



## St. Joe's Rectory Uprooted and Relocated



Downingtown area residents lined both sides of Manor Avenue last Friday to watch a borough landmark being moved about 200 yards to a location nearby. The rectory, where the priests of St. Joseph's Catholic Church have resided for several decades, was moved to a site just beyond the convent. The original house was built in 1941 by contractor James Cohen for the Cole family. The man on the right side of the photo above is 81-year-old Bill Cole, who grew up in the house. To support the structure while it was being moved, Wolfe House and Building Movers of Bernville, PA, inserted layers of steel beams, running in both directions, under the rectory. The house was lifted via a hydraulic jacking system, so multi-wheeled dollies could be installed underneath. Instead of using trucks to pull the 400,000-pound structure, movement was controlled electronically by a radio-remote power system.



# Downingtown Area Historical Society

*Interesting Local History, Accessed From Our Archives*

## Thanks to all who helped us buy a new furnace

The Downingtown Area Historical Society is most grateful to all the people who helped us meet the \$5,000 Furnace Fund goal.

Local organizations that made contributions include: DHS Class of 1957, DHS Alumni Association, Downingtown Lions Club, Girl Scouts, Downingtown Service Unit, and the Williamson Masonic Lodge.

Individuals who donated to the Fund were: Caroline Ash, Janet & Bill Brookover, Jacqueline & Charles "Bud" Bruton, Jr., Betty & Jim Charley, Judith Collier, Sunny & Jim Cook, Becky & Mike Corbin, Becky & Parry Desmond, Terry & Hunter Gaul, Marjorie Gazzola, Mary Anne Geary, Carol & Roger Grigson, Joanne Heckman, Harry Helms, Marilyn & Jack Hines, Tom Holder, Chuck Hossack, Kevin Kelly, Edith & Lloyd Kurtz, and Lois & Richard Lehr. And Marie Mae, Peggy Mahan, Anthony Mascherino, Karen & Ronald Meacham, Mary Ellen & Glenn Mull, Bonnie & William Radford, MaryAnn Rodda, Sandy & Paul Rucker, Woody Sbei, Barbara & Charles Short, Iva and Olin Siever, Paula & Ed Spang, Denine & Dave Summers, Tim Tweed, Amina & Ben Valocchi, Jenn & Matt Wagner, Meredith & Mark Walters, and Stephen Ziobro & Albert Scariato. Once again, you have proven that Downingtown truly is a Good Neighbor community. Thanks for all the help you have given to the Historical Society.

## Wallace historians provide more info on D&L Railroad

After Sandy Brannan saw the brief history of the Downingtown & Lancaster Railroad in our July 13 Hist-O-Gram (accessible at [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org)), she invited us to look over the files on the D&L, archived by the Wallace Township Historic Commission. As archivist for the commission, Sandy has spent innumerable hours organizing thousands of historic documents.

Some of the interesting items about the D&L railroad we discovered in Wallace Township's files include:

- When the East Brandywine and Waynesburg Railroad (forerunner of the D&L) sought to be chartered by the state, Lancaster County farmers opposed the new, faster means of transporting their milk and crops to Philadelphia area markets because they feared that construction of the proposed rail line would "cut up" their farms and some of the farms would be "entirely ruined." Despite the farmer's opposition, the railroad was chartered in 1854.
- But the railroad wasn't up and running until 1861 because it took more than six years for the officers to raise money to pay for construction of the rail line. The first passenger train traveled from



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Downingtown to Waynesburg (Honey Brook) in August 1861. The Pennsylvania Railroad furnished the engines, passengers and freight cars, and underwrote much of the road bed construction

- Leaders of the railroad, when the East Brandywine and Waynesburg began operation, included: John Cornog, president; Abraham McIlvaine, secretary; John Lewis, treasurer; L.H. Eicholtz, inspecting engineer; Oliver Barnes, chief engineer; and W.W. Wright, resident engineer.
- In the beginning, two trains ran each way daily; soon the schedule was increased to eight trains a day. Despite the growth, however, the railroad encountered financial and operational difficulties, including clearing the tracks of snow drifts, and washed out bridges. And after the East Brandywine and Waynesburg went bankrupt in 1888, it was reorganized as the Downingtown & Lancaster Railroad, which was absorbed by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1903 and was designated as the Pennsy's New Holland branch.
- It served more than 20 stations along the 28-mile stretch between New Holland and the Pennsylvania Railroad station in Downingtown. Stations just north of Downingtown included Moorestown (Glen Moore), Springton, Cornog, Brooklyn (Lyndell), Reed, Dorlan, Dowlin's Forge, and Shelmire.
- Negatively impacted by the increased use of automobiles, the last passenger train came through Glen Moore in December 1930. Members of the crew on the last run were: Chris Barr, mail agent; John Armstrong, conductor; and Clyde Spera, baggage agent.
- Several years after the decaying ties and tracks between Glen Moore and Honey Brook were removed, the Glen Moore station--built in 1892 and closed in 1935--was torn down in 1964. At the time, the freight train coming from Downingtown only came as far as the Cornog Quarry to pick up stone. The station had been occupied by a feed and grain business since 1946, but it was shut down in the early 1960s because so many locals had discontinued dairy farming.

## Reflections on recent Hist-O-Grams

Bob Stevens informed us that, when Good Neighbor Day (GND) was held at Kerr Park in the early years, his father, Morris, was in charge of getting the music for the event. Bob recalls that the entertainment, performed on the stage near the fish ponds, began with the chorus of the Downingtown Young Men's Association, as a warm-up act for big bands that played at those GNDs. The bands included Harry James, Ray Anthony and Tex Beneke.



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Also, recycling news from old local weeklies, including the 1951 editions of the *Downingtown Archive*, has its risks. In last week's Hist-O-Gram we noted that several members of Boy Scout Troop 69, Glen Moore, spent a week at Camp Horseshoe. However, John Miller informs us that the Glen Moore boys were members of Troop 79; not Troop 69. John says the troop is "still going strong."

## **Missed last Hist-O-Gram? Fear not; they're all accessible at website**

We send our Hist-O-Grams to a huge number of people every week. But sometimes Internet gremlins intercept them en route. So, if you're distraught about your copy not coming through the system, have no fear. You can access all the old Hist-O-Grams--the latest edition as well as past issues--at [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org).

## **Clip joint will be open on Sunday afternoon**

We're going to have another newspaper clipping & pasting on Sunday afternoon, August 7 at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the AshbridgeShopping Center in East Caln. Parking is available at the Chick-Fil-A restaurant next door, which is closed on Sundays.

The sessions will be between 1 PM and 4 PM, but you can come and go at any time that's convenient to you. Don't forget your scissors. As usual, cookies and root beer will be served.

## **Signed up yet to get borough's bi-weekly e-newsletters?**

The Borough of Downingtown plans to publish a bi-weekly e-newsletter, e-mailed to borough residences and property owners. The borough will also use e-mail to send residents important information, such as snow emergencies and road closings. To register to have your e-mail addresses added to the e-newsletter list, go to the borough's website at [www.downingtown.org](http://www.downingtown.org).



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## Historic Keepsakes available at Downingtown Country Gifts

Downingtown Country Gifts, 147 E. Lancaster Ave, (former site of Oak Emporium) in the borough, has agreed to sell the ceramic Historic Keepsakes, designed by Lori St. George, a professional ceramicist.

As shown below, there are two versions of the Keepsakes, each showing a landmark in the borough. One version has a photo of the 1701 Log House, a historic icon on Lancaster Avenue, while the other shows the 1932 Junior-Senior High School on Manor Avenue in the Borough (future site of the STEM Academy), which thousands of local students attended over eight decades.



Mrs. St. George is donating her time and efforts to make the ceramic Keepsakes, as a very active member of the Downingtown branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. And as a good will gesture, the local Odd Fellows organization is supplying all the material used to make the Keepsakes. Proceeds from sales (\$15 each) of the limited edition Keepsakes will go to the Downingtown Area Historical Society.

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## Downingtown's Junior American Legion baseball team in 1947



Based on recollections of several members of Downingtown's Junior American Legion baseball team 64 years ago, the players in this photo (donated by Don Greenleaf) included, left to right, front row: John Talierco, , unidentified, Andy Burns, Joe Forte and Coach Paul Talierco; middle row: Anthony Sack, Jack Helm, unidentified, Bill Davis, Don Greenleaf; back row: Nana Massimini, Pete Hayes, (can't recall first name) Sweigart, Bill Dague, Danny Barrow, Carmen DiPietro, and unidentified. If you know the names of the identified players, contact us at [Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.org)

*(Editor's Note: Anyone still have their old baseball uniform from when they played for one of Downingtown's Little League, Babe Ruth or American Legion teams? We'd love one of each, even if you never got that grass stain out. You can make arrangements to donate it by contacting us at [Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.org).)*



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## Legion sponsored housing for WWII vets in Downingtown

The American Legion has sponsored youth baseball programs across the nation for many decades.

However, the American Legion, or at least the Thomas F. Moran Post 475 in Downingtown, sponsored a housing program for WWII veterans, as well.

*The Archive*, a Downingtown weekly for many years, included several articles in March 1948 editions about plans to build 49 bungalows for vets in the borough.

Lambert McGuckin, chairman of the Legion's Housing Committee, reported that the new dwellings would be Cape Cod-style houses. And Leon Gable, a member of the Legion and the project's contractor, presented drawings and blue prints of the proposed houses at meetings held in the Legion's offices in Borough Hall. Gable, who built the houses, also noted that arrangements had been made with Brandywine Savings and Loan to provide mortgages to vets buying the houses.

Land owned by W. P. Canby, north of Grant Avenue in the southeastern section of Downingtown, was initially considered as a potential site for the housing, but the cost of the property was too high, if the cost of each house was to be as low as \$6,000.

Ultimately, the Housing Committee decided that the development should be located on land beyond where Mary and Williams Streets ended at the time. The land, divided into 49 lots, was owned by Norman Gray, Wilmer Johnson and G.O. Carlson.

The houses can be seen on the two streets, which were extended westward to where the Beaver Creek School was built in 1960.

However, we have no other information on the housing project. Anyone who can provide more info on the project should send us details and recollections to: [Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org).



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### **G.O. Carlson celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

*Editor's Note: Information in this article was extracted from a special 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary booklet published by G. O. Carlson, Inc.*

G. O. Carlson Inc. is a local firm that was established at the height of the Depression and survived many other challenges. And celebration of its anniversary is particularly unique when you consider that a privately-owned steel company has thrived in the United States for 75 years.

The business was started in 1936, when Gunnard O. Carlson, a young engineer, recognized that special grades and unusual sizes and shapes of stainless steel for the chemical industry were too costly and impractical for large-scale production.

Initially, Gunnard became a broker of stainless, purchasing ingots from producers and having them converted to plate on the rolling mills of Lukens Steel Co., and then sold them to end-users. This was an informal business, without an office other than the paperwork carried inside Gunnard's coat pocket. The company was formally established by Gunnard and his wife, Margaret, in 1937.

A short while later, Harry Cole, the first employee, was hired to supervise the conversion of ingot to plate at Lukens.

Then, the Carlsons built a two-story stone and brick building on the family farm in Thorndale they bought in 1936 at a sheriff sale. In the company's early stages, the building's upper floor included a three-room apartment, a playroom for the Carlson children and a small office where Margaret Carlson handled all the typing and order taking. The lower floor housed a machine shop where custom-made pieces of stainless were cut to customer specs.

Despite the Depression, business was good, orders increased far beyond expectations, and the work space had to be expanded. By the summer of 1939, there were 25 employees on the payroll, and "the future seemed secure, with an ever increasing profit margin."

However, personal tragedy struck the family in September 1939, when the oldest child and only son, Gunnard Berry Carlson, died at the age of 15. "The disaster created profound changes in the lives of both parents, and Gunnard devoted all of his energy to the business as a panacea for the loss of his son.

The company continued to flourish through the World War II years, and another building was constructed on the Thorndale property, to accommodate more machining equipment and an electric furnace for heat-treating stainless. And production outpaced storage capacity so fast that the new, rust-resistant stainless plates had to be temporarily "warehoused" under apple trees in an orchard on the farm.



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With the end of the war, orders from the government vanished. However, the company soon realized an endless stream of orders, as America rebuilt its industrial base in the post-war era, as heavy plates were produced for the chemical, oil, pharmaceutical, cryogenics, marine and aircraft industries.

Those increases forced Carlson to lease part of a Lukens plant in Coatesville. Soon thereafter, Carlson took over the entire plant, and, subsequently, all production facilities were housed in Coatesville. And the offices in Thorndale were expanded and modernized again.

By 1972, the Coatesville production facilities couldn't handle all the production of light gauge, and that operation was shifted to the former Downingtown Iron Works facility in the borough.

In the ensuing years, Carlson supplied stainless plates for the first nuclear submarine, *The Nautilus*, and the first nuclear power plant built by Westinghouse at Shippingport, PA. Carlson also produced the world's largest—more than 49,000 pounds each—stainless plates. The company also diversified into nickel alloys and titanium.

Gunnard O. Carlson died in 1969, and his wife, Margaret, died 1981. He had served on the boards of three colleges, Brandywine Hospital and the Chester County Airport Authority, while she established a charitable foundation, in memory of her son, which made contributions to many charities.

Meanwhile, the corporation continued to shift gears as markets changed. In 1991, Carlson bought Electralloy of Oil City, PA, a custom melter of specialty and stainless steel alloys, produced into ingots, billets, bars, pigs and weld wire.

And the smaller and more profitable corporation remains headquartered in Thorndale. Carlson's officers include: A. Frederick Travaglini, chairman; Barbara Travaglini, vice chairman; Gunnard C. Travaglini, chief executive officer; Frederick C. Travaglini, vice president, property group; Tracy T. Rudolph, president and chief operating officer; William G. Warren, chief financial officer; Peter Santucci III, vice president, chief information officer; and Mark Travaglini, assistant secretary.

### More donations to the Furnace Fund

An additional contribution to the Furnace Fund was made by St. Anthony's Lodge. And individual donations were made by several (Chunky, Rosy and Kristen) members of the generous Klunk family. Thanks to those wonderful donors and all the others who have contributed to the fund.

### Whoops!

You'd think that a three-year stint in the Army would have taught your Hist-O-Gram editor the difference between left and right. Despite that military marching experience, we mistakenly pointed out in the caption under the photo of St. Joe's rectory being moved in last week's Hist-O-Gram that the man on the **right** side was Bill Cole. Obviously, Cole was on the **left** side of the photo. For that snafu (an official WW II term), the first sergeant at our house demanded that I do 10 push-ups.



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## News about Downingtown area 35 years ago

The following items were retrieved from August 1976 issues of the *East Branch Citizen*, a Downingtown weekly newspaper;

Sue Supplee and Krista Hayes, members of Troop 1242, sponsored by Marshallton Church, earned the rank of First Class, the highest level of Girl Scouting. They were the first Girl Scouts from the Downingtown Service Unit to reach that rank.

James Harvey, Marbie Guyon and Kipper Guyon were the best “aviators in a paper airplane flying contest at the Lionville playground. And Eric Proctor and Herman Boggs won the “Hot Potato” Tournament at the Johnstown playground.

Local students enrolled in the summer session at Penn State included: Stephen Rowan, Downingtown; Gregory Turnbull, Exton; and Laura Canale, Glen Moore.

Property transfers included: West Bradford, 1172 Telegraph Road, \$60,500; Uwchlan, 130 Beech St., \$62,950; East Brandywine, 10 North Guthriesville Rd., \$55,900; Upper Uwchlan, Rabbit Run Lane, \$58,835; West Pikeland, 84 South Yellow Springs Road, \$66,000; Downingtown, 114 Lake Drive, \$36,000.

A broken wheel apparently caused a 32-car Conrail freight train to derail in Downingtown, and five of them fell into the Brandywine Creek.

Wanda Snyder, Downingtown; Marlene Newman, Uwchlan; and Bonnie Ruth MacDougal, Eagle, were among the 7,000 women in the U.S. between the ages of 21 and 36, were named “Outstanding Women of America.”

Karen Martini of Lyndell participated in the 4-H Club Regional Dress Revue.

Members of the Downingtown Lobsters team who won matches in the Chester County Junior Team Tennis tournament were Colleen Murtaugh, Glenn Miller, Bill Jemison and David Box.

Top hitters in the 10, 11 and 12-year-old bracket of the Home Run Derby competition were: Scott Ramsay, first; Glenn Harman, second, and Pat Sarmiento, third.

Dan Hayes and Eddie Howard were helping breed peregrines in captivity at the National Wildlife Refuge at Brigantine, NJ.

The U.S. Air Force announced that Raymond Wood, West Bradford, was promoted to Airman First Class, and Karen Gilchrist, also of West Bradford, was selected for training in aircraft equipment maintenance.



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Debra Parry, West Bradford, represented DHS in the Chester County Junior Miss competition.

New officers of the Village League of the Uwchlans were: Anita Routzahn, president; Heidi Felsner, vice president; Betty Lien, secretary; Jean Ann Nothstein, treasurer.

## Local news from the *Archive* in August 1951

These items were originally published in the *Downingtown Archive* 60 years ago:

Margaret Sciarretta won the baby bottle drinking contest, and Florence Bartelmo was tops in the potato shuffle at the St. Anthony's Lodge Ladies Auxiliary picnic.

Winners in the East Ward playground pet show were: David Fidler, smallest entry, with a pet ant; Michelle Buckley, oddest, with her hamsters; Mary Anne Charles, prettiest, with her cocker spaniel; Rusty and Marianne Griffith, cutest, with their kittens.

Joan Garrison, Mary Jane Cipollini, Anne Henderson, Mrs. Thomas Manuel and Mrs. Leroy Strohl were accepted as members of the Downingtown Junior Woman's Club.

The committee responsible for recarpeting at Mount Raymond Church included: Sara Yates, Lulu Mills, Robert Butcher, Harriet Flowers, and Mrs. Charles Mills.

Officers of the Gardening Class of the Downingtown Woman's Club were: Mrs. Merton Yerger, chairman; Mrs. Clifford Orr, vice chairman; Mrs. Allen Sutton, secretary; and Mrs. George Foreman, treasurer.

Downingtown firefighters Alfred Peterman, Tom and Walter Peazzoni, Robert Pollock, Angelo Cipollini, Dan Rothas, Walt Shaw and William Keen spent a week at the State Fire School in Lewistown, PA.

Local residents watched the Downingtown Little League team win two games on WCAU-TV. John Bousum had six hits and struck out 11 Hamilton, NJ, batters. And Eddie Aumiller was on the mound and hit two doubles when the locals beat Hammonton, NJ, last year's national champions.

Officers of the Youth Group sponsored by the Downingtown Friendly Committee included: Jane Romig and Barbara Seibert, co-chairmen; Janet Kriebel, secretary; Carolyn Pritchard, treasurer.

Teachers of the Beginners Department of Hopewell Methodist Church included Mrs. Andrew Brookover, Mrs. Anna Stevens, Mrs. Edna Curry, Mrs. William Summers, and Mrs. Clark Snyder.

Officers of the Upper Uwchlan Home and School League were: Mrs. George Horton, president; Mrs. Norman Frank, vice president; Mrs. Wilbur McQueen, secretary; and Wilbur Shank, treasurer.



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The Downingtown's Red Cross Disaster Committee included: Chairman Mrs. C. Edwin Johnson, Vice chairmen Mrs. William Mahood and John Rogers, Vinton Smedley, Edwin Wagner, Dr. Thomas Parke, Margaret Baldwin, Mrs. Mary Crisman, Mrs. Wesley Worrall, Ray Sheeler, Clarence Fry, Charles Emery and Mrs. William Gibbs.

The total enrollment for fall session of Downingtown's schools was 1,324.

Faculty for Wallace Township schools included: Mrs. Miriam Bond, first and second grades; Mrs. Fred Johnson, third and fourth grades; Mrs. Mary Eppihimer, fifth, sixth and seventh grades.

Lionville Elementary School pupils who completed the eighth grade and planned to attend Downingtown Junior High included: Kathleen Levorgood, Barbara Simpkinson, Esther Supplee, Shirley Matlack, Rob Spiess and Jack Stewart.

## Free ads for Non-Profits

As you may have noticed, our Hist-O-Grams often include advertising for public events and activities sponsored by non-profit organizations based in the Downingtown area.

Please send ad copy to [Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Info@DowningtownAreaHistoricalSociety.org) at least 10 days prior to the date when the public event or activity will be conducted.

The Downingtown Area Historical Society has the right to refuse to publish advertising that's deemed inappropriate or doesn't meet the criteria noted above.

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## Fifth Graders at West Ward School in 1942



Members of Miss Robinson's Fifth Grade Class at Downingtown's West Ward School in 1942, were, left to right: Don Greenleaf, Bill Davis, Rose Formica, Lucy DiCarlo, Doris Chafee, George Eachus, Lolita Bates, Fred Seibert, Teresa Sack, Theresa Valentino, Unidentified, Joan Sheehan, Sonny Milano, Pete Hayes and Louise Bartelemo.

## Hall of Famer pitched for Downingtown

Ned Walsh led the Downingtown Athletic Association, in the only game he pitched for the local team, to a victory over the West Chester Brandywine squad on July 4, 1902.

Walsh was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY, in 1946. A right-handed hurler for the Chicago White Sox (1904-16) and the Boston Braves (1917), Walsh still holds the major league record for the lowest lifetime earned run average (1.82). He used his later-outlawed spitball to win an average of 24 games over seven years (1906-1912).

Prior to pitching that one game for Downingtown, Walsh had played for his hometown squad in Plains, PA, located in the coal region of northeast Pennsylvania. It's unclear how or why he was brought to Chester County for just one game.



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However, in an interview published in the November 4, 1912 edition of the *Washington Post*, Walsh claimed he was recruited to take the place of an injured Downingtown pitcher.

And the game was important because it was part of a series that would determine that season's Chester County champion. Apparently, it was important to Walsh as well, because he told the Washington reporter, "I'll never forget that game as long as I live."

Walsh recalled that the game (played in West Chester) reached a critical point in the bottom half of the ninth inning, and Downingtown was desperately trying to hold on to a 3-2 lead.

West Chester's first two batters got on base with singles, and then a Downingtown outfielder dropped a blooper. Now, with the bases loaded, Walsh was starting to wind-up for his next pitch, when he heard some fans shouting. "And soon the whole park is in an uproar," he recalled. That's when Walsh realized the fans were excited because a rabbit was "racing frantically across the field." The immense crowd, he explained, had dislodged the rabbit from its home in the tall grass in the far outfield. The rabbit continued to race around the field until, "frightened and exhausted," it came to a sudden, fatal stop at the pitcher's mound.

It was at that deadly moment, continued Walsh that "my mind was made up, and I am not superstitious either, but I believed then and I still believe now," that the dead rabbit was a lucky sign.

"I carried the stricken creature to the bench, feeling that a sense of confidence came over me." Better yet, the Downingtown team's "nerves were relieved of the tenseness, and the West Chester attack was flustered. Then, I struck out the next three men. If that was not luck, why there is no such thing. If it wasn't for that rabbit, I probably would not be here today.

"That victory was the beginning of my success, for the very next day, I received my very first offer to play professional ball."

Well, those details about the deceased rabbit's role in the game prove that Walsh was a fantastic storyteller, as well as a great pitcher.

According to a West Chester *Daily Local News* reporter's story on the game, it was during the seventh inning, not the ninth, when the rabbit made its appearance. And there was no mention in the article about the rabbit's inspiring, supreme sacrifice. Also, West Chester didn't load the bases in a tension-filled ninth inning, before Walsh mowed down three batters. Instead, the first two West Chester batters grounded out. Although the next hitter got a single and stole second, Downingtown won the game when Walsh struck out the next batter.

The *Daily Local News* coverage also noted that the contest in West Chester was played in the morning, as part of an unusual doubleheader. The second game that day, a 3-2 loss for Downingtown, was played in the afternoon, at an unidentified site in Downingtown.



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Apparently, there were no lucky rabbits in Downingtown that afternoon.

## Visit our booth at E. Brandywine's Family Day

We'll have a booth at East Brandywine Township's annual Family Day, 4-8 PM Saturday, August 27 at the Community Park, 440 Dilworth Road.

In addition to signing up more people to receive our free, weekly Hist-O-Grams, we'll be selling books about local history and ceramic Keepsakes (see details below), which include illustrations of Downingtown's 1701 Log House and the former 1932 Junior-Senior High School on Manor Avenue.

Events include: a kids' bike parade (2 bikes to be given away) led by the DHS D-Dog, kids' games, pony rides, hay wagon rides and Stubby the Helicopter.

Other attractions: crafters, a magic show, Hopewell Boy Scouts' food booth, Victory Brewery root beer, live music, bag pipers, a hot air balloon launch, bingo, Civil War Re-enactors, a car show/display, and Krapf's antique school bus. Also, exhibits by the Police and Fire Departments, and the Chesco Emergency Unit.

Almost everything is free, except food.

## Dunn's recollections of train derailments

After reading in last week's Hist-O-Gram about the time when 32 cars of a Conrail freight train derailed in August 1976, and five of them went into the Brandywine, Mike Dunn, retired Downingtown police officer, wrote: "I was called into work for that accident. Some of cars contained acid, and it was running into the Brandywine. A cloud developed, and we had to have people leave their homes along Brandywine and Jefferson Avenues."

Mike also wonders if anyone remembers when a passenger train derailed in Downingtown, over the Christmas holidays in 1976. "The poles that held the overhead wires kept at least one railcar from falling onto Viaduct Ave. Worked that one, too."

*(Editor's Note: Anyone out there have some photos of this accident? If so, please contact us at [Info@Downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@Downingtownareahistoricalociety.org).)*



# Downingtown Area Historical Society

*Interesting Local History, Accessed From Our Archives*

## Historic Keepsakes available at Downingtown Country Gifts

In addition to being available at East Brandywine’s Family Day on Saturday, Downingtown Country Gifts, 147 E. Lancaster Ave, (former site of the Oak Emporium) in the borough, is selling ceramic Historic Keepsakes, designed by Lori St. George, a professional ceramicist.

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4-7 PM Saturday, Aug. 27. Eat-in or take-out, at fire hall, 122 W. Pennsylvania Ave., Downingtown.

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Downingtown Golf Club, 85 Country Club Lane, Downingtown.

Shotgun Scramble at 8:30 AM.

Golf Cart, Green Fees and Buffet Lunch.

Entrance fee - \$90. Registration information contact;

Lions Don Greenleaf [610-363-2297](tel:610-363-2297) or Herb Mays [610-389-3747](tel:610-389-3747).

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Call [610 873-7117](tel:610-873-7117). Leave Message. Leader: Cheryl Spaulding,

Email: [JPCheryl@verizon.net](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).

Meets 7:30 PM 2nd & 4th Tues. of the month. All are welcome.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Historic sites open in Uwchlan Township

Uwchlan Township Historical Commission administers two sites owned by the Township. Each is open the first Sunday of the month, April to November, 2 – 4 PM. Admission is free.



# Downingtown Area Historical Society

*Interesting Local History, Accessed From Our Archives*

The John Cadwalader House is the headquarters of the Commission. It is an 18th, 19th and 21st century built, originally one of the oldest homes in the township. A display of antiques or memorabilia is featured. September continues a collection of wool and linen knitting and weaving items, including a “kniddy-knoddy”, drop spindle and heckle or hechel. The Frances D. Matthews Research Library is housed in the building. Tours are conducted by Commission members.

Edith P. Moore Schoolhouse is a 19th century structure, which had been a one-room school, a township office and now is furnished as a school looked like years ago. A working hand pump still stands outside the school. Children can try their hand at using the pump, ringing the old school bell, and trying on clothing such as worn by the farm children who went to school here years ago. Two structures replicate the old-style outhouses in the back yard.

Further information can be obtained by calling [610-280-9522](tel:610-280-9522).

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Vol. 2, No. 35

August 31, 2011



This photo of the DHS Class of 1957, standing on the roof of Rockefeller Center, was taken on the annual senior class trip to New York City.

## Scrapbook provides insights on DHS Class of 1957

Marjorie Lawn Gazzola, DHS Class of 1957, who now lives in a Virginia suburb of our nation's capital, recently donated a wonderful scrapbook to the Historical Society. Chock full of photos and printed items from her high school days, the scrapbook provides capsules of what life was like for Downingtown area teenagers more than 50 years ago.

Noted below are some of the interesting items found in the scrapbook. Most of them were retrieved from issues of the *Blue and Gold*, the student newspaper.

- The DHS faculty, plus supervising principal (equivalent to district superintendent then) Charles Emery, put on a theatrical production that attracted some 600 people.

## Hist-O-Gram



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- Downingtown's Youth Day celebration in 1955 included a parade with three bands, 50 floats, and convertibles transported seniors who were taking over Borough government offices that day. The day ended with a dance at the Alert fire hall.
- Mary Ann Hamilton and Cookie Seibert, who did a tap dance while dressed in a horse costume, won the Junior High Talent Show.
- DHS received an overall rating that ranged between Good and Very Good from the Middle States Association evaluation team in 1956.
- William Smith's heifer and Ruth Carmichael's charcoal gray suit won blue ribbons in the FFA and FHA competitions, respectively, at the State Farm Show in Harrisburg.
- An overflow crowd came to the DHS Farm Show to see FHA president Ruth Hall, crowned as the 1956 Harvest Queen. Her court included Margie Eppolito, Susie McCue, Jean Timmerman and Betty DiAttilio.
- Officers of the 1957 Class were: Joe Bird, president; Barry Wickersham, vice president, vice president; Susie Norris, secretary; and Helen Pannebaker, treasurer.
- Proceeds from the sale of sweaters and jackets by members of the Lettermen's Club were used to buy a whirlpool bath for the boys' locker room.
- Nancy Brown, Ruth Brookover, Marjorie Lawn, Judy Orr and Edward Popjoy had the best speeches in the "I Speak for Democracy" competition.
- Tickets to the dance after the Coatesville basketball game cost 15 cents.
- Allen Hughes was named to the All-State Orchestra, and Mary Jean Lillard was chosen for the All-State Chorus.
- Although the football team had a 2-4-1 league record in 1956, the school won the Ches-Mont Sportsmanship trophy for the third time in five years.
- The School Board reversed its controversial policy of forbidding the football team to play against C-M opponents in a night game.

# Downingtown Area Historical Society's

## Hist-O-Gram



*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

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- More than 1,000 people turned out for the Winter Carnival, which featured movies, a freak show, two variety shows, dancing and an opportunity to throw wet sponges at band director William Ifert.
- In the mock presidential election conducted in POD classes, Republicans Eisenhower and Nixon beat Democrats Stevenson and Kefauver by a 2-1 margin.
- After teaching Social Studies for 42 years, Marion V. Philips retired.
- Winners of the Outstanding Male and Female Athlete Awards were Jim McClintock and Susie Norris.
- Leaders of the Community Chest drive were: Mary Jean Lillard, president; Bob McClure, executive director; Judy Orr, chairman; Ernest DiEugenio, vice president; Stella Karahalís, secretary.
- Officers of the new Girls' Athletic Association were: Mary Ann Hamilton, president; Judy Manning, vice president; Ann Yerkes, secretary; Polly Pennypacker, treasurer.
- Marjorie Lawn and Robert Manning finished in the upper half of the top 10 percent of the National Scholastic Academic competition.

*Editor's Note: In the coming months, we plan to publish highlights of two more DHS scrapbook collections—Football Coach Francis Tweed's and Agriculture Teacher Harold Klinger's—which have been donated to the Historical Society. Please contact us if you have collections of photos and printed materials offering insights on Downingtown's past, please contact us at [Info@dwoningtownareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:Info@dwoningtownareahistoricalsociety.org).*

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Vol. 2, No. 36

September 7, 2011



This schoolhouse on Little Conestoga Road, Wallace Township, was known as the Wallace Seminary in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It was built on Edward Hunter's farm in 1830. Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, preached there and converted several local families, including Hunter's, to Mormonism. Hunter sold his farm property (including the schoolhouse) in 1842, and moved west with the Mormons. The building continued to be used as a public schoolhouse until the mid-20th century.

# Hist-O-Gram



*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

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## When Mormonism thrived in Glen Moore area

Wallace Township is a place where tranquility usually prevailed. However, there was controversy in that part of the Glen Moore area in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, when Mormons wanted to hold church services in the Wallace Seminary school house.

That momentary problem was settled by Edward Hunter, who had allowed the stone school house to be built on his 210-acre farm in 1830. He had supported construction of the school, with the caveat that any religious denomination could use it for worship on weekends.

The Mormon sect, officially called The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints (LDS), was founded by Joseph Smith in upstate New York in 1830. Nine years later, Mormon missionaries created a settlement in a section of the township that's still known as Mormon Hollow.

And when Wallace officials and neighbors claimed the Mormons were "very dangerous people" and tried to ban the Mormons from conducting services in the school house, Hunter stepped in and threatened to shut down the school if the missionaries weren't permitted to use the building.

The officials and other residents relented, the Mormon branch in Wallace thrived, and Joseph Smith preached there in 1840. Soon the branch had 200 members, and one of them was Hunter.

Hunter sold the farm in 1842 and led a contingent of Mormons from the Wallace branch to a large Mormon settlement in Nauvoo, IL. When the Mormons left Nauvoo in 1847, Hunter led a large wagon train in the cross-country migration to the Great Salt Lake. From 1851 until his death in 1883 at age 90, he was the Mormon's presiding bishop, the church's highest office. He served in that capacity longer than any other person in the history of the LDS Church. Reportedly, he had 55 wives, but 10 of them divorced him.

Other people from the Wallace branch also headed for Nauvoo shortly after Hunter moved there. They included Jacob and Agnes Baum, the great, great, great uncle and aunt of John Miller, a retired Downingtown teacher and community leader in the Glen Moore area. John provided much information about the Baum family's involvement with Mormonism.

They and their four children left their farm (located in an area that's part of East Brandywine Township today) and headed west in 1841. Agnes's father was so upset about his daughter joining the Mormon Church, he disinherited her.

The Baums spent several years in the Mormon settlement in Nauvoo, where they had a farm. After Joseph Smith was killed there and many other Mormons were persecuted by the Nauvoo locals, the Baums and most of the other LDS members headed west once again, in 1846. The Baums' next stop was in Iowa, where Agnes died in 1846.

After Jacob remarried in 1850, the Baums journeyed to Salt Lake City, where he had a leadership role in the church's early days. He died in 1883.

# Hist-O-Gram



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But the Baum family's Mormon connection to Chester County continues to this day. That's because Baum kept his seven-and-one-half-foot-tall clock, made in Chester County in 1794, throughout his westward travels, even though space was at a premium in their wagon.

And although the clock's body and base were abandoned somewhere along the cross-country trek, new ones were made after the Baums arrived in Salt Lake City in 1852. The clock has been enshrined in the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers' museum in Salt Lake City museum since 1917, a year after Jacob's and Agnes's daughter, Elizabeth, died in Ephraim, UT. Elizabeth, who was born in Chester County in 1834, willed it to the museum.

Most of the information on the Jacob Baum family was accessed from Ancestry.com. Sources of information on Edward Hunt include: a story by Catherine Quillman in the May 15, 2000 edition of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and an article by Mark E. Dixon, in the April 2008 issue of *Main Line Today*.

## **Fly the American flag on Sunday, Sept. 11**

Elsie Sinex Tarr sent us this reminder: "Everyone should display the American flag outside your home, apartment, office, and store on Sunday, September 11.

"We do this to honor those who lost their lives on 9/11, their families, friends and loved ones who continue to endure the pain, and those who today are fighting at home and abroad to preserve our cherished freedoms.

"In the days, weeks and months following 9/11, our country was bathed in American flags, as citizens mourned the incredible losses and stood shoulder-to-shoulder against terrorism. Sadly, those flags have all but disappeared. Our patriotism pulled us through some tough times,, and it shouldn't take another attack to galvanize us in solidarity. Our American flag is the fabric of our country and together we can prevail over terrorism of all kinds."

## **Clip joint will be open on Sunday afternoon**

We didn't have our monthly newspaper clipping & pasting last Sunday, due to the holiday weekend. However, we will be catching up on clipping & pasting this Sunday afternoon, Sept. 11 at Ashbridge House, our headquarters on East Lancaster Avenue, in the Ashbridge Shopping Center in East Caln. Parking is available at the Chick-Fil-A restaurant next door, which is closed on Sundays.

The sessions will be between 1 PM and 4 PM, but you can come and go at any time that's convenient to you. Don't forget your scissors. As usual, cookies and root beer will be served.

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Proceeds will benefit: Downingtown Lord's Pantry, Downingtown Area Senior Center and Lions Club International.

#### **Girl Scout Sign-Up**

It's time to join Girl Scouts! Parent sign up will be at 7 PM Thursday Sept. 22, at Downingtown United Methodist Church. For more information, contact [GirlScoutsDtown@verizon.net](mailto:GirlScoutsDtown@verizon.net) or call [610-213-1662](tel:610-213-1662).

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Vol. 2, No. 37

September 14, 2011

## Steel bar from attack on World Trade Center displayed at DHS West

*Photo by Peter Crimmins, National Public Radio*



*DHS West social studies teacher Dan Soler and student-poet Elyse Mark, with the piece of steel retrieved after the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center.*

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York City was observed in many ways in recent days. At DHS West a 3-foot long steel bar was put on permanent display at the high school.

Noted below is the report broadcasted across the United States on National Public Radio's NewsWorks program on Sept. 8.

"It's rusted, and it's bent," said social studies teacher Daniel Soler, hefting the twisted steel. "It's surprisingly heavy."

## Hist-O-Gram



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Two years ago, one of Solar's students—Katie Artus—applied to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for a piece of the World Trade Center. Although the high school has no direct connection with the attacks of 9/11, Artus persevered through a glacial application process.

Upon approval, Soler took Artus and the rest of his class on a field trip to New York to pick up the piece, and scout out how other organizations displayed their piece of history.

"We saw three memorials in three parts of New York," said Soler, describing granite reflecting pools with embedded crystals in corporate lobbies of Manhattan. "They were done by MasterCard—or some major company with lots of resources. We thought maybe a high school could do something."

What they came up with is modest but heartfelt. In a small nook of the high school lobby—where there used to be a pay phone—that twisted bar will be suspended from wires, as though it were floating or suspended in freefall.

A poem called "September Martyrs" by 16-year-old Elyse Mark will be painted on the wall behind it.

*And from the sooted night we rose,  
like flaming phoenix of ancient lore.  
America  
whose thousand hearts pulsed with life  
as many  
as one  
once more.*

Elyse was just 7 years old in 2001. Most of what she remembers from 9/11 was being sent home early from first grade.

The incoming freshmen at Downingtown High School West were about 4 years old in 2001. Many have no memory of that day when the planes flew into the World Trade Center.

Every day, Soler says, about 1,800 kids will pass by the twisted bar.

"If that's the only way these students over the next 10, 15 years will be reminded about this event in 2001," said Solar, "at least they'll have something to remind them about it."

## News about Downingtown area 35 years ago

The following items were retrieved from September 1976 issues of the *East Branch Citizen*, a now-defunct Downingtown weekly newspaper.

The student population in the Downingtown Area School District increased by just 78 students in the 1976-77 school year, bringing the total enrollment to 6,942 pupils. The district's total population was 29,334.

## Hist-O-Gram



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And since renovations and construction of an addition at the Downingtown Junior High School hasn't been completed, the facility operated on split sessions. Pupils from West Bradford and East Caln attended classes from 8 AM until noon, while those from the Borough and East Brandywine were in school from 12:30 PM until 4:30 PM.

William Van Roden replaced Joe Williamson as administrative superintendent of the church school of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Exton.

There was a reunion of current and former residents of Bondsville, Fisherville and East Brandywine at East Brandywine Baptist Church on Labor Day. Mrs. Norman Springer and Mrs. Allen Miller co-chaired the event.

Results in the round robin tennis competition at Kerr Park included: mixed doubles, Carol Ann Patrylak and Mike Bryant, first, and Lynn Potts and Daryl Douglas came in second. Winners in men's doubles were Steve and Duke Charles; Mike Bryant and Keith Hess placed second.

Property transfers included: 119 Downing Ave., Downingtown, \$41,000; 330 Woodland Dr., Uwchlan, \$69,000; 2780 West Chester Rd., West Bradford, \$47,900; 150 Whiteland Hunt Rd., E. Caln, \$81,000; 13 Dogwood Ln., W. Pikeland, \$86,500; 3 E. Merion Cir., E. Brandywine, \$56,850.

Wolfington Body Co., Upper Uwchlan, celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The business was still owned and operated by members of the founding family. In the early years, the firm built fancy horse-drawn carriages for Main Line families.

John Brownstein, former owner of the Downingtown Department Store, was named president of the Philadelphia area SCORE retired business executives group.

The Social Ministry committee at Messiah Lutheran Church, Downingtown, headed by Carol Leffler, conducted a songfest at Embreeville State Hospital.

A cow owned by Denise Andrien, West Bradford, was the grand champion Jersey at the Southeast District 4-H Dairy Show.

Carolyn Lichok was the new secretary at St. James Episcopal Church. Also, Ruth Ann Gillooly and Ann Buell were in charge of the "Corny Corn Roast."

Leaders of Boy Scout Troop 23, sponsored by Central Presbyterian Church, were: Jack Waiboer, scoutmaster; Steve Grenz and Craig Thomas, assistant scoutmasters; Mike Bertolami, David McNamara and Tom Waiboer, patrol leaders.

Downingtown Area School District teachers signed a two-year contract with the School Board, which provided a 6.8 percent increase in the current school year and a 7.2 percent hike the following year.

An ad hoc committee, established by Uwchlan Township's supervisors, proposed that all school directors be elected on an at-large basis. At the time, each municipality in the district elected one director, except for Downingtown which had two representatives.

Tickets for a spaghetti dinner at Central Presbyterian Church were being sold by Robert Barber, David Ross, Mrs. George Seel, John Wade, Arthur Westenberger, Phillip Ham, Francis Walton, Milton Bozarth and John Brown.

# Downingtown Area Historical Society's

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Loretta Gottier, Emily Popjoy and Dean Seese retired as Sunday School teachers at Windsor Baptist Church, Eagle.

Gary Wagner, who replaced William Ifert as DHS marching band director, changed the marching style from military type to a bugle-and-drum-corps style.

Kate Gerrity, Wendy Casper and Ginny Woodruff learned puppet making at Downingtown Library's Amazing Arts program.

St. Anthony's swimmers who received recognition from head coach Dave Robbins and his assistants, Nick Madrigale and Judy DeMucci, were Carol DiBerardinis, spirit award; Brain Ciarlone, most improved; and Mike Celli, hardest worker.

Members of Webelos Cub Pack 221, honored by Uwchlan Township for restoring the picnic grove at Acker Park, were David Burgess, Craig Steiner, George Nonemaker, Jeff Stauffer and Russ Faller.

New members of the Sunday School staff at Lionville Community Methodist Church were Barbara Seiple, Steve and Kathy Ayers, Bonnie Vogel, Dorian Rumsey, Elinor Carroll, Ray and Vivian Baldwin, Ray and Barbara Pope, Fred and Peggy Griste, and Bob French.

DHS students who participated in the 11-week volunteer service program at Embreeville State Hospital were Cathie Ardrey, Susan Binder, Joyce George, Arlene Johnson, Connie Kabatt, Barbara Millham and Susan Snee.

Michael McCarraher, Downingtown, a seventh grader at St. Joseph's School, was the top male essayist in a contest sponsored by the Chester Board of Realtors.

Construction of a \$14,000 addition at the Glen Moore fire house enabled two more trucks to be housed.

Thirty-five members of Cadette Girl Scout Troops 1242 and 1089 of Downingtown spent a weekend camping at Camp Tweedale.

New officers of the Marshallton Grange were Dorothy Kerstetter, master; Gilbert Pyle, overseer; Jane Ellis, lecturer; Robert Ellis, steward; Leah Johnson, treasurer; Alice Shoemaker, secretary; William Holtz, gatekeeper; Shirley Crowley, Pomona; Mary Jane Martin, ceres; and Dorothy Holtz, flora.

West Bradford's Kathleen Baroni and her brother, Jeff, each won first place in the ewe and ram classes, respectively, in the Dorset breed contest at the Chester-Delaware Counties Sheep Show.

# Downingtown Area Historical Society's

## Hist-O-Gram



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Chairpersons at Downingtown Methodists Church's Old Fashion Day were Mabel Davis, white elephant table; Linda Wolfe, gift table; Pat Dukeman, candles; Emily Lewis, mission table; Louise Bruton, kitchen items; Dorothy Haering and Marge McCombs, food and baked goods; Joyce Harmon, plants; Shirley Shaeffer and Marie Williams, kitchen; and Fran McAllister, dining room.

New officers of Hopewell Methodist's Youth Fellowship group were Doug Neyman, president; Charles Thompson, vice president; Anne Dowling, secretary; Becky Kring, treasurer; and Dave Bower, junior high representative.

The American Legion team won the Downingtown Slo-Pitch League playoffs. Leading hitters for the Legion were "Beanie" Williams, Denny Luminella, Tom Benton, and Ollie Thompson.

Mrs. St. George is donating her time and efforts to make the ceramic Keepsakes, as a very active member of the Downingtown branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. And as a good will gesture, the local Odd Fellows organization is supplying all the material used to make the Keepsakes. Proceeds from sales (\$15 each) of the limited edition Keepsakes will go to the Downingtown Area Historical Society.



Downingtown Country Gifts, which is contributing all sales revenue to the Historical Society, is open 10 AM to 7 PM, Tuesday through Friday; and 10 AM to 6 PM on Saturdays.

# Downingtown Area Historical Society's

## Hist-O-Gram



*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

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

### Coming events and activities in the Downingtown area

#### *Girl Scout Sign-Up*

It's time to join Girl Scouts! Parent sign up will be at 7 PM Thursday Sept. 22, at Downingtown United Methodist Church. For more information, contact [GirlScoutsDtown@verizon.net](mailto:GirlScoutsDtown@verizon.net) or call [610-213-1662](tel:610-213-1662).

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#### *Seeking Crafters & Artists*

Fourth Annual Log House Arts & Crafts Show – Sunday, October 2 from 10 – 3 at Kerr Park (Log House Field). Arts/Crafts/Music/Food. Vendor spaces \$35.

For more info: [www.downingtown.org](http://www.downingtown.org) or Val DiLuigi [610-269-0344](tel:610-269-0344), Ext. 200.

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#### *Joseph's People--Downingtown Chapter*

An ecumenical support mission to help un/underemployed people.

Run entirely by volunteers, we have been at St. Joseph's since 1995.

Visit web page, [www.josephspeople.org](http://www.josephspeople.org) or just come to a meeting at St. Joseph's Church, Parish Meeting Room behind the school, 460 Manor Ave., Downingtown.

Call [610 873-7117](tel:610-873-7117). Leave Message. Leader: Cheryl Spaulding,

Email: [JPCheryl@verizon.net](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).

Meets 7:30 PM 2nd & 4th Tues. of the month. All are welcome.

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**Hist-O-Grams are emailed weekly to members and friends of the Downingtown Area Historical Society. If you want to make a comment, add your email address to our list, or have your email address deleted from the list, send an email to: [info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org). We won't share or sell email addresses.**



**Downingtown Area Historical Society**  
**Hist-O-Gram**  
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Vol. 2, No. 38

September 21, 2011



DHS East senior Michael Homan spent more than 40 hours working on his graduation service project, which entailed entering and organizing thousands of names in our new searchable Family Files database. Michael is working on a second database, which will include information about local businesses, churches, governmental bodies and schools.

### **Database lists articles about your family & friends**

Want a copy of Grandma's obituary? Lost the newspaper clipping announcing your sister's engagement?

You may find those articles and many more in the Family Files online database assembled by the Downingtown Area Historical Society. It lists newspaper articles about the deaths, weddings, engagements, etc. of more than 5,600 Downingtown area residents. Volunteers have clipped, organized and pasted the articles on large card files, which are stored at Ashbridge House, our headquarters. It's located in front of the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on East Lancaster Avenue in East Caln, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant.

As a result, you can check our online database to see if there are any articles about your family or friends in our Family Files collection. The alphabetized listing of the Family Files notes each person's last name and their first name's initial, in our collection. The cards often contain several articles.

Most of the newspaper articles in the collection were clipped from local newspapers published since 1970. Those newspapers include: The Daily Local News, East Branch Citizen, Downingtown

Archive, Coatesville Record, Downingtown Ledger, and the Community Courier. And our volunteers (Want to help?) will be continually adding articles from both recent and old newspapers to the database.

You can access the database by accessing [www.downingtowntownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtowntownareahistoricalociety.org) and looking at the ARCHIVES section on the top of the Home page. In addition to an alphabetized listing of the names in the database, the ARCHIVES section also will include instructions on how you can get a copy of an article related to any of those names and first initial in the database. Also, the instructions will note the option of having a copy of the requested article mailed to you for a fee, or picking it up at Ashbridge House on a Sunday afternoon.

## **Township trivia shows W. Bradford history isn't trivial**

Marjorie Gazzola, DHS Class of 1957, sent us a long list of trivia questions about West Bradford Township, which originally were published in a township newsletter. The questionnaire was developed by Jack Hines, when he was still West Bradford's township manager. After serving in that capacity for many years, Jack is now retired. Here are 19 questions, selected from Jack's original set and edited due to space limitations.

### **1. When was Bradford Township split into two townships?**

The petition to divide Bradford Township into West Bradford Township and East Bradford Township was approved on August 30, 1731. The petition was served in the City of Chester, now in Delaware County, then the seat of Chester County.

### **2. How many pupils were enrolled in Romansville Public School in the fall of 1892?**

Gertrude Cunningham had 12 male and 17 female students in her class between the ages of 7 and 17. Her monthly salary was \$35.

### **3. What is West Bradford's connection with the movie classic, "Casablanca?"**

Actor Claude Rains, who earned an Oscar nomination for supporting actor when he portrayed Louis in *Casablanca*, lived in West Bradford. He called Chester County his home, and owned the Stock Grange Farm on Romansville Road from 1941 to 1958, according to an article in the *Inquirer*, May 20, 2001.

### **4. When was the West Bradford Fire Company formed?**

The fire company was officially formed in December 1953. The first firehouse was a rented garage in the alley on the south side of Marshallton. In 1961, the fire company moved to its present location at 1305 W. Strasburg Road. In 1994, a sub-station was located in the western portion of the township, at the West Bradford Township Campus. For more info, visit the fire company's web site at [www.wbfc.org](http://www.wbfc.org).

### **5. Where was the first shopping center in West Bradford Township?**

According to a historical researcher, Marshallton was a bustling center in the 1700s, with all kinds of shops and businesses. Among them were a seamstress, blacksmith, cabinetmaker, barber, tobacconist, hat maker, machinist and a cigar maker. With the village being on a drover's road between Lancaster and Philadelphia, there also were several inns in and near the village

### **6. How much did West Bradford's School Board spend on education in 1940?**

In May 1940, the township School Board spent a total of \$1,724.86. That included teachers' salaries and payments to West Chester, Downingtown, Unionville, and Haverford for students to attend those high schools. There were six teachers in the township schools; each earned approximately \$25 per week.

### **7. How did the Philadelphia-Lancaster Turnpike impact the township's development?**

The Philadelphia-Lancaster Turnpike (Route 30), opened in 1794, was our nation's first toll road. The Strasburg Road generally parallels the turnpike and was free. Therefore, many drovers used it instead of the turnpike. The result was that Marshallton and Romansville grew with businesses to support the travelers on Strasburg Road.

### **8. What West Bradford resident was inducted into the Aviation Hall of Memories at the Chester County Airport?**

Mrs. Mildred Albertson was inducted into the Aviation Hall of Memories at the Chester County Air Show in 1997. She was honored for her many years as a radio correspondent to pilots, who often referred to her as their “guardian angel.” The Albertson family operated a farm on the Strasburg Road for a number of years. During that time, she was active in various organizations such as the PA Flying Farmers and the Aero Club of Chester County.

**9. How much was a West Bradford elementary school teacher in paid in 1952?**

Miss Anna Nields, principal at the Marshallton Elementary School, was paid \$260.90 per month in 1952. In 1936, she received \$119.80 per month in the same position. She was fondly known by her students as Miss Anna. When she taught in Marshallton, the township had its own school board to operate the elementary school and was not a part of the Downingtown Area School District.

**10. How much did the land for the Methodist graveyard in Romansville cost?**

The land was conveyed to Richard Webster, Isaac Rollin and John King, ministers of the Gospel, in 1811 for the sum of 20 cents!

**11. How many covered bridges are there in West Bradford Township?**

Only one, or perhaps one-half, since the Gibson Bridge on the east branch of the Brandywine Creek is half in West Bradford and half in East Bradford. And although the bridge is close to Route 322, the up-ramp part of the bridge is owned by West Bradford and the road on the other side is owned by East Bradford. The bridge is owned by Chester County.

**12. How much did it cost to mail a letter from Marshallton to Thorndale in 1895?**

An envelope mailed from the post office in Marshallton (there is no post office in Marshallton today) to an address in Thorndale, contained a two cent stamp.

**13. When was the first band organized in West Bradford?**

The first band, organized in 1844 by Milton Clayton, was known as the Marshallton Cornet Band. It had, at various times, between 12 and 20 members.

**14. In 1873 a building in West Bradford was described as being three stories in height, 150 feet long and 54 feet deep. What was that building?**

The Chester County Almshouse or Poorhouse. It was located on the south side of the former Embreeville State Hospital property. The brick building housed 252 adults and 64 children. Included among the adults were those classified as 19 insane, 21 idiotic, 3 blind, and one deaf and dumb person. The building was torn down in the 1960's and is now the site of a baseball field operated by West Bradford Youth Association.

**15. Nathan Simms is buried in the Bradford Cemetery in Marshallton. Who was he?**

- a. A Revolutionary War General who died in the Battle of the Brandywine.
- b. Pennsylvania's first Supreme Court Justice.
- c. A slave boy who helped John Wilkes Booth escape from the Ford Theatre after he shot President Lincoln, and told Union soldiers where Booth went, thus aiding in his capture.
- d. Played shortstop for the Philadelphia Phillies between 1910-1927 and made the first unassisted triple play in Phillies history.
- e. Served as a member of the Continental Congress and signed the Declaration of Independence.

Nathan Simms was the slave boy who helped John Wilkes Booth escape, and told the Union soldiers where he went, thus aiding in his capture (answer c).

**16. How many of West Bradford's "boys" were lost in World War II?**

Eight West Bradford "boys" were lost in World War II. Considering that the township's population in 1940 was 776, the number was significant. A monument to these heroes was erected at the Marshallton School during the 50's, and when the school closed, it was moved to the Bradford Cemetery. A ceremony is held in their memory on the Sunday before Memorial Day each year. This ceremony has been held on Sunday because in years past, the high school band and veterans groups were busy in the "bigger" towns on

Memorial Day. West Bradford's World War II Honor Roll includes: E. Roy Eshleman, Jr., Oscar Eshleman, Robert P. Guiler, Chester F. Harple, Charles A. Henk, Horace J. Keller, William H. McAllister and Ralph Wilson

**17. What foreign army marched through West Bradford on its way to battle?**

On September 11, 1777, part of the British Army, commanded by Generals Howe and Cornwallis, crossed the Brandywine Creek (west branch) at Trimble's Ford, near Camp Linden Road. Then they proceeded east on Camp Linden Road (and through part of East Bradford as well) to complete a flanking movement of Gen. Washington's Army. This occurred during the Battle of the Brandywine, when the British engaged the Americans near the Birmingham Meeting House and dealt a severe blow to the American forces.

**18. Why did the concern that someone "might steal apples in his orchard" become the main argument used by a land owner to thwart a proposal that would have made a major change in Marshallton history?**

According to a newspaper article published in 1884, there was talk in 1786 of making Marshallton, because of its centrality, the county seat, since the village is nearly the center of the county. The "Center House" standing in the fork of Strasburg Road and Northbrook Road is supposed to be the exact center. A commission appointed by the assembly to select a site for the location of a courthouse, prison, etc.; selected and staked out a plot of ground in Marshallton. But Marshallton residents objected because locating county buildings there "would apt to draw men and boys to the neighborhood who would not scruple to steal apples, and other fruit, from the trees of the residents and commit other depredations of equally as objectionable a character..." There is some thought that other political influences may have changed the location, but the story as told above was frequently heard through the years.

**19. Why did a famous aviator's plane become the name of a road in West Bradford?**

Lone Eagle Road was named after the plane flown by the famous aviator, Charles A. Lindbergh. And Lone Eagle Road is located in the western part of the township, and connects Chestnut Lane to Strasburg Road, crossing over Romansville Road.

In March 1928, Lindbergh was flying the "Lone Eagle," (the twin of the "Spirit of St. Louis", the plane Lindbergh flew on the first solo transatlantic flight) from Curtis Field, New York to Washington, and became enshrouded in dense fog. He landed in a muddy field on the farm of Emmer R. Way, and spent the night at the nearby home of Charles Elkington and his wife. A large crowd gathered to watch Lindbergh depart the next day.

**Historic Keepsakes available at Downingtown Country Gifts**

Downingtown Country Gifts, 147 E. Lancaster Ave, (former site of the Oak Emporium) in the borough, is selling ceramic Historic Keepsakes, designed by Lori St. George, a professional ceramicist.

As shown below, there are two versions of the Keepsakes, each showing a landmark in the borough. One version has a photo of the 1701 Log House, a historic icon on Lancaster Avenue, while the other shows the 1932 Junior-Senior High School on Manor Avenue in the Borough (site of the new STEM Academy), which thousands of local students attended over eight decades.



Mrs. St. George is donating her time and efforts to make the ceramic Keepsakes, as a very active member of the Downingtown branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. And as a good will gesture, the local Odd Fellows organization is supplying all the material used to make the Keepsakes. Proceeds from sales (\$15 each) of the limited edition Keepsakes will go to the Downingtown Area Historical Society.

Downingtown Country Gifts, which is contributing all sales revenue to the Historical Society, is open 10 AM to 7 PM, Tuesday through Friday; and 10 AM to 6 PM on Saturdays.

## Coming events and activities in the Downingtown area

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### DHS Alumni Assn. seeks new members

The nation's oldest high school alumni association, which meets monthly, seeks DHS grads to join. First meeting of the new school year will be at 9 AM Saturday, Sept. 24 in Room 135 of DHS West. Please enter the school at the rear via the door marked 3-7. For more info on the Alumni Assn., see

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

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### Seeking Crafters & Artists

Fourth Annual Log House Arts & Crafts Show – Sunday, October 2 from 10 – 3 at Kerr Park (Log House Field). Arts/Crafts/Music/Food. Vendor spaces \$35.

For more info: [www.downingtown.org](http://www.downingtown.org) or Val DiLuigi 610-269-0344, Ext. 200.

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### Candle Light Dinner for Four at Downingtown Log House

Sponsored by Downingtown Lions Club. Catered by Luigi and Giovanni Ristorante.

Only 100 raffle tickets being sold @ \$25. For tickets, call Lion Don Greenleaf, 610-363-2297. Drawing will take place on Saturday, Nov. 19 at Lions Club's Annual Pancake Breakfast. Dinner can be between Jan. 2 and March 31.

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### Joseph's People--Downingtown Chapter

An ecumenical support mission to help un/underemployed people.

Run entirely by volunteers, we have been at St. Joseph's since 1995.

Visit web page, [www.josephspeople.org](http://www.josephspeople.org) or just come to a meeting at St. Joseph's Church, Parish Meeting Room behind the school, 460 Manor Ave., Downingtown.

Call 610 873-7117. Leave Message. Leader: Cheryl Spaulding,

Email: [JPCheryl@verizon.net](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).

Meets 7:30 PM 2nd & 4th Tues. of the month. All are welcome.

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Hist-O-Grams are emailed weekly to members and friends of the Downingtown Area Historical Society. If you want to make a comment, add your email address to our list, or have your email address deleted from the list, send an email to: [Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org). We won't share or sell email addresses.

# Hist-O-Gram



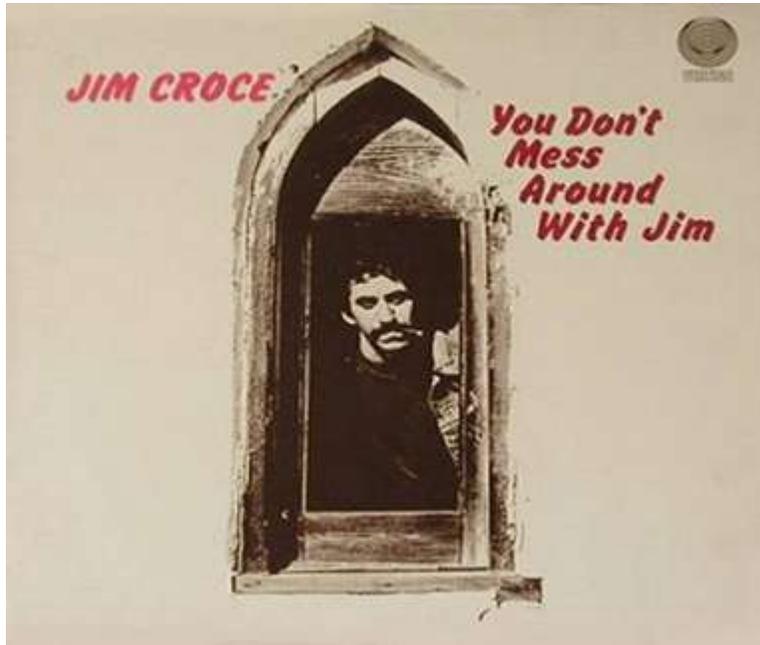
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Vol. 2, No. 39

September 28, 2011

## Looking for tales about Croce when he lived in Lyndell



This photo, on the cover of one of his biggest hit albums, shows Jim Croce peering out the gothic-style window of an outhouse on the property where he lived in an apartment in a Victorian mansion in Lyndell in the early 1970s.

Born in Philadelphia in 1943 and raised in Upper Darby, Jim Croce learned to play a 12-string guitar while attending Villanova University, where he earned a degree in psychology in 1965. His early musical attempts, including coffeehouse performances and the recording of an album with his wife, Ingrid, proved less than profitable. So to save on living expenses, the Croces moved to Lyndell in 1970. While he lived in the quaint East Brandywine hamlet, Croce worked on construction jobs during the week and performed at all types of musical venues on weekends. He also wrote many of his best-known songs while living in a Victorian mansion in Lyndell.

Several of those songs were on Croce's first, best-selling album, *You Don't Mess Around With Jim*, was released in 1973. In addition to the title track, other classic hits on that album were *Operator* and *Bad, Bad Leroy Brown*. Croce's career skyrocketed. He had several other hit albums and enjoyed nationwide success as a concert and TV performer. Tragically, he died in 1974 when his charter aircraft crashed, following a concert at Northwestern State College in Natchitoches, LA.

# Hist-O-Gram



*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

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

That brief biography doesn't do justice to Croce's story. That's why we're asking Hist-O-Gram readers to fill in some of the blanks. So, please send an email, via [Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org), that offers interesting tales you've heard about Croce's life in Lyndell.

## Downingtown area news 60 years ago

The following news was published in the *Downingtown Archive* in September 1951.

About one-half of the DHS football squad, plus the head coach, came down with a mysterious viral infection while they were at pre-season training camp in Quakertown.

New officers of the Fisherville-Bondsville reunion held at East Brandywine Baptist Church were: George Taylor, president; Jacob Ellis, vice president; George Herman, treasurer; Hazel Laird, secretary; and Mrs. Myrtle Lilley Jefferis, program chairman.

New teachers in the East Brandywine School System were Mrs. Peter Smith and Mrs. Raymond Ferguson, Hopewell School, and Mrs. Hannah Harner, Guthriesville School.

Glen Moore Cub Scouts who hiked and had a picnic along the Brandywine were: Richard Mason, David Miller, Clark Reiter, Tommy Campbell, Donald Miles, Billy Everett, Jackie Earnshaw, Bobby Shingle, Jimmy Williamson and den mother Mrs. Laura Williamson.

Officers of the Future Farmers of America chapter at DHS were: Grant Wells, president; Robert Styer, vice president; Bill Hayes, secretary; Stanley Johnson, treasurer; Herbert Hayes, reporter; and Otto Huasch, sentinel.

Rev. William P.C. Loane was the new rector of St. James Episcopal Church.

John Rogers, Henry Thomas and Joe Eby were responsible for the VFW Post 845's picnic and mortgage burning.

Lee Schneider, manager of Pepperidge Farm, was named chairman of the Downingtown Chamber of Commerce's Pennsylvania Week committee. Others on the committee were Charles Emery, Ed Baldwin, W.P. Canby, C.O. Brown and J. Gibson McIvain.

Shirley Hettinger, Marie Quartucci and Judy Frank were overall winners at the Farm Show sponsored by the Upper Uwchlan Home and School League.

# Hist-O-Gram



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“Cap” Wando, president of the Downingtown Moose, appointed Arthur Phillips, Harry Robertson, Charles Broomell, LaVerne Moore and Adam Nichelowski to handle arrangements for the annual banquet.

New officers of the Downingtown Odd Fellows Lodge were C. Allen Woodward, noble grand; J. Copleand Nichols, vice grand; Gilbert Cox, secretary; Richard Warren, treasurer; and J. Evans Miller, trustee.

Plans were being made for the merger of the Downingtown and Guthriesville camps, Patriotic Sons of America. The Downingtown camp was formed in 1888, and the Guthriesville group was founded in 1906.

Total enrollment at Downingtown Junior-Senior High School was 785.

## Follow-ups on recent Hist-O-Gram articles

Sunny DiMatteo Cook, who grew up in the Marshallton area, sent additional info on Nathan Simms, the slave boy who helped John Wilkes Booth escape from Ford’s Theatre after the assassin shot President Lincoln, and told Union soldiers where Booth went, thus aiding in his capture. Simm’s burial in the cemetery behind the Bradford Meetinghouse in Marshallton was featured in the Jack Hines’ trivia questionnaire about West Bradford Township in the September 21 Hist-O-Gram.

Sunny noted that Chris Sanderson was responsible for seeing that there was a marked tombstone on Simm’s grave.

It appears to have been an urban legend that an elderly, impoverished woman named Irene was Nate’s niece, according to an email from Hines, who lived near Irene when he was a kid.

Hines cleared up some of the mystery about Irene, when he wrote, “Irene lived in an old barn (stable) on the property then owned by the McCues. The barn was converted to a house, although when Irene lived there, it didn't have much in the way of amenities.....I always thought that the McCues allowed her to live in the house without paying rent and as Sunny stated, the community helped look after her.”

When Irene died, she “was carried out on a chair that she had been sitting on as infection had overcome her and she couldn't move,” says Hines.

## Hist-O-Gram



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Sunny also remembers when Irene passed. "Three men from the fire company drove the old fashioned red ambulance and gently removed her. My dad was one of the three."

By the way, Sunny recalls that Hines was her parents' paperboy.

### **Find articles about your family & friends in our database**

Want a copy of Grandma's obituary? Lost the newspaper clipping announcing your sister's engagement?

You may find those articles and many more in the Family Files online database assembled by the Downingtown Area Historical Society. It lists newspaper articles about the deaths, weddings, engagements, etc. of more than 5,600 Downingtown area residents. Volunteers have clipped, organized and pasted the articles on large card files, which are stored at Ashbridge House, our headquarters. It's located in front of the Ashbridge Square Shopping Center on East Lancaster Avenue in East Caln, next to the Chick-Fil-A Restaurant.

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Most of the newspaper articles in the collection were clipped from local newspapers published since 1970. Those newspapers include: The Daily Local News, East Branch Citizen, Downingtown Archive, Coatesville Record, Downingtown Ledger, and the Community Courier. And our volunteers (Want to help?) will be continually adding articles from both recent and old newspapers to the database.

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# Downingtown Area Historical Society's

## Hist-O-Gram



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### Visit our booth at Downingtown Fall Fest

The Street Festival will be held in the Borough, on East Lancaster Avenue between Wallace Avenue and Green Street, from noon to 4 PM Sunday, October 2.

In addition to signing up local residents so they, as well as friends and relatives, can get FREE Hist-O-Grams emailed to them every week, we'll also be selling:

- Ceramic Historic Keepsakes, showing historic landmarks in the borough.
- Copies of *Downingtown's Greatest Generation*, a booklet is full of authentic stories about Downingtown High School alumni, who grew up during the Depression and then fought in World War II while family and friends back home contributed to the war effort as well.
- A pictorial *History of Downingtown*, book with some 200 old photos from the Historical Society's archives. The book's 128 pages also include information about life in the Downingtown area many years ago.

PS, our monthly Clipping & Pasting session has been changed 1-4 PM at Ashbridge House on Sunday, Oct. 9.

### Coming events & activities in Downingtown area

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#### Children's Everything Sale on Saturday

Hopewell United Methodist Church, 852 Hopewell Road, East Brandywine, will conduct a sale of children's gently used fall and winter clothing, plus toys, DVDs, books and baby equipment, from 9 AM to noon Saturday, Oct. 1, in the church's Family Life Center.

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#### Fourth Annual Log House Arts & Crafts Show

Arts/Crafts/Music/Food will be offered 10 AM to 3 PM Sunday, Oct. 2 at Kerr Park (Log House Field). For more info: [www.downingtown.org](http://www.downingtown.org).

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# Hist-O-Gram



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## Old Caln's Historic sites open Saturday

The Meetinghouse and Museum on Route 340 and the Hexagonal Schoolhouse on Municipal Drive in Caln Twp. will be open for the last time this season from 1-3 PM Sunday, Oct. 2. Free tours will be guided by members of the Old Caln Historical Society.

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## Historic sites open in Uwchlan Township on Sunday

Uwchlan Township Historical Commission's two sites will be open 2-4 PM Sunday, October 2. Admission is free.

John Cadwalader House is the 18th, 19th and 21st century built headquarters of the Commission; it's one of the oldest homes in the township. A display of antiques or memorabilia is featured. September continues a collection of wool and linen knitting and weaving items, including a "kniddy-knoddy", drop spindle and heckle or hechel. The Frances D. Matthews Research Library is housed in the building. Tours are conducted by Commission members.

Edith P. Moore Schoolhouse is a 19th century structure, which had been a one-room school, a township office and now is furnished as a school looked like years ago. A working hand pump still stands outside the school. Children can try their hand at using the pump, ringing the old school bell, and trying on clothing such as worn by the farm children who went to school here years ago. Two structures replicate the old-style outhouses in the back yard.

Further information can be obtained by calling [610-280-9522](tel:610-280-9522).

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## Flu Shots at Senior Center

The Downingtown Area Senior Center, 983 E. Lancaster Ave., East Caln, will host a Flu Shot Clinic and Health Fair, from 9 AM until noon Thursday, Oct. 6. Flu shots will be administered free to those who have Medicare cards. To make a flu shot appointment, call [610-269-3939](tel:610-269-3939). For more info, check [www.downingtownseniors.org](http://www.downingtownseniors.org).

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## Parking lot sale at Central Presbyterian

Central Presbyterian, 100 W. Uwchlan Ave., (Route 113) Downingtown, will hold its semi-annual parking lot sale from 7 AM to 2 PM Saturday, Oct. 8. For more info or vendor reservations, call [610-269-1576](tel:610-269-1576).

# Downingtown Area Historical Society's

## Hist-O-Gram



*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

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

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### Friends Fall Festival

More than 40 crafters, live music, festival food, baked goods, kids' activities, local artwork and antiques, perennial flowers, and an exhibit of vintage Quaker clothing and memorabilia, will be some of the attractions at the Downingtown Friends Meeting's Fall Festival 9 AM to 4 PM Saturday Oct. 8. The meeting is located on East Lancaster Ave.(Rte. 30) in Downingtown. Call [610-296-7861](tel:610-296-7861) for more info.

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### Candle Light Dinner for Four at Downingtown Log House

Sponsored by Downingtown Lions Club. Catered by Luigi and Giovanni Ristorante.

**Only 100 raffle tickets being sold @ \$25. For tickets, call Lion Don Greenleaf, [610-363-2297](tel:610-363-2297). Drawing will take place on Saturday, Nov. 19 at Lions Club's Annual Pancake Breakfast. Dinner can be between Jan. 2 and March 31.**

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### Joseph's People--Downingtown Chapter

An ecumenical support mission to help un/underemployed people that are run entirely by volunteers. We have been at St. Joseph's since 1995.

Visit web page, [www.josephspeople.org](http://www.josephspeople.org) or just come to a meeting at St. Joseph's Church, Parish Meeting Room behind the school, 460 Manor Ave., Downingtown.

Call [610 873-7117](tel:610-873-7117). Leave Message. Leader: Cheryl Spaulding,

Email: [JPCheryl@verizon.net](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).

Meets 7:30 PM 2nd & 4th Tues. of the month. All are welcome.

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Hist-O-Grams are emailed weekly to members and friends of the Downingtown Area Historical Society. If you want to make a comment, add your email address to our list, or have your email address deleted from the list, send an email to: [info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:info@downingtownareahistoricalociety.org). We won't share or sell email addresses.

**Downingtown Area Historical Society's**

# **Hist-O-Gram**



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