



Dawesfield

Wissahickon Valley Historical Society: Celebrating 10 Years of *Stroll Blue Bell*

BY CAROL KALOS, PRESIDENT, WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Wissahickon Valley Historical Society has supplied 62 articles for *Blue Bell's Finest* and *Stroll Blue Bell*. Each month, in keeping with the society's mission to promote local history, WVHS describes a nearby historic landmark, bringing history to each BBCC household. Some BBCC residents have told us that, each month when they receive the *Stroll*, the first article they turn to is the WVHS history article.

Our local area was first inhabited by the Lenni Lenape. Whitpain Township, settled in 1681, began officially in 1701. The township's most precious landmark is Dawesfield, General Washington's headquarters in 1777. The area's farmers supplied milk and produce for Philadelphia, and as transportation improved, so did commerce. The population grew from 771 in 1800, to about 3,000 in 1950, to about 30,000 in 2023, but many 19th-century structures remain.

WVHS hopes that every BBCC resident will be proud of their local history and appreciate the lovely old buildings that give our neighborhood

its character. Each article describes a site's architecture, its history, its owners, and a fascinating fact, such as (in the March 2023 *Stroll*), how George Washington, eating a pear he picked from a local grafted oak tree, declared that it was luscious. That unusual tree grew on a farm, now the campus of the Montgomery County Community College!

WVHS posts all of its *Stroll* articles on the WVHS website: <https://www.wvalleyhs.org/blue-bells-finest/>.

Hundreds of historic sites stand near BBCC, waiting to be described in future issues of *Stroll Blue Bell*.

WVHS is celebrating its 50th year! During the summer, its 1895 School and Franklinville School, both on the National Register of Historic Places, are open by appointment: www.WValleyHS.org

Lenape, "Original People."
Watercolor, Tamra Phillips

