



Wissahickon Valley  
*historical society*

*Serving Ambler Borough and Lower Gwynedd and  
Whitpain Townships      wvalleyhs.org      215-646-6541*

*THE WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
INVITES YOU  
TO THE GRAND REOPENING  
OF OUR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY  
IN THE 1895 WHITPAIN PUBLIC SCHOOL  
AT THE CORNER OF SKIPPACK PIKE AND  
SCHOOL ROAD  
BLUE BELL  
ON SUNDAY APRIL 14, 2019  
FROM 1:00 TO 4:00  
FEATURING MUSIC, GAMES, REFRESHMENTS  
AND FAMILY FUN  
COME EXPERIENCE OUR HERITAGE!*

**To donate items for the refreshment table,  
please call Bev Hahn, 610-279-3286.**

## Preparing for the Re-opening



The last many months have witnessed a number of regular and some special efforts at the 1895 Schoolhouse. For the last couple of months, Thursday mornings usually see 6 to 10 members taking on various tasks - some routine, some on new exhibit. At left, Marie Goldkamp and Ethel Hutchinson arrange

showcase on second floor.

Members of Blue Bell Rotary (Bob Durian, Tom Wynn, Rik Lundell - see above right) have joined us for several sessions - washing and painting pallets and hanging blinds and exhibits.

Whitpain Township employees (Lee Miller, Stan Dull, Ron Fricker, and Mike Gilbert - see right) moved our local fossil from the garage to its spot in the basement.



## Recent Donations

The James E. Esposito collection - includes several items and stories from his career at Amchem.

The Kyle Slingluff collection - includes items from Kyle's school days at Whitpain Public School and his career at Amchem. His family had a farm along Penllyn-Blue Bell Pike.

From Mabel Whittock - an "Ambler" sweatshirt, school banners, pencils from local organizations, programs from local events

From Frank Russo - a copy of the weekly *Ambler News* dated Sept. 12, 1939 - one of three Ambler focused newspapers of the early 1900s. The *Ambler Gazette*, a weekly, is the only one that exists today. Old newspapers are an excellent source of information about businesses and activities of another time.

## Quester Grant Sponsors "Women of the Wissahickon"

Thanks to a Blue Bell Quester grant, a new exhibit featuring Women of the Wissahickon is on display on our first floor. Many of the women featured were teachers in area schools as well as being historians and authors. We are lucky to have books by several of them in our library collection. 2020 will mark the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in the United States

## **Some WVHS Opportunities**

For the past several years the WVHS has provided small exhibits at the Whitpain and Lower Gwynedd Township and at Ambler Borough buildings. The exhibits feature artifacts and photos of local interest. Ambler recently learned about the history of its post office. Lower Gwynedd's exhibit featured photos from a walk up Bethlehem Pike. Dawesfield was the focus of a recent Whitpain exhibit.

The exhibits are in place for 2 months, and all the materials come from the WVHS's collections. The cases aren't large and it is easy to choose photographs and artifacts to fill them. We often share ideas and help each other locate items for the displays. If this sounds interesting, please consider giving it a try. Please contact Peg Johnston at 215-542-7753.

The Society is also looking for a recording secretary and an archivist. Please contact Russ Bellavance if you would like to know more about either of these opportunities.

Of course, articles for the newsletter are always welcome.

## **Mark Your Calendar**

**Saturday, April 13** - Sheep shearing at Wentz Farmstead - 10 a.m. -3 p.m.

**Sunday, April 14** - Grand Re-opening of the 1895 Schoolhouse, 1 to 4 p.m.

**Tuesday, April 16** - Fort Washington Historical Society - Program: Philadelphia Architecture

**Sunday, April 18** - Fort Washington Historical Society - Victorian Tea - call 215-643-4169

## **Two Recommendations for Summer Outings**

**Pennsbury Manor** - Located on 43 acres along the Delaware River, Pennsbury is the reconstructed 17th century home of William Penn, founder and first governor of Pennsylvania. Although Penn resided in Pennsylvania for only four years, his ideas influenced the country's founding fathers and the development of American democracy. Pennsbury is a living history museum. For example, on May 5 blacksmiths, joiners, and spinners as well as sheep shearers will present their trades from 1 to 4 p.m.

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

**American Swedish Historical Museum** - 1900 Pattison Ave., Philadelphia - Even before William Penn's arrival in the area, Swedes had establish New Sweden in 1638 along what became the Pennsylvania/Delaware border. The museum, built in 1926, houses exhibits of the Swedish colony as well as Swedens more modern influences. It is located in a park near the Sports' Complex. There is a fun Pippi's Treasure Hunt with hands-on activities for children. [www.americanswedish.org](http://www.americanswedish.org)



