



Wissahickon Valley

historical society

Ambler
Lower Gwynedd
Whitpain

www.wvalleyhs.org

info.wvalleyhs.org

April 2015

A Brief History of Whitpain Township

Join us for a visually rich presentation - including photos by local photographers George Peck, Clara Beck and others.

Rescheduled from March.



Please bring your stories of Whitpain history to add to the program.

Presented by the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society
Monday, April 13 at 7:30

at the 1895 Schoolhouse
Skippack Pike and School Road in Blue Bell

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Serving Lower Gwynedd, Whitpain, and Ambler

Volume 16, Issue 7

WVHS Library Display Well Received

This year's Blue Bell library display focused on the history of Whitpain. It featured some of the original photographs from Whitpain - Crossroads in Time. Artifacts from our collection added color and interest. We received several positive comments.



Market Day Scheduled

This year's Market Day - WVHS's major fund raiser - will be Saturday, May 9 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. There is an application for tables on the WVHS website or one can call Marie at 215-542-8845.

The Society will have a bake table and a book sale. Please consider baking and/or recycling some books. Boxed books can be left on the porch anytime; baked goods can be left off on Friday, May 8 or early on May 9.



Helpers are also needed to sort books, mark out spaces for tables, and sell baked goods and books. Please consider volunteering a couple of hours. Check with Russ at 215-643-5048.

This year a special attraction will be a plant sale. It will feature flowers grown and sold by Lakeside School students. Lakeside is a work/study school located in North Wales. Proceeds from the sale benefit the school. This is perfect timing for Mother's Day - May 10. Hopefully by then we will have some weather warm enough for planting as well!

Applications Sought

The Society is seeking a librarian and a secretary to help with its mission. The new library is a pleasant, efficient place to work. We are not using the Dewey decimal to organize our books since most of them fall into the same category. The work would be accessioning donations, helping researcher to find materials, and making a master list of titles.

Thanks to Whitpain Township

Many thanks to Whitpain Township for including WVHS in their annual budget. We received \$1000 from the township to help with expenses.

Our parking lot is in much better condition after Whitpain's road crew filled potholes. This makes it much safer for all.

At the March board meeting, it was decided that Russ Bellavance, John Simon, and Bob Whittock would arrange a walk-through of the 1895 Schoolhouse with experts from Whitpain Township - looking for ways we can make the building safer and more efficient as well as making some long term plans.

Mark Your Calendar

April 13 - WVHS Monthly meeting - program: A Brief History of Whitpain - 7:30 p.m. at the 1895 Schoolhouse.

April 15 - Bayberry Questers visit the 1895 Schoolhouse - 11 a.m.

April 18 - Ambler Earthfest - 11 to 4:30 - WVHS will have a table entitled "Repurposing Buildings" - If you are interested in helping for an hour or so, please call 215-542-7753.

April 19 - Open House at WVHS 1 to 4 p.m.

Open House at Evans Mumbower Mill

April 20 - Community Observatory session - MCCC - 8 to 10 p.m.

April 25 - Chemical Heritage Foundation sponsored program on the legacy of Keasbey-Mattison at Act II, Ambler. WVHS contributed information for this program.

April 27 - WVHS Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Bellavance home

May 9 - WVHS Market Day, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the 1895 Schoolhouse

May ? - WVHS outing to Aldie Mansion (see right), Doylestown - Details to follow.



Note from the President's Desk.

Starting with last Fall, we have been operating with an increased board, having invited Marie Goldkamp, Dottie MacDermott and Pat Plumb to join us from the board of the Historical Society of Whitpain. We would now like to have the members formally ratify their appointment at the June meeting. The Board will then formally consist of (alphabetically): Russ Bellavance, Marie Goldkamp, Peg Johnston, Dottie MacDermott, Mary Lou McFarland, Pat Plumb, Emmy Simon, John Simon and Bob Whittock. Please join us at our annual closing picnic (June 8 at the 1895 Schoolhouse) and cast your vote of ratification. See you there.

WVHS Presents Programs to Area Groups

On March 31, Marie Goldkamp, Dot MacDermott, and Peg Johnston traveled to the Schwenckfelf Manor Center in Lansdale to present a program about the Ambler, Lower Gwynedd, and Whitpain area. It was a learning experience for all. Several members of the audience had grown up in Ambler and Centre Square and shared their memories. One woman recalled that her father had driven the truck that carried the slag from the Keasbey Mattison factory to the "White Mountain".

Another woman had lived on Hoover Rd. in



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Ambler and could trace the history of the various schools in the Ambler. One gentleman remembered attending a one room school on Skippack Pike and going to Reed's store.

On April 15 at 11 a.m. the Bayberry Questers will visit the 1895 Schoolhouse to hear about our work and tour the museum. Members are welcome.

Condolences

We are sorry to announce that two long time historical society members - Jean McCracken and Ann Greiner - passed away recently.

Jean and her husband Charley lived in the Blue Bell area for many years and were active in many local service organizations. They were members of the Whitpain Historical Society.

Ann and her husband Dutch were early members of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society. Dutch served as building supervisor during the years when much of the work of the building was done by members. Ann was an excellent watercolor painter and the WVHS has several of her paintings in its collection.

Our condolences to the families of Jean and Ann. Their dedication to historical preservation and their community serves as a model.

Development of Historic Upper Dublin Tract

The March 29 edition of the Ambler Gazette carried a long article about the proposed development of the Pizek tract. The tract straddles Pennsylvania Avenue at Camp Hill Road. The property features Emlen House, a private 18th century estate that served as George Washington's headquarters during the part of the winter of 1777. Development plans include the preservation of the house as well as open space along the Sandy Run Creek. Details of the development are still under consideration.



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