



now land used for the Center Square Shopping Center. In 1871, he also bought the 47-acre Boxwood Farm, where the Wentz Run Park is today.

The July 2024 issue of *Stroll Blue Bell* describes Harley's famous grandson, a professional baseball player, who grew up at the Boxwood House, built in 1730.

Author Carol Kalos is president of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Preserving the history of Ambler Borough, Whitpain Township, and Lower Gwynedd Township, the society offers tours of the 1895 School and the Franklinville School, both on the National Register of Historic Places. For an appointment, go to [www.WVValleyHS.org](http://www.WVValleyHS.org).

# HISTORIC HARLEY HOME

BY CAROL KALOS, PRESIDENT, WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**BBCC RESIDENTS MIGHT OVERLOOK** one of the most historic houses in Whitpain Township, located at 1205 Skippack Pike, across from Blooms and Buds, because its hedges hide its wide front porch. Built in 1752 in Georgian style, it boasts six “bays,” meaning architectural “sections.” A historic marker hangs in the middle of its six second-floor windows. The house is distinctive not simply for its age but also for its stone construction and the influence of one of its early owners.

Most Whitpain builders in the eighteenth century used rubble construction, but this house reveals rare ashlar

construction. A rubble house is built with rough stones, creating gaps to be filled with mortar. In contrast, this house has ashlar walls, made of large stones cut precisely into blocks with smooth faces (now covered with white stucco). This method provided stronger walls than rubble construction, but it took more time to cut the blocks, and thus it was more expensive.

Edward Harley (1817-1882), who made his money selling beer and soda in Philadelphia, purchased this home in 1868. It sat on a large plot with a blacksmith shop and a post office,



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