



# Downingtown Area Historical Society *History Notes*

Interesting bits of Downingtown area history

July 25, 2019

Volume 2, Issue 14

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## The Jet Plane Crash In a Lionville Orchard (More Information and Photographs!)

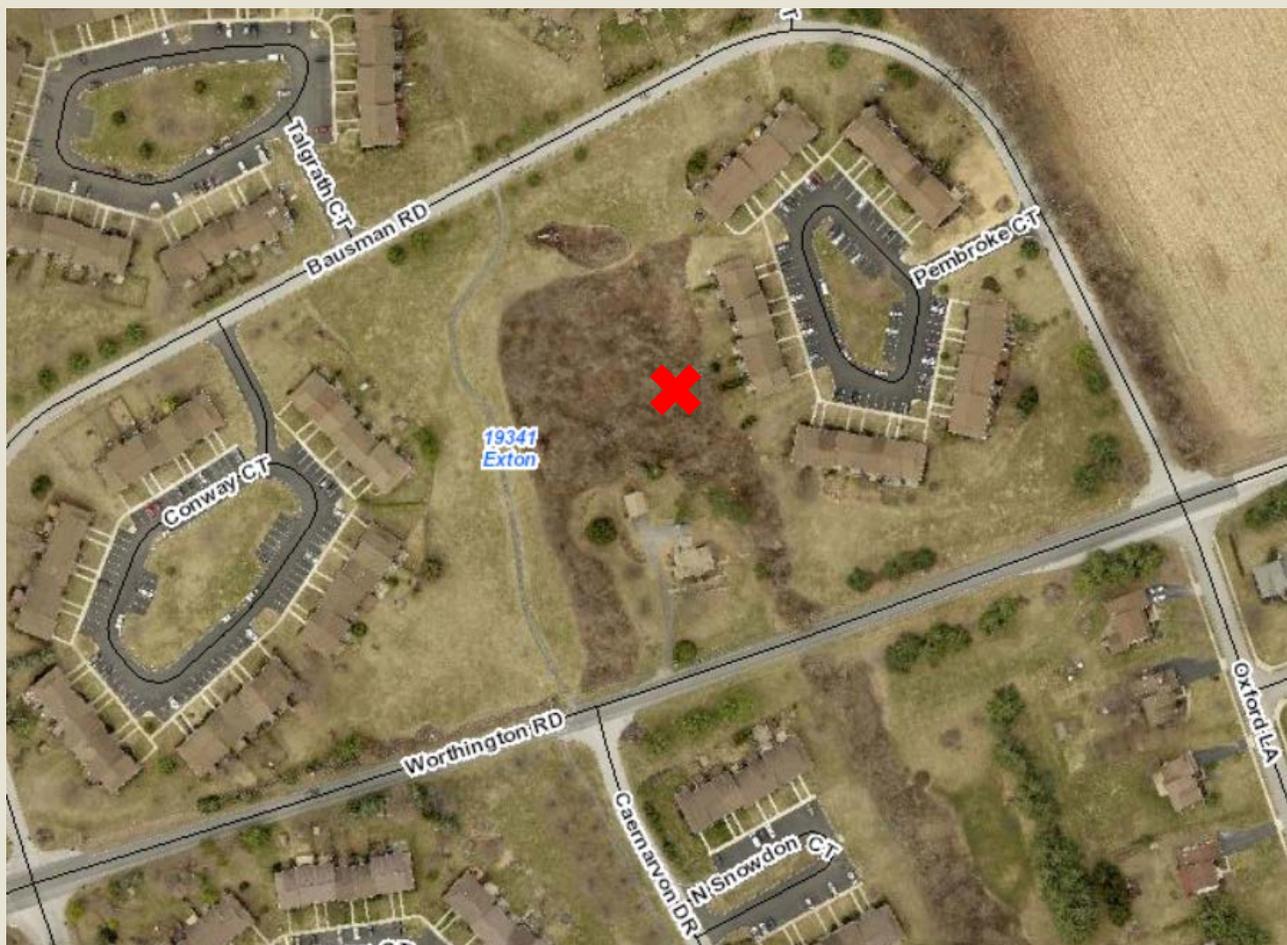
Our June 27 issue of **History Notes** featured the May 18, 1950 crash of an Air Force jet trainer plane near Lionville. The plane's pilots safely bailed out before the plane crashed into the orchard of Henry Russell Worthington, Sr. on the east side of Route 100. The plane just missed the home of Worthington's son Henry Jr. Henry Jr. and his wife Louise were away that evening attending special services at the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in West Chester where they were members. The couple returned home shortly after the 10:20 PM crash. Their two young sons, Russ and Dick, were staying with an aunt nearby. Russ Worthington, who lives in New Jersey, was sent a link to our article and he contacted us right away as that night and the following days when the Air Force removed the jet remains and cleaned up their property was still fresh in his mind. Russ also provided us with photographs his parents took and allowed us to share them with our readers. On the following pages are some of these photographs. Thank you Russ!!



*The Worthingtons operated a large peach and apple orchard north of Exton and slightly east of the Village of Lionville. None of it remains today. The advertisement above was placed in the Daily Local News in August 1948.*

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In our article we included a 1957 aerial photograph of the Worthington orchards and surrounding area, but we didn't know exactly where the jet crashed. When Russ Worthington contacted us, he provided the exact location which we are showing as the red 'X' on the modern aerial photograph below. The crash site was about 100 yards north of the home where Russ grew up (which is still standing). The bottom photograph shows an Air Force truck carrying the wreckage of the plane from the Worthington's property. Russ' mother Louise wrote on the back: "What is left of the P80."



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The top left image shows a wing of the Lockheed P-80 "Shooting Star" caught in a peach tree. The top right image shows the jet's engine which was also party entangled in a peach tree. The bottom image shows Russ and his younger brother Dick Worthington playing on one of the Air Force vehicles that arrived to clean up the wreckage. The two boys were staying with an aunt on the other side of the orchard on the night of May 18, 1950 when the jet crashed.



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The top image below shows debris from the plane, including the cockpit, piled on the side of the road in front of the Worthington home waiting to be picked up by the Air Force. On the back side of the bottom image Russ' mother Louise Worthington wrote, "Truck to haul the remains away." The road is now Worthington Road.



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The image at the right shows Russ and Dick Worthington playing in a hole in the peach orchard behind their home made by the crashed jet. Russ remembers that they couldn't go outside barefoot for years because of the sharp metal objects from the crash that still littered the area. Dick remembers that they often found pieces of the plane when digging in the garden or when workers were cultivating the orchard. The image at bottom left shows an Air Force crane picking up what looks like the jet's engine in the peach orchard.

Dick Worthington also remembers the military police and guards who came to secure the sight from souvenir hunters and curiosity-seekers. The bottom left image shows two civilian guards who came from Harrisburg.

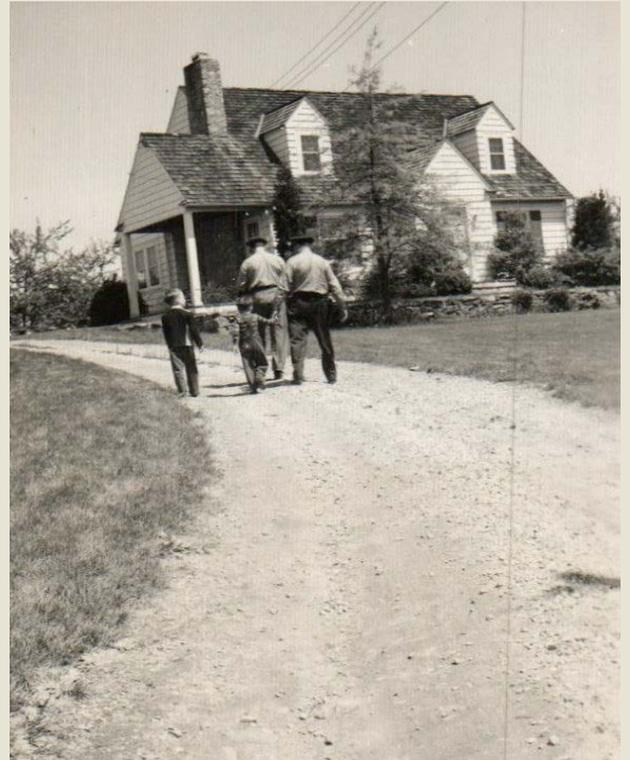


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The image at the bottom left shows one of the plane's wing tanks by the hole as a result of the crash.

Louise Worthington wrote on the back of the original photograph at the bottom right "Ready to go home." It shows the two Worthington boys walking up the driveway to their home with what looks like two Air Force personnel. Louise's note may have meant that the Worthington family was allowed back in their home, or that the military personnel had cleaned up the wreckage and were now headed home themselves – or both.

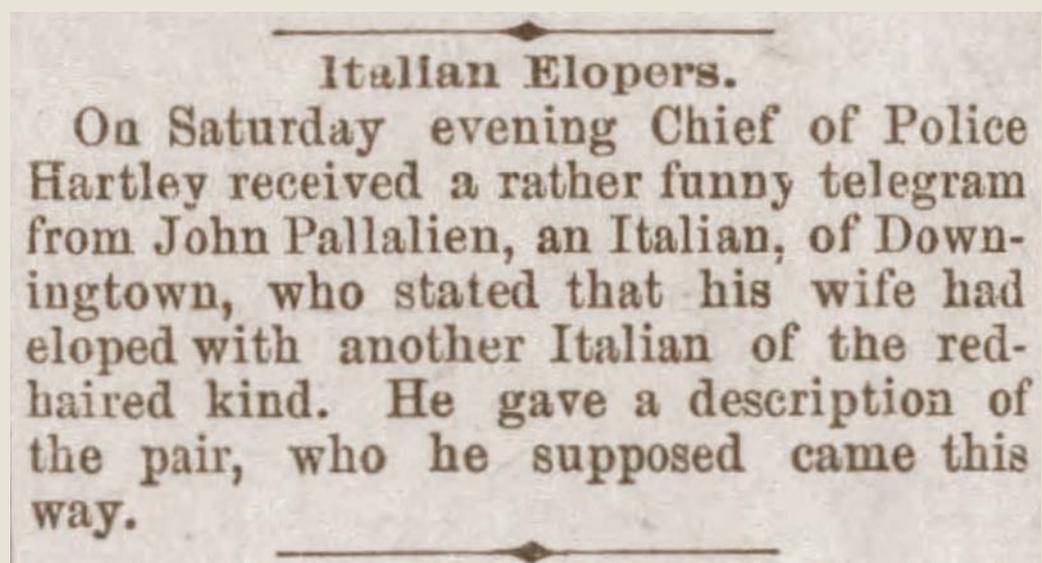
We want to again thank Russ Worthington for sharing his remembrances and graciously allowing us to use the photographs taken by his parents during the days following the crash.



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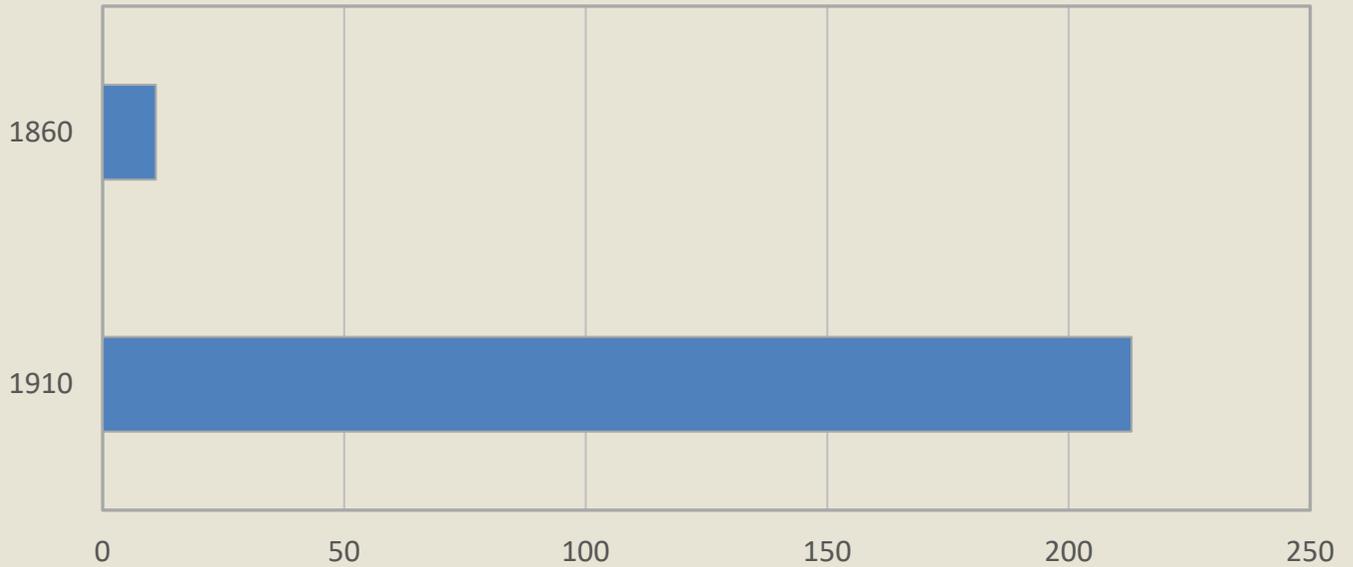
## In The (Old) News – Items that Made Headlines Back in the Day

This short article appeared in the Lancaster Intelligencer on Wednesday, December 5, 1894.

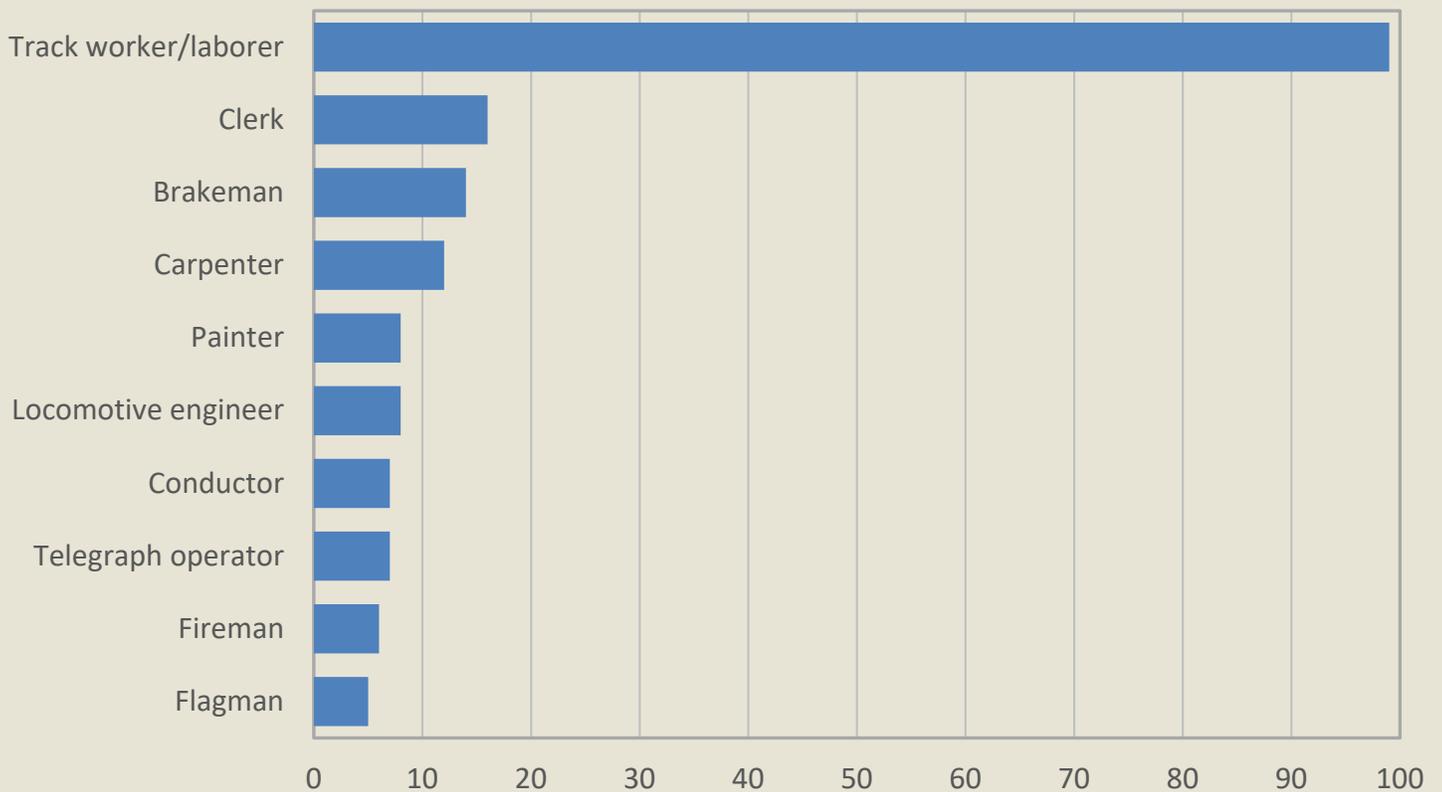


# Downingtown Did-You-Know?

Did you that in 1860 there were just eleven railroad workers living in Downingtown? By 1910 there were well over 200.



In 1910 there were dozens of different jobs with the railroad industry in Downingtown including...



## Downingtown Vintage Ad

The following ad for the Coffee Cup appeared in the Downingtown Archive in 1954. In the undated image at the bottom workers are installing a new brick façade on the Coffee Cup.

**NOW OPEN**

**DOWNINGTOWN COFFEE**

**5¢ Cup      CUP      Cup 5¢**

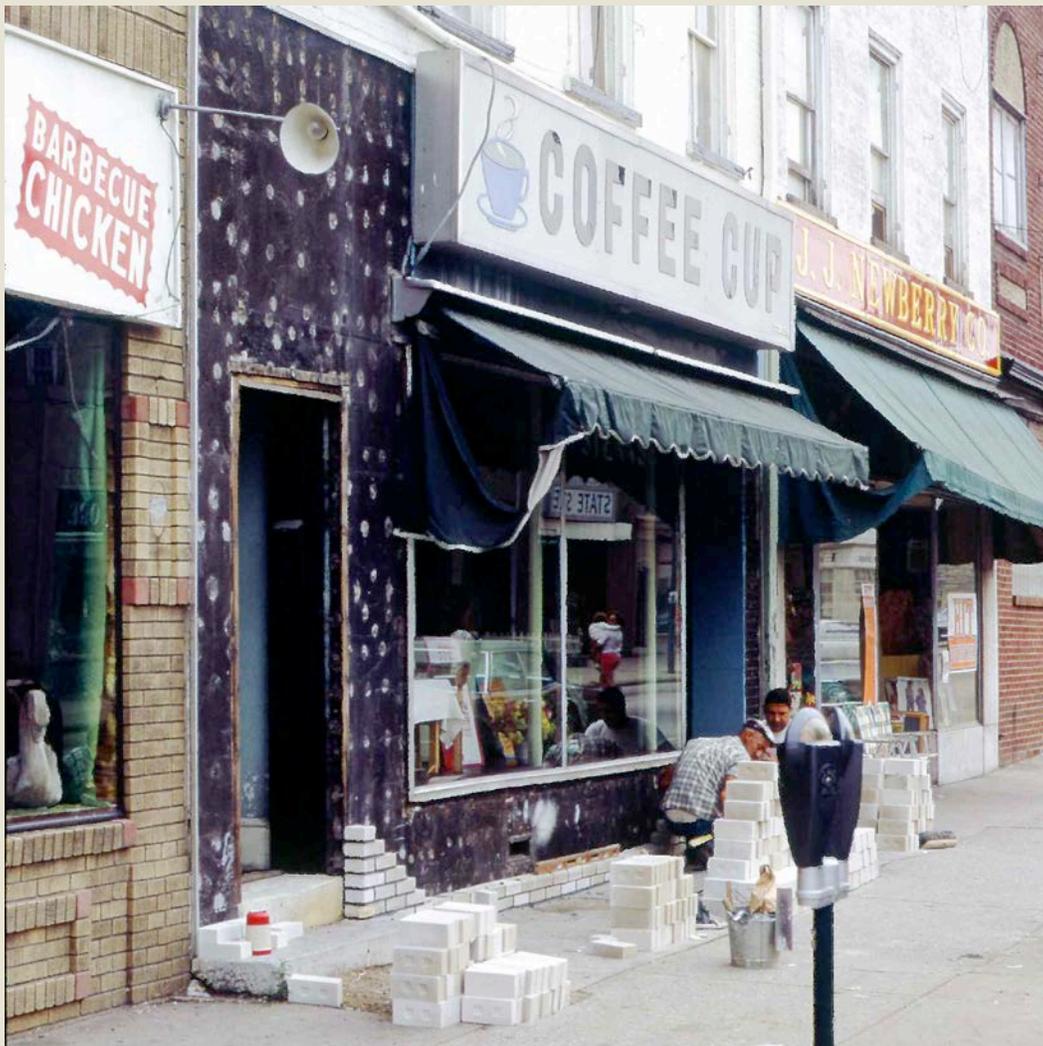
*Specializing in - Sandwiches - Platters*

**Cup of Coffee and Cream — Still 5¢**

**Hot Dog and Roll — Still 10¢**

**NEWLY MODERNIZED**

**Center Square, Downingtown**



# Ashbridge Artifact

Now in our collection from a recent donation from the estate of Emily Lewis were several certification cards for Allan Cope Lewis (Emily's brother) from the Pennsylvania State Board of Undertakers including one from 1926 below. The son of Edge and Jennie Lewis, Allan was born in 1900 and grew up in the west end of Downingtown. He served in the Army during World War 1 and later had a funeral home at 19 Whiteland Avenue. The bottom image shows a receipt for tuition to the Eckels College of Embalming where he attended in 1924. Allan later moved to Aberdeen, Maryland where he passed away in 1949.

ALLAN C. LEWIS  
FUNERAL DIRECTOR  
Successor to John L. Weldin Est  
19 Whiteland Ave.  
Bell Phone 381

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

2043

STATE BOARD OF UNDERTAKERS

This Certifies That Allan C. Lewis  
has paid the Registration Fee of two dollars as required by the  
Pennsylvania laws, Act 65, P. L. 1925, and is entitled to practice  
Undertaking for the year indicated.

License No. 5074. Date Jan. 15, 1926.

*W. C. Price* President.  
Issued by Department of Public Instruction.

Attest:  
*Chas. Hamann* Secretary.

*Francis B. Hoas*  
(ent)

Philadelphia, February 25th, 1924

Received of Allen C. Lewis

One Hundred Forty Dollars

BALANCE OF TUITION FOR SPRING SCHOOL IN EMBALMING

\$ 140.00

ECKELS COLLEGE OF EMBALMING  
per. *E. M. Thompson*

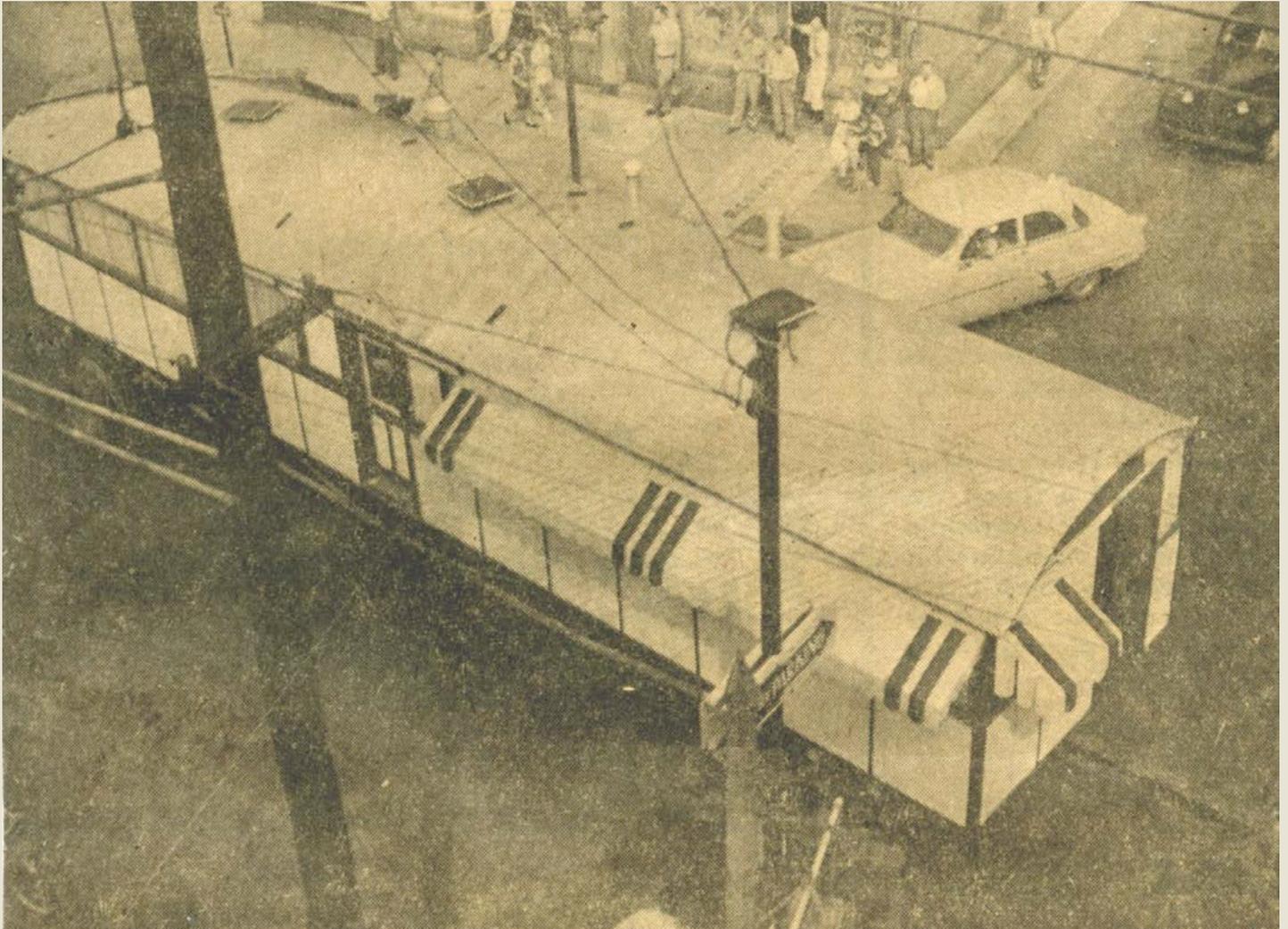
U.S. Bond. The George B. Fish Company Stationers & Printers, 30 South 16th St. Philadelphia, Pa.

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## Last Issue's Mystery Pic

No one was able to identify what was happening in the image below. A lot of readers thought last issue's Mystery Pic was the Downingtown Diner being moved along Lancaster Avenue. But this is actually the Swan Diner, and it was located on Brandywine Avenue next to the old Swan Hotel (directly across the street from Downingtown National Bank). The image below was taken on August 30, 1954 from one of the Swan Hotel's windows facing Lancaster Avenue. This day the diner, which had sat at the location for about 20 years, was being moved to Exton. It was put on wheels, moved onto Brandywine Avenue, backed into Park Lane, then swung around onto Lancaster Avenue and pulled east. In the image below the white car is coming from Wallace Avenue.

That day the diner was being moved to its fourth location, to the intersection of Route 100 and Boot Road. We are not sure of its first location, but its second location was along Route 100 in Exton just north of Route 30. Around 1934 or 1935 it was moved during a snowstorm to the west side of the Swan Hotel, its third location. Then it moved back to Exton in this move. If anyone has more information about what happened to the diner after this, please let us know.



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## Chester County's *Town Tours & Village Walks* Coming to Downingtown!

Every summer Chester County sponsors a *Town Tours & Village Walks* program which is a series free tours through old neighborhoods, villages, and other historic sites in the County. One of the tours this summer will be through the Johnsontown neighborhood of Downingtown on August 22 starting at 5 PM. This tour of a 'town within a town' is sponsored by the Downingtown Area Historical Society, Downingtown Historic Commission, and St. Anthony's Lodge. The 11 stops on this tour will include old stores, churches, and homes in Johnsontown, with five-minute presentations given at each one, some by individuals who grew up in the neighborhood. For more information on this and other tours click on the following link: [Town Tours](#)



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## Downingtown Area Mystery Pic

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



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# Advertisements for Non-Profits

## ***Marshallton United Methodist Church Chicken BBQ Dinner***

The Marshallton United Methodist Church is hosting a Chicken BBQ Dinner on Saturday, July 27, 2019. The menu includes BBQ chicken, Cole slaw, corn on the cob, baked beans, roll & butter, dessert, and beverage. Hours for the "Eat-in" or "Take-out" option are from 4:30 to 6:30 pm. Cost is \$13/adult and \$5/child (5 to 12 years of age) if ordered before July 23 and \$15/\$5 at the door. The church is located at 1282 West Strasburg Road, West Chester, PA. Contact the church office at (610) 696-5247 or [office@marshalltonchurch.org](mailto:office@marshalltonchurch.org) with any questions.

***Fall 2019 East Brandywine Historical Commission Speakers Series.*** All programs are held at 3:30 p.m. at the East Brandywine Township Building

***Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>*** - "Property Research in East Brandywine Township." The speaker is John E. Smith III, Assistant Archivist for Chester County Archives. Chester County Archives.

***Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>*** - "Penn and the Lenape." The speaker is Doug Miller, Director of Pennsbury Manor – William and Hannah Penn's home.

***Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup>*** - "History of the American Flag." The speaker is Michael Rapp. Michael and his wife Jeanne owned Brandywine Flags from 1995"

## ***Uwchlan Township Historical Commission***

The Uwchlan Township Historical Commission will open the Edith P. Moore Schoolhouse (9 North Village Avenue, Lionville) and the John Cadwalader House (21 North Village Avenue, Lionville) on the first Sunday of each month, April through November. Hours for both are 2PM-4PM.

## ***Lyme Disease Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania***

The Lyme Disease Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, an education and support group for patients and caregivers who have been affected by Lyme Disease, will meet Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 7PM at the Kennett Friends Meeting House on PA Rt 82 (125 W. Sickel St., Kennett Square, PA 19348). This will be a special support meeting to answer your questions, share your experiences, and meet others who are battling Lyme Disease. Meetings are free and all are welcome. Check [www.lymepa.org](http://www.lymepa.org) for directions.

## ***Chester County Marine Corps League Detachment***

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

## ***Greater Downingtown Business and Professional Women (BPW)***

Meets monthly on the 2nd Wednesday evening, at 6 pm, in the Thorndale Inn for a dinner, networking, program and meeting. All area women are welcome. Most nights there is a program such as a speaker. Call Cindy Markley for your reservation for dinner at 610-363-1404. We meet each month from September to June.

## ***Joseph's People, Downingtown chapter***

An ecumenical support mission to help unemployed or underemployed people. The group is entirely conducted by volunteers, and has been at St. Joseph's since 1995. Meets at 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month. All are welcome. Visit web page, <http://josephspeople.org/our-chapters/downingtown/>, or just come to a meeting at St. Joseph's Parish Meeting Room behind the school, 460 Manor Ave., Downingtown. Call 610-873-7117. Leave Message. Leader: Cheryl Spaulding, Email: [cheryl.spaulding@josephspeople.org](mailto:cheryl.spaulding@josephspeople.org).

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## Historical Society's Wish List

The Downingtown Area Historical Society is a non-profit organization proudly maintaining the 310-year-old Ashbridge House and a large archives. The society can always use gifts in kind with an immediate need for:

- General household items and office supplies including:
  - Pens and pencils
  - Scotch tape and masking tape
  - Copier paper (both color and white)
  - Light bulbs
  - Paper towels
  - Large and small trash bags
- Amazon gift cards or gift cards to Home Depot or Lowes. Sometimes we need to make quick purchases so gift cards would come in very handy.

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



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### Downingtown Area Historical Society

P.O. Box 9, Downingtown, PA 19335

610-269-1709

[dths1709@gmail.com](mailto:dths1709@gmail.com)

<https://www.downingtownhistory.org>

Like us on Facebook:



Follow us on Twitter:



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



### DAHS Board of Directors

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