



General Membership Meeting

*Monday,
June 12, 2006
5:30 PM*

at the home of
Bob & Gloria Myers



June Program:
*Members' Annual
Summer Picnic
And "Fun Auction"*
(Bring a wrapped
gift for auction!)



Hospitality
*Members'
Covered Dish*



**Wissahickon
Valley Historical
Society**
799 Skippack Pike
Blue Bell, PA 19422
215.646.6541

From the Desk of the President:

It's June and that means it's time for our **Annual Covered Dish Picnic**. Once again, we have been invited to the lovely home of Bob and Gloria Myers in Fort Washington. Your admission is a covered dish, bring whatever you like and make sure it's enough to serve 8. The party begins at 5:30 PM.

We will again host a **Fun Auction** during the picnic. Please bring a "wrapped" item that you no longer want (so we cannot tell what we are bidding on). Items can be new (you know you have gifts that you have no use for), old (something with a little value) or funny (a gag gift). Back in the 70s and 80s we called this our Corn Auction because you purchased bags of corn kernels to bid with. This year we will use dried beans. It will be a fun activity so plan to participate.

As we end our 2005-2006 season, I would like to reflect on the year. Our challenge for this year was programs. We had a difficult time with arrangements for speakers or weather or scheduling and I am trying to remedy this situation with a new Program Committee. By the time you read this, the Program Committee should be underway planning for next season.

In membership news, we are proud to welcome several new members to our historical society. We'd like to see a few more new faces each year as historic preservation becomes ever important in our changing and growing communities. This was also a difficult year for some of our members (or their loved ones) who have experienced health issues. Our prayers go out to each of you for a speedy recovery; we wish you well and hope you return to join us soon.

Upcoming events: We are now planning for our Fall Flea Market, to be held Saturday, October 14, 2006. After hosting our largest and most successful flea market last year, it is back by popular demand. We anticipate this year's event to be even bigger with permission to expand our selling area to in front of the Korean Church / School. Keep checking back with us to learn more about this great money-maker event.

In other news, we have been working diligently to get our 1895 Schoolhouse on the National Register of Historic Places. John Simon, Emmy Simon's son, has been spearheading the most recent attempt by completing the submission requirements for this difficult process. Many members have contributed working on this application over the last several years and with John's new research, we are now sending in the final application.

In closing, I would like to thank all of our members for their contributions and the work you have done for our Society over the last year. We couldn't have done it without you.

*Sincerely,
Frank J. Russo, Jr., Acting President*

May 2006 – Members' Covered Dish

WVHS Summer Picnic is Monday, June 12 ...

You are cordially invited to join us for our Annual June Picnic, Monday, June 12, at 5:30 pm at the home residence of our members Bob and Gloria Myers. This event is a covered dish supper, with no additional costs.

**Monday, June 12th 5:30 PM at the home of Bob and Gloria Myers
1280 Pinetown Road, Fort Washington, PA**

All we ask is for those attending to bring a covered dish and yourself. We need main courses, side casseroles, appetizers, and desserts. Your families are welcome.

We again wish to thank Bob and Gloria for opening up their home and hosting this event. They are always gracious hosts.

If you haven't already signed up and wish to attend and bring along your specialty covered dish, please contact Marie Russo at 215-616-2661. See you there!

**Bob & Gloria's home is located at
1280 Pinetown Road, Ft. Washington, PA.**

Directions – Starting from WVHS 1895 Schoolhouse:

- Head east on **SKIPPACK PIKE** towards Broad Axe.
- Turn left on **BUTLER PIKE**.
Follow thru Ambler
- Turn right onto **SUSQUEHANNA AVENUE**.
- Turn right on **PINETOWN ROAD**;
look for 1280 on the right.



National Register of Historic Places ...

The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com>

Or visit the Montgomery County regional historical places at:

<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/pa/Montgomery/districts.html>

WVHS — Financial Aid Required

To help defray our operating costs, don't forget to bring in your used computer printer ink cartridges – there's postage-paid envelopes available in the Schoolhouse to mail and recycle the used cartridges. See the display on the entry table. Every little bit helps!

Growing Up In Ambler in the 1950s and 1960s

Old Fashioned Bargain Days: The Sidewalk Sale

Back in the 1960's, a special time each June that was called Old Fashioned Bargain Days. This event traces its origin back to June 1963 when Ambler was celebrating its 75th Anniversary Celebration. Stores, offices, and businesses along Butler Avenue were decked out with flags and special yellow and black signs announcing "Old Fashioned Bargain Days". During that first year, the weeklong event featured window displays of antique and historical items. Store sales staff donned 19th century outfits and bonnets and top hats.

Each store and business along the avenue set up tables and bins selling their wares at "old fashioned" prices. For a mere nickel or dime you could purchase almost any item you longed to own. Our F.W. Woolworth store featured a Neapolitan Ice Cream Sandwich for nine cents — what child didn't want that treat in early summer! Outside the store, an array of merchandise ranging from toys to household wares could be purchased for mere pennies. At the counter, special bargain prices heralded the event for the day's blue plate special.

The Ambler Drug Company located in the Ambler Theatre block, had health and beauty items at rolled-back prices. Other stores featured items with sidewalk sale displays including the Gift Gallery, Mary Jane Wilson Gifts, Jenny K Gifts, Gill's Variety Store, Gresh's Toys and Hobbies, Kel-ees Pet Shop, Brandenburg's Stationery, Hilton Drug Store, and Sun Ray Drugs.

In addition to the old fashioned sales, there was plenty of entertainment provided to the patrons, including a Philly radio station who broadcasted from Cavalier Drive, dance troupes from Olin Kearsse Dance Studio, plus clowns and celebrity guests from local television stations.

The Old Fashioned Bargain Days event continued each year until sometime in the 1970's. It died out as businesses along the avenue began to vacate due to the rise of shopping centers and malls.

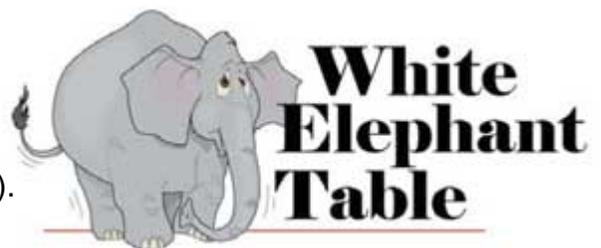
I have my memories of this event and of simpler times of growing-up in Ambler in the 1950's and '60's. Do you remember?
— *Submitted by Frank J. Russo, Jr.*

WVHS Plans for 2006 Fall Flea Market

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for **Saturday, October 14, 2006**, for the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society's Fall Flea Market.

The vendors are calling and we're calling all members to start their spring cleaning early for our Fall Flea Market event! The planning committee will be meeting in May to layout the groundwork for another great flea market (and I think they're planning for good weather, again, too!).

Josephine Sawicki will be organizing the White Elephant sale — after running such a successful table last year she's up for the challenge to top her sales this year. She is asking for you to start looking in your closets and attics for any unwanted "wares" that could be donated and sold at the Flea Market to benefit the WVHS.





Wissahickon Valley Historical Society Calendar of Events ~ June 2006 and upcoming events!

Mon., June 12 **WVHS Members' Summer Picnic** **5:30 PM**
(At the Myers' home in Ft. Washington ... covered dish event)

Happy Summer to All!

Mon., Sept. 12..... **General Business Meeting**..... **7:30 PM**
"Topic to be Announced"

Mon., Sept. 26..... *Board Meeting* *7:00 PM*

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT: <http://www.angelfire.com/pa5/wvhs>
or e-mail us at: wvhs_newsletter@yahoo.com



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