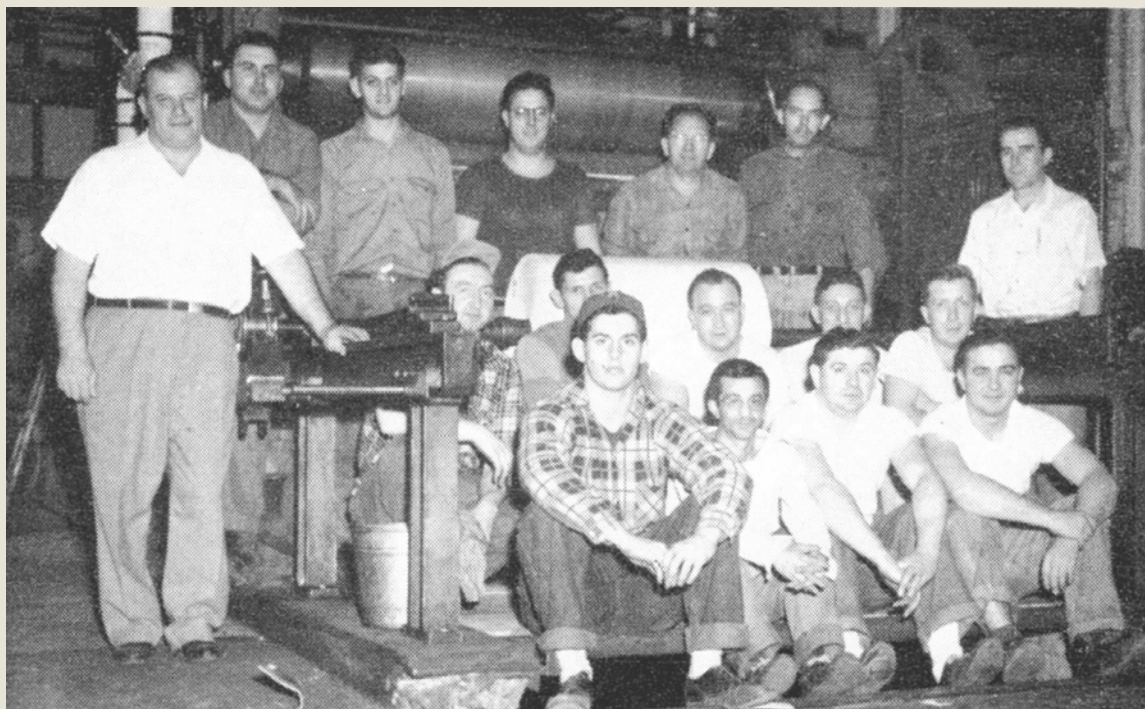


Downingtown Area Mystery Pic

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 Area Group Photo



Pictured above are workers that made up a shift of cutters, combiner crew, and liner crew at the Downingtown Paper Company. The picture appeared in the January 1953 of the DOPACO Diary. The employees (L to R) are:

Front row sitting: Richard Mann, Amateo Canale, Lloyd Warren, Victor Zemacki

Middle row sitting: John O'Gorman, Dominick Gazzerro, Joseph Stringer, Leo Ciarlone, Calvin Pennell

Back row standing: Attilio Sciarretta, Dominic Castaldi, Joseph Sciarretta, Anthony Sciarretta, Herbert Jordan, Wilfred Lyons, Dominic Mascherino

Advertisements for Non-Profits

West Caln Historical Society

The West Caln Historical Society will hold a meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 7 P.M. in the West Caln Municipal Building, 721 West Kings Highway, Wagontown, PA on the subject of the **Christian (Chris) Sanderson Museum**. The speaker will be Gene Pisasale, historian, author, and re-enactor. The event is free and all are welcome. The Historical Society also wants you to know that you can bring your old or outdated Rx drugs for safe disposal.

Wallace Township Historical Commission

The Wallace Township Historical Commission will hold a *Scherenschnitte* (paper cutting) workshop on March 16, 2019 from 2pm-4pm at the Wallace Township Building, 1250 Creek Road, Glenmoore, PA. Registration can be made at the Township building or by calling 610-942-2880. Leave your name and phone number in case of bad weather. The workshop is limited to 10 people. Participants should bring an 8x10 photo frame, a pair of sharp pointed scissors, and an X-ACTO knife. All other materials will be provided.

East Brandywine Historical Commission Spring 2019 Speakers Series (all programs presented at East Brandywine Township Building at 3:30 PM)

- **Sunday, March 17, 2019 – The Arrival of the Mormons and How It Impacted East Brandywine and Wallace Townships.** Did you know that before the Mormon's traveled to Salt Lake City they were active right in our area? We'll find out about their meetings in "Mormon Hollow" and residents of East Brandywine that join the winter trek out West! There is even a Chester County clock in the Church of Jesus Christ of the Later Day Saints in the temple. John Miller, retired Downingtown School teacher and Gettysburg National Military Park guide will tell us the details. John is an Educator and Historian at Springton Manor Farm and past President of Chester County Historic Preservation Network. Come prepared to tell stories you may have heard or ask questions.
- **April 28, 2019 – Follow the Brandywine for the Geology, Ecology and Architectural Features of the Border of East Brandywine.**
- **May 19, 2019 – The Special Barns of Chester County.**

Chester County Marine Corps League Detachment

BINGO on the first and third Saturday of every month, 420 Chestnut Street. Public welcome. Kitchen opens at 5:30, Bingo Cards on sale at 6:00, Early Bird Special 6:30. Food available for purchase. Funds used by the Marine Corps League and Marine Corps League Ladies Auxiliary to help veterans from all branches of the service as well as others in the community.

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.

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.

Historical Society's Wish List

The Downingtown Area Historical Society is a non-profit organization proudly maintaining the 310-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:
 - Pens and pencils
 - Scotch tape and masking tape
 - Copier paper (both color and white)
 - 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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<https://www.downingtownhistory.org>

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Follow us on Twitter:



Check out our *Then & Now* series on YouTube:



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