



**A Note from  
the President:**

*April Showers!*

Greetings, I trust everyone has had a good holiday season, spring has sprung and everyone is getting ready for spring cleaning. Don't forget the Society; we're busy hoarding all kinds of goodies for our Fall Market Day. So, while you begin to your clean out – save your junk, box it up and bring it to the Schoolhouse. It will mean more money for us to make in the fall.

Plan to attend our membership meeting on Monday, April 9th. Our spring meeting will feature a member of the Centre Square Fire Department who will speak on "The History of Firefighting in Whitpain Township". We all owe a great deal to

these dedicated volunteers who come to our aid us in disasters. Come and hear their stories.

As I am writing this letter to you, I am preparing for Spring Break and that means a brief get-away to Florida. Therefore unfortunately I will not be with you for the April Membership Meeting; Yes, even I need a vacation. I will leave you all in very capable hands.

We will be passing a sign-up sheet for our Annual June Picnic Supper at the April meeting, plan to join in the festivities. We ask that you sign-up for food dishes as well as desserts so we don't end up with only main course items and dessert. We also will have our little fund raiser, our "Peanut" Auction. It has gone

**April  
General  
Membership  
Meeting**

**Monday,  
April 9, 2007  
at 7:30pm**

At the Historic 1895  
Schoolhouse

*This Month's  
Hospitality:  
Janice Dreidger and  
Helen Missfeldt*

through many incarnations ... corn, beans, and now peanuts. There will be many *interesting* prizes!

**Mark your calendars!**

*Sincerely,  
Frank J. Russo, Jr.  
President*

*Bring May Flowers!*



## 1895 Schoolhouse Preservation Committee

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The inaugural meeting on the 1895 Schoolhouse Preservation committee took place at the Schoolhouse on Thursday, March 15th at 7:00 PM. In attendance were **Russ Bellavance, Bill Missfeldt, Mary Lou McFarland and chair, John Simon**. Absent members of the committee were **Bonnie Schmid and Herb Levy**.



Wissahickon Valley Historical Society President **Frank Russo** was in attendance and charged the committee with specific purposes for the preservation of the 1895 Schoolhouse. The Committee will meet regularly and report to the Executive Board on the progress toward meeting the committee's goals.

Topics to be addressed in these committee meetings will be: the roof, the cellar walls, the chimney, and the windows. We are hoping that some of this work will commence shortly.

Another issue in discussion was our lease with Whitpain Township, which will be coming up for renewal very quickly.

We owe this committee our sincere thanks for helping to preserve what we call home.

## Member Focus: Meet William "Bill" Missfeldt

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Candid shot of Bill Missfeldt at the 2006 Holiday Party.

My earliest memory of Bill is when we were both active members of the Historical Society of Fort Washington. Many times we shared the good experience of acting as hosts at the Clifton House; at the time I served as Curator of the museum.

In the late '70's the Missfeldts (**Bill** and his wife, **Helen**) joined the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society, they immediately jumped in and began to volunteer for many projects. The Missfeldts helped with our Annual Market Day.

Bill and Helen joined our first volunteer Docent Training class and immediately volunteered to serve as guides in our 1895 Schoolhouse Museum.

Bill eventually became our 1895 Schoolhouse Property Chair. He has served in this position for many years – overseeing the property and its continual upkeep. Bill does his own repair work: changing light bulbs, installing all kinds of gadgets, fixing those little bugs and bumps to help keep the Schoolhouse running smoothly. Where would we be without Bill?

When our treasurer, **Virginia "Ginny" Zabriskie** passed away January 12, 2004, Bill volunteered to take the position of Treasurer. Our treasury has grown under Bill's careful guidance and scrutinization of some unnecessary expenses.

Bill is an example to us all, and we owe him our thanks for his selfless commitment to our Society.

## This Month's Meeting

### *The History of Firefighting in Whitpain Township*

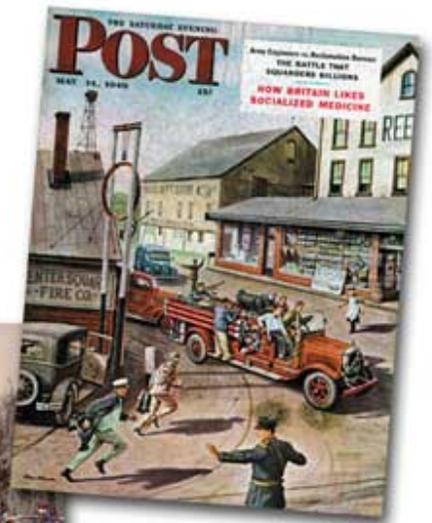
The Centre Square Fire Company is over 90 years old, and has a rich local history. You can visit their Website at

<http://www.csfc33.com/index.html>

The Centre Square Fire Company (CSFC) serves as the primary fire and rescue services provider for Whitpain Township. The township is approximately 12.8 square miles, and is bounded by North Wales Road to the west, Township Line Road to the south, Butler Pike to the east, and an imaginary line extending Township Line Road in the north.

In addition, CSFC provides fire and rescue services to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and its patrons for the Northeast Extension (Route 476) from the junction with the main east-west Turnpike in Plymouth Meeting (milemarker 20.0) to the Lansdale Interchange (milemarker 30.3).

Lastly, we provide mutual aid assistance to some of our neighboring fire departments for fire and rescue services. In some cases this even includes first alarm assignments due to the proximity of our stations to the other townships.



Centre Square Fire Company has a long history, as depicted with these vintage vehicles: Shown above: 1919 REO speed-wagon; shown right are the old 33-23 vehicles featuring a 1958 Mack 750GPM Engine; pictured far right is the cover of the May 14, 1949 edition of the Saturday Evening Post featuring the artwork of Stevan Dohanos of a "small town fire company" – our own Center Square Fire Company.



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

- Mon., April 9 ..... **General Business Meeting**..... **7:30 PM**  
*"History of Firefighting in Whitpain Township" – Speaker to be announced*
- Mon., April 23 ..... *Board Meeting* ..... 7:00 PM
- Mon., May 14 ..... **General Business Meeting**..... **7:30 PM**  
*"History of the Delaware Canal" – Susan Taylor, speaker*
- Mon., June 11 ..... **General Business Meeting**..... **to be announced**  
*Summer Picnic – at the home of Bob and Gloria Myers*

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

**Wissahickon Valley Historical Society • 799 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422 • 215.646.6541**

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**Wissahickon Valley Historical Society**  
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***April 2007 Newsletter***

**Our Meeting:**

*"History of Firefighting in Whitpain Twp."*