



A Note from the President:

Happy New Year

...to all our members and friends! I hope that everyone is well rested after the holidays. Now it is time to get back to business.

We hope that you will plan to join us for our Membership Meeting scheduled for Monday, January 8th, our program will be: "The Moravians in Pennsylvania" presented by our own **Art Driedger**. Art is our historian extraordinaire. *No one does it better*. Please plan to join us for this enjoyable presentation.

The Year 2007 is significant because it is the 400th Anniversary of the English Settlement at Jamestown, VA. Many special events and commemorations are planned for this year – including a visit by Queen

Elizabeth II. Please take some time to visit during this historic year.

Locally, the Year 2007 is the 125th Anniversary of the founding of the Ambler Gazette, our hometown newspaper. There will be many events planned to celebrate including a tour of Ambler by yours truly. More details will follow as things are formalized.

On January 15, 2007, we celebrate the legacy of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** Doctor King worked diligently throughout his life for Civil Rights for African-Americans. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. represents peace and tolerance for all peoples.

He led the movement that sparked the Lunch Counter Sit-ins at the Greensboro, NC, Woolworth on February 1, 1960 and the Rosa Parks bus boycott which followed; all leading to the passage of the Civil Rights Amendment

January General Membership Meeting

**Monday,
January 8, 2007
at 7:30pm**

**At the
Historic 1895
Schoolhouse**

in 1964. Take some time to think about how far we have come as Americans and look forward to continuing the fight for all Americans who are disenfranchised.

We look forward to seeing you on the 8th.

Frank J. Russo, Jr.
President



Celebrating 125 Years...

AMBLER GAZETTE TO CELEBRATE 125th ANNIVERSARY

A committee of local people has been formed to plan the 125th Anniversary of the Ambler Gazette. A member of the committee is **Frank Quattrone**, who put together our Arcadia book, Ambler. Many historical photos and articles will be a part of the year-long celebration. We have been asked to plan a Historical Tour of Ambler as a part of the celebration. Plans are preliminary right now, but we will keep you abreast as plans begin to unfold.

THE AMBLER GAZETTE

A Special Holiday Thanks...

THE BELLAVANCES PARTY IS A SUCCESS!

Our heartfelt thanks go out to **Russ and Jean Bellavance** for hosting another fabulous Holiday Party for our Historical Society members. *All had a good time.* The food was great (as usual!) and we'd like to say thanks to our members who graciously helped by doing the readings for our program.

We were especially treated to see some members return whom we haven't seen in a while. Thanks for coming it was great to see you again.

Do You Have a Story To Tell?

Is there a unique story or event you'd like to share with your Historical Society Members? Write it up and send it to the WVHS Newsletter (wvhs_newsletter@yahoo.com) or contact **Judy Grubb** at 215-591-3694. Your submission is due before the scheduled Monday Board Meetings. *(Space permitting, of course!)*

Holiday Cheers

with our Historical Society "family"



WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SERVING AMBLER • LOWER GWYNEDD • WHITPAIN COMMUNITIES

The Turner Frontier Thesis

Frederick Jackson Turner

In the census of 1890, it was reported that to all intents and purposes the American Frontier no longer existed and that all the land had been settled. In 1893, at the convention of the American Historical Convention, a professor from the University of Wisconsin gave many implications of this announcement.

The frontier brought about social equality and measured a man on his ability to fight, farm, and hunt – not who his father was or his race, religion, or national background. Land was cheap and no man had to work for another. The ***Westerner hated special privilege*** and originated such democratic reforms such as the universal male white suffrage, women suffrage, initiative, referendum, and recall – which in most cases are unknown in the East.

Nationalism was encouraged since the inhabitants looked to the Federal Government for territory, cheap land, and protection from the Indians.

The Westerner saw the growth of his area and so had faith in the future. It provided a market for manufactured goods of the East and the raw materials for manufacturing.

Wages were kept high since low wage in the factory meant that workers would head west and this was known as the Safety valve.

This retarded the growth of unions as well as socialism.

Inventions were encouraged to take the place of high price labor in the factories and to work the huge farms of the west. Since land was cheap and plentiful, wasteful agricultural practices were the rule of the day.

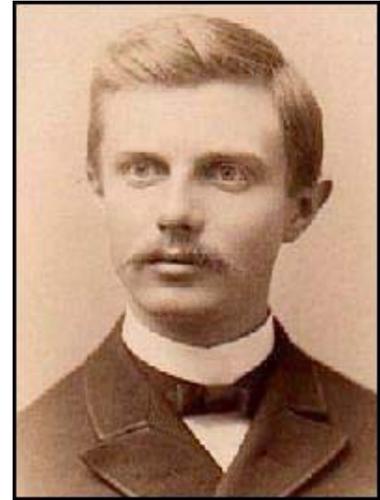
Frederick Jackson Turner must have been a very charismatic teacher for many of his students took his philosophy much further than he intended and ascribed all differences to the American frontier.

At first his thesis was universally accepted, but his students stretching it, the thesis fell in disuse during the twenties. In the sixties it had a revival. (*Your author does believe in large parts of it.*)

With the closing of the frontier, Turner saw us getting more like Europe and that we would lose our unique cultural characteristics and become more like Europe.

Labor unions became stronger with the AF of L in the 1886; the struggle between capitol and the labor became stronger. With free or cheap land gone, the immigrants now went to the city and immigration laws were enacted.

Within ten years, the United States went to war with Spain and we, too, became imperialistic and



Frederick Jackson Turner
1863-1932

were interested in colonialism – especially with Teddy Roosevelt as President. We became interested in naval bases, a large navy, and foreign markets.

The Conservation movement got started with the construction of huge dams, the land reclamation act and irrigations projects. National Parks were established and the number of National Forests were increased many fold.

The spread of democracy has worked east, but many direct democratic reforms are still unknown in the East.

There are many criticism of the Turner Thesis but I think many of its arguments are valid.

— **Submitted by**
Arthur R. Driedger



Wissahickon Valley Historical Society Calendar of Events ~ January 2007 and upcoming events!

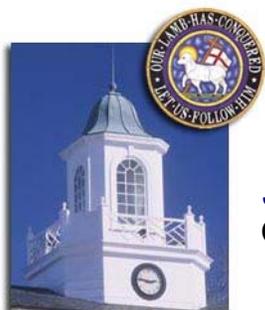
- Mon., Jan. 8 **General Business Meeting** **7:30 PM**
“History of the Moravians in Europe & America” – Art Driedger, speaker
- Mon., Jan. 22 *Board Meeting* **7:00 PM**
- Mon., Feb. 12 **General Business Meeting** **7:30 PM**
“History of Zion Baptist Church, Ambler” – Herbert Russ, speaker
- Mon., Feb. 26 *Board Meeting* **7:00 PM**
- Mon., Mar. 12 **General Business Meeting** **7:30 PM**
“Clara Barton Impersonation” – Ms. Waskie, speaker

The *Wissahickon Valley Historical Society Newsletter* is published once a month during the membership season. General Membership Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month, and are open to the public.

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January 2007 Newsletter
Our Meeting: “History of the Moravians
in Europe and America”