



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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org

Vol. 5, No. 1

January 2, 2014

Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the building, shown above, will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Better yet, he or she will win a \$25 gift card from F.H. Swisher Plumbing & Heating, to be used at a local restaurant. Please send your responses to:

Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org.

Interesting Downingtown area news 36 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in the East Branch Citizen in January 1978.

After John Fiore was sworn in as **Downingtown's mayor**, he swore in newly-elected councilman William Whiteman and re-elected councilmen James McGowan and Frank Manetta.

Downingtown physician **Dr. Herman Kramm** retired after practicing in the borough for 36 years. As a doctor for DHS sports teams for 35 years, he recalled that he once was responsible for a 5-yard penalty during a football game, because a referee claimed he failed to get the official's permission when he went on the field to treat an injured Whippet player.

Glyn Jenkins, president of the **Downingtown Area Education Association**, which represented the district's teachers, said he was, "very happy with the package the (school board) gave to us," about the proposed, three-year contract offer, which added up to a 22.5 percent raise.

Most local residents supported a proposed ban on the **pornographic films** being shown at the Marchwood Cinema in Exton. Chester County DA William Lamb petitioned the court to prevent the theatre from continuing to show x-rated movies.

An informal survey by Rick Betres, DHS Doings columnist, showed that 24 of the 30 students interviewed had **kissed** on their first date.

A survey of the 372 DHS students who **graduated in 1972** determined that 37.5 percent of them had earned a college degree five years later, and 79 percent of the respondents still lived in the Downingtown area in 1977.

Tom Lee was elected chief of the **Downingtown Fire Department**. Elected as line officers of the Minquas Fire Co. were: Mike Davis, assistant chief; Vince Panetti, captain; Tom Gillespie, first lieutenant; Jim McHugh, second lieutenant; and Randy Hallman, third lieutenant. Line officers for the Alert Fire Co. were Richard Keers, captain; Bob Stevens, first lieutenant; Wes Pannebaker, second lieutenant; and Phil Burns, third lieutenant.

East Brandywine Fire Co. officers included Dr. Brent Follweiler, chief; Harold Thompson and Ron Rambo, assistant chiefs; and John Schmidt and Jim Baker, captains.

And line officers of the **Lionville Fire Co.** were Richard Ruth, chief; and Robert Holmes, assistant chief.

Recent **property transfers** included: 421 Carmarthen Court, Uwchlan, \$41,990; 1353 Ridgeview Circle, West Bradford, \$60,349; 108 Cheryl Drive, Upper Uwchlan, \$52,937; and 75 Chatham Court, East Brandywine, \$43,075;

The school board failed to get a majority vote to **ban smoking** by employees on school district property. However, the school directors approved a resolution to: have an unimproved room in each school, set aside for smoking staff members; inform all pupils that faculty members and staff have been asked not to smoke in school buildings and at school functions; and a concerted effort be made to inform students of the dangers of smoking.

Officers of the United Methodist Women at **Downingtown Methodist Church** were Marilyn Walter, president; Traudi Stevens, vice president; Lee Bradley, secretary; and Anita Schollenberger, treasurer.

DHS students who won first place in **skills competition** at the Central Chester County Vo-Tech School were Sandy Mull, keypunching; Matthew Van Lew, architectural drafting; Lea Gayton, nurse's assistant; Tracy Grier, cake decorating; Robert Walck, appliance repairs; Rick Keesey, small engine repairs; and William Finkbiner, heating.

The **Lionville Lions Club** donated \$400 checks to the Woman's Club of Uwchlan and the Uwchlan Ambulance Corps.

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Were Whippets booted from League competition, despite winning sportsmanship trophy again?

This is a continuation of a series of news items, which were originally published in the *Blue and Gold*, the DHS student newspaper, during the 1956-1957 school year. The copies of the *Blue and Gold* were donated by DHS grad Caroline Ash.

January 1957

Although the DHS football team won the J. Bishop and Co. Ches-Mont League Good Sportsmanship trophy for the third time in five years, it was likely that the Whippets wouldn't be eligible to compete for the Ches-Mont League championship in the fall of 1957 because the Downingtown Joint School Board refused to allow the Whippets to play in a night game at Conestoga High School. Downingtown's School Board was strongly opposed to playing night football, according to George Nixdorf, board president. And according to Ches-Mont League rules, any team that refused to play an opponent was automatically expelled from competing for the league championship in a particular sport.

The *Blue and Gold's* editors characterized the school board's position as "a punishment" because "our elders" disapprove of students driving to and from away football games at night, although it was okay to drive to and from night basketball games. **(Editor's Note: To learn how this issue was ultimately resolved, we need a copy of the *Blue and Gold* which would have been published in the fall of 1957. Can someone give us a copy?)**

Mary Jean Lillard, an alto, was selected to sing in the All-State Chorus at Washington, PA. And Beatrice Rubincam, who played the flute, and French horn player Gerald Williams were chosen to play in the District Band.

Bill Smith won two blue ribbons for his Ayrshire heifer at the State Farm Show.

Charles Emery, who had been the Downingtown School District's supervising principal (comparable to today's district superintendent) for 11 years, resigned to become director of student teachers in secondary education at West Chester State College.

February 1957

The cast of the Junior Class Play included Ronald Davis, Kay Gallatin, Ruth Carmichael, Betty D'Attilio, Marlene Thomas, Felicia Farnsworth, Philomena Massimini, Donald Gerhart, Leland Stanford, Thomas Newlin, Bette Smedley, Dave Jenney and Bruce Garvey.

Marjorie Lawn was named the Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow at DHS.

May 1957

Janet Bowman and Barry Wickersham received the Outstanding Girl and Boy awards from the DHS Alumni Association. And Susie Norris and Jim McClintock were named girl and boy Athletes of the Year.

The cast of the May Day Operetta included Gerry Deets, Dan DiFonzo, Ronald Davis, Jim Schollenberger, Felecia Farnsworth and Malcolm Styer. Proceeds from the show were to be used to buy an electric scoreboard for the football field.

It's at 1403 Horseshoe Pike, Glenmoore



Rahn Brackin is the truly perceptive scholar, who was the first person to correctly identify the house above, which is located at the intersection of Route 322 and Little Washington, Springton and Culbertson Run Roads in Glenmoore. According to Mrs. William Ward, now a 97-year-old resident of Harrison House, her family lived in the house, built in 1814, for 44 years.

Clip Joint will be open Sunday, Jan. 5

You don't want the holidaying to end? You can continue to have fun at our monthly clipping and pasting session, which will be held from 1-4 PM on **Sunday, Jan. 5** at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. Parking is available in the lot at the Chick-Fil-A restaurant next door, which is closed on Sundays. You're welcome to arrive and leave at your leisure.

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Free ads for Non-Profits

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For more info/complete price list on these opportunities and upcoming programs, go to the DARC website: www.darcinfo.com, or 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 very reasonable. Call 610-269-3555 for more information.

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January 9, 2014

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Interesting local news 52 years ago

Noted below are news items, which were originally published in local newspapers in early February 1962.

Representatives of the **Uwchlan Civic Association** petitioned the township to enact an ordinance that would limit residential building lot sizes to one acre, until a study of zoning, subdivision and sanitation issues, by the township planning commission, was completed. The township, whose population at the time was less than 1,000, faced an “inevitable population boom,” according to Robert Worthington, chairman of Uwchlan’s planning commission.

Earl Stern, of the **Alert Fire Co.**, reported to Downingtown Borough Council that a new aerial ladder truck would cost between \$40,000 and \$45,000.

Officers installed at **St. Paul's UCC Church**, Lionville, were Elmer Matthews and Robert Worthington, elders; Mrs. Ernest Rodney and Harry Levering, deacons; and Richard Faddis, trustee.

Leaders of the local **Red Cross** fund drive were Mrs. Fred Pollock, Mrs. Robert Garrett, Mrs. Theodore Noll, Mrs. Gilbert Hamm, Howard Fitzgerald and Edward Gillespie.

West Pikeland residents involved in the township's **Civil Defense** effort were Robert Rometsch, director; Mrs. John Brock, supply officer; Richard Brenner, operations officer; George Seel, personnel officer; and James Godshalk, survival chairman.

The Women's Executive Board of **Central Presbyterian Church** included Mrs. Leon Williams, president; Mrs. Nelson Norris, vice president; Mrs. William Walton, treasurer; Mrs. John Fisher, secretary; Edith Stauffer, program chairman; Mrs. Austin Moore, friendship chairman; Mrs. Edwin Johnson, local church service chairman; and Mrs. Wallace Pearson, Mrs. David Ross and Mrs. George Nordblom, circle leaders.

New members of the Council at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Eric Bittmann, Howard Stimson and Louis Maga.

Business Education Department students at DHS, who assisted with the Downingtown Chamber of Commerce shopping survey, were Michelle Buckley, Denise Joyner, Barbara Rothas, Pamela Leach and Bonnie Eachus.

The Downingtown Joint Area Elementary **School Board** decided to have a team from the University of Pennsylvania conduct a survey, to project enrollment growth over the next 10 years. Total enrollment at Beaver Creek, East Ward, Marshallton and Lionville Schools had increased from 1,009 in June 1960 to 1,291 in January, 1962.

Downingtown **Cub Scouts** who earned badges were Frank Bishop, Gary Burkey, Jeffrey Kohlhas, David Hemberger, Mickey Watts, Stuart Pollock, Eric Dreibelbis, James Connor and William Woodruff.

Members of **Brownie Troop 166**, Glenmoore, who had ice skating instructions, included Robin deRussy, Rebecca Evans, Eugenia and Vickie Gabriel, Ruth Ann Givler, Carolyn Kelly, Patty Pease, Lois Slater and Becky Wilson.

The Pickering-Brandywine School Board voted to start a kindergarten program at **Brandywine-Wallace School** next September.

Members of the Episcopal Church Women at **St. James Church**, who were responsible for a hat sale and card party, were Margaret Whitecar and Mrs. Allen Powell, co-chairmen; Mrs. Paul Pollock and Mrs. Warren Radcliffe, tickets; Mrs. George Lord, favors; Mrs. Raymond Greenleaf, hostesses; Mrs. Charles Mead, prizes; and Mrs. Neils Olsen, publicity.

Forty-four boys received their surplices at an altar boy investiture ceremony at **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**. Timothy Terramin and James Romano received awards for excellence. Richard Lichty, Ronald Ruffini and Thomas Marino were servers for the ceremony.

Ninth graders who sold tickets for the **Valentine's Dance** at the Junior High were Sally Campbell, Carol French, Edward Hildebeitel, Gail Katherman, Kenny Sigle, Vicki Thompson and Daniel Yost. And the refreshment committee included Debbie Dunn, Larry Showalter, Donald Ash, Dennis Dancy, Evelyn Sievers and Judy Ralston.

Clip Joint rescheduled for Sunday, Jan. 12

Due to the icy conditions last Sunday, we've rescheduled our monthly Clip Joint session to **Sunday afternoon, January 12**. Hope to see you between 1 PM and 4 PM this coming Sunday, at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. Parking is available in the lot at the Chick-Fil-A restaurant next door, which is closed on Sundays. You're welcome to arrive and leave at your leisure.

More *Blue and Gold* news items from the late 1950s

Here are more news items found in the DHS student newspaper, *The Blue and Gold*, donated by Caroline Ash. Members of the paper's staff during the 1957-58 school year included: Lee Shepherd, editor-in-chief; Nancy Laird and Liz Smedley, associate editors; Joan Kent, art editor; Jean Emery, music editor; Pat Weber, business editor; Iva Darlington, girls' sports editor; and Sally Lillard, society editor.

December 1957

The band was selling **wool, flannel blazers**. The cost was \$14.95 for girls and \$15.95 for boys. Each class chose a different color. The seniors chose charcoal gray, juniors opted for scarlet, and the sophomores went for royal blue. (*Editor's note: Any of those blazers hanging in someone's closet? We'd love to have one for the Historical Society's archives.*)

Soloists when the DHS mixed chorus sang "The Nativity," during the **Christmas Concert**, were Ronald Davis, Wilson Pollock, Dick Whittaker, Dan DiFonzo, Mina Massimini, Evelyn Eshelman and Eleanor Robinson.

The boys' basketball team opened its season with a **44-43 squeaker** over Kennett Square. Starters for DHS were Paul Pennypacker, Park Plank, Jack McCombs, Dick Whittaker and Jim Schollenberger.

January 1958

DHS musicians who made the **District Band** were Jerry Williams, Dan DiFonzo, Dick Whittaker, Fred Estheimer, Beatrice Rubincam and Bob Stevens.

In addition to winning the Ches-Mont League championship, the **football team** also won the J. Bishop & Co. Sportsmanship Cup for the fourth time in six years. The award was based on grading of each team by referees after every game.

Members of the **girls' basketball team** were Judy Manning, Ella Westmoreland, Bonnie Walton, Gerry McCombs, Jane Mills, Judy Scarborough, Karen Sigle and Mary Ann Philips.

February 1958

After practicing four hours daily during the summer and training in Europe, **Sandy Hamilton** signed a contract to skate with the Ice Capades.

Raymond Styer, who played the guitar while he sang "**Out Behind the Barn**," won the talent show.

April 1958

Soloists who sang at the Junior High's **Spring Concert** were Pamela Leach, Carol Lillard, Carmelia Cressman, Ann Galt and Galucha March. They were accompanied by Judy Jones, John Rogers, Joan White and Helen Simmons.

The Keystoneers—a singing group comprised of Neil Shields, Robert Shank, Lewis Wilson, Tommy Yerkes and Jim Connors—won the Junior High **Amateur Show**.

May 1958

Members of the winning **bowling team** were Linda Hadfield, Alice Gee, Polly Pennypacker, and Lee Shepherd. Bette Smedley and Nancy Pannebaker had the highest average for the Senior High and Junior High, respectively.

Gerry McCombs and Frank Marcocci were King and Queen of the **Junior Prom**.

June 1958

Student speakers at the DHS **commencement** included Ann Stratton, Rosalie Shepherd, Ruth Ann Klunk, Judith Manning and Todd Stong, who earned an appointment to West Point.

Elected as officers of the **DHS band** for next year were Nancy Jefferies, captain; Fred Estheimer, lieutenant; Jeanne Emery, Tom Johnson, Evelyn Eshelman and Bill Brookover, sergeants; and Helen Burkhart, Walter Supplee, Ed Matthews and Paul Edelen, corporals.

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Panetti rescued info on Tom Lee's Fire Department career

Vince Panetti tells us that we made a mistake when we claimed, in last week's Hist-O-Gram, that Tom Lee was appointed chief of the Downingtown Fire Department in 1978. Subsequently, Tom informed us that he first retired as chief after he completed a three-year term--1975, 1976 and 1977. He was succeeded as chief by Bob Cumens, who served as chief in 1978, 1979 and 1980. During those three years, Tom was assistant chief of the Alert Fire Co. Then Tom was chief of the department again, from 1981 to 1983.

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House was razed so Downingtown East Apartments could be built on the site



Joe Bird is the truly perceptive scholar who was the first person to correctly identify the East Lancaster Ave. house in the photo above. The Meisel family was the last owner of the house, at 335 East Lancaster Avenue, before it was razed so the Downingtown East Apartments (now known as the Downingtown Commons) could be built across from the Downingtown Library. The house, which had a granite exterior, had many fireplaces, and a stone milemarker (from the early Philadelphia-Lancaster Turnpike days) was in the front yard.

According to Stuart Meisel, who now lives in Fort Lauderdale, FL, his father, Maxwell Meisel, owned a pharmacy in Coatesville, and the family moved from to Downingtown in about 1945. Their property, which stretched north to beyond where Pennsylvania Avenue now is located, totaled about 12 acres. Part of that land was sold to the borough in the early 1960s, so Pennsylvania Avenue could be extended eastward, to Uwchlan Avenue. As kids, Stuart Meisel and his best friends, Larry Meredith and Ron Tipton, were “desperately unhappy” because the sale of that tract of land destroyed the “Devil’s Nest,” located in the woods behind the house, where they played as youngsters.

And the property was sold to the developer of the apartment complex shortly after Maxwell Meisel died in 1961. “My mother and I tried desperately to have the house declared an official historical site, but no luck.” Meredith claims that there was a small building behind the Meisel residence, where slaves, who escaped from the South via the Underground Railroad, often were billeted overnight. And he recalls that there was a tunnel that ran beneath the slave house and continued eastward to the house at 341 E. Lancaster Ave.

Paid ads for businesses

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January 16, 2014

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Local news originally published in August 1946

Noted below are news items, which were retrieved from local newspapers published 68 years ago.

After representatives of the **Downingtown American Legion and VFW Posts** met with borough leaders, the two veterans' groups agreed to merge their plans to conduct fund raising efforts so they each could buy or build a post home. They agreed to jointly conduct a house-to-house solicitation, in addition to selling chances for two cars. The VFW had recently announced that its goal was to raise \$25,000, and it was considering using a lot next to Arthur Petrella's garage in St. Joseph's Alley, which Petrella offered to donate, or a lot on Wallace Avenue, owned by the Bicking Paper Co.

Members of the Junior Boys Sunday School Class at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, who went to a double feature at a movie theatre in Wilmington, were: Jack Witmer, Charles Long, Dick Stoudt, Carl Ruth, and David, Richard and George Taylor.

Installed as officers of Camp 275, **Patriotic Sons of America**, Chester Springs, were Hibbert Wells, president; Hiram Twaddell, vice president; Robert Richards, master of forms; Ralph Miller, conductor; Frank Cale, inspector; Clayton Seaboldt, guard; Harry McBride, delegate to the state camp; Raymond McBride, recording secretary; Raymond McBride Jr., corresponding secretary; and Harold Hallman, treasurer.

Downingtown firemen who attended the state fire school at Lewistown, PA, for a week were Carmen Menna, Hallan Usher, Fred Jameson, Benjamin Summers and W.H. Backenstose.

The **Lyndell School** conducted its first reunion since 1941, and some 55 former students and guests came. When the village school was established in 1867, it was called the Brooklyn School. Officers of the Reunion Committee were Endora Freeman, president; Dr. Leonard Frescoln, vice president; Hannah Hughes Harner, secretary; and Clara Lewis Piersol, treasurer.

The **Donkey Club** of Downingtown was entertained at the Glen Isle Farm home (now the Orangery restaurant on South Lloyd Avenue) of Mrs. Norman Woodward. The bathing beauty contest was won by Mrs. Andrew Brookover Jr.

Members of the Intermediate Boys Sunday School at **Marshallton Methodist Church**, who enjoyed a swim and doggie roast at the home of John Morris, Sunday School superintendent, included: Robert Sellers, Dale Ellingsworth, Jerry Powell, Myrle English, Clarence Wallace and Sandy Morris.

Aubrey Goudie and Kermit Mountz returned to the **DHS faculty**, after serving in the Navy during WW II. Mountz, a history teacher, also was a line coach for the football team. Goudie taught mathematics and coached the boys' varsity basketball team.

Restricted building lots were being sold at the former **Happy Days Farm** in Lionville. According to owner Harold Durant, the property was unique because it was the only development in Chester County that had its own fire equipment, a 5-ton truck that carries 250 gallons of water.

Camp Linden in West Bradford was sponsored by the Southwark Settlement House of Philadelphia. The summer camp, which had been the site of the Greenwood Dell Board School in the early 19th Century, included a mansion and several cottages for some 40 campers.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the **Alert Fire Co.**, Downingtown, won \$50 "best appearance" prize in the opening parade for the Oxford Fair.

The **Romansville School**, which was operated from 1870 until 1926, held its 21st reunion. The school building was built from recycled stone from a former schoolhouse.

Third graders at West Ward School in 1955-56



Gene Martin, who now lives in New Hampshire, sent us this photo and provided most of the names of the third graders in Jane Ulsh's class at West Ward School in Downingtown. Others who helped identify the kids were: Gail Katherman, Lois Quinn, Janet Strawsnyder and Jeff Swisher. The only unidentifiable student in the photo apparently is the boy in the sixth row, between Marty Martin and Bobby Green. Based on the consensus identifications by those noted above, the kids in the photo are: row 1, Jay Rambo, Jon Shepherd, Jeff Swisher, Lynn Dowlin, Ed Conner, Gene Martin and Miss Ulsh, teacher; row 2, Sharon Fennelly, Debbie Morrison, Oscar Asparagus, Marlyn Harmon, Sally Campbell and Janet Strawsnyder; row 3, Bobby Connor, Linda Farah, Kenny Sigle, Jane Kempfer and Jim Sanders; row 4, Diane Wilkerson, Virgil Grissom, Marty Menas, Audrey Strouse, Lois Quinn and Ruth Travaglini; row 5, Carol Ely, Howard Fitzgerald, Darlene Harris, Alvin Groff, Tommy Rogers and Ed Jenkins; row 6, Ethan Berry, Priscilla Asparagus, Bill Barlow, Marty Martin, (unidentified) and Bobby Green.

***Blue and Gold* news items from 1958-59 school year**

These news items from the *Blue and Gold* student newspaper at DHS reveal what life was like during the 1958-59 school year. The newspaper's staff that year included Jeanne Emery, editor-in-chief; Joan Kent and Pat Mitchell, associate editors; Sonia Raysor, art editor; Dallet Norris, managing editor; Helen Burkhart, music editor; Joanne Rice and Polly Weber, girls' sports editors; Bill Davies, boys' sports editor; Tom Johnson, features editor; Mike Echols, make-up editor; and Iva Darlington and Linda Smith, typists. Although no specific editor was assigned to the task, most issues included details on a student's "Dreamy Dragster."

October 1958

Student Council members were: Bill Brookover, president; Dave DiEugenio, vice president; Anne Yerkes, secretary; Tom Booker, treasurer; Jakie Ax, Tribunal judge; and John Yamshak, Tribunal clerk.

Polly Pennypacker was elected Harvest Queen at the Farm Show. Officers of the Future Homemakers of America, which co-sponsored the show, included Judy Jones, president; Kathy McMinimee, vice president; Barbara Garris, secretary; Betty May, treasurer; Shirley Evans, reporter; and Linda Billman, historian.

Members of the Future Farmers of America, the show's other sponsor, who won awards at the event were Jack Hoffman, Albert Hultz, Lamar Howe, Henry Roth, Francis DuBosq, Walter Jankowski, Charles Stouff, Ronald Styer, Harry McMinimee and Ben Hash.

Cheerleaders were co-captains Gerry McCombs and Mary Jane Sabellico, Judy Scarborough, Karen Sigle, Polly Pennypacker, Nancy Lee, Shirley Jesse and Mary Ann Philips.

November 1958

The Lettermen's Club paid \$171.60 to buy yard markers, used at football games.

Members of the Senior Class Play cast included Cookie Seibert, Pat Mitchell, SuSu Serafino, Tom Johnson, Charlie Crouse and Alan Wilson.

December 1958

The football team beat Coatesville 7-6 on Thanksgiving morning, and the Whippets were co-champs of the Ches-Mont League for the second consecutive year. DHS players who made the all-league first team were Buddy White, Franny Henderson, Joe Arasim and Lamar Howe.

The School Board approved plans to build a new, \$2.5 million senior high school, designed to hold 1,000 students.

May 1959

Students chosen to speak at the commencement were Frank Marcocci, Buddy White, Nancy Jefferis, Jim Beggs, Pat Kuhs and Alan Wilson.

DHS students who won awards for their entries in the Chester County Science Fair were Gary Kinzey, Charles Stimson and Paul Edelen.

Local students who showed their art work in the Regional Scholastic Award Exhibition were Frannie Moyer, Barb Crosby, Patsy Sue West, Joan Kent and Louis Pizzi.

(Editor's Note: This article concludes our series of items gleaned from copies of the Blue and Gold from the late 1950s, which were donated by Caroline Ash. However, we will continue them if someone donates earlier or later editions of the student newspaper.)

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Tunnel under 341 E. Lancaster Avenue?

Last week's Hist-O-Gram included information on the Meisel mansion, which was razed in the 1960s so the Downingtown East Apartment complex could be built on the site, across from the Downingtown Library. The article also noted that a tunnel (part of the pre-Civil War Underground Railroad operation for escaped slaves from the South) may have stretched from the Meisel house at 335 E. Lancaster Ave, to the Thomas Moore house at 341 E. Lancaster Ave. Noted below is a comment about that issue from local attorney, Jay Fischer.

"The article on the Meisel property is interesting. When Jeff (Valocchi) and I acquired the Thomas Moore House (341 East Lancaster Ave) Jane Davidson called and requested permission to inspect the property for evidence of the rumored tunnel. She spend several hours in the basement, but found nothing to substantiate the rumors. There have been many reports of a tunnel between Thomas Moore House and the library building, which I always found interesting. If it existed, I am sure it would have collapsed by now, with all the traffic on Lancaster Ave. When we did the initial renovations, we did find evidence of a cistern in the front yard, which could be what people remember as a tunnel."

Monkey Ward catalog reveals the so-called good old days

Teresa Talucci sent us an online copy of Montgomery Ward's 1934 Christmas catalog, accessible via: <http://grannykaye.com/wp-content/uploads/1934-Christmas-Catalogue-from-Montgomery-Ward.pdf>.

In addition to the incredibly low, Depression era prices, take note of the last line on the order form, which is the last item of the series of images.

Don't throw that stuff away

You probably noticed that many of the articles we publish every week in the Hist-O-Gram are based on printed materials from the past, such as programs from schools, churches, businesses, clubs, Scout troops and teams with a Downingtown area connection.

So, whenever you come across these types of printed materials with a local connection, please don't toss them. Instead, donate them to the Historical Society. Please call us at 610-269-1709 or send us an email to Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org, so you can arrange to donate the materials to us.

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It's at 771 Font Road in Upper Uwchlan



Russ Faller is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify this as house at 771 Font Road in Upper Uwchlan Township. You can see more details about this historic house at: www.trulia.com/property/3049467001-771-Font-Rd-Glenmoore-PA-19343.

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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org

Vol. 5, No. 4

January 23, 2014

Where and What Is This?



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Interesting local news 52 years ago

Noted below are news items, which were originally published in local newspapers in the latter part of February 1962.

Fourth graders, taught by Emily Lewis at **East Ward School**, participated in an assembly program. Those who did nursery rhyme charades were Bobby and Dennis Willis, Dorothy Conner, Brenda and Linda Henderson, Karen Bailey, Paul Jones and John Miller. And Billy Fillman, Phyllis Deets, Romanita Rodriguez and Margaret Cortlessa recited poetry.

Models in the **Downingtown Junior Woman's Club** fashion show were Linda Benson, Ann Gee, Mary Jean Lillard, Mrs. Philip Manno, Mrs. Joseph Mento, Mrs. Peter Riegel, Mrs. Albert Skiles, Mrs. Mervin Thomas, Mrs. Richard Weaver, Mrs. Edwin Johnson and Mrs. Charles Huber.

Members of **Cub Pack 83**, Lionville, who sold at least \$30 worth of light bulbs, were John Henssler, Ricky Gilbert, Richard Faddis, Dan Hayes, Kevin Miller, Barry Lambert, Lonnie Spence, Billy Braden, Harold Trego and Tony McQuail.

New trustees at **Fairview Presbyterian Church**, Glenmoore, were Harold Hannum and Robert Shoemaker. And elders elected by the congregation were Richard Clemmer, Kenneth Comstock and Edward Irwin.

Several of the younger members of the **West Bradford Fire Co.** turned the firehouse basement into a recreation room, which included installation of a shuffleboard court. The auxiliary contributed \$200 to the project.

Among the major projects considered by Downingtown's Borough Council was the use of the **Bicking Paper Co. property** as a temporary landfill.

Although the **DHS boys' basketball team** rallied from a first quarter 17-9 deficit and got as close as 29-28 in the third quarter, the Whippets lost to West Chester 69-51.

Elected officers of the Teener Sunday School at **First Baptist Church**, Downingtown, were: Gilbert Cox Jr., president; Joy Emery, vice president; Janet Hamilton, secretary; and Thomas Haas, treasurer. Mrs. John Frazer was the class teacher.

Members of the Art Service Club at **Downingtown Junior High** were Daniel Yost, Debbie Hutchison, Donald Bassett, David Emberger, Ronald Moore, Althea Boggs and Gordon Mazza.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 82** spent a cold weekend at Camp Horseshoe were Frank, Pete and Jim Duca, Robert Menna, John March, Richard Stine, Richard Smith and Leslie Pyle.

Officers of the **Downingtown-Chester Valley Community Chest** were Stanley Walters, president; Mrs. Walter Roehrs Jr., Ralph Ralston and Paul Kraus, vice presidents; Mrs. Gilbert Hamm, secretary; Charles Seibert, treasurer; and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Campbell, executive director and executive secretary, respectively.

The **Exton Diner**, located at the intersection of Routes 100 and 30, was offering an 8-ounce steak, plus French fries and a salad, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, for only \$1.

The Downingtown Chamber of Commerce endorsed a proposed **shopping center** in the borough's business district. However, three of the owners of properties within the 5.5-acre tract where the planned center is to be built were not interested in selling at the prices offered. Also, shopping centers were being considered along Route 30 in East Caln and Thorndale.

Members of **Pack 8**, East Brandywine, who received Cub Scouting's highest award, The Arrow of Light, were Alex Androwick, Mike Alexander, Jerry Eachus, Ken Shaw and John McGirk.

More info on Underground Railroad tunnels on East Lancaster Avenue

Ever since Stuart Meisel provided information in the Jan. 9 Hist-O-Gram (<http://www.downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2014%20Hist-O-Grams/January%209%202014.pdf>) about his family's home, across from the Downingtown Library, we've received suggestions about other houses on East Lancaster Avenue in the borough, which may have had tunnels, as part of the Underground Railroad, connected to their basements.

One of the suggestions came from former East Lancaster Avenue resident Stan Landis, now a retired educator who lives in Lehigh County. Stan suggested that we contact Robert "Bo" Fidler, of Chester Springs, who grew up at 435 E. Lancaster Ave. Here's most of the information that Bo recalls about a tunnel connected to his home:

Our family moved to 435 E. Lancaster Ave., a circa 1800 home, in 1949. It did not take long for the imaginations of Bo and his siblings (aged 6, 9 and 11 years old at the time) to conjure up untold horrors situated under a wooden trapdoor located in the cellar's dirt floor. We moved the cartons, cans, and etc. piled on top of the trapdoor, which was about 8 feet long. When the trapdoor was opened, we discovered stone steps leading down to a large oak door, which, if I recall correctly, had a small forged latch. And when they opened the door, they found a room that was about 14 feet long, 8 feet wide, and slightly over 6 feet high, with white-washed walls and a dirt floor.

As it turns out, there were no dead bodies, zombies or hideous apparitions in the room under the cellar of our house, but it seemed to be more than a root cellar our parents suspected it was. The amount of time it probably took for someone to build and plaster the stone walls, the size of the room and the possibility of an outline of a tunnel at the far end, may be telling. But of most significance was what we believed to be a "breathing hole" in the ceiling, which upon investigation was covered by a wooden apparatus in the cellar above, which was what one might find covering an outside chimney.

All of which means, tales about East Lancaster Avenue's tunnel mysteries continue.

Restaurant Raffle winners enjoyed dinner at Kimberton Inn

Karen and Ron Meacham won the grand prize—dinners at 12 Downingtown area restaurants—in the Restaurant Raffle, conducted by the Historical Society this past fall.

And the Meachams have offered to provide our readers with a write-up on their experiences as they visit the participating restaurants. Here's what they had to say about their meal at the Kimberton Inn:

On Thanksgiving 2013, we used one of our prize winning gift certificates and dined at The Kimberton Inn, a historic Inn built in 1796, in the Quaker community of Kimberton. The ambiance was charming and cozy, with several burning fireplaces and elegant Christmas decorations. The Thanksgiving menu was varied, in addition to the traditional Turkey entrée. All courses were finely prepared and delicious. We especially enjoyed the prime rib and baked salmon. Service was efficient and non-intrusive.

Owner Jeff Effgen stopped by our table to congratulate us on winning the Raffle, concluding a very enjoyable evening on a special holiday. The Kimberton Inn serves guests from the small intimate party to large affairs and weddings. Having experienced both, we rate it as one of our favorites and we thank them for their gracious donation to the Downingtown Area Historical Society's fundraising event.

Don't throw those old t-shirts away

Got a bunch of t-shirts cluttering up your dresser drawers? We're interested in adding to our archives those t-shirts that have printing and artwork on them, promoting a Downingtown area business, church, school, team or organization.

And they don't have to be spotless; we'll run through a clothes washer before we put them on display. However, if any of them are full of holes, maybe you should keep and use them when you're washing your car.

So, instead of tossing your old t-shirts, please donate them to the Historical Society. Just call us at 610-269-1709 or send us an email to Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org, so you can arrange to donate the materials to us.

It's at 1401 Marshallton-Thorndale Road in West Bradford



Rahn Brackin is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify this as the house at 1401 Marshallton-Thorndale Road in West Bradford. The house was owned for many years by Mr. and Mrs. Parke Book. Mrs. Book had been a teacher at Caln Elementary School. The house is a Sears mail-order house. For more details on the mail-order houses see: www.searsarchives.com/homes/images/1927-1932/1928_p3218.jpg.

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Vol. 5, No. 5

January 30, 2014

Where and What Is This?



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Local news originally published in September 1946

News items noted below were retrieved from local newspapers published 68 years ago.

Joseph Jefferis Jr., a substitute lineman on the DHS football team, died from a kidney injury he suffered at a practice session. Initially, Jefferis responded satisfactorily to early treatment, and went home and ate dinner after practice.

After he began to feel a lot of pain several days later however, he was taken to Chester County Hospital by ambulance and underwent emergency surgery, but the seriousness of the injury proved to be fatal. DHS students were told of Jefferis's death at a special assembly. His death was the first football fatality in Chester County in many years. Classmates who served as pall bearers were Mylin Logan, Raymond

Kipp, Joseph Doran, Jack Fleck, Alfonso Doto, Andrew Mueller, Joseph Hemphill and Vernon Jameson. Following a report by Dr. Herman Kramm, team doctor, the Downingtown School Board decided the football team should continue to follow its schedule for the season.

The Philadelphia Catholic Archdiocese bought "Lowebrook," the palatial estate at 151 Woodbine Road in East Caln, which had been the home of the late Gibson McIlvain. The property had been listed at \$125,000.

Now known as the **St. John Vianney Center**, the facility is the oldest running behavioral health facility in North America for priests and nuns. The mansion, built in 1917, had 29 rooms. The estate also included a large garage with living quarters overhead, a barn for hunting horses, a large dairy barn, two greenhouses and a conservatory. The dairy farm had been operated for many years by Frank Smedley, and that arrangement continued under the new owners.

The student body of the **Font School** in Upper Uwchlan, taught by Elizabeth Wanner, was comprised of eleven girls and six boys.

Members of the **Thorndale Sportsman's Club** had a Sunday afternoon shoot on the club grounds in Bondsville.

Entrepreneurs in **Marshallton** were DiMatteo and Busby, a new house and barn painting business, and Clarence Wallace, who took over the Marshallton Garage.

Elected as officers of the **Harmony Hill School** reunion committee were: Bertha Winter, president; Florence Stein Supplee, vice president; Agnes Taylor, secretary; and Margaret Balentine, treasurer. Members of the executive committee included: James McFarland, Oscar Darlington, Mrs. George Mercer, Jasper Thomas and Stella Balentine.

Members of the Downingtown branch of the **Women's Christian Temperance Union** re-elected the following officers: Mrs. Harry Brown, president; Mrs. Edwin Wagner, vice president; Mrs. Leonard Maust, secretary; and Mrs. Lemon Habecker, treasurer.

Norman Jenkins, Bobby Pringle, Jimmy Barnett and Richard Ruth were new first graders at **Lionville Elementary School**. And three newcomers to higher grades at the school were Robert Ross, Robert Spies and Robert Peoples.

Elected to lead the **American Legion Auxiliary** in Downingtown were Mrs. Leroy Helms, president; Mrs. Paul Dague, first vice president; Mrs. Earl Thornton, second vice president; Mrs. John Fisher, treasurer; and Esther Williams, secretary.

Officers of the Youth Fellowship group at **Marshallton Methodist Church** were Doris McCarter, president; Edith Martin, vice president; Betty Keehn, secretary; Mabel Sellers, treasurer; and Mary Ciaffoni, program chairman.

Officers of the Philathea Class at **St. Paul's UCC Church**, Lionville, were Mrs. Ernest Rodney, president; Mrs. Norman Davis, vice president; Mrs. Schuyler Rennard, secretary; and Mrs. Heber Wilson, treasurer.

The Mothers Club at **Indiantown School**, Glenmoore, elected the following officers: Mrs. Larne Williamson, president; Mrs. Rodney Ray, vice president; Mrs. William Rigg, secretary; and Mrs. Ward Aaron, treasurer.

Members of **Girl Scout Troop 10**, Marshallton, who earned badges were Lee Ashby, Jo-Ann LeFevre, Doris Cann, Peggy and Frances DiMatteo, Anna Hubbard, Shirley Lamborn, Mary Jane Place, Virginia English, Lilly Anne Gyger, Jean Thompson, Edith Albertson, Joyce Powell and Mary Wickersham.

Parke Book established airport in West Bradford in 1954

Jack Hines, retired manager of West Bradford Township, provided us with more information about Parke and Mary Book, and Mary's sister, Dorothy Bane, all of whom lived in the Sears mail-order house, at the intersection of Marshallton-Thorndale and Poorhouse Roads, which was in the "What & Where Is This?" photo in the January 16 Hist-O-Gram.

According to Jack, The Books had owned the land where the old township building had been at 1535 Poorhouse Road. Parke told Jack he sold the property to the township so they would be sure that Poorhouse Road was plowed when it snowed.

After Parke died in 1981, Jack looked after Mary and Dorothy for several years, since he was under the impression that they were very poor. However, the lawyer who handled the sisters' estates told Jack that "a substantial amount of money had been stuffed in books, magazines, newspapers and paper bags" in the house.

According to www.airfields-freeman.com/PA/Airfields_PA_Lancaster.html#shannon, Parke established an airport in 1954 on West Bradford farmland along Marshallton-Thorndale Road. That land has been occupied by the United Sports Training Center since 1998.

Originally known as the Downingtown Airport, it had two grass runways, the longest of which was only 2,000 feet, plus a few small hangars.

Since it was difficult keeping the airport afloat financially, Parke sold it to Bob Shannon Sr. in 1961. Shannon had been working as a flight instructor for several years at West Chester, later renamed Brandywine Airport.

About the same time, Shannon purchased an airway light beacon from a closed airfield off Route 10, near the village of Compass in West Caln Township. In the 1920's and 1930's, the beacon helped guide airmail pilots who delivered mail to rural communities. Shannon bought the light beacon for \$1, disassembled it, trucked it to his airport, and reassembled it to serve as his airport's rotating beacon tower. A granite plaque, donated by the Aero Club of Chester County, was installed in 2004 on the spot on the Training Center property, where the beacon tower had been located.

Shannon paved and lengthened the runway to 3,000 feet, and offered flying lessons and private plane services. In his honor, it was renamed Shannon Memorial Airport after his death in 1970. His family operated the airport until it closed in the early 1990s

Clip joint will get your chip-grabbing fingers in shape

Yes, we know the Super Bowl will be played on Sunday, February 2. In fact, we believe our monthly clipping and pasting session provides a wonderful opportunity for you to prepare for the Frozen Fanny Fest being held Sunday night at the MetLife Stadium in North Jersey.

We recently read that Americans eat more food on Super Bowl Sunday than any other day, except for Thanksgiving. In fact, the Calorie Control Council says Super Bowl fans will consume about 20.8 million pounds of potato chips and 20.8 million more pounds of tortilla chips during the game.

And in preparation for those festivities, we suggest that you get your fingers in shape for all that chip-grabbing by coming to the Historical Society, where many interesting folks will be clipping and pasting newspaper clippings for our archival collection. As usual, the session will be held from 1-4 PM on **Sunday, Feb. 2** at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. Parking is available in the lot at the Chick-Fil-A restaurant next door, which is closed on Sundays. You're welcome to arrive and leave at your leisure.

Members of Historical Society's board

Based on recent appointments and an election, officers of the Downingtown Area Historical Society are: Parry Desmond, president; Ernie Jameson, vice president; Marion Piccolomini, secretary; and Carol Grigson, treasurer. And the directors are: Dick Lehr, Harry Helms, Mike Dunn and Phil Dague.

We're going to try last week's Where & What Is This? photo again



Although this was a high-profile, controversial location in the 1970s, many Hist-O-Gram subscribers must have assumed we'd be swamped with responses about this gorgeous house. In fact, no one even tried. So, we're going to try again. Please send your responses to:

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Vol. 5, No. 6

February 6, 2014

Where and What Is This?



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Downingtown area news published in February 1978

Noted below are news items retrieved from issues of the *East Branch Citizen*, which were published 36 years ago.

The Downingtown area was hit by **back-to-back blizzards** that month. As a result, the borough's street department was working double shifts, as the crew tried to clear the roads. The street crew received an emergency call in the middle of one night to dig out a heavily-drifted Woodbine Road in the east end of the borough, so an ill priest at Villa St. John (now the St. John Vianney Center) could be taken to the hospital in an ambulance. One guy on the street crew characterized one chest-high drift as a "sonuvabitch" because it took so long to dig it out.

Several *East Branch Citizen* readers claimed that kind of language was inappropriate for a small town newspaper. However, an editorial in the next issue noted that, "We suspect the elderly, sick priest, who had to wait until the road crew could clear the road before he could be transported to the hospital that night, would have forgiven the borough worker for his graphic language without batting an eye."

Recent **property transfers** included: 416 Berkley Road, Uwchlan, \$53,750; 12 Surrey Road, Upper Uwchlan, \$68,130; 8 Highland Court, East Brandywine, \$59,530; 1339 Ridgeview Circle, West Bradford, \$60,235; 204 North Lake Drive, Downingtown, \$53,500.

Irv Geschwindt, Jack Hilferty, Darryl Kuhns and Doris Zelina were elected to **Messiah Lutheran Church's** council.

DHS students who made the **District Chorus** were Chris Daghir, Karen Irwin and Jody Cura.

Members of the deacons group at **Windsor Baptist Church** were Ed Popjoy, chairman; Ed Pyle, vice chairman; Don Anthony, secretary; and Dean Seese, treasurer. And the trustees were Shorty Trego, chairman; Ralph Mertz, vice chairman; John Nagle, secretary; and Elmer Murdoch, treasurer.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 79**, Glenmoore, who were installed in leadership positions were Brian Harrop, senior leader; and patrol leaders Mark Kottmeyer, Bruce Harrop, Rob Krentel and Jon Hoxter.

Newly elected leaders at **Central Presbyterian Church** were: elders John Staggers, Ernest Stockhoff, Richard Thatcher and John Yurkutat; deacons Walter Kottmeyer, Mary Lynam, Harold Stalder and Douglas Whipple; and trustees Mary Ann Gitzendanner, Jane Klaebel, Anne Pearson and Janet Schucker.

Vicki Geisel won the spelling bee for fifth and sixth graders at **West Bradford School**. Robin McGrady was the runner-up.

The **Downingtown Chamber of Commerce's** new committee chairpersons were Earl Myers, government affairs; Lambert McGuckin, membership; John Francella and Dr. Charles Micken, manpower and education; and Jonathan Stott, economic development.

DHS tennis players Erin Conaghan and Steve Ziobro were selected to be ball persons at the U.S. Pro Indoor Championships at the Spectrum in Philadelphia. They also were ball persons for the Virginia Slims Tournament in Philadelphia in March.

Members of the **Alert Fire Co. Auxiliary**, who modeled clothing from Jennie Rae's during their fashion show, were Rose Bruno, Carol Keers, Linda DiLuigi, Kathy Przychodzien and Blanche Dawson.

Scott Lytle, Doug Petrie and Marl Lytle were the team from **Cub Pack 21**, Lionville, which won the Cub Scout National Physical Fitness competition.

Members of the **Woman's Community Club of Uwchlan**, who won awards at the club's arts and crafts show were Mrs. William Edgerton, Mrs. Richard Newman, Mrs. Charles Alfieri and Mrs. Paul TenHoopen.

Coach Bob Boyer's **DHS boys' basketball** team earned their first District I AAA playoff spot by beating Boyertown and Great Valley in the final week of Ches-Mont League play. Bob Dorsey was the Whippets' top scorer in both contests.

West Pikeland's supervisors revealed that they had been in negotiations with Historic Yellow Springs Foundation, whereby the township building on Route 113 would be sold to the foundation, and the township would lease back the building for 99 years. The building, constructed in 1907, was used as school until 1963.

New officers of the **Uwchlan Ambulance Corps** were Cal Wilhelm, president; Mary Ellen Morrissey, vice president; Joan Pladek, corresponding secretary; Lois Norwood, financial secretary; Robert Kochie, treasurer; Ed Milham, operations chief; and trustees James Hart and Donald Dockstader.

Frances Matthews recalled Lionville's past

A two-part feature about Mrs. Frances Matthews' recollections of the Lionville area in the early 20th Century also was published in the *East Branch Citizen* in February 1978. Some of the life-long resident's memories of the village in Uwchlan Township were:

- Lionville High School, established in 1904, was located in several rooms in the Friends Meeting House on Route 113. One teacher taught all the subjects, which included Latin and bookkeeping. In 1918, there were so few students in the high school, the Uwchlan Township School Board decided to put seventh and eighth graders in the high school building. And in the 1920s, the high school curriculum was reduced to two years. Those who wanted to earn a high school diploma went to either Downingtown, which was appealing because Lionville farm boys could major in agriculture there, or to West Chester High School. Lionville High School was closed in 1932 because there was only one student, Gladys McCardell.
- There was little in the way of entertainment in Lionville back then. One attraction was a Lyceum (a Greek term meaning intellectual happening) which was held once a month in the Odd Fellows Hall on Village Avenue. For just a dime, people saw local musicians perform. Also, Paul Dague (later a Congressman from Downingtown) was a popular Lyceum performer. He did impressions of "Uncle Josh," one of the nation's first popular comedians who regaled people with his "silly talk" about people in a mythical farming town, claimed Mrs. Matthews.
- Another major event in the area was the Chautauqua, which came to small communities from New York State for a week in the fall. Different plays and musical entertainment were presented every afternoon and evening; a \$2.50 season ticket enabled one person to go to every performance.
- And many of the women in the village formed a chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in Lionville in an attempt to get the Lionville Tavern's liquor license revoked. "Too many husbands were up there drinking," she claimed.
- Although there wasn't much crime in Lionville a century ago, a constable could be called when there was a problem. The constable, a cattle dealer who lived in the village, was not paid, unless someone was fined. So when a kid was caught playing hooky from school, the constable was paid when he went to visit the truant's family.

Your friends and family can be Hist-O-Gram subscribers

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It's the Frank Miller Paper Co., predecessor of the Downingtown Paper Co.



Many subscribers claimed that the “What and Where Is This?” photo in last week’s Hist-O-Gram was of the Downingtown Paper Co., or DOPACO or Sonoco, as the firm was known in later years. However, we were looking for a more historically accurate response, which provided information on Downingtown’s largest paperboard manufacturer. So, no one correctly identified the photo shown above as the Frank Miller Paper Co.

The photo was in the center of a postcard, which included a border surrounding all four sides of the picture. And on the bottom part of the frame was printed, “F. F. Miller Paper Co., first mill, Downingtown, PA. Largest box board mill in the US.”

A digital copy of the postcard was sent to us by Doug Bennett, retired DHS band director and music teacher, who lives with his wife in Charlotte, NC.

Frank Miller started papermaking 1881, when he began manufacturing binder board for bookbinders in a mill that was a mile south of the borough, according to a booklet, entitled “A Tradition of People and Paper,” which was published in 1956, on Downingtown Paper Co.’s 75th anniversary. Since he had to haul raw materials and the finished product one mile to and from a rail station, Miller bought a 14-acre tract on Brandywine Avenue in Downingtown in 1887, which was near the Pennsylvania Railroad’s main line. The mill he built there was one of the first to be run entirely by steam. A year later, a paperboard machine was added to mill’s equipment.

And when he needed money to expand the operation in 1891, Miller turned to his brother-in-law, Gibson McIlvain. Subsequently, the McIlvain family became actively involved in the company.

The firm was renamed the Downingtown Paper Co. in 1924.

It's at 230 Fairview Road in Glenmoore



Russ Faller is the truly perceptive scholar who was the first person to correctly identify this as the house at 230 Fairview Road in Wallace Township. Built in 1907, it was the summer residence of William Montgomery, a prominent Philadelphia attorney. In the 1970s, it became the Vitae House for recovering alcoholics, and later became a rehabilitation facility for drug addicts, based on materials provided by Wallace Township historian Sandy Brannan. In recent years, it was reconverted into a residence. For more details on the 76-acre estate, see: www.trulia.com/property/3115523699-230-Fairview-Rd-Glenmoore-PA-19343.

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Free ads for Non-Profits

Lecture series

The East Brandywine Township Historical Commission will kick off a monthly lecture series on Sundays, at 3:30 PM, with a discussion at the township building on Feb. 23 about the Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School. It will be followed by a lecture on the Bondsville Mill on March 30. The third lecture, on East Brandywine Baptist, will be held at the church on April 27.

Program on Lincoln

At 6:30 PM, Wednesday, Feb. 12, Deb Pieri will talk about "The Wit and Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln" at the Downingtown Library, 330 E. Lancaster Ave.

Book sale

Donations of books (hardbacks and softbacks in good condition only) will be accepted until Monday, Feb. 10 for the Downingtown Library's Spring Book Sale, which will be held from 6-7:30 PM Friday, March 7, and from 9 AM to 4 PM Saturday, March 8. For more info, call the library at 610-269-2741.

Food Fight

The Thorndale Rotary Club has challenged the Coatesville Rotary Club to a food fight. The clubs are competing to collect the most non-perishable food goods through March 1. All donations can be delivered to the West Bradford Township Building, 1385 Campus Drive, during normal business hours, 7 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

All items collected will be delivered to the Chester County Food Bank, to benefit families in need throughout our local communities.

The Cupboard's food supply runs low every March. Your generosity will help feed hundreds of hungry families during this critical time of year.

These high-priority items that are always in short supply: canned tuna, macaroni and cheese, canned pasta, canned beef stew, chili and soups, canned fruits & vegetables, and cold and hot breakfast cereals. Please consider adding an extra item or two to your weekly shopping list.

Brochure on DARC classes & activities

You can gain access to the latest DARC brochure, listing all classes and activities, at: www.darcinfo.com. 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.

Downingtown Farmers' Market

The Downingtown Farmers' Market will be open over the winter months on the following Thursdays: Feb. 20, March 6 and 20, and April 3 and 17, at the Williamson Masonic Hall; 210 Manor Ave., Downingtown, from 4 - 6 PM. All of the farmers and food artisans at the market must grow, raise or make what they sell – meriting its classification as a "producer only" market. Consistent with the market's social mission, food drives will be held periodically to benefit the Lord's Pantry and other organizations in need of food donations. Additionally, market space will be made available to non-profit groups if their mission is similar to that of the market.

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 very reasonable. Call 610-269-3555 for more information.

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

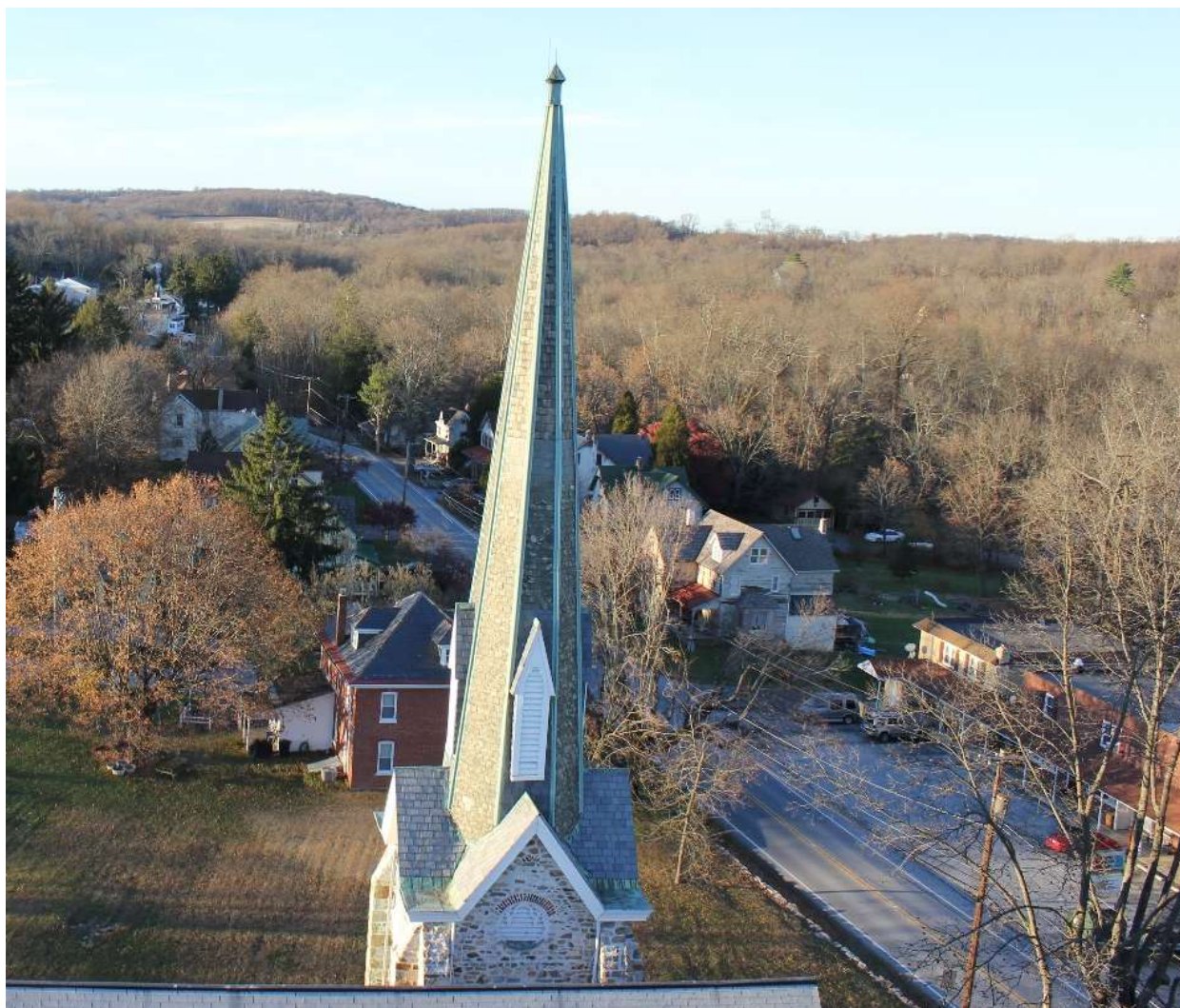
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Vol. 5, No. 7

February 13, 2014

Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the building, shown above, will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

Local news items 52 years ago

Noted below are news items about the Downingtown area, which were originally published in local newspapers in early February 1962.

Members of **Cub Pack 79**, sponsored by Fairview Presbyterian Church, Glenmoore, who received one-year service stars were Jesse Baker, Harold Earnshaw, David Funk, Jeffrey and Gregory Hannum, Carl Harple, Danny and Mike Messner, George Quinn, Harvey Roeder, Carl Shrader, Louis Waldmann and Ricky Herter.

Newly elected officers of the Ladies Auxiliary of **St. Anthony's Lodge** were Laurie Reutter, president; Pat Panichelli, vice president; and Rose Castaldi, recording secretary.

Mrs. Robert Garrett, rural division chairman of the local **Red Cross** campaign, named the following township captains: Mrs. John Griggs, West Bradford; Mrs. Chester Zell, Wallace; Mrs. Stanley Walters, Caln; Mrs. Raymond Williams, East Caln; Edith Moore, Uwchlan; Mrs. Frank Crimp, Upper Uwchlan; and Mrs. John Mendenhall, East Brandywine.

Downingtown Junior High students who played in the Chester County Orchestra were Elise Cohen, first violin; Jack Trego, first alto saxophone; Gene Martin, percussion; Lois Carson, first flute; James Schofield, first horn; David Robbins, first trumpet; and Bert Nordblom, tuba.

Members of the **Junior High's Parents Club**, who arranged for a St. Patrick's Day dance at the school were Mrs. Thomas Jenkins, Mrs. Edward Campbell, Mrs. Lewis Wilson, Mrs. Guy Kline and James Martin.

Committee chairpersons for the **Brandywine-Wallace PTA's** Spring Fling were Mrs. Louis Waldmann, general chairman; Mrs. Thomas Hickey and Mrs. Roy Nellius, decorations; Mrs. John Corry, publicity; Mrs. Nancy Wilson, snack booth; and Mrs. Robert Shoemaker, posters.

Student Council officers at **Beaver Creek School** were Martha Brown, president; Annawyn Menas, vice president; Glenda Buckwalter, secretary; and Greta Asparagus, treasurer. Other council members were Larry Patrizio, Nancy Romig, Gerald Mitman, Fred Pollock, Vernon Thomas, Alex Mecray and Robert Griggs.

The Gas Island at the **Downingtown Farmers Market** was selling gasoline for 23.9 cents a gallon.

Members of **Cub Pack 2**, sponsored by the Downingtown Lions Club, who received various awards were David Radcliffe, Bobby Osborne, Kenneth Harman, Jack Leonard, Jack Wasmuth, Mike Norris, Stuart Pollock, Frank Bishop, Joel Swisher, Jack Howe, Steve Mascherino, Gary Burkey, and Palmer Raysor.

Harry Simms won the senior high division; Janet Strawsnyder took first place in the junior high division, and East Ward's Michael McCardell earned the top honor at the Downingtown School District's third annual **Science and Industrial Arts Fair**.

The **Woman's Community Club of Uwchlan** celebrated its 40th anniversary. The club's newly elected officers were Mrs. Theodore Rogers, president; Mrs. G. L. Hughes, first vice president; Dr. Anna Biddle, second vice president; Grace Gordon, recording secretary; Jeanette Stiteler, corresponding secretary; and Helen Biddle, treasurer.

A petition, requesting that buildings on lots of less than one acre be prohibited until a comprehensive survey of Uwchlan **Township** was completed, was presented to the township supervisors.

The **DHS boys' basketball team** qualified for the preliminary round of District I's Class B playoffs by beating Spring-Ford, as five Whippets hit double figures: George Murphy, 13;

Beanie Williams and Clarence Wilkerson, 11 each; and Bill Pollock and Sam Westmoreland, 10 each.

In last season's (1961) playoff, Downingtown's Charlie Newlin hit a jumper with six seconds left to beat Kennett 61-59. However, DHS was knocked out of the 1962 playoffs when it lost to Kennett, Southern Chester County League champion, by a 68-51 score.

Info on Marshallton's Ted Baldwin offers a ray of sunshine

Seeking a respite from the icy, snowy weather we've experienced recently? Why don't we focus on something warm and sunny--like baseball?

Well, while doing research for this week's Hist-o-Gram issue, we came across an interesting article in the March 13, 1962 edition of the *Daily Local News*. The story was about Henry Clay (Ted) Baldwin, a Marshallton resident, who spent 15 years (1914-1929) in organized baseball, including eight years with professional teams. That career included a brief (5 hits in 16 at-bats for a .313 average) stint during the 1927 season, when he was a 33-year-old infielder for the Philadelphia Phillies. He spent the last four years of his active pro ball career with the Pacific Coast League's Seattle Indians. He hung up his spikes after he was the player-manager for most of the 1929 season with the Portland Mariners in the class B New England League.

In addition to the baseball talk, his recollections in the West Chester newspaper story also provided insights on what life was like in Chester County more than 100 years ago.

When Baldwin broke into semi-pro ball in 1909, following his sophomore year at West Chester Normal School (now West Chester University), "nobody had cars in those days. I used to hitch up the old pony and drive the 12 miles from Goshen to Chadds Ford, where we played. It wasn't an uncommon sight to see 100 buggies tied up under the trees on a Saturday afternoon," he recalled

After graduating from West Chester in 1913, he played semi-pro ball for a season and a year in the minors. Then he signed on with the semi-pro team sponsored by the Parkesburg Iron Co., which played exhibition games against major league clubs. The games against the big leaguers often attracted 2,000 fans to the borough, whose population in those days was 2,500. In addition to locals coming by horse and buggy, many fans travelled by trolleys from Philadelphia and Lancaster to get to the games.

"We were paid \$500 a month, which was top dollar in those days, and considerably more than the \$2,500 a year rookies got with the Phillies and the A's. Heck, if we didn't knock off those clubs, we were out of a job.

"I remember the afternoon we took on Detroit and Cincinnati in a doubleheader," continued Baldwin. "The Tigers beat us in the opener, but we came back to lick the Reds."

In his post-baseball days, Baldwin owned and operated a dairy farm in West Bradford, and was well known for raising fox hunting dogs and show horses, according to [www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Henry Baldwin](http://www.baseball-reference.com/bullpen/Henry_Baldwin).

He died, at age 69, on February 24, 1964.

Downingtown's connection with a U.S. President

Ray Downing of Henderson, NV, a descendant of Thomas Downing, whom the borough was officially named after in 1859, recently sent us this message:

While reading the short history of the Ashbridge House on the Downingtown Area Historical Society's web site, I recalled a fact that I chuckled about in the past, and thought might be of interest to Hist-O-Gram readers. Now, it's a bit far out, I agree, but it is absolutely true.

The first recorded owner of the Ashbridge House was John Baldwin. He and his wife, Hannah (Johnson), had a son in 1722, Joshua Baldwin. On June 7, 1744, Joshua married, Sarah Downing, second daughter of Thomas Downing, Downingtown's namesake.

On 16 July, 1745, Sarah died in childbirth. The daughter survived.

Joshua re-married, on September 17, 1747, Mercy Brown. There was one child from that marriage, Hannah Baldwin.

Hannah married William Milhous in 1767. There was one child of that marriage, William Milhous, Jr.

Now it gets a bit repetitious, but bear with me. William Jr. had a son, Joshua Vickers Milhous, and he, in turn, had a son, Franklin Milhous, who had a daughter, Hannah Milhous.

In 1908, Hannah Milhous married Francis Anthony Nixon, in Whittier, California. And they had a son who you may have heard of, Richard Milhous Nixon.

Now stop and think. If my fifth great grandniece, Sarah Downing Baldwin, had not died in childbirth in 1745.....Richard Nixon would have never existed.

It's at 102 Pottstown Pike (Route 100) in downtown Eagle



Josh Bruton is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the building above in last week's "What and Where Is This?" photo, taken by Mike Dunn. Currently, it's the location of the Bella Salon and Spa, at 102 Pottstown Pike, at the intersection of Byers Road, in downtown Eagle. The building was constructed by William H. Sheetz around 1860. Next door was a building where Sheetz and his son operated a saddlery (harness) business.

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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

Vol. 5, No. 8

February 20, 2014

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More local news items 52 years ago

Noted below are news items about the Downingtown area, which were originally published in local newspapers in the latter part of March 1962.

Young people who participated in a stewardship contest at **St. Paul's UCC Church**, Lionville, included Robert Worthington, Donald and Jill Corneal, Ella and Dorsey Trego, Richard Faddis, Thomas and Richard Shreiner, Charles Wertz, Rickey Gilbert, Joyce Mull, Norma Jean Walters, Bruce Emery, Linda Davis and William Behrndt.

Newly elected officers of the **Downingtown Rotary Club** were James Hines, president; Guy Kline, first vice president; Earl Radcliffe, second vice president; Ernest Smedley, secretary; Lloyd Swarner, treasurer; and Henry Smith, sergeant-at-arms. Directors elected were William Balderston, Rev. Donald Bower and Stephen MacNeill.

There was no public opposition when some 60 residents of **Upper Uwchlan** heard the township planning commission's first comprehensive plan. Members of the planning commission were Rev. Carl Kopenhaver, chairman, George Fish, George Lumis, Forrest Gottier and James Martin. The plan called for a light industrial area of about 350 acres in the vicinity of the village of Eagle.

Horace Rodgers, chairman of the **Downingtown Chamber of Commerce's** improvement committee, gave a pessimistic report on the borough's store front project. Rodgers said some store owners wanted modern fronts, while others preferred colonial fronts. And David Yaeck, chairman of the Christmas decorating committee, said that, although service clubs and other local organizations had supported putting up Christmas lights, there was little cooperation by merchants in the business district.

Second graders who participated in an assembly at **Beaver Creek School**, Downingtown, included Nancy MacDonald, Denine Koth, Paula Swoyer, Roxanne Adams, Dianne Peterman, David Kipp, Mark Dreibelbis, Richard Weaver, Deborah Seibert, Edward Green, Sandra Piersol, Terry Davis, Mona Sollenberger, Jean Jarvie, Wanda Shindle, Valerie Wilkerson and Robert Paup.

A Philadelphia planning consultant told **Uwchlan Township** residents, who attended a planning commission meeting, there was a need for "community minded" industrial companies to supply additional tax revenue. And he advised that it would be a mistake to "string out" the township's commercial development along Route 100. Instead, it would be better if the village of Lionville were a commercial center, rather than "dribble it along the highway."

Members of **Troop 314**, who helped celebrate the 50th anniversary of Girl Scouting at Fairview Presbyterian Church, Glenmoore, were Carol Baker, Ann Chalfant, Nancy Gerbron, Deborah Greenfield, Susan Hadfield, Maria Louise Pease, Yvonne Pryzanski, Jean Reeve, Betty Saathoff, Karen Slater, and Bertha and Linda Bentley.

Fourth graders at the **Font School**, Upper Uwchlan, taught by Dixie Bradbury, who participated in a program on the settlement of Pennsylvania, included Susan Hurst, Billy Frame, Wendy Gottier, Mary Harvey, Donald Spence, Jacqueline Pitt, Kenny Peterson, Bruce Wynn, Bruce Styer, Jimmy Pinkerton and Craig Hardy.

Those who modeled clothing in the fashion show, sponsored by the Ladies of **St. Joseph's School**, Downingtown and chaired by Mrs. Michael Golden, were Mrs. Jack Crenshaw, Mrs. George Kalbitzer, Mrs. Bert Hough, Mrs. William Sheridan, Mrs. Eugenio DiClemente, Mrs. William Hall, Mrs. William Crawford, Mrs. John Doddy, Mrs. Richard Short, Mrs. Joseph Panichelli, Mrs. Nello Caporale and Mrs. Francis Allen. And eighth graders modeled dresses

were Aleta Sack, Agatha Mento, Lorraine Androwick, Joan Massimini, Cheryl Valocchi and Betty Ann Panetti.

Students who made the honor roll at **West Pikeland Elementary School** were Bobby Hayes, Teddy Jeffries, Raymond Mertz, Ricky and Bonnie Summerfield, Bonnie Trego, Sue and Bonnie Uhler, Jackie Winchell, Harry Levering, Andre and Suzanne Perreault, Kath Vail, Mary Smiley, Robin Knox, Diane Fink, Alice Dilworth, Anne English, Billy Hollifield, Karl Snyder, Karen Alfsen, Anne Louise Detweiler, Katie Hallman, Nancy Sload and Ben Woodland.

George Hilton was elected commander of the **Brandywine VFW Post 845**, Downingtown. Also elected were Harley Leavitt, senior vice commander; Herbert Lammey, junior vice commander; William Wilmot, quartermaster; Henry Thomas, chaplain; P. Y. Farnsworth, post advocate; Dr. Charles Bruton, post surgeon; and trustees Thomas Clark, Theodore Jameson, Schrack Stewart, Edward Klink and Earl Parker.

Finalists in the Downingtown Elementary School **spelling bee** were Jesse Babcock, Howard Baum, Donna Brown, Herbert brown, Stephen Caldwell, Brenda Diem, Elaine Geiger, Cheryl Geist, Susan Getty, Robert Griggs, Robert Hildebeitel, Judy Husted, Susan Jones and Linda Kipp.

Models in the fashion show, sponsored by the **Alert Fire Co. Auxiliary**, Downingtown, were Mrs. Herbie Talucci, Joyce Stern, Mrs. Maynard Collier, Mrs. Frank Thraillkill, Mrs. Elmer Schrupf, Mrs. Donald Stine, Mrs. Paul Pollock, Mrs. James Bones, Velma Warren, Mrs. Robert Eickstedt and Mrs. Brooks Laird.

Fine Dining, Victorian Style, at the Yellow Springs Inn

Here's another restaurant write-up by Karen and Ron Meacham, who won the grand prize—dinners at 12 Downingtown area restaurants—in the Restaurant Raffle, conducted by the Historical Society this past fall.

Our next dining experience, using the certificates won in the Downingtown Area Historical Society Restaurant Raffle, was the beautiful Yellow Springs Inn in Chester Springs. The Jenny Lind House is the newest location for this beautifully renovated Victorian Restaurant. The house is named after the 19th century European opera star Jenny Lind, who is said to have stayed there around 1850, during the Philadelphia part of a concert tour.

The restaurant has both formal and casual dining rooms, all richly decorated with Charles Orlando's passion for antiques. We were served in the warm and cozy casual room, with a fireplace and beautiful mahogany bar. The Inn prides itself on offering heritage breeds of beef, pork, chicken and wild-caught seafood from New York and Honolulu.

Our experience included uniquely prepared appetizers of duck and chestnut in pastry, wild mushroom and pheasant soups, and stuffed portabella mushroom, fresh ricotta salad and roasted red and golden beets. Our entrées included a variety of fish - halibut, salmon and grouper, all exquisitely prepared and presented on antique china. We topped off this delicious meal with desserts of chocolate pie, crème brulee' and carrot cake. The Inn is a BYOB restaurant, but charges no corking fee and provides a variety of mixers. The service was attentive yet non-intrusive, and our server provided a wealth of knowledge about the history and renovation of this wonderful find.

We thank Charles Orlando for making this gracious donation to the Downingtown Area Historical Society's fundraising event. To learn more about the historic Yellow Springs Inn Restaurant and Catering Service, as well as Jenny Lind, visit their website www.YellowSpringsInn.com.

School principals bewail cancelling classes in song

Check out www.youtube.com/watch?v=ee2aSVzJvvY&feature=youtu.be so you can see the “No School Medley,” rocked by Downingtown School District administrators—Dr. Larry Mussoline, superintendent; Dr. Nick Indeglio, Downingtown Middle School principal; and Jon Ross, Lionville Middle School principal—as they bewailed (literally) having to cancel classes for the eighth day this school year. According to an article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, their presentation had attracted more than 60,000, as of this past Monday. Apparently, the principals didn’t start out as music teachers.

It’s the steeple of Glenmoore United Methodist Church



Cathy Murphy is a truly perceptive scholar because she was the first person to correctly identify the building in the photo above as Glenmoore United Methodist Church. The photo was taken by John Miller, a member of the congregation and a life-long resident of Wallace Township, where he serves as the township Historical Commission’s archivist. The church, located on Route 282, smack-dab in the center of the village of Glenmoore, was founded in 1831 as Springton Methodist Church and was originally located one mile south of the village. When the congregation outgrew that location, a church shown above was built in 1873.

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Free ads for Non-Profits

Lecture series

The East Brandywine Township Historical Commission will kick off a monthly lecture series on Sundays, at 3:30 PM, with a discussion at the township building on Feb. 23 about the Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School. It will be followed by a lecture on the Bondsville Mill on March 30. The third lecture, on East Brandywine Baptist, will be held at the church on April 27.

Food Fight

The Thorndale Rotary Club has challenged the Coatesville Rotary Club to a food fight. The clubs are competing to collect the most non-perishable food goods through March 1. All donations can be delivered to the West Bradford Township Building, 1385 Campus Drive, during normal business hours, 7 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

All items collected will be delivered to the Chester County Food Bank, to benefit families in need throughout our local communities.

The Cupboard's food supply runs low every March. Your generosity will help feed hundreds of hungry families during this critical time of year.

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Book sale

The Downingtown Library's Spring Book Sale will be held from 6-7:30 PM Friday, March 7, and from 9 AM to 4 PM Saturday, March 8. For more info, call the library at 610-269-2741.

Brochure on DARC classes & activities

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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

Vol. 5, No. 9

February 27, 2014

Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the building, shown above, will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

Local news items from 68 years ago

Noted below are news items about the Downingtown area, which were originally published in local newspapers in October 1946.

Committee chairmen of the **Mothers Club of the East Ward School**, Downingtown, were: Mrs. Thomas Brookover, hostess; Mrs. Victor Amway and Mrs. Lloyd Trego, hospitality; Mrs. Thomas Lee, publicity; Mrs. John Miller, program; and Mrs. Tyler Egolf, membership.

Kahler's Pharmacy in Marshallton announced to farmers that it carried veterinary supplies such as Naylor's teat dilators, calves cordial, milking tubes and udder balm.

Officers of the choir at **St. Paul's Reformed (UCC) Church**, Lionville, were Mrs. George Harting, director; Mrs. James Messner, librarian; Mrs. William Whitely, president; Mrs. William Peterman, vice president; Mrs. Harry Dewees, secretary; and Everett Wilson, treasurer.

Members of the **Upper Uwchlan Home and School League** elected the following officers: Mrs. Fred Moore, president; Stephen Moore, vice president; Lena Frame, secretary; Mrs. Elsie Finger, treasurer; and Mrs. Guy Mercer, pianist.

Elected as officers of **Girl Scout Troop 55, Marshallton**, were Florence Johnson, president; Mary Wickersham, vice president; and Doris McCarty, secretary/treasurer.

Students from **Wallace Township** enrolled at Downingtown Junior-Senior High School included: Joanne Barclay, Josephine Flynn, Marjorie Good, Merle, Harold and Charlotte Hannum, William and Esther Irely, Stanley Russell, Ronald Souden, Thomas and Virginia Bare, Henry Beam, Netha Beumer, William Chalfant, Peter Edgar, John Good, Ray Griffith, Eleanor Keiser, Robert and Paul Ray, Betty, John and Ruth Sensenig, Charles Trego, Robert Adams, Rogers Bender, Harry Evans, Loretta Kaempfer, Dorothy Ortlip, James Hague, Betty Simmers, Janice Shingle, Joseph Young, Shirley Gabriel, John and Harry Muller, and Ray Guzman.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson had to stay in Washington and continue working on a nationwide meat shortage, and was unable to come to Downingtown's Alert fire hall to address 300 local farmers on conservation.

Players on the Downingtown team, which won the **Chester County Baseball League** championship, were honored at a dinner at Palumbo's Restaurant in Philadelphia. The dinner was sponsored by Morris Steifel, Sam and Chester Charles, Bill Mahood, Arthur Petrella, Charles Grimes, Dr. George Bousum, Ernie Rittenhouse, Robert McCaughey, Nick Zaferes and Anthony DiLuigi.

The sixth annual banquet and dance was held at the Alert fire hall for the 400 employees of the **Collins-Aikman Co.**, Bondsville. Members of the company's cooperative council who planned the affair were Clarence Spece, Fred Simpson, Mary Harple, Esther Frame, Russell Gilkin, Isabell Hall, Frank Flynn, Robert Rock and Clara Shirley.

Foxley Farms, located on the south side of Route 30, just west of Downingtown in Caln, was sold to Paul Nelms. The 150-acre property, which included a stone mansion, a caretaker's house, a garage with a chauffeur's quarters and a lake, had been owned by the Richard Fox family for several generations. Nelms said he planned to make the farm an Aberdeen Angus cattle breeding operation. The property had been listed for \$50,000.

Five girls from **Brownie Troop 83**, Downingtown, who became members of Girl Scout Troop 94 in a fly-up ceremony at Kerr Park were: Fay Bousum, Betty Hayes, Dorothy Kipp, Marlene Gordon and Patricia Brown.

Members of **Boy Scout Troop 52, Marshallton**, who received badges during a Court of Awards, were Donald and Jimmy Liney, Raymond Feuerbaum, and Freddy Martin. And Robert Bunting was the first member of the troop to earn the Silver Star rank.

Pomanto's Restaurant, 143 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, was offering various types of pasta and seafood prepared by "famous chef" Dolly Trieste.

Coach Don White's **DHS football squad** edged Eddystone 7-6, as 190-pound fullback Dick Dague bulled his way into the end zone in the fourth quarter. However, the Whippets lost its first game of the season, by a 6-2 score, in a defensive struggle against Phoenixville, the following week. The Papertowners got back in the win column with a 14-0 victory over West Chester, as Tom DiOttavio scored on a 35-yard reverse, and Dick Dague intercepted a pass and ran 65 yards for another TD. Also, Downingtown racked up a 21-13 win over Bridgeport, as Dague scored all the points (3 TDs and 3 extra points) for the Blue and Gold.

Schnure ends iconic career as girls' basketball coach

When Bob Schnure applied to be the head girls' basketball coach at DHS for the first time, after serving as Jean Schiffer's assistant for three seasons, he didn't get the job. Ray DiSerafino, the principal at the time, believed that the coach should be a woman. So, Schnure hung in there as the jayvee coach for the 1977-78 season. And after the female head coach lasted only one year, Schnure finally got the varsity coaching job. Then, in his first game as head coach, the Whippets got clobbered 72-13, by Unionville.

Not exactly an auspicious beginning for a guy who would become an icon among Pennsylvania high school girls' basketball coaches.

Despite that initial hiccup, however, the Downingtown girls' teams (including DHS East for the past 10 season) went on to win 769 games, with Schnure at the helm, before he announced his retirement from coaching last week. And many of those victories were huge, including 20 Ches-Mont League or division championships, 11 District I crowns and five state titles in eight trips to Hershey.

Yes, his team was nationally ranked for several years and, for a while, the Lady Whippets' roster included two girls—Tina Nicholson (Penn State) and Tina Suber (Virginia)—who became college All-Americans and were selected in the WNBA's first draft. But Schnure seemed to get just as much pleasure from coaching girls who weren't attracting recruiters from Division I colleges.

And this wasn't Schnure's first retirement. He bowed out of the History Department at DHS West (where his wife, Fran Baliotti, also retired, had been his boss) several years ago.

We don't know what's next on Schnure's to-do list. But since he was renowned for thoroughly preparing his teams for every opponent, we suspect he's working hard on a plan for his next challenge.

Clip joint will be open on Sunday

The Historical Society's Clip Joint will be open from 1-4 PM on Sunday, March 2, when scads of volunteers will walk across our freshly shoveled walk so they can participate in our monthly newspaper clipping and pasting session at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. Parking is available in the lot at the Chick-Fil-A restaurant next door, which is closed on Sundays. You're welcome to arrive and leave at your leisure.

It's at 313 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown



Gregg Nelms is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the location of the building in the photo above as 313 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. For more info on that house, see: www.zillow.com/homedetails/313-W-Lancaster-Ave-Downingtown-PA-19335/9141086_zpid/.

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Recollections of how the school district dealt with past snow problems

Although most people are tired of the stuff, snow has been a big part of our conversations recently. And since we focus on local history, here are some recollections of how some folks dealt with snow in the past, and how current technology probably would have mitigated some of the problems

- Local school kids and their parents tuned into WCOJ, the radio station that carried news about school closings due to heavy snowfalls. To avoid pranksters who attempted to mimic a school district administrator who called the station and claimed there was no school that day, WCHE assigned a code word to each school district. "Milltown" was the code word for the Downingtown School District. Somehow, several DHS students discovered the code word in the early 1960s, and one of them used it successfully, when he notified WCHE in an authoritative tone of voice, that there would be no school that day. Apparently, it worked just once, and the kid who made the call wasn't caught. Obviously, this was long before there was "Caller ID."
- Back in the 1970s, Dr. Charles Micken was superintendent of the Downingtown School District. And although Micken always received updates on projected, big snow storms, he was the kind of guy who wanted to make sure the forecasts were accurate. So, he would get up at some ungodly hour and drive around the Downingtown-Exton area to personally determine if the road conditions would be a problem for car and school bus drivers, following a heavy snowfall. According to a school board member back then, Micken discovered, the hard way, that the roads were very slippery when he drove his car into a ditch in a rural part of the school district. We don't know how Micken got home that morning, but you can bet he didn't use a cell phone to call someone to come and pick him up.

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Book Sale & Library Programs

The Downingtown Library's *Spring Book Sale* will be held from 6-7:30 PM Friday, March 7, and from 9 AM to 4 PM Saturday, March 8. Book donations still being accepted until the sale begins.

Creating a Pollinator Garden: 6:30 PM Tuesday, March 1--Learn how to create a garden that attracts birds, butterflies and bees.

Holistic Weight Loss: 6:30 PM Monday, March 10--Learn healthy ways to make lifestyle changes to help keep weight off.

Meditation for Creativity: 6:30 PM Monday, April 28--Program focuses on drawing inspiration from meditation.

For more info on any of these activities, call the library at 610-269-2741.

Lecture series

The East Brandywine Township Historical Commission will present a lecture on the Bondsville Mill on March 30. It's part of a series of lectures, plus a discussion, on Sundays, at 3:30 PM, at the township building on Route 322, Guthriesville. The third lecture, on East Brandywine Baptist Church, will be held at the church on April 27.

Brochure on DARC classes & activities

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Vol. 5, No. 10

March 6, 2014

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Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

DHS Hall of Fame inductees selected

Five Downingtown High School graduates have been selected to be the first inductees into the Hall of Fame, which was recently established by the Downingtown Area School District and the Downingtown Area High School Alumni Association.

Those who will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at the Alumni Association's annual banquet at St. Anthony's Lodge, Downingtown, on Saturday evening, April 26, are:

- Todd Stong, Class of 1958, achievement in Humanitarian Service, Military;
- Curt Schroder, Class of 1979, achievement in Politics, Government;
- James (Hank) Hamilton, Class of 1968, achievement in Business, Community Service;
- Bonnie MacDougal Kistler, Class of 1971, achievement in Law, Literature;
- Richard Whittaker, Class of 1958, achievement in Medicine, Humanitarian Service.

Nominees were required to have graduated from either DHS East or DHS West, prior to 2004, and have accomplished success in the arts, education, politics, the military, science, engineering, athletics, entertainment, business, professional affiliations or charitable involvement. Additional information on the inductees will be published in future Hist-o-Grams.

Members of the selection committee, which considered 21 nominations, were: Chairperson Melissa Menna, Donna Kneisly, Kate Campbell, Jack Helm, Paul Hurley, Thomas Mulvey, Corey Sigle and Mark Kenworthy.

More information about the banquet can be provided by calling Caryn Menna at (610) 883-3917, and tickets can be purchased via www.downingtowntalumni.org/banquet.html.

Established in 1884, the Downingtown Alumni Association is the oldest, continuously meeting, public high school alumni association in the United States.

Interesting Downingtown area news 36 years ago

Noted below are news items originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* in the early part of March 1978.

Florence Ford was retiring, after serving more than 40 years as postmistress of the **Uwchland Post Office**, which was established in 1825. In the early years, the Post Office was located in the Eagle Hotel (later the Eagle Tavern), the Eagle General Store (later Simpson's), and Lumis's General Store in Byers. And when Ford was appointed, during President Franklin Roosevelt's second term, she set up the Post Office in her father's garage. Also, mail volume grew from an average of 100 pieces a day in 1937 (when a first class stamp cost only three cents) to about 1,000 a day in 1978.

The cast of students who were presenting the musical "**Damn Yankees**" at DHS included Valerie Jean Hadfield, Curt Schroder, Chris Daghir, Jody Cura, Karen Heckman, Lauri Kaulkins, Cindy Griggs, Bud Zinni and Matt Ladd. It was directed by William Cain and Timothy Lutz.

Members of **Cub Pack 23's** Pinewood Derby were Michael May, first; Brian Gomez, second; and Barry Gomez, third. And at the pack's Blue and Gold banquet at Central Presbyterian Church one-year service pins were presented to Tommy Wood, Glenn Dunlap, Jeff Morrison, Darren Ulmer and Clay Stehman.

DHS lost its first-ever District I AAA playoff game when the **boys' basketball team** was edged by Central Bucks West in a 49-48 heartbreaker. Bob Dorsey, whose season average was 20.2 per game, was the top Whippet scorer, with 22 points. His career scoring mark was 880

points, placing him in third place, behind Doug Gindin (1,312) and Tom Benton (1,210) among DHS players at the time.

Mark Dague sank 23 of 25 shots and won the 10th annual **foul shooting contest**, sponsored by the Downingtown-Uwchlan Recreation Board.

Recent **property transfers** were: 415 Jefferson Ave., Downingtown, \$36,000; 5 West Merion Circle, East Brandywine, \$64,100; 200 Fairview Road, Wallace, \$45,000; 1405 Manorwood Drive, West Bradford, \$50,700; 160 Whitford Hills Road, East Caln, \$84,500; 106 Taylors Mill Road, Uwchlan, \$63,626; 148 Ascot Court, Caln, \$35,290; and 10 Surrey Lane, Upper Uwchlan, \$64,000.

Harold Hannum, chairman of the **Wallace Township Recreation Board**, announced that Jan Lewis had been elected as board secretary and Marilyn Mason as vice chairman. And Harold Miller was appointed to the board.

Supervisor Andrew McCreight said **West Pikeland's** supervisors were "perfectly content" with the former schoolhouse on Route 113 as the township headquarters. And the building would only be sold if it continued to be the township's headquarters "in perpetuity." The supervisors were considering selling the building because the township was spending \$3,000 annually to maintain the building and grounds.

New members of **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Berdell, Mrs. Noretta Beuhner, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Frazer, Angela Gennell, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Mrynkow, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Klose, Mr. and Mrs. Owen McIntyre, Mr. and Mrs. John Ratyna, and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Schuler.

Rob Sanders, a Lionville Junior High ninth grader who was a member of the DHS indoor track team, placed second in a novice meet at West Chester State College, which attracted competitors from over 100 schools.

Those elected to lead the **Philathea Society**, the international Masonic scholarship and research organization, included William Albert Burkhardt, president, and Robert Bair, treasurer, both of Downingtown.

Officers of the recently formed **Downingtown Republican Club** were Bob Bowker, president; Bill Whiteman, vice president; Nancy Mason, secretary; John Roberts, treasurer; Jonathan Stott, membership chairman; and Harry Crossan, PR chairman.

Members of **Windsor Baptist Church** who attended a retreat in the Poconos were Carole Styer, David Supplee, Mark Shaw and Stan Miller. Also, John Meissner and Edward Pyle were ordained as deacons.

The **Chester County Toastmasters** group gave awards to two local people. Bobbi Talbert of Uwchlan was presented a trophy for her participation in a table topics forum, and Dudley Christy of West Bradford received the "Best Evaluator" award.

And although many residents of the HillCrest development in **West Bradford** wanted the township to pave Stouff's Road, Jean Eckbold, a longtime property owner on Broad Run Road, declared, "I like my road the way it is. Please don't pave it."

New trustees at **Downingtown Methodist Church** were Robert Moyer, Thomas Bradley and Francis Swisher. And new members of the congregation were Dorothy Wiest, Janet Brookover and Leslie Henry.

Historian seeks info on Col. Horace Shelmire

We have been contacted by a military historian who's looking for information on Col. Horace Shelmire and his involvement with the 303rd Air Service Group on the island of Saipan during World War II.

According to our July 18, 2013 Hist-O-Gram, Shelmire Road, in Uwchlan Township, was named after Col. Shelmire, who bought a large property, then known as Old Forge Farm, on that road in 1931.

Since Shelmire (1886-1965) had served in the military during World War I and was in his mid-50s when WW II started, he was turned down when he volunteered to join the Army again, according to an article in *The Archive*, a Downingtown weekly newspaper.

That rejection stung Shelmire because at least one member of his family had fought in every war the United States had been involved in. In fact, his great-grandfather, Capt. John Shelmire, was an aide to Gen. Washington at the Battle of the Brandywine.

However, Shelmire's disappointment didn't last long, because Gen. "Hap" Arnold, commander of the Army Air Force and Shelmire's classmate at Lower Merion High School, asked him to come to Washington to be his chief aide.

But Shelmire didn't spend much time in Washington as a Pentagon desk jockey. Instead, after earning his wings, his assignments included North Africa and 18 months as commander of a B-29 Group on the island of Saipan, where he was responsible for building an air field.

Ironically, Shelmire closely resembled Lt. Col. Nicholson, portrayed by Alec Guinness in the Oscar-winning 1957 film *Bridge on the River Kwai*.

Also, as a commander on Saipan, Shelmire earned a Legion of Merit medal for his personal involvement in the disposal of dangerous dud bombs.

During the 1950s, he was head of the Civil Defense efforts in Chester County.

If you have *any* info on Col. Shelmire, please call us at 610-269-1709, or contact us via email at: Info@downingtowntownareahistoricalandsociety.org.

Great Tuscan food in a historic setting at the Orangery at Glen Isle

Here's another restaurant write-up by Karen and Ron Meacham, who won the grand prize—dinners at 12 Downingtown area restaurants—in the "A Taste of Chester County" restaurant raffle, conducted by the Historical Society this past fall.

A snowy Valentine's Day was the perfect time to dine at The Orangery at Glen Isle, a lovely, upscale, yet unpretentious restaurant located off South Lloyd Avenue in Downingtown. Owners Paul and Sabrina Lutz combined their passions for historic architecture and simple Tuscan cooking into a beautifully renovated dining facility. The house sits on an Isle between two streams that split the property. It is the site of the original Ship Inn, and during the American Revolution, the inn's owner, a British loyalist, found patriot soldiers in his establishment and promptly removed them. The soldiers, in turn, put several musket balls into his tavern sign. In later years, business declined, and the inn was moved to its present location in Exton. The house, known for many years as Glen Isle, remained a private residence until recently.

Our evening began with an appetizer of cauliflower cakes, followed by a fresh pear and spinach salad. Next came delicious, homemade Tuscan lasagna and then tender chicken scaloppini in mushroom sauce with roasted potatoes. Dessert was selected by Sabrina and topped off with a special Valentine package of chocolate truffles. All courses were nicely

proportioned and served on charming, mismatched, antique china. Service was efficient, yet non-intrusive. Owner Paul mingled with the guests appropriately throughout the evening.

The Orangery is a reservations-only BYOB, with one seating at 6:30 PM, Thursdays through Saturdays. You will enjoy a five-course, set menu of delectable Tuscan recipes prepared by Chef Sabrina, using the freshest ingredients. Menus are published on their website at www.orangeryatglenisle.com. Menus are changed every two weeks, so guests can always be sure of getting something new and scrumptious.

We want to thank The Orangery at Glen Isle for their gracious contribution to the Downingtown Area Historical Society's "A Taste of Chester County" fundraiser.

It's at 1748 Horseshoe Pike, Glenmoore



Rahn Brackin is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the house in the photo above as being located at 1748 Horseshoe Pike (Route 322), Glenmoore. There's more info about the house at: www.trulia.com/property/3141837322-1748-Horse-Shoe-Pike-Glenmoore-PA-19343.

Jack Hines loved Kahler's cherry ice cream sodas

We noted in our Feb. 27 Hist-O-Gram that Kahler's Pharmacy in Marshallton offered many veterinary items to local farmers in the 1940s. However, Jack Hines, retired township manager in West Bradford, provided some recollections about the drug store:

The drug store was located in a building that is now an apartment house, the second building on the left, going west on Strasburg Road, after the intersection with Northbrook Road. It backs up to the Martin Tavern historic site. The drug store closed in the 50's and became a sandwich shop, before it became apartments.

"They had the best cherry ice cream soda, which I think cost 25 cents. I can remember Mr. Kahler giving out all the ice cream one time, when his freezer failed. He said it was easier than letting it all melt." And when the drug store closed, Jack's neighbor in Marshallton, who had worked at Kahler's soda fountain, purchased the milk shake machine, and later gave it to Jack who still uses it to make shakes at home.

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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org

Vol. 5, No. 11

March 13, 2014

Where and What Is This?



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More interesting local news in March 1978

Noted below are news items originally published in the *East Branch Citizen* in the early part of March 1978.

Sue Donaldson, president, said the Uwchlan Township Civic Association planned to meet with local groups so they could effectively protest the **Marchwood Theatre's** showing of x-rated films. Chester County's legal attacks against the theatre were ineffective because the state's obscenity laws at the time would have required the County to go to court each time an x-rated movie was to be shown.

East Brandywine parents protested against the **Downingtown Area School District's** plan to require students who lived east of Route 322 to transfer from Lionville Junior High School to

Downingtown Junior High the following school year. The school district claimed the change was needed because Lionville's projected enrollment for the 1978-79 school year was 964 students, while Downingtown was expected to have 676 pupils. The capacity of both schools was 908 students.

Five DHS students had reached the final stage of the selection process for those who wished to attend the **Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts**. They were: Margie Caldwell, Judy Honey, David Carr, Kathleen Fiedler and Lindley Werkheiser.

Based on a budgeted **cost-per-pupil** (\$1,689), Downingtown ranked 10th among the 12 Chester County school districts for the 1977-78 school year, according to Dr. Charles Micken, superintendent of schools. The average was \$1,948, and Great Valley's \$2,207 was the highest.

Appointed to Downingtown's **Recreation Commission** were: Frank DiOttavio, Tom Woodward, William Klunk, Vince Massimini and Sharon Clayton.

The **Downingtown-Lionville Babe Ruth League's** recently elected officers. They were Mike Whiteman, president; Ron Savastio, vice president; Pat Murphy, secretary; and Tom Shirey, treasurer.

Recent **property transfers** included: 138 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, \$77,500; 3310 Hazelwood Ave., Thorndale, \$40,500; 1479 Federal Dr., West Bradford, \$49,500; 396 Devon Dr., Uwchlan, \$59,500; 62 Somerset Ct., East Brandywine, \$44,650; 10 Carriage Dr., Upper Uwchlan, \$64,000; 13 Downing Circle, East Caln, \$80,000.

Mrs. Helen Watson was named **Citizen of the Year** by the Greater Downingtown Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Watson, who had been employed as a dietician at the Atkinson memorial Hospital, Coatesville, for 16 years, also had been actively involved with the Bethel AME Church, Visiting Nurses of Central Chester County, Homemakers Services of Chester County, Girl Scouts, Well Baby Clinic, Order of the Eastern Star and the Downingtown Golden Agers Club.

The DHS **Concert Band and Concert Choir** entertained Needham (MA) High School, as part of a cultural exchange program. Needham High School's musicians and choristers offered reciprocal concerts at Downingtown in April 1978.

Newly elected officers of **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, Lionville, were Robert Testa, president; Milton Maslin, vice president; Richard Edwin, recording secretary; Fred Jaeschke, financial secretary; Anne Bennett, treasurer, general fund; and Joseph Vasile, treasurer, building fund.

Michelle Mathis, president of the DHS Student Council, was one of the Chester County high school students who received a Good Citizen Award from the Chester County **Daughters of the American Revolution**.

Marshallton Methodist Church's team won the Downingtown Church Basketball League by beating Central Presbyterian 98-82. Ed McGeehan and Mark Myers, with 22 points each, led Marshallton's scoring.

Richard Byerly, principal of Beaver Creek School, learned that he had been exposed to radioactive contamination when he was one of the military service personnel assigned to the Atomic Energy Commission's testing of the atomic bomb in 1954.

The **Downingtown Jaycees** hid 65 dozen eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt in Kerr Park, Downingtown.

Info on Hank Hamilton, DHS Alumni Hall of Fame inductee

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The honorees will be inducted at the Alumni Association's 130th annual banquet at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 W. Church St., Downingtown, on Saturday evening, April 26. More information about the banquet can be provided by calling Caryn Menna at (610) 883-3917. Tickets can be purchased via

www.downingtownalumni.org/Documents/DAHSAA_BanquetReservation%202014.pdf.

Since the information on the inductees will be offered in alphabetical order, we will begin with James (Hank) Hamilton, Class of '68 - Achievement in Business, Community Service.

- At DHS, he was a speaker at the 1968 DHS commencement, having graduated third in his class. He won nine varsity letters in football, wrestling and track.
- In 1972, he graduated, with honors, from Lehigh University, where he was chairman of the Fraternity Management Association, lettered for four years in lacrosse, and was intra-mural wrestling champion for three years.
- Currently, he is chairman of the board of directors of Dane Décor furniture store in Downingtown. He has been an active member of the Downingtown Main Street Association, the Downingtown-Thorndale Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Downingtown Municipal Water Authority for many years. He was the Downingtown Chamber's Person of the Year in 2000.

Details on inductee Bonnie MacDougal Kistler will be provided in next week's edition.

Grigson played major role in National History Day

The 25th annual National History Day (NHD) for Southeastern Pennsylvania was conducted at the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, this past weekend. The academic competition is a national event, involving more than one-half million middle and high school students, representing public, parochial and private schools. Entrants do extensive research on a particular historic issue and present their findings via presentations, using one of many formats. Winners this past weekend will compete in the state contest at Cumberland Valley High School, Mechanicsburg, PA, on May 3 and 4.

One of the persons responsible for the regional NHD's success over the past quarter century is Carol Grigson, who also has been responsible for the Downingtown Area Historical Society's archival collection, as well as treasurer of the organization.

She was the NHD coordinator, representing the Chester County Historical Society, from 1998 through 2010. In that role, her responsibilities included organizing the competition and visiting schools to work with students to prepare for the competition. She also helped schools create their own contests, from which the participants for the regional competition were chosen.

Grigson had been a history teacher at Abraham Lincoln High School in Denver, CO, from 1963-1985. She earned a BA in History at Loretto Heights College, Denver, CO, and an MA in History at the University of Denver. She also was part of the first group of 22 teachers ever invited to South Korea. They had been awarded Fulbright Scholarships to study there for six weeks during the summer of 1982.

It's at 32 South Village Avenue, Lionville



Eagle-eyed Rahn Brackin is a truly perceptive scholar because, once again, he was the first person to correctly identify the building in the photo above as a house at 32 South Village Avenue in downtown Lionville. For more information on the house, see: www.trulia.com/property/3039380701-32-S-Village-Ave-Exton-PA-19341.

Why and where did Irish patriot stay in Downingtown?

Since we'll be soon celebrating St. Patrick's Day soon, we've been wondering why Theobald Wolfe Tone, an Irish patriot, reportedly stayed in Downingtown in the late 18th Century.

Frankly, we never heard of Tone until we saw, on several web sites about Downingtown history, that he stayed here (and in West Chester, where there's the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Wolfe Tone Division) after he landed in Philadelphia in 1795, according to the *New American Encyclopedia*. For more info on Tone, see: www.freewebs.com/irish32/historyofwolfetone.htm.

Please contact us at Info@downingtowntareahistoricalociety.org if you have any info on Tone's brief stay in Downingtown.

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Register soccer players with special needs

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March 20, 2014

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Interesting local news 52 year ago

The following news items were originally published by local newspapers in the early part of April 1962.

South Philadelphia's **Bobby Rydell**, who recorded 34 Top 40 hits in the 1960s, appeared at the Exton Roller Rink.

Downingtown Borough Council unanimously appointed the following men to the **Planning Commission**: Fred Pollock, Lewis Snyder, Elmer Hemberger, Robert Mitman and Vincent DiEuliis. The old Planning Commission had resigned en masse in January, following the appointment of Leon Gabel to replace George Snyder on Borough Council. Warren Strawsnyder, chairman at the time, claimed that "since pressure was brought to bear about Gabel's appointment, we felt the time to get out was now. Since Council is apparently susceptible to

pressure, we thought it better to resign now, rather than in the middle of some dispute over planning.”

Typing Progress certificates were awarded, for making no more than five errors while typing 30-39 words per minute in a 10 minute test, to these DHS students: James Pillagalli, Stephen Wilson, Nancy Mercer, Alvin Wells, Kathy Forbes and Elizabeth Kelly.,

Susan Patrizio, won the **Spelling Bee** involving fourth, fifth and sixth graders at Beaver Creek and East Ward Schools. Jack Leonard was the runner-up.

The following committee appointments were made at **Central Presbyterian Church**: Christian Education—George Nordblom, Edith Stauffer, Charles Seibert and Adelaide Moore; and Stewardship and Promotion—Elton Weikel, Edward Towson, and John Pannebaker.

W. I. Pollock and Reber Horne, of the Downingtown School Board, recommended that **hot lunches** should be prepared at Beaver Creek School and transported to Marshallton and East Ward Schools. The estimated cost of equipment needed at those two schools—not counting more trays, silver, staff and a truck to transport the food—was \$2,612.

The following infants were baptized at **St. Joseph Catholic Church**: Joseph Francis Cipollini, Darin Michael DiLuigi, Michael Saello, Joseph Anthony Conahan, Karl Lester Troupe, Laurie Jean Zinn, Theresa Lynn Marcocci, Toni Ann Graveno and Cheryl Lynn Ann Stanford.

Members of the **DHS yearbook** staff who attended a conference at Eastern Baptist College were Katherine Kahler, Nancy Heugh and Patricia Dague.

Glenmoore **Cub Scouts** who visited the Cloisters in Ephrata included David Funk, David Taylor, Gregory Hannum, John Pizii, Ray Chilcote, Pat Corry, Harold Earnshaw and Louis Waldmann.

Students from the Junior-Senior High School, whose exhibits were accepted for the Delaware Valley Regional **Science Fair** at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, were Robert Bruton, a ninth grader, and Harry Simms, a sophomore.

Newly elected officers of the Afternoon Club of **Downingtown Methodist Church** were Mrs. Charles Barron, president; Mrs. Mary Getman, vice president; Mrs. Florence McGuckin, secretary; and Mrs. John Haas, treasurer.

Mrs. Mark Bareford was elected president of the **Downingtown Junior Woman's Club**. Other officers were Mrs. Frederick Seibert, first vice president; Theresa Sciarretta, second vice president; Mrs. Edward Foreman, recording secretary; Mrs. Irving Geschwindt, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Ray Kipp, treasurer.

Officers of the **Chester County Hospital Auxiliary's** Downingtown branch were Mrs. Allen Powell, president; Mrs. Ralph Ralston, vice president; Mrs. Allison Hallowell, recording secretary; Mrs. Edwin Johnson, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Weldon Bicking, treasurer.

Glenmoore **Girl Scouts** from Intermediate Troop 314, who brought a doll to the Doll Derby in Philadelphia, were Carol Baker, Ann Chalfant, Edith deRussy, Nancy Gerbron, Susan Hadfield, Debbie Greenfield, Jean Reeve, Karen Slater, Linda and Bertha Bentley, Maria Louise Pease and Betty Saathoff.

Clarence Wilkerson won the 880 and one-mile races, and Bill Pollock came in first in the 180 low hurdles, as the **DHS track team** opened its season with a victory over O.J. Roberts.

Downingtown **Cub Scouts** from Pack 2 who earned awards were Bob Ifert, Dan Massimini, David Hemberger, Gary Burkey, Mike Bilka, Jimmy Fennelly and Michael Norris.

First car in Downingtown was steam-powered

Joseph Hoopes was the first Downingtown resident to buy and drive a car, in September 1901. But Hoopes soon switched from steam to a gasoline-powered motor, according to the August 30, 1929 edition of the *Daily Local News*. And that same year, Dr. Edward Kerr, whom the borough park was named after, bought an Oldsmobile.

Back in 1901, local drivers usually had their vehicles serviced at the Downingtown Garage and Repair Co., located on Armor Alley, a connection between East Lancaster Ave. and Mill Alley, until it was closed as part of the Downing Center Urban Renewal project in the 1970s. Now the Armor Alley Walkway is located next to the Downingtown Country Gifts store.

The Downingtown Garage and Repair Co., evolved in 1906 into the Downingtown Motor Co., located at 206 E. Lancaster Ave. In 1925, E. Hallan Usher established the Brandywine Nash Motor Co. there, and nine years later, he started operating an Oldsmobile franchise at the location, according to Jane Davidson's *A History of Downingtown*. Today, Colonial Electric Supply Co. is located at the site.

Dr. Bill King recalls his early life in the Downingtown area

DHS grad Bill King stopped practicing dentistry 15 years ago, and has settled down in a retirement community in northern Arkansas. But according to an email Bill recently sent us, he was a peripatetic soul in his youth.

Bill, his brother, Emerson, and their Mom moved from Delaware County in 1944 to an 86-acre farm at the intersection of Route 322 and Springton and Little Washington Roads in West Brandywine. Although it wasn't a working farm at that time, the property included a barn and an old stone house. The monthly rent for the house was \$86 per month, and they heated the house with wood cut in the woods along Springton Road.

The house, where the Kings lived two years, was pictured in the "What and Where Is This?" photo in the Dec. 26, 2013 Hist-O-Gram:

www.downingtowntownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms/2013%20Hist-O-Grams/Dec%2026%202013%20Hist-O-Gram.pdf).

"At the time we lived there, we were on a 22-party line phone service with a crank phone" recalls Bill. And around 4 AM every morning, he would be awakened by the 30-minute-long cycle of wake-up calls to the homes of many women in the area, who worked at the Sun Ship yard in Chester, Delaware County.

But being awakened at 4 AM by a ringing phone wasn't so bad in the summer of 1945, says Bill, because he was employed then by the Susquehanna Pipeline Co., and the start of his work day began at 5 AM. He got \$35 a week for tramping 18 miles through the countryside from Malvern to Icedale and from Birdsboro to Icedale, for three days each over a six-day period, in search of pipeline leaks.

Although Bill had been the Class of 1946's secretary, he joined the Navy several months before he was slated to graduate in June. However, he passed the GED test while in the Navy, and returned to Downingtown to pick up his diploma at the 1947 commencement.

"I feel that, for all my own teen problems of the time that the people of DHS were very generous in their attitude to us. That's why Downingtown is always a fond memory for me."

After he completed several hitches in the Navy, Bill graduated from Tennessee University's College of Dentistry in 1957, and practiced dentistry, primarily in the South, until he retired at age 70.

No one guessed What and Where This Is



We suspect that many of our subscribers believe someone always correctly guesses the “What and Where” mystery photo immediately after each week’s Hist-O-Gram is released. Well, that myth has been dispelled once again, because no one provided the correct info about the house in the photo above, which was taken by Mike Dunn. Even more surprising, it’s a historic site, which has been written about in an earlier Hist-O-Gram. We’ll run it again, sometime.

Info on Bonnie MacDougal Kistler, DHS Hall of Fame inductee

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Noted below are details on Bonnie MacDougal Kistler, Class of 1971, Achievement in Business and Community Service.

According to the nomination form, submitted by Donna Kneisly, Ms. Kistler:

- Received her undergraduate degree from Bryn Mawr College, *magna cum laude* with honors in English literature, and her law degree from the University of Pennsylvania. She spent the next 20 years practicing with major law firms in Anchorage, Alaska, Little Rock, Arkansas; and then back to Philadelphia.

- Has written or co-authored four novels—*Angle of Impact*, *Breach of Trust*, *Out of Order*, *Common Pleas* and *Natural Suspect*—which used her experiences in complex civil and criminal cases involving issues such as securities fraud, product liability and trademark infringement.

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Alert Fire Co. golf outing

The Alert Fire Co. will hold a golf outing on Monday, May 5, at the Downingtown Country Club. Entry fee for each golfer is \$100, which includes greens fee, cart, lunch, beverages on the course, awards dinner and five competitions. See www.alertgolfouting.org for registration and contest details.

Soccer program for players with special needs

The Glenmoore Eagle Youth Association's High 5 soccer program will be held at Fellowship Fields, 275 Fellowship Road, Chester Springs, from 3-4 PM on Saturdays, beginning on April 12. The free program is for players, between 5 and 19 years of age, who have special needs. For more info, go to: www.geyasoccer.org.

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

Interesting local history, accessed from our archives

www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org

Vol. 5, No. 13

March 27, 2014

Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the site, shown above, will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your responses to: Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org.

More local news originally published 52 years ago

The following news items were originally published by local newspapers in the latter part of April 1962.

The **Downingtown Chamber of Commerce** opposed establishment of a wage tax to create another revenue source for the Downingtown School System. The Chamber claimed the new tax would stifle industries from moving into the area.

W. Perry Tyson, Class of 1912, received the Distinguished Service Award at the **DHS Alumni Association** banquet, which was attended by 325 persons. DHS seniors Lynn Barron and Robert Shank received awards for outstanding leadership and scholarship. New Alumni Association officers were William Mitman, president; Joseph Travaglini, first vice president; and George Dowlin, second vice president. Serving for another term were Elma Miller, financial secretary, and Margaret Stern, recording secretary. Members of the Distinguished Service Award committee were Hazel Miller, Stella Balentine, Gladys Brookover, Joseph Miller, Charles Ax and Richard Willard. And the banquet committee was comprised of Louise Wilmot, Roland Brinton, James Burns, Diane Coy, Ruth Brookover and Barbara Skiles.

Re-elected to lead the Ladies Philathea Sunshine Bible Class at **East Brandywine Baptist Church** were: Grace Zynn, president; Alice Esworthy, vice president; Jean Drayton, treasurer; and Elizabeth Heisey, secretary. And children dedicated by Rev. Harry Sink were Stephany and Stanley Lee Leszkowicz, Susan Elizabeth Brown, Brenda Lee Roberts and Scott Canale.

Mrs. Theodore Rogers was elected president of the **Woman's Community Club of Uwchlan**. Other officers, installed by retiring president Mrs. Frederick Heuer, were Mrs. G. L. Hughes, first vice president; Dr. Anna Biddle, second vice president; Grace Gordon, recording secretary; Jeanette Stiteler, corresponding secretary; and Helen Biddle, treasurer.

Pupils from **East Brandywine-Wallace School**, who participated in a radio program about Thomas Buchanan Read on WCOJ, were Carl Shrader, Linda Kemp, Diane Howe, Larry Dilworth, James Herrington, Bundy Von Hacht, Karen Stanford, Denny Davidson, Tim Harriman and Nancy Gerbron. Also, elected to lead the school's PTA were William Wilson, Mrs. Edwin Johnson, secretary; Gerald Whiteman, vice president; and Shirley Fetters, treasurer.

Split-level houses, on a minimum of 1/4 acre landscaped lots, in the **Marshallton Farms** development on Strasburg Road were being offered at \$14,990. The houses included three bedrooms, a finished recreation room, and hot water baseboard heat.

Leaders elected at **Windsor Baptist Church**, Upper Uwchlan, were Evans Downing, president; Karl Simmers, vice president; Raymond Barry, general secretary; Helen Simmers, corresponding secretary; Carolyn Supplee, treasurer; Rev. William Stephens, pastor-councilor; Ruth Downing, publicity; Hilda Hertzler, missionary superintendent; Charles Popjoy, audio-visual superintendent; Richard Wheatley, social action superintendent; and Edgar Lockart, music superintendent. And members of the newly formed orchestra at Windsor included William Bath, director, Jack Trego, Ralph Emery, Linda Peterson, Barbara and Dale Moore, Frances and Jack Williamson, David Rodgers and Warren Emery.

An investigation by the **Downingtown Joint High School Board's** Curriculum Committee determined that many of the Junior-Senior High School students surveyed weren't participating in extra-curricular programs, primarily because of a "lack of interest" by students as well as by faculty sponsors. The board also tentatively adopted a \$942,269 budget for the 1962-63 school year, which was \$113,585 higher than the budget for the current school year. One of the reasons for the hike was a new salary schedule for teachers, whereby more than half of the 71 faculty members would earn at least \$6,600. "We've finally gotten our salary standards to a respectable scale," said George Nixdorf, budget committee chairman. The high school's enrollment was projected to reach 586, and the junior high's was expected to be 734, in the 1962-63 school term.

Mrs. H. LaRue Frain was elected president of the **Downingtown Woman's Club**. Also elected to two-year terms were Mrs. Fred Wooten, first vice president; Mrs. Arthur Anderson, second vice president; Mrs. Gilbert Hamm, recording secretary; Mrs. Morris Jackson, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. W. I. Pollock, treasurer.

Downingtown National Bank officials expected some 2,000 persons to come to the open house at its remodeled headquarters at Center Square in the borough. When it was established in 1861, the bank was opened at the Odd Fellows Hall on West Lancaster Avenue. A year later, it was moved to East Lancaster Avenue, across from St. James Episcopal Church. The bank (now the main branch) was moved to center Square in April 1901. The bank's officers in 1962 were Joseph Miller, president; Richard Warren, executive vice president; Jay Lammey, cashier; and Raymond Schollenberger and Mary Thompson, assistant cashiers.

Barbara Flinn, Barbara Rothas, Katherine Kahler and Sharon Donaghy, members of the **DHS student newspaper**, *The Blue and Gold*, participated in the Temple University Press

Tournament. And DHS students Jill King, Joan Klase and Faye McBride attended a conference at Penn State's College of Home Economics.

The eight infants baptized by Rev. Howard Adams at **Downingtown Methodist Church** were Sandra Lynn Bareford, Richard Guy and Robert Carl Hipple, David James Lary, Gregg Scott Nelms, Tracy Lee Stum and Patricia Ann Thomas.

Although Gordie Flowers got a first in the 100-yard dash, Jeff Smith won the 440, and Mark Jones was the top pole vaulter, the **DHS track team** lost to Boyertown, 82 1/3 to 34 2/3.

However, the **Whippet baseball team** beat West Chester 6-5 in a thriller, when pinch hitter Ellis Brown rapped a single to bring Cliff Jackson home in the final inning.

Steve DiLuigi tells about his “Pop-Pop” and founding of St. Anthony’s Lodge

Steve DiLuigi sent us this interesting biography of his grandfather, Antonio DiLuigi, who was one of the founders of the *Societa D.M.S. Saint Antonio Di Padova*, which we know as St. Anthony’s Lodge in Downingtown.

Antonio, the son of Domenico DiLuigi and Grazia Capolli, was born in January 1892 in Campli, Province of Teramo, Abruzzo, Italy. When not in school, he spent his early years working with his parents and siblings on the family farm and gristmill in Compli. On January 14, 1909, at the age of 16, he arrived at Ellis Island, New York, along with his parents, his brother and two sisters. Traveling by train, they arrived in Downingtown and settled in with relatives in the “Johnsontown” section of the borough. With the help of other Italian immigrants, his father found work on the Pennsylvania Railroad, and Antonio went to work at the Davey Paper Co. in town. Hard working and ambitious, he rose quickly through the ranks and was promoted to mill superintendent, overseeing operations at Davy’s mill, in Downingtown and in Jersey City, N.J.

In 1929, at the age of 37, he suffered a horrific accident at the Jersey City plant. While helping to repair a machine, his sleeve caught in the rollers, mangling his lower right arm, which required an amputation above the elbow. He returned to work in a short time and continued as superintendent at Davey until he retired.

Early in the 20th Century, America’s population, as immigrants from all over Europe settled together in small communities. With language barriers and prejudice rampant, they were totally dependent on one another for support. It was that way in Johnsontown. Intelligent and well respected throughout the community, Antonio was instrumental in helping many Italian families immigrate and settle in Downingtown. He provided lodging, secured employment opportunities and even lent financial support to many. One of the first and few to own a car, he provided transportation for many in times of need.

Around 1916, a small group of men began discussing a means of support that would benefit the families in their Johnsontown neighborhood in times of need. Hosting meetings in his home on Bradford Avenue, Antonio was instrumental in laying the foundation of a grass roots organization, St. Anthony’s Lodge. As their numbers grew, they rented space for their meetings uptown in a building at the corner of Stuart and Lancaster Avenues, which still stands today. And in November 1919, the founders were granted a charter from the State of Pennsylvania for “The Societa D.M.S. Saint Antonio DiPadova”.

Antonio was named the first president, and held the title for about 12 years. In 1927, St. Anthony’s leaders purchased a half-double house at 231 Church Street, which became their first official clubhouse. Two years later, St. Anthony’s Lodge was constructed on the lot at 259

Church Street. Antonio drew up the plans for the building and oversaw its construction. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Antonio's younger brother, Guido "Willy" DiLuigi, also a founder of St. Anthony's, hosted the first "Frog Party" in the back yard of his home, at 288 Church Street.

In 1947, Antonio's daughter, Filomenia "Mena" Williams, helped organize and was named the first president of The Ladies Auxiliary of Saint Anthony's. Also following in his father's footsteps, Antonio's youngest son, "Buddy," went on to be president of the Lodge for many years. Antonio DiLuigi died at the age of 63, in 1956.

Information on Curt Schroder, DHS Hall of Fame inductee

This is another article on a DHS graduate who will be inducted into the Hall of Fame, which was recently established by the Downingtown Area School District and the Downingtown Area High School Alumni Association. The information is based on data noted on the nominations forms submitted to the selection committee.

The honorees will be inducted at the Alumni Association's 130th annual banquet at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 W. Church St., Downingtown, on Saturday evening, April 26. More information about the banquet can be provided by calling Caryn Menna at (610) 883-3917.

Tickets can be purchased via

www.downingtowndalumni.org/Documents/DAHSAA_BanquetReservation%202014.pdf.

Noted below are details on Curt Schroder, Class of 1979, Achievement in Politics and Government. According to the nomination form, submitted by State Rep. Becky Corbin, Schroder's accomplishments included:

- Served nine terms in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and for two years as Chester County's Prothonotary. While a state legislator, Curt led the fight to lower medical malpractice insurance, sponsored legislation that ensures access to life-saving trauma care, and championed the law requiring insurers to allow a 48-hour hospital stay after a delivery for mothers and newborns.
- Played a vital role in the Borough of Downingtown's revitalizations efforts, such as obtaining a \$1.7 million grant for the demolition and redevelopment of the O'Brien property.
- Named, by the Exton Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Advocate of the Year in 2010 and the Sen. Robert Thompson Public Service Award in 2007. Also named: Matthew Ryan Legislator of the Year by the Chester County Chamber Foundation in 2004, Legislator of the Year by the TriCounty Chamber of Commerce in 2002, and Outstanding Citizen of the Year by the Downingtown Chamber of Commerce in 1998.

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By the way, you can access previously published Hist-O-Grams at:

www.downingtowndareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html.

It was the nightclub at the Downingtown Motor Inn



Carol Nelms is a truly perceptive scholar because she was the first of many people who correctly identified the site in the photo above as the Downingtown Motor Inn's nightclub. The Motor Inn was located on Route 30, East Caln, on the current site of the Brandywine Square shopping Center. We believe the singer in the photo is Robert Goulet, one of the popular entertainers who appeared there. Others included: Phyllis Diller, Vic Damone, Billy Eckstine, Henny Youngman, Jackie Mason and Al Martino.

The Downingtown Motor Inn, opened in November 1961, was a 100-acre resort complex. It included convention and banquet facilities that could accommodate as many as 2,500 guests, two swimming pools, and the 1896 Restaurant and cocktail lounge. Its owners were Samuel Tabas, founder; Charles Tabas, chairman; and Daniel Tabas, president. After an 18-hole golf course was built, it was known as the Downingtown Inn and Golf Club. In 1983, the Tabas family sold its holdings in the Inn to the Ramada Corp. in exchange for stock. The Inn was demolished in 1994, and a year later the Brandywine Square shopping center was opened on the site.

Paid ads for businesses

Vance Usher, Registered Representative

Providing a courtesy financial advisory service whose objective is to create a portfolio of:

- 1) Investment Grade Bonds - To achieve preservation of principal, and a stream of monthly income, to meet your budgeted living expenses.
- 2) Equities - To achieve market growth, and increase financial wealth, by exceeding the rate of inflation. Contact: vance_usher@netzero.com, 610-329-1056, 320 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, PA 19335.

Free ads for Non-Profits

Program on Watergate

The Old Caln Historical Society will host a program on Watergate, presented by Ross Kershey, former Coatesville Area High School history teacher, on Sunday, April 6, at the Caln Township

Building, on Municipal Drive in Thorndale. The free program, which open to the public, will begin at 2 PM. Please use the rear entrance.

Library programs

Meditation for Creativity: 6:30 PM Monday, April 28--Program focuses on drawing inspiration from meditation.

For more info on any of these activities, call the library at 610-269-2741.

Lecture on Bondsville Mill

The East Brandywine Township Historical Commission will present a lecture on the Bondsville Mill at 3:30 PM Sunday, March 30 at the township building on Route 322, Guthriesville. The third lecture, about the history of East Brandywine Baptist Church, will be held at the church at 3:30 PM on Sunday, April 27.

Alert Fire Co. golf outing

The Alert Fire Co. will hold a golf outing on Monday, May 5, at the Downingtown Country Club. Entry fee for each golfer is \$100, which includes greens fee, cart, lunch, beverages on the course, awards dinner and five competitions. See www.alertgolfouting.org for registration and contest details.

Kentucky Derby Nite at the Races

The Downingtown Good Neighbor Christmas Committee, sponsors of the Halloween and Christmas parades, will have a "Kentucky Derby Nite at the Races" on Saturday, May 3 at St. Anthony's Lodge, 259 Church St., Downingtown. Doors will open at 5:30 PM. Buffet begins at 6 PM. Horse racing will begin immediately following the actual Kentucky Derby. For more details, see: www.dtownchristmas.com.

Soccer for players with special needs

The Glenmoore Eagle Youth Association's High 5 soccer program will be held at Fellowship Fields, 275 Fellowship Road, Chester Springs, from 3-4 PM on Saturdays, beginning April 12. The free program is for players, between 5 and 19 years of age, who have special needs. For more info, go to: www.geyasoccer.org.

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