



Wissahickon Valley

historical society

Ambler
Lower Gwynedd
Whitpain

www.wvalleyhs.org

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WHVS's Fall Outing

Saturday, October 14 - 1:45 p.m.

Member Eliza Walbridge has invited us to tour Manderley Farm at 230 Penllyn Pike.



We will meet at the 1895 Schoolhouse by 1:45 - and carpool to the farm for a 2 o'clock tour.

Eliza will provide a tour of the house (not visible from the Penllyn Pike) and the grounds. (For non-walkers, there are comfortable chairs in the house as well as cool drinks and cookies.)

She'll also explain the process of permanently preserving the land for sustainable agricultural purposes.

The driveway off of Penllyn Pike originally was a road that led to Mather's Mill on the Wissahickon Creek and has several houses and barns along the path.

.Early tax records list buildings at 230 Penllyn Pike as early as 1740. At right - springhouse.



Open House at 1895 Schoolhouse and Franklinville One-Room School
Sunday, October 15 - 1 to 4 p.m.

Reminder: WVHS 2017-2018 dues can be sent to MaryLou McFarland, 500 Trinity Place, Ambler, PA 19002-5836

Reminders of the Past

Mabel Whittock recently donated a copy of the *Ambler Joint High School Handbook from 1952-1953*. It makes interesting and fun reading - especially as Wissahickon School District recently opened their 2017-2018 school year.

The following are a few interesting items: There were four curricula offered - college preparatory, business education, practical arts, and general. In the list of required courses for college preparatory curricula in 9th grade students would take algebra, in 10th grade - plane geometry, in 11th grade - algebra II, and in 12th grade - solid geometry/trigonometry. Students in every curricula were required to take typing.

Foreign languages offered were Latin and French.

Driver education was offered to all eleventh graders. "Through the courtesy of the Mullin Motor Car Company, General Motors Corporation, and the American Automobile Association, a dual control car was provided for use in the training program. The Kiwanis Club of Ambler provided funds for housing, running expenses, and general maintenance of the vehicle."

There was also a Work Experience Training Program that placed high school students with local businesses. Students received at least 75 cents an hour. Placements were made only after an interview with the student's parents.

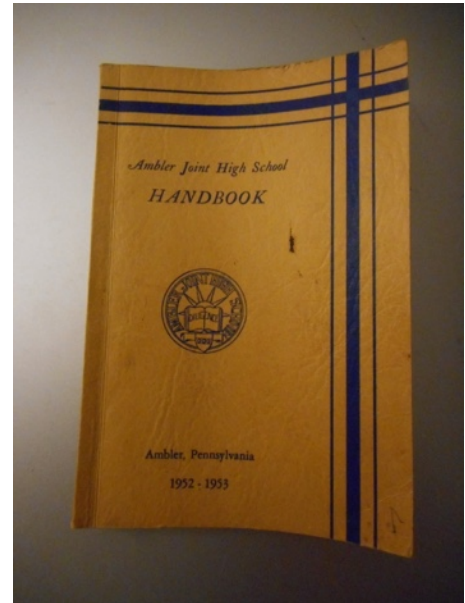
A few fun items: Dance Courtesy - "At the Dance - Have at least the first and last dance with your partner. It is your responsibility to see that your partner has a good time, etc. Avoid being conspicuous. Don't assume poses or try acrobatic steps. Don't dance with your eyes closed. Don't chew - it doesn't fit in with your best clothes. Boys should use good steering sense to protect partners from collisions." This was before Chubby Checkers and Elvis - and the twist!

An final item: There is a list of colleges attended by Wissahickon Joint High School. The number one = University of Pennsylvania.

And a cheer: Si-----s, Boom! Ah!
 Ambler High School, rah! rah! rah!
 Team! Team! Team!

A quick review of the history of the Ambler High School: In 1881 the Ambler Independent School District was formed, a site on Forrest Avenue was purchased, and a two room building was erected. The first School Board met in a toll house situated on the present site of what became the Ambler Trust Company - located on Butler Pike.

Ambler Borough was incorporated in 1890 and established a Borough School Board that purchased the Forrest Avenue School for \$3,504.94. In 1891, a new six-room, two story building was erected at Forrest Avenue. Four additional rooms were added in 1896. A new high school was built on Tennis Avenue in 1923. Fire destroyed the Forrest Avenue building in 1926. In 1927, a new junior high school building was erected on the site. It is now the home of Ambler's Senior Center and Art Center.



Extensive athletic fields were added to the Tennis Avenue in 1939. A building program completed in 1940 enlarged the high school building.

The Ambler Joint High School was organized in 1950 by the Ambler Joint High School Board composed of the Directors of the School Boards of Ambler Borough, Lower Gwynedd Township, and Whitpain Township.

WVHS Outreach

WVHS had an exhibit table at the recent Pike Fest (Lower Gwynedd) and at Whitpain Day at MCCC. Thanks to members who spent time assembling the displays, talking with visitors, and taking things back to the schoolhouse. Our booth now looks great and is quite comfortable - with our official table drape and shade cover. The exhibit box donated by Gary Fuess offers a safe way to display artifacts. The new brochure makes an excellent take-away.

Octoberfest in Ambler is next Saturday - October 7 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.. If you can help assemble the display (Thursday morning), set up the booth and chat with visitors, and/or take down the display, please let Russ Bellavance know. Every event has helped us make connections with community members and organizations.

Girl Scout Annie Cassidy worked on a display which is currently in the Shady Grove Elementary library. The display represents the history of Shady Grove - from its humble beginnings as a one-room school in the woods along Lewis Lane, through its years as a junior high school, to its present use as an elementary school.

At right - Annie Cassidy and Donna Merin, Shady Grove librarian with the WVHS display.



Lindenwold Estate Update

According to a public notice dated September 25, the Lindenwold Residential Associates has submitted revised preliminary land development plans for the redevelopment of the Lindenwold Estate (Dr. Mattison's estate) and later St. Mary's Villa property on Bethlehem Pike. The proposal for the 44.62 acres consists of 32 twin units, 72 townhouses, and 250 senior "independent living" apartments. According to the proposal "the landmark castle will be preserved" - though

there are no details. A conditional use approval for this development was granted by the Board of Commissioners on May 9, 2017.

Several public review meetings are scheduled: Shade Tree Commission - 10/19/17, Planning Commission - 10/26/17, and Environmental Protection Advisory Board - 11/7/17. Residents for Open Space at Lindenwold Estate's website is at www.lindenwoldestate.org

Penllyn Village Walk - Next Month

Please watch for the promised “walk through Penllyn Village” article in next month’s newsletter. The story is more detailed and interesting than expected. Also there is nasty road construction on Penllyn Pike!

Make Your Calendar

- Oct. 6** - Alumni Hall of Fame Induction at Wisshickon High School, 3 to 4:30 - RSVP on Wissahickon School District website.
- Oct. 6** - 12th annual Chefs of the Burbs - sponsored by BlueBell Rotary - Pine Crest Country Club - 6 to 9 p.m. Check details at www.bluebellrotary.org - “It’s all about the Kids” fund raiser.
- Oct. 7** - Ambler’s OctoberFest - Butler Pike - 11 am. to 4 p.m,
- Oct. 7** - Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Revolutionary Germantown Fest - Clivenden in Germantown
- Oct. 14** - WVHS outing - meet at 1895 Schoolhouse by 1:45 to carpool to Manderley on Penllyn-BlueBell
- Oct. 15** - Open House at 1895 Schoolhouse and at Franklinville School, 1 to 4 p.m.
- Oct. 17** - Historical Society of Fort Washington - Program: PA Representatives to the 2nd Continental Congress, 7:30
- Oct. 19** - Historical Society of Montgomery County, Historic Barns of Southeast PA - Architecture and Preservation - 5 p.m.
- Oct. 28** - “Ghost of Henry Mumbower” Evans-Mumbower Mill, 5 - 8 p.m.



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