

Box 96, Ambler, PA 19002
July 2015

www.wvalleyhs.org
215-646-6541

info@wvalleyhs.org
Vol. 16, Issue 11

Thursday Morning at the 1895 Schoolhouse “Volunteers at Work”



On a typical Thursday morning a group of WVHS volunteers can be found doing various tasks at the 1895 Schoolhouse.



From top left clockwise: Emmy Simon and Mabel Whittock review some recent donations, Peg Diorio vacuums the library, Dot MacDermott finds a 4-leaf clover in an old school book, Russ Bellavance and Bob Whittock discuss WVHS business, and Marie Goldkamp accessions an antique spice collection. There is always something interesting to do - from 10 to noon on Thursdays. Volunteers always welcome.



June Picnic a Huge Success

From President Russ Bellavance: We had great June picnic hosted by Pat Plumb - with the rain holding off just long enough.

From host Pat Plumb: Pat Plumb wants to thank everyone who participated in the Annual Picnic. The food and beverages were delicious and everyone was so helpful with bringing things in when the Heavens opened up. We truly lucked out with the storm sparing us almost to the end.

We all enjoyed a presentation by Pat's husband's nephew John Plumb about the Fayette Plumb, Inc. of Frankford - a company started by Fayette Plumb. It operated until 1970. John shared several specialized iron implements produced by the company - including knives and horse shoeing clamps.

Member Charlie Miller also shared a short program - unfortunately after most members had sought cover from the rain. Perhaps we can schedule Charlie for a program this next year.

As Pat mentioned, the food was delicious. This year's recipe to share is Bev Hahn's bread pudding. We think perhaps it is the perfect pot-luck dessert: no-one should eat a full recipe by themselves!

Croissant Bread Pudding

Ingredients:

- Enough good quality croissants to cover the bottom of a large baking dish
- planning ahead = the baking dish will be cooked in a water bath so you'll need to make sure you have a bigger container for the water.
- 3 XL eggs
- 8 XL egg yolks
- 5 cups half and half
- 1 1/2 cups sugar (you can use 1 cup)
- 1 1/2 t. vanilla
- 3/4 cups golden raisins

- Directions:
1. Slice croissants in half clamshell style. In the baking dish, tightly fit the bottom halves of the croissants with the cut sides up like interlocking puzzle pieces.
 2. In a mixing bowl, beat together the eggs, egg yolks, half and half, and vanilla.
 3. Ladle half of the wet mixture evenly over the croissants in the baking dish. Push the croissants down so that they can absorb the wet mixture.
 4. Sprinkle raisins evenly over the croissants to 1/2 inch of the edges.
 5. Fit the sliced croissant tops on the ones in the baking dish in the same manner as the bottom
 6. Ladle as much of the remaining wet mixture evenly over the croissants almost to the rim. Push the croissant tops into the wet mixture. Make sure no raisins are showing or they will burn.
 7. Cover the baking dish with aluminum foil and place in the refrigerator overnight.
 8. The next day, take the baking dish out of the refrigerator an hour before it goes into the oven.
 9. Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Punch holes in the aluminum foil.
 10. Place the baking dish inside another pan. Pour warm water around the baking dish so that water surrounds the baking dish up to 2/3rds up its sides.
 11. Bake for 45 to 75 minutes. Carefully remove aluminum foil for the last 20 minutes. Insert a knife tip to test that pudding is no longer wet. Bake longer is needed, replacing foil until tester is no longer wet.

Thanks, Pat, for sharing your wonderful home and yard. Thanks, Bev, for sharing your recipe. Thanks, Charlie and John, for sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm.



Board Members Meeting with Whitpain Officials

Russ Bellavance, John Simon, and Bob Whittock met with several Whitpain officials at the 1895 Schoolhouse recently. They walked through and discussed the building's condition and needs - including the parking lot, heating and electrical systems, and the foundation. The WVHS has been a good steward of the building and, moving into the future, wants to keep it in the best condition. The first steps are this analysis; next will be setting priorities. This is an on-going process and Whitpain's expertise and support is greatly appreciated.

Changes Coming in Lower Gwynedd, Centre Square, and Ambler

The plans for changes in the central shopping areas of Lower Gwynedd and Centre Square are moving along. The Whitpain Commissioner have given final approval to the Centre Square redevelopment of the southwest corner. Several long time businesses will be lost and the fire house will be rebuilt further back from Skippack Pike. This would be a good time to take photos of business fronts and collect a few artifacts from familiar places. The same applies to the Lower Gwynedd shopping area at the corner of Bethlehem Pike and Sumneytown Pike.

Ambler's skyline is quickly changing with the construction of the new Ambler Bank building on Butler Pike. See photo at right of bank from Lindenwold Avenue across Butler Pike.



Update on Lindenwold/St. Mary's Property

At the recent board meeting, members learned that the Lindenwold property has been declared eligible for the national registry and as such can be listed by Upper Dublin as a Class I resource. There is an active effort to keep citizens informed and asking questions of the Upper Dublin Township Board. The public is welcome to a meeting of the Upper Dublin Historic Preservation Commission on July 27 at the Upper Dublin Township building. The possibility of moving Lindenwold from a Class II to a Class I resource will be discussed.

ROSLE (Residents for Open Spaces at Lindenwold Estate), the local preservation group is currently raising funds to hire a lawyer to help shape the development in a more environmentally and historically authentic way. Check out their web-site on the internet.

Open House at Franklinville and 1895 Schoolhouse - July 19

Both the Franklinville School on Morris Road and the 1895 Schoolhouse on Skippack Pike will be open to the public on Sunday, July 19 from 1 to 4 p.m. There will be several children's activities at the one-room Franklinville School. The museum will be open at the 1895 Schoolhouse. Most of the items from the Whitpain Historical Society have been integrated into 1895 Schoolhouse collection and many are in new displays.

Members are especially welcome.



Mystery Site

June's mystery site was Pickering Field in Ambler. The horse chestnut flowers are gone for the year, but the trees offer lots of shade. Baseball games now provide daily entertainment. Buck Amey was again the first to identify the site.

Several years ago Frank Russo, Jr. wrote an article about Pickering Field for this newsletter. According to Frank, the tract was originally part of the Burk family property which extended from the Wissahickon Creek to Bethlehem Pike. From 1879 to 1877 the field was a part of the fairgrounds of the Montgomery County Agricultural Society. The land that is now Pickering Field was at the

very center of a horse race tract at the fairgrounds. The Borough took possession of the property in the 1950s after it had been owned by John T. Turner and later by Dr. Richard V. Mattison.

This month's mystery site is the site of an present day business but the name in stone above the door reflects an earlier time. (The stone reads King and Betz.) Extra points if you have a story about visiting the site.

E-mail pegathome6@yahoo.com with your answer and/or story.



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