

# Blue Bell Inn Part II

George Washington and the kitchen maids

BY CAROL KALOS, PRESIDENT, WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Last month's issue of the *Stroll* explained that the Blue Bell Inn began in 1843, and the local post office became its namesake in 1796.

In October 1777, George Washington and his 10,000 troops camped in the Blue Bell Country Club area, preparing to defend the capital, Philadelphia, from a British invasion.

Philadelphia was the largest English-speaking city in the world, besides London, and in those days, taking the main city meant winning the war. (However, no one told the Colonists. Unfamiliar with the European rules of engagement, they kept fighting!)

Washington and his officers, with their militia camped near them, resided on Lewis Lane at Dawesfield, today a private residence. Occasionally, during that time, Washington would stay at the Blue Bell Inn, then called the White Horse. From there, a legendary story has been passed down to us.

Although a hard worker, Washington, well over six feet tall and an elegant dancer, had a reputation for being easily charmed by the ladies. *Whitpain...Crossroads in Time* (1977) relates how one day Washington overheard a group of maids, whispering inside the kitchen door. One of them, obviously enthralled by the tall, graceful leader, said she wished to give him "one good, sweet kiss."

Washington pushed open the door and offered to oblige her, but not one of the giggling maids admitted to making the remark. Imagine their blushes when he gave each of them a kiss! Moreover, history notes that "no maid demurred."

*Author Carol Kalos is president of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society with its headquarters and museum at the 1895 School, located at the corner of School Lane and Skippack Pike. The WVHS also owns the Franklinville School on Morris Road, furnished as a 19th-century, one-room school. Both buildings are open to the public by appointment and for Open House events. Please email to [info@WValleyHS.org](mailto:info@WValleyHS.org).*

