



Wissahickon Valley

historical society

Ambler  
Lower Gwynedd  
Whitpain

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Wissahickon Valley Historical Society  
presents

## Native American Paths of the Eastern Pennsylvania by Jim Tufano, Local Historian

The talk will focus on the Lenape people of the Delaware Valley who traveled far and wide on foot throughout Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, eastern New York, and northern Delaware. These old footpaths served as the primary channels of trade and cultural diffusion for hundreds of years. These paths often became the roads and railroads of today.



Monday, January 8  
7 p.m. at the Blue Bell Library

Wissahickon Valley Historical Society  
Serving Lower Gwynedd, Whitpain, and Ambler  
[www.wvalleyhs.org](http://www.wvalleyhs.org)

**Please note: This is a repeat of an article from the December Newsletter:**

**From the President's Desk  
by Russ Bellavance**

Please mark your calendars for our meeting on Monday, February 12 (Abraham Lincoln's birthday), 2018. In addition to our program, we will be voting on new Amended and Restated Bylaws for the Society. We have been meaning to do this for some time. Our existing Bylaws did not really fit the way we have been operating and did not reflect our changed situation since our merger with the Historical Society of Whitpain. We looked at recent bylaws from other small societies for some good ideas and developed a set of bylaws that would fit what we are now and how we have been operating.

Briefly, the new bylaws provide that the members of the Society will elect all executive officers (president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary) every 2 years. These officers will also serve as 4 of the members of the board. The remaining board members will also be elected by the members of the Society for 2 year terms at the same time as the officers. There are no limits on the number of terms executive officers or board members may serve. The board may appoint other non-executive officers, such as curator, archivist or librarian, and may appoint replacement executive officers and board members if there is a vacancy during the 2 year term. The board will continue to make operational decisions for the Society, but certain major decisions (such as a merger with another society) require the consent of the members of the Society.

We have posted the complete text of the proposed Amended and Restated Bylaws on our website - [www.wvalleyhs.org](http://www.wvalleyhs.org). We invite you to read them, and, if you have any questions, please address them to me at [rebellavance67@gmail.com](mailto:rebellavance67@gmail.com). We ask you to vote in favor of the Amended and Restated Bylaws at the February meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting, we ask that you sign a Proxy Vote and give a copy to one of the Board members or mail it to P.O. Box 96, Ambler, PA 19002.

Thanks for you continued support of our Society. Together, we have made great strides these past several years, and we look forward to working together on future improvements.

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PROXY VOTE

The undersigned member of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society hereby casts my vote in favor of adoption of the Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Society in the form posted on the Society's website - [www.wvalleyhs.org](http://www.wvalleyhs.org)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name \_\_\_\_\_

## Mark Your Calendar

**Saturday, Sunday - Jan. 6,7** - Boar's Head Festival at St. Peter's Lutheran church, Barren Hill (Lafayette Hill) - various times. This is a lively festival with a huge cast. Check their web-site for times, etc.

**Saturday, Jan. 6** - Chocolate Workshop - Peter Wentz Farmstead - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - pre-registration required by January 3.

**Monday, Jan. 8** - WVHS monthly meeting and program - BlueBell library - 7 p.m.

**Sunday, Jan 14** - Open House - 1895 Schoolhouse - 1 to 4 p.m.

**Saturday, Feb. 10** - "Winter Chores and Treats" - Peter Wentz Farmstead - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## Typewriters In the News

by Peg Johnston

Tom Hanks' recent book *Uncommon Type* and an article from the Wall Street Journal about antique typewriters shared by Marie Goldkamp reminded me of the three typewriters in our collection as well as the numerous jobs I've had involving typewriters. Lots of us started on typewriters and moved on to computers.

A little research revealed some interesting history. Perhaps the earliest typing instruments was the *scrittura tattile*, a machine developed by printmaker Francesco Rampazetto to impress letters in paper in 1575. In 1774, Henry Mill obtained a patent in Britain for a machine that from the patent appears to have been similar to a more modern manual typewriter. During the 1880 the increasing importance and pace of business communication created a need for mechanization of the writing process. Stenographers and telegraphers could take down information at rates up to 130 words per minute (though I don't remember getting nearly that speed in high school typing class!); a writer with a pen could record a maximum of 30 words per minute.

The first commercially successful typewriter model was the Sholes & Glidden Type Writer appeared in 1874. It could only type uppercase letters. It cost \$125.

The typewriter in the historical society collection are:



A dial typewriter which is a child's typewriter but resembles the Columbia Index machine (1885). The handle on the dial controls character selection.

A vintage Smith-Corona - 1930s era. It was common in high school typing classes and offices. Though Smith-Corona is no longer manufacturing typewriters, today it is possible to obtain ribbons and cartridges on-line.



A Royal portable typewriter with carrying case.

Visiting young people our museum are interested in the machine as it looks like a computer, but it doesn't have a "delete" or "print" key!

Our collection also includes typewriter erasers, steno tablets, and carbon paper.

**Thanks** to Dot MacDermott for wonderful holiday decorations for the 1895 Schoolhouse doors.



**Thanks** to the Jean and Russ Bellavance for hosting the 2017 WVHS enjoyable holiday party.

**Thanks** to Ami Kardos, art teacher at BlueBell Elementary, for facilitating the WVHS exhibit at the school during November. Plans are for an exhibit at Lower Gwynedd Elementary in the new year.

**Thanks** to Emmy Simon for accessioning the boxes of files from the Whitpain Historical Society. The list of materials will be available on the WVHS web-site and the materials will be stored in our library.



**Thanks** to Joan Duxbury, Sally Zeller, and Yen Ho for taking on the basement reorganization. We hope to have display areas for Marsden glass artifacts, local farm tools, the locally extracted dinosaur fossil as well as explanations of the basic construction of the building.



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