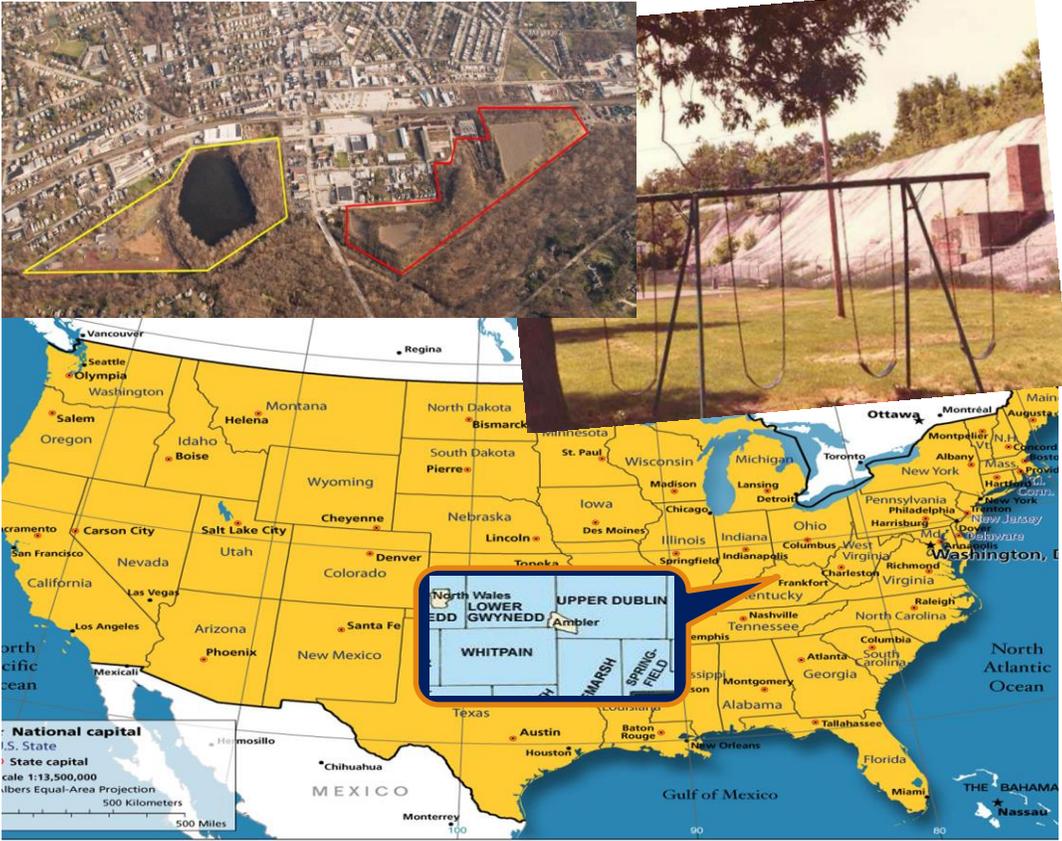


Using Ethnography and Oral Histories in Environmental Health

-
- FRANCES K. BARG, PHD, PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PERELMAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, FRAN.BARG@PENNMEDICINE.UPENN.EDU
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Introduction: How this project started



“We’re here to talk about the asbestos.”

“No, I thought you were here to talk about protecting the community.”

- ARGUMENT AT PUBLIC MEETING 2010



Methods

Immersion

Resident interviews conducted by community members

Oral histories

Film

Theater

Telling stories

Event centered

Reveals context

Experience centered

Enter the world of the story being told

Creates an experience for the audience

Engages emotion



Telling stories



Stories as speech acts

- Transform
- Heal
- Imagine the future
- Co-creation

Telling stories

Stories as cultural artifacts



Search



H Ambler: Jack DelConte - Growing up in South Ambler

Oral History Collection

REACH Ambler

INTERVIEWEE: Ruth Weeks
Stephanie Moman

INTERVIEWER: Lee Berry
Britt Dahlberg

LOCATION: Weeks Home
Philadelphia, PA

DATE: 14 August 2014

BERRY: This is an oral history interview being conducted on August 14th, 2014, for the REACH Ambler Project. The interview is being conducted by Lee Berry with Ruth Weeks, and that's W-E-E-K-S, right, Ruth?

WEEKS: Yes.

BERRY: And do you prefer Ruth or Ruthie?

WEEKS: Either one. Most people call me Ruthie, though.

BERRY: Okay. And also with us is Britt Dahlberg, D-A-H-L-B-E-R-G, and Stephanie Moman, M-O-M-A-N. Thanks, everybody, for coming to sit down and talk about Ambler, [Pennsylvania] today. I really appreciate you taking the time. Ruthie, I wanted to start by asking you about your background. Can you tell me your date of birth and the place you were born?

WEEKS: I was born December [] I was born in Norristown, Pennsylvania, because that was the hospital that anybody [who] lived in Ambler or anywhere, that's what we used. It was the Sacred Heart Hospital.

BERRY: And your parents were living in Ambler at the time. Is that right?

WEEKS: Yes.

BERRY: Whereabouts in Ambler?



Newspaper Insert distributed in local papers



Magazine Article



Play & Discussion

The White Mountains

directed by David O'Connor
produced by Bill D'Agostino
production assisted by Pat Sabato
music created and performed by Pat Lamborn

The Hill

by Bill D'Agostino
starring Charmira Nelson and Marcia Ferguson

The Spirit of Ambler

by Jacqueline Goldfinger
starring Dan McLaughlin, Amy Frear,
and Leslie Nevon Holden

The Fire's Claim

by Mark Costello
starring Charmira Nelson and Leslie Nevon Holden

The Women Wait

by Jessica Bedford
starring Brandon Pierce, Dan McLaughlin,
Amy Frear, and Leslie Nevon Holden

Mary Runs to the Wreck

By MJ Kaufman
starring Charmira Nelson, Brandon Pierce,
Marcia Ferguson, Dan McLaughlin, Amy Frear,
and Leslie Nevon Holden

Revitalized

by Quinn D. Eli
starring Charmira Nelson, Brandon Pierce,
and Leslie Nevon Holden

Someone Else's Life

by David Robson
starring Marcia Ferguson and Amy Frear

Please stay after the
performance for a talkback.

Multi-media materials

Website

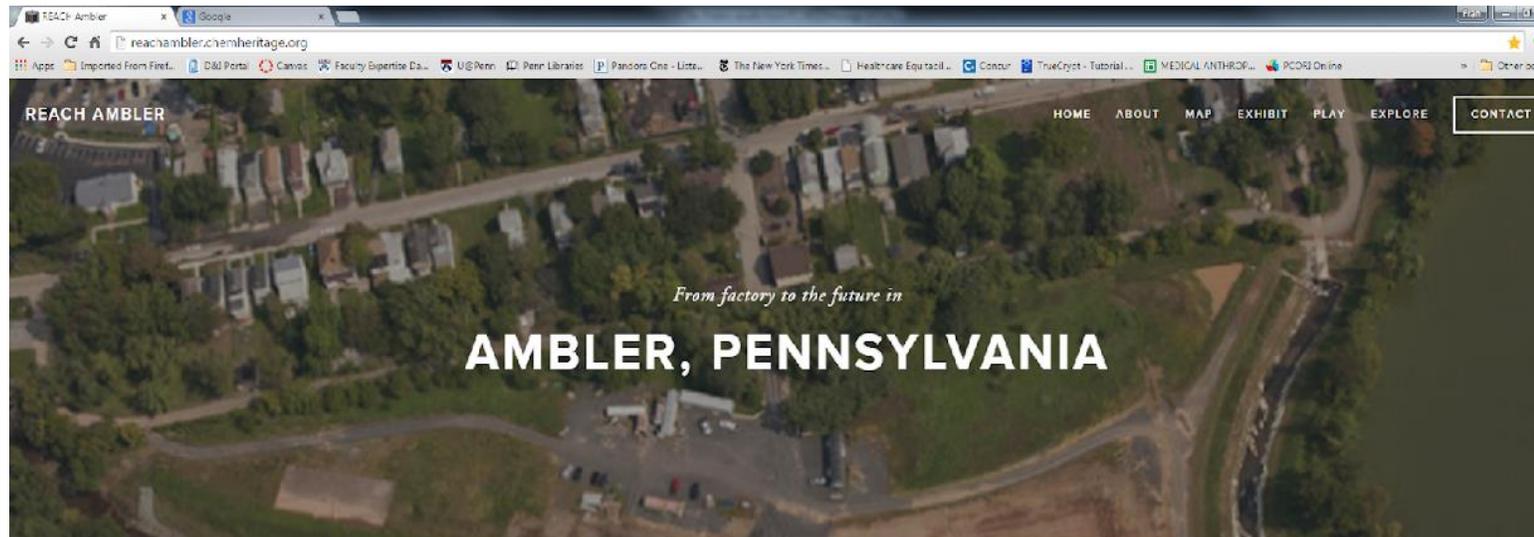
Exhibit

Booklet

Newspaper insert

The White Hills of Ambler

Website: reachambler.sciencehistory.org



History. Health. Community.

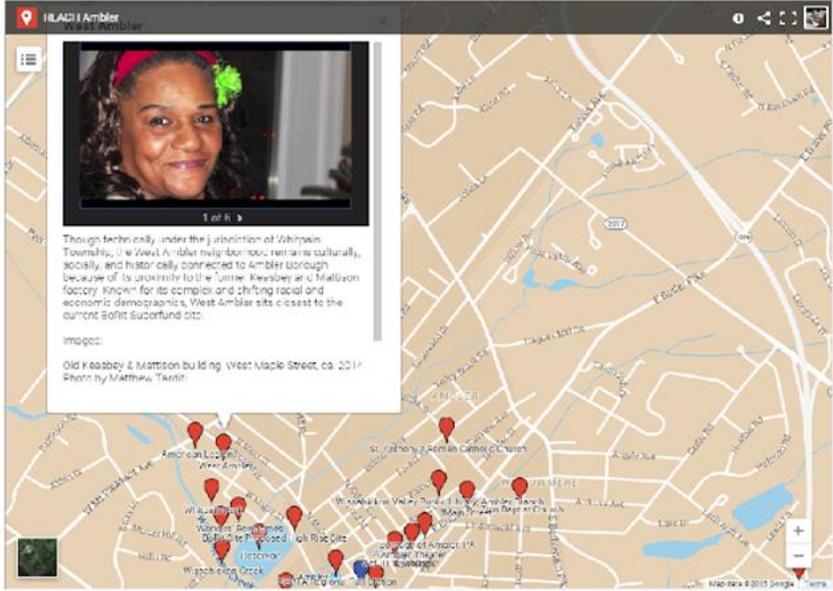
Ambler, Pennsylvania, is a vibrant commuter town 20 miles from Philadelphia, with an idyllic main street, a close-knit community, and a history intertwined with the legacy of Keady and Mattison, a manufacturer of asbestos-containing products.

Discover Ambler's stories and join us in imagining its future.

Mapping Ambler

reachambler.chamberheritage.org/the-map/

TAKE A TOUR OF AMBLER'S PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.
CLICK ON A MARKER BELOW TO VIEW IMAGES, HEAR STORIES, AND WATCH VIDEO.
OR CLICK HERE TO EXPLORE THE MAP IN FULL SCREEN.



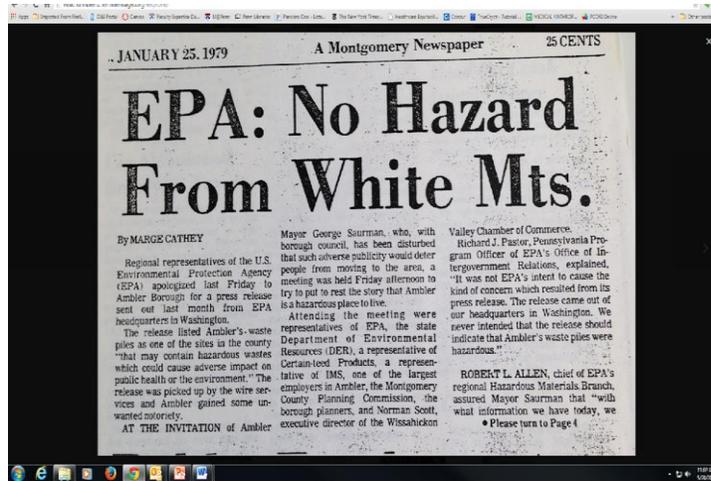
Though technically under the jurisdiction of Whitpain Township, the West Ambler neighborhood remains culturally, socially, and historically connected to AMBLER Borough because of its proximity to the former Keasbey and Mattison factory known for its complex and shifting racial and economic demographics. West Ambler sits adjacent to the current Softit Superfund site.

Image:
Old Keasbey & Mattison building, West Maple Street, ca. 2014.
Photo by Matthew Terzin

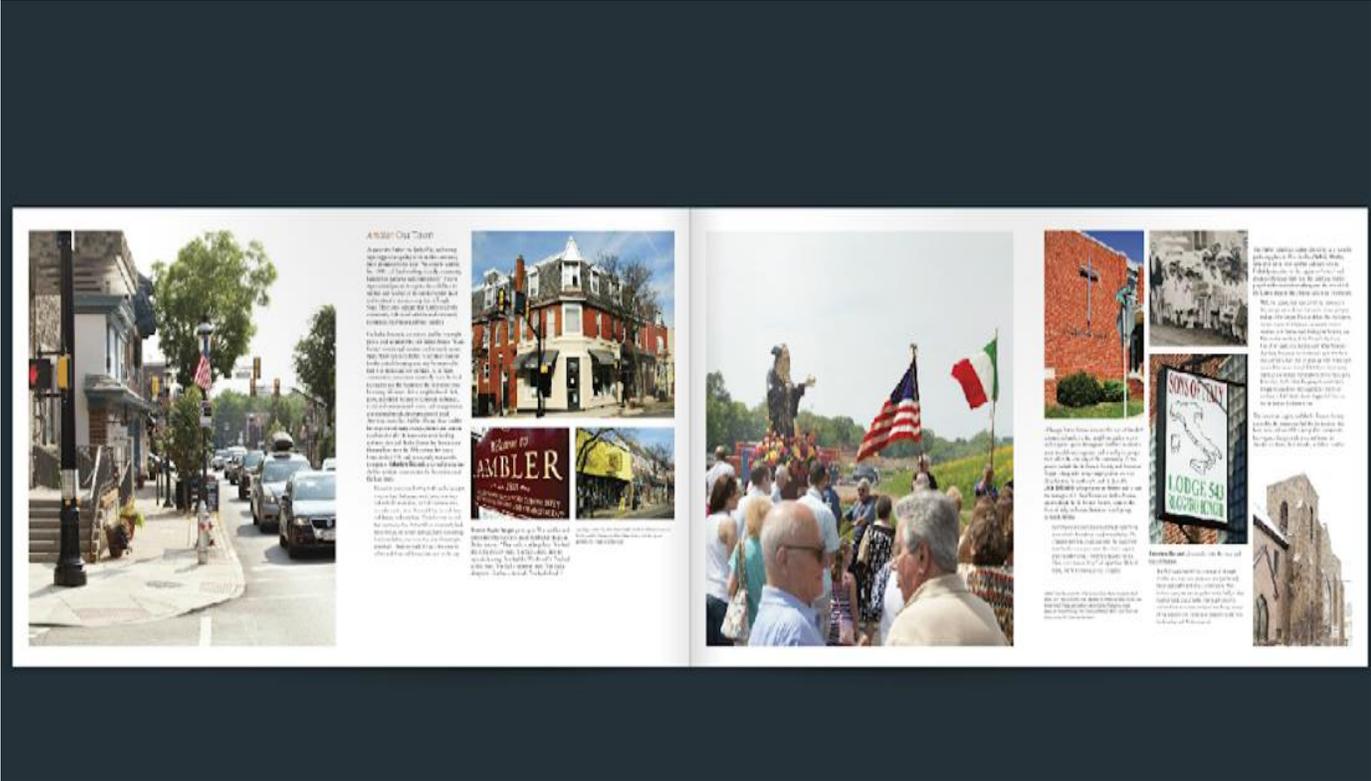
ADD YOUR VOICE TO THE MAP. SEND US YOUR MEMORY OF AMBLER USING THE FORM BELOW. ONCE APPROVED, STORIES SUBMITTED BY WEBSITE VISITORS WILL APPEAR IN BLUE ON THE ABOVE MAP. HAVE IMAGES OR DOCUMENTS TO SHARE? E-MAIL US.

10:47 AM 5/20/2015

Articles, remembrances, images

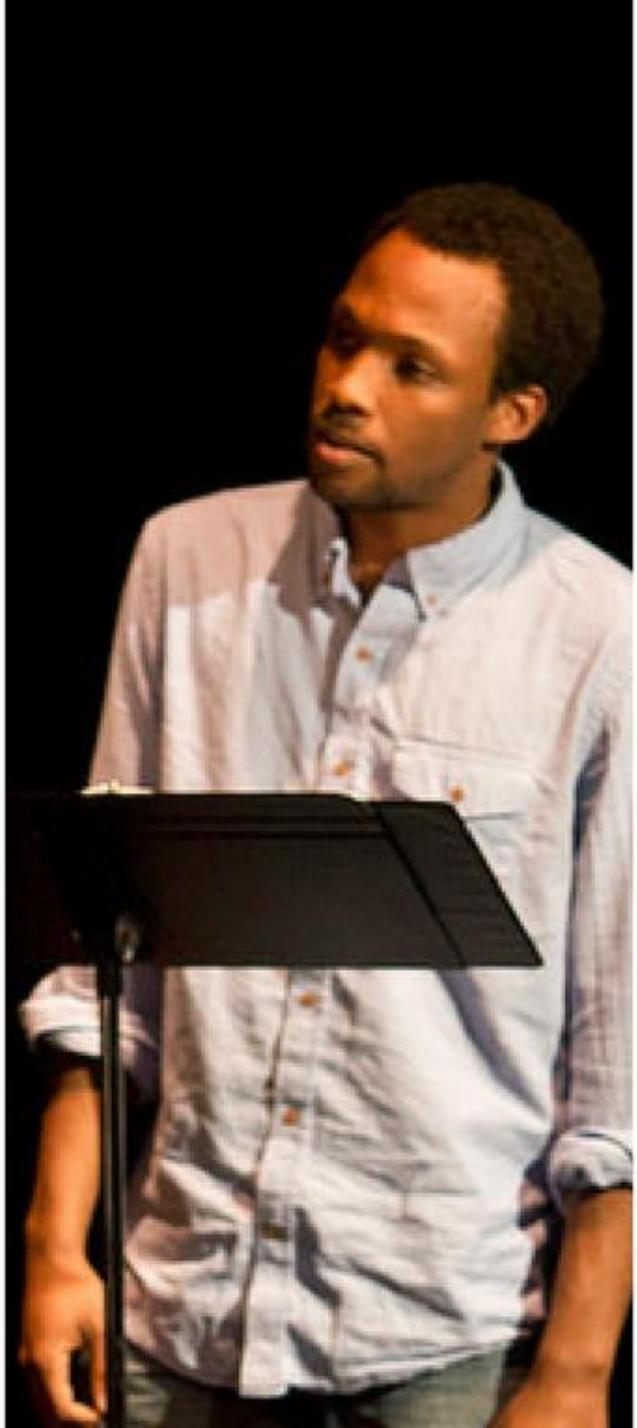


Booklet



The White Mountains





Impact



...ously" and go beyond Main Street as a means of seeing beneath the surface and to open up to explorations focusing on environmental impact and social equality, to more traditional studies looking at Ambler's past and present. All these initial explorations formed the basis for further discussions and studio work back at GA. Supporting this hands-on work were additional visiting discussions with social scientists, Ambler residents and government leaders on topics as diverse as gentrification and racial equality. An additional and significant resource was the Science History Institute's inter-disciplinary **Reach Ambler** project, which delved deeply into how Ambler's residents and environment were, and in ways still are, profoundly affected by its legacy of asbestos manufacturing.

Like many towns across America, Ambler's



Closing reception, Sunday, April 28th-5:30-7:30.
The Ambler Theater's "Film Now" HS Film Competition Screening will be held earlier in the day (4-5:30pm). There's a chance a GA film focusing on Ambler might be involved.

Cellini Gallery
113 Poplar Street, 2nd floor
Ambler, PA 19002



Impact: Lives on

- University of Pennsylvania Superfund Research Program (SRP)
- Center for Applied History: How do we create the grounds for dialogue using scholarship and primary sources like these? Public Programs:
 - Pick Your Own Path First Fridays, History Lab Program, Philadelphia Science Festival
- Oral History Collection available at local Historical Society
- Programming at Local High School (science, theater, art, history, environment classes)
- Undergraduate classes: using oral histories
- EPA conversations at other sites, call for use of these materials internally

Additional resources

- collaboration: http://www.workingknowledgeps.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/WKPS_PriceAgreement_PDF_Interactive.pdf
- dialogue:
 - <https://ncph.org/history-at-work/science-history-institutes-history-lab/>
 - <http://www.americananthropologist.org/2018/10/23/cities-and-urban-planning-missing-dialogues/>
- findings: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277953616305871>
- how-to guide: <https://reachambler.sciencehistory.org/for-communities>
- access the materials / materials for classrooms: <https://reachambler.sciencehistory.org/materials-for-classrooms>
- (article about the aims and impact of the project and play is underway)

Acknowledgements

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