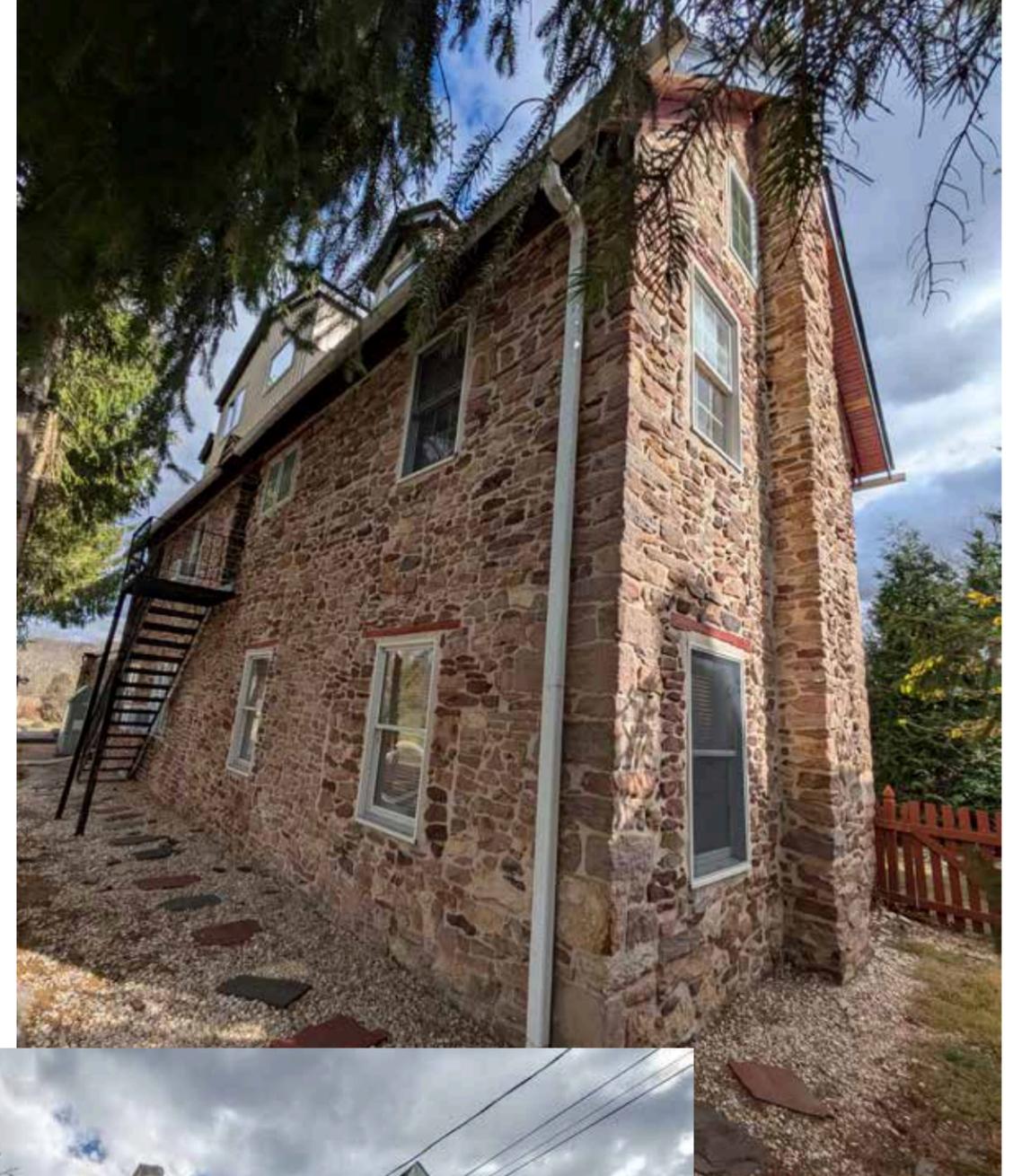


The barn



House 1

Three Historic Whitpain Structures: A 1790, a Rare Gothic Revival, and a Bank Barn

BY CAROL KALOS, PRESIDENT, WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BBCC residents who turn left onto North Wales Road in 3.4 miles encounter, on their left, two old fieldstone houses and a beautiful, weathered barn. The three structures appear to share the same property.

The first house dates to 1790! At the end of the structure's original core stands a tall stone chimney. While the home's first front door faces away from the road, two white pillars mark a newer side entrance.

The second house dates to 1835. Its core is two stories tall with trimmed dormers above. The owner enlarged the old home, creating two additions, one of them with a "sleeping porch" (a

screened-in balcony, designed for sleeping, before the days of air conditioning). The building's oldest section boasts Gothic Revival architecture, popular from 1840 to 1860 and quite unusual for this area. (Remember Grant Wood's 1930 oil painting, *American Gothic*, showing a midwestern farm couple, standing in front of their Gothic-style farmhouse, the grim-looking husband holding a pitchfork?) Like the dwelling in Wood's painting, this landmark has pointed arches, steep gables, and ornamental trim.

The frame bank barn sits on a stucco-covered foundation. Typical in Pennsylvania, farmers built these two-story bank barns into a hill, or "bank." Hay wagons drove up the slope to the top



House 2

floor, and animals resided on the ground level, insulated by the hay above. An overhang from the second level provided an outside shelter for the livestock below.

Carol Kalos is president of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society, celebrating its 50th year! Its headquarters and museum are located at the 1895 School on Skippack Pike, and it owns the one-room Franklinville School on Morris Road. Both sites are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. WVHS hosts a speaker each month, free and open to the public. For details, please email to Info@WVValleyHS.org.