



Wissahickon Valley

historical society

Ambler
Lower Gwynedd
Whitpain

www.wvalleyhs.org

info@wvalleyhs.org

Volume 13, Issue 4, Dec. 2011

Join with friends at the annual
Holiday Get-Together
December 11 - 2 to 5 p.m.
(Please note afternoon time.)

Hosted by Jean and Russ
Bellavance
148 S. Bethlehem Pike,
Ambler

Please bring a salad, vegetable
dish, or dessert to share.
\$5 per person for
turkey and ham and beverage.

Decorating at the
Bellavances on Saturday,
Dec. 10 at 1 p.m.
Questions: call 215-643-5048



Noteworthy: Wentz Farm hosts Candlelight Tour on Saturday, December 3 from 2 - 8 p.m. "A soft glow of candlelight will guide you throughout the decorated Farmstead for tours showcasing period music, seasonal decorations, holiday food, and a visit from Belsnickel, a Pennsylvania German St. Nicholas in furs."

Visits from Blue Bell, to Lower Gwynedd Schools

Wissahickon School District third graders are studying early Pennsylvania history. As part of their study of the Lenni Lenape in this area, students of Blue Bell Elementary visited the 1895 Schoolhouse.

They learned that students in 1895 would have also been learning about the Lenni Lenape in much the same way as they are. **Peg Diorio, Emmy Simon, and Peg Johnston** shared items from our collection and from their own collections to encourage students to think about how the Lenni Lenape met their basic needs and took care of each other and the world around them.

On November 28, Peg and Emmy traveled to Lower Gwynedd Elementary to share the same lesson with third graders there.

As a final project, students are creating their own museum exhibits about the Lenni Lenape. The Society's presentation included how artifacts should be researched, recorded, and shared in a museum. We have been invited back to see their "museums".

The local Lenni Lenape belonged to the turtle clan and were considered the peacemakers. They make their homes of saplings and tree bark. Their diet included squash, beans, corn, nuts, berries, animals, and fish.



Lenni Lenape Items in Our Collection

Several Lenni Lenape projectile points are included in the collection of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society collection. The points were found near the site of the Mary Ambler home in Ambler. They were worked from native stone and were probably knapped for either deer or bear hunting since they are quite large (2 to 3"). They would have been attached to a longer stick with sinew (made from animal tendon) to be used as an arrow or a spear. Small bird feathers were attached to the opposite end of the stick to help the weapon to sail more accurately.



Small Repository Project

Two curators from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania will spent next Thursday, December 8 at the Schoolhouse. They will be reviewing our collection for inclusion on their on-line site. They will also be making suggestions for the organization and maintenance of our collection.

Recent Donations

From **Joe Schneider**: Wooden ruler - with James A. Cassidy logo

Business cards - Schneider Electric

Book marks - Johnson Press, Ambler

Note pad - CertainTeed, Ambler

Milk bottle - Bonnie View Farms, Center Square

From **Jeff Hahn**: Metal box of classic Crayola crayons

From **Josephine Sawicki**: Panel of "Fashionable Costumes" from an 1875 Ladies Book, framed by Ed Sawicki.

Request for Information

As the AmChem materials donated by former employees have been processed, we have realized that there are several other important local companies for which we have little or no information. For example, Unisys was an early computer giant whose headquarters was located on Township Line. CertainTeed, an Ambler company, produced PCV piping in its factory on Main Street.

We now have a copy machine in our library and would love to make copies of papers, photos, etc. related to local businesses and industries to include in our collection.

Video Tapes to CDs

The Society has access to a small collection of locally made video tapes. They include a tour of local school buildings with commentary (by Bob Whittock) and interviews with local residents (including ones made by high school students and another by Judy Baigis of Howard Kuhnle). These all tell invaluable stories.

Unfortunately video tapes have a short life span - shorter than home movies. A goal for this winter is to transfer these videos to CDs.

Another goal is to record more interviews. Interviews with employees of Keasby-Mattison would add greatly to our collection as would stories of attending the 1895 Schoolhouse. If you would like to get involved in recording (behind or in front of the camera), please contact Russ Bellavance.

Honoring Janice Driedger

The Society lost a long time member and friend in November when Janice Driedger passed away from Parkinson's disease. Janice always had a smile and words of encouragement for others. She and Art shared many adventures - traveling extensively as well as taking part in many local walks. They also hosted many backyard campfires and get-togethers for those interested in history. Janice will be missed. Art's address is 795 Penllyn Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422-1625.

Mark Your Calendar

Dec. 10 - Decorating for the holiday get-together - 1 p.m. - Bellavance's
Dec. 11 - Holiday get together - 2 -5 p.m. - Bellavance's
Jan. 9 - Monthly meeting - at the Wissahickon Public Library, Blue Bell, 7:30 p.m.

Please forward membership renewals or gift memberships to MaryLou McFarland, 500 Trinity Place, Ambler, PA 19002-5836

Articles about local sites and events, about hobbies and collections, about history in general are always welcome for our newsletter. Please check with Peg Johnston, 215-542-7753.



Wissahickon Valley Historical Society
P.O. Box 96
Ambler, PA 19002-0096

www.wvalleyhs.org