

OUTLINE
INTERVIEWS OF CAROLINE WISTAR
FOR ORAL HISTORY
BY: MEREDITH VALTS

First Interview: February 9, 2008 at 11 am (Weather: Snowy)

Second Interview: February 16, 2008 at 1 pm (Weather: Sunny)

Location: Roanoke Street, Chestnut Hill, PA

The rationale for studying Caroline Wistar was to get an insight on how the LaSalle Art Museum got its start and how it came to become a world-renowned museum with the help of Ms. Wistar and Brother Daniel. The museum began with a meager \$ 3000.










Interviewer:

Ms. Meredith Valts

- ❖ Born October 1973 with a twin brother.
- ❖ Lived in Horsham – Graduated from Hatboro-Horsham HS 1991
- ❖ Achieved a Bachelor of Arts in History Education with minors in Women Studies and Philosophy at the University of Delaware in 1995
- ❖ Co-Founder of the History Club at University of Delaware 1993
- ❖ Currently resides in Bucks County

Interviewee:

Caroline Wistar

-  Born in Philadelphia
-  Graduated from Wheaton College – Boston
-  Studied at Courtauld Institute of Art – London
-  Returned to Philadelphia to work at the Philadelphia Art Museum
-  Lost job because of Legionnaires Disease 1976
-  Started at LaSalle Art Museum part time in 1976 – full time in 1978.
-  Wrote: Charles Willson Peale Historic Guide
-  Famous father – Fox Chase Farm
-  Currently resides in Chestnut Hill

Design:

- Simple. I went to the LaSalle Library and read the background of Brother Daniel and Caroline Wistar.
- I enlisted Brother Joe at the Archives to research any archives that have information about Caroline Wistar
- The interviews were set-up at her home for her convenience
- The interviews were roughly one hour long again for her convenience

Notes on Interview:

- ✱ No decision on choice. Dr. Allen recommended Caroline Wistar.
- ✱ Enormous respect for Ms. Wistar who has worked for the LaSalle Art Museum for 30 years.
- ✱ Two important artists (Pictures Enclosed)
 - ✱ Charles Willson Peale (A.K.A “America’s Leonardo)
Print: David Gelston (1792)
 - ✱ Henry Ossawa Tanner
Mary (1898)

Challenge:

- ✱ Feeling obligated to make a response to everything that the interviewee said. I said ‘right’ multiple times and have since edited it out of the transcripts
- ✱ Was unable to find a second person to discuss Ms. Wistar.

The Interviews and what I cultured about Oral History:

- 📄 Setting up the interview to be done at her home was relaxing and helpful
- 📄 Used the right recorder an Olympus Digital Voice Recorder WS-300M.
- 📄 Preparation was key to a strong interview
- 📄 Transcribing is a great tool that can be outsourced
- 📄 Oral History is essential to learning History