



The Haverford Herald

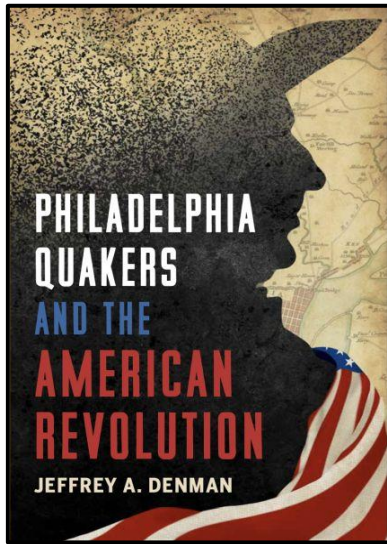
Spring 2026

Newsletter of the Haverford Township Historical Society

Our 86th Year

www.haverfordhistoricalsociety.org

The Philadelphia Quakers and the American Revolution HTHS ANNUAL MEETING & PROGRAM – MONDAY, APRIL 20, 6:30-8:30PM



April Talk- <https://haverfordhistoricalsociety.org/2026-hths-spring-talk/>
Thursday, April 20, 6:30 pm at the Haverford Twp Library

Join us for a talk by Jeff Denman, author of Philadelphia Quakers and the American Revolution.

Fleeing political upheavals in England for settlement in the New World, Quakers rose to unprecedented economic and political power in the Pennsylvania colony. However, the failure of the Quaker-dominated government to provide for defense in the wars from the 1730s into the 1760s was the beginning of their downfall. By the Revolution, their fortunes had waned, and they were brutally suppressed by their political foes. Seventeen Quakers and three others were exiled to Virginia without so much as a hearing, and Quaker farms and businesses were subject to depredations. Labeled dissenters by Loyalist and Patriot alike, they stood their ground, alone and isolated. Through the words of those who were there, author and historian Jeff Denman vividly describes the precipitous rise of the Philadelphia Quakers and their fall during the American Revolution.

Our annual members meeting in April typically allows members to vote on the election or reelection of board members. We have 4 board members up for reelection for 2-year terms, one board member for reelection for a 1-year term and a new member for election for a 1 year term. This would allow us to have half of the board members elected each year. In addition to board member elections, the board would like to change the bylaws to allow for more than two consecutive terms for officers:

Original:

ARTICLE VI ELECTIONS

The Board of Directors shall be elected by voice vote at an annual meeting. The term of office for all Directors shall be two years. One-half of the Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve two-year terms. *No Officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, except the Treasurer and Curator, who may succeed themselves.* Terms shall begin immediately following elections.

Amended:

ARTICLE VI ELECTIONS

The Board of Directors shall be elected by voice vote at an annual meeting. The term of office for all Directors shall be two years. One-half of the Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve two-year terms. *No Officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office, except the Treasurer and Curator, who may succeed themselves.* Terms shall begin immediately following elections.

If you are coming to the talk on the 20th, we will hold the vote then. If you cannot make it, then please make your voice heard by voting before April 20 at this link: <https://forms.gle/KMAG4cH7ZLbXpWmR6>

This vote is only for members. If you are not a member, you can become one:
<https://haverfordhistoricalsociety.org/membership-join-renew/>

If you are interested in becoming a board member or being more involved with the historical society, please contact us.

Saying 'Goodbye' to Our Beloved Kathy Case

By Amy Wolfe

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Kathy Case on November 14, 2025. Kathy had served as Director at Large on the Haverford Township Historical Society Board of Directors since 2023. Though her tenure was short with the Society, her contributions were considerable.

After having retired from a distinguished career in the medical publishing industry, Kathy became a devoted volunteer with the Society. Her years of experience as Archivist for the American Association for Cancer Research prepared her for the considerable task of restructuring the Society's vertical files, which contain numerous archival paper items. She worked to better preserve aging newspaper clippings, reorganized the extensive photograph collection, and incorporated recently acquired historic civic association materials into the collection.

Kathy's research projects varied from documenting the Lenape in Haverford Township to studying the porcelain china collection on display in Nitre Hall. She wrote articles relating to the history of Haverford Township for the newsletter and the website, and edited others' articles for historical accuracy. She was a constant at the Tuesday work days at Nitre Hall.

In addition to organizing the Historic Pilgrimage in 2023, Kathy served as a docent at open houses and the Heritage Festival, helped with newsletter mailing, and even polished the silver in the Society's collection. At the time of her death Kathy was part of the team working to curate a new exhibit of textile accessories on the third floor of Nitre Hall.

Kathy's wit, humor, professionalism and passions for both history and historical accuracy were a gift to the Haverford Township Historical Society and, thus, Haverford Township in general. Her presence with us is very much missed.



DELCO GIVES



Have you dreamed of making history? Of course, we all have. And now we have a chance to be a part of Delaware County's day of giving - an opportunity to unite our community around causes in which we truly believe and help nonprofit organizations connect to the larger community.

We need your help! Please join our campaign and help us reach our goal of \$10,000! We need you to tell your friends and family members about the important work we do and ask them to join us in helping to make a difference.

Get ready to give! On **May 6th** (starting at 7 PM), visit delcogives.org and make a donation to us and/or to any of the great participating nonprofit organizations in Delaware County. All giving will **end at 7PM on May 7**, so make sure to get your gift in on time!

Questions? If you have any questions or would like more information, let us know at info@haverfordhistoricalsociety.org. Thank you in advance for your generosity to our organization!

A History of Haverford Reserve

By Steven S. Goodman (edited down by John Kirkland)

*This article is the third of a series covering primarily early 20th century township history, written by HTHS volunteer Steven Goodman. Other articles Mr. Goodman has completed or that are in progress include research on medical facilities, toxic sites, and township churches. All have extensive endnotes. Because of the space limitations of newsletters, The Haverford Herald is publishing excerpts or articles in parts and referring readers to **History Resources on the Society's** website for Mr. Goodman's complete articles and those by other HTHS researchers. (<https://haverfordhistoricalsociety.org/places/>) —The Herald*

Determination of Re-Use of the Property

Closure of the facility gave rise to a long and sometimes contentious process to determine a new use for the property. The hospital's 209 acres represented the largest and last parcel of open space in Haverford Township, a portion of which was idyllic sylvan space, presenting a rare but certain to be controversial opportunity to both re-purpose and preserve the tract. The hospital buildings and site languished for several years while the process played out.

From the outset the state was inclined, although not committed, to turn the parcel over to Haverford Township, but not before the Township had developed a plan for it. An appointed board, the Haverford Township Authority, chaired by Haverford Township Commissioner Fred Moran, was established and tasked with turning public opinion about the site's future use into a concrete plan.

As the first step, the Authority sent a survey, shortly after official closure of the hospital, to 20,000 township residences, and approximately 3,300 responses were received, considered a high response rate by the Institute of Survey Research of Temple University, which tabulated the results. Residents were asked to provide their view on various planning factors, financing options and specific uses on a scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."



Photo of abandoned Haverford State Hospital – 2014

The highest level inquiry in the survey related to ownership alternatives for the hospital site. The options included sale of the property by the state to a private developer, sale to Haverford Township for a nominal amount, or purchase by the Township followed by sale or lease of a portion of the site to one or more private entities to offset the cost of any public projects proposed for the balance of the site.

The survey results made immediately clear that a significant majority of the respondents did not favor outright sale to a private developer. Instead, roughly the same majority expressed a strong preference for the Township to acquire the site. In view of the cost to demolish and clear the hospital buildings from the site, respondents favored a model in which development of the property would be funded through a mix of public and private sources, through sale or lease of a portion of the tract for private use.

With respect to planning factors, protection of the environment, maintenance of the neighborhood's character and preservation of open space ranked as respondents' highest priorities, and increasing the local tax base ranked lowest. Residential and office or commercial development did not garner much support.

Among specific uses for the property, survey respondents ranked walking trails and bike paths most highly, followed by a swimming pool. The Haverford Township school board had set aside \$2.6 million in 1994 for construction of a pool and thus expressed interest in constructing one on the hospital site. Some support was also provided for a senior center and a facility geared to teens.

The township engaged a planning firm to translate the survey results into potential scenarios for development. The firm created three alternatives, each featuring a combination of conservation areas, recreation fields and athletic facilities, a community recreation center, and either offices or age-restricted housing. The township then held several public hearings to solicit input from residents and other interested parties.

Following an extended period of deliberation, in mid-2001 the Haverford Township Board of Commissioners approved a master plan for development. The plan was a combination of two of the three original scenarios and was intended to strike a balance between open space conservation, community recreation and revenue-producing development. It featured conservation of 135 acres of undeveloped open space, a community recreation center and potentially 23 acres for age-restricted housing.

Having satisfied the state's condition that the township have a plan in place, on September 10, 2002, Haverford Township and the state Department of General Services entered into an Agreement of Sale. On November 25, 2002, the General Assembly passed an act approving the conveyance. The purchase price was \$3.5 million, and the deed of conveyance required that 120 acres be preserved for open space and passive recreation uses, with an additional 15 acres set aside for community recreation.

Haverford Reserve

The township then solicited bids to develop the remaining portion of the hospital site. Two dozen bids were submitted, including one by a joint venture formed by the Goldenberg Group and Pohlig Builders. In December 2003, the Board of Commissioners entered a preliminary sales agreement with the Goldenberg/Pohlig joint venture.

In 2004, a dispute arose between the Board of Commissioners and Goldenberg/Pohlig about the proposed development. One disagreement involved a discrepancy in the number of acres to be developed, as well as the number of acres set aside for the proposed ball fields. Another involved the inability to construct regulation size ball fields because of the location and steep topography of the land.

In November 2005, the parties reached a new agreement, pursuant to which Goldenberg/Pohlig would pay \$17 million for 39 acres, on which it would develop age-restricted condominiums and carriage houses.



Commissioner Andy Lewis, photo by Steven M. Falk, Philadelphia Inquirer, April 18, 2021

Prior to execution of the agreement, on December 19, 2005, the Board held a special public meeting to address a looming revenue shortfall. According to testimony later accepted by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Commissioner Moran proposed that Goldenberg/Pohlig pre-pay \$500,000 of the 2006 property taxes on the parcel and suggested that such payment could accelerate the zoning process. Another commissioner, Andy Lewis, stated that the township was not in the business of selling zoning.

In April 2007, Moran was charged with three counts of bribery. A jury convicted him on all counts, and the conviction was upheld on appeal, including by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which held that "it is patently improper for an official to condition successful or expedited completion of a legitimate process on payment of extra money."

On November 14, 2006, the township and Goldenberg/Pohlig signed a new Agreement of Sale. The agreement provided that 123.7 acres would be preserved in perpetuity as open space, 45.5 acres would be available for active recreation, and 39.9 acres would be developed with residential housing.

Pohlig ultimately constructed Athertyn at Haverford Reserve, a 55+ active lifestyle condominium community, featuring multiple buildings and amenities, while Goldenberg built carriage houses. These developments are connected by Parkview Drive, a new public road bisecting the former hospital property.

As envisioned, the dedicated open space was preserved. Several playing fields, an accessible playground, a dog park and walking trails were built as part of the Community Park at Haverford Reserve, later renamed the Andy Lewis Community Park.



Torrey House – Haverford Township Historical Society photo

The Haverford Township Community Recreation & Environmental Center (CREC) opened in June 2012. The CREC is a 35,000 square foot facility that encompasses an indoor track, double gym, multi-purpose rooms, fitness center, environmental nature area and kitchen facilities. The facility runs on geothermal energy from wells located beneath its parking lot.

As a final note, the Torrey House survived the development around it and remains in its original building. Torrey House Personal Care Home provides supervision and assistance with personal care for adults with mental illness and promotes social activities and group therapies. In late 2023, the General Assembly passed an act conveying the Torrey House property to Carelink Community Support Services of PA, Inc.

Conclusion

William Penn could not have foreseen, as he was selling parcels in the new colony of Pennsylvania, the use to which those parcels would eventually be put or the events that would occur on them. Each tract undoubtedly has an interesting and perhaps unique history, and the one that encompasses today's Haverford Reserve is no exception.

This property and its surrounding area have been owned by or home to Quakers, soldiers, farmers, industrialists, inventors, psychiatric patients and people from various other walks of life, and have been put to a variety of uses, ranging from agrarian to medical to residential to recreational. Haverford Reserve is now home to hundreds and its resources serve many more, operating as one of many jewels in the crown of Haverford Township.

HTHS 18th Annual Haverford Heritage Festival

SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2026

Haverford Township Historical Society will be hosting the 18th annual Haverford Heritage Festival on June 7th, 2026 from 11 AM to 4 PM along Karakung Drive and beautiful Cobb's Creek.



Featuring:

- Live Local Music and Entertainment on Two Stages
- Free tours of Nitre Hall, including weaving and quilting demonstrations
- Craft Beers from Conshohocken Brewing & Delicious Food
- Local Artists, Crafts People and Civic Organizations
- Birds of Prey demonstrations from Baywings Falconry
- Native American artifacts & craft making (including face painting for the kids!)
- Meet Fascinating Historical Characters
- Candle dipping, blacksmithing, knitting, tatting and food prep demonstrations

haverfordhistoricalsociety.org/heritage-festival/

Who Has Served in Haverford Township?

Many people have been elected or appointed to governance and management positions since Haverford became a first-class township in 1912. A Township-wide search, however, uncovered no complete list of these public servants. In 2022, former Historical Society Board member, Richard Kerr, compiled spreadsheets of Township Commissioners, Board Presidents and Vice Presidents, managers, and secretaries.

This project was part of the Historical Society's goal to greatly increase content in our online History Resources section. Please visit these unique resources at haverfordhistoricalsociety.org. Look under History Resources/People for those who serve and continue to serve local government. <https://haverfordhistoricalsociety.org/people/> --HTHS

Amateur Boxing Night at the Skatium

by Kate Clifford

Michael Thistle fought in the Amateur Boxing Match held at the Skatium on June 7, 1979. He was the Heavyweight champion of the night. Michael and others from the Warminster PAL gym were asked to participate in the match against other PAL and amateur gyms. They took the ice off of the rink floor and had the matches in front of a good-sized crowd. His then-girlfriend took the poster from the fight and mounted it on a board. Some photos were taken by family members during the night, but no record of the fight in local newspapers has been found. Do you remember a boxing match at the Skatium? Let us know!

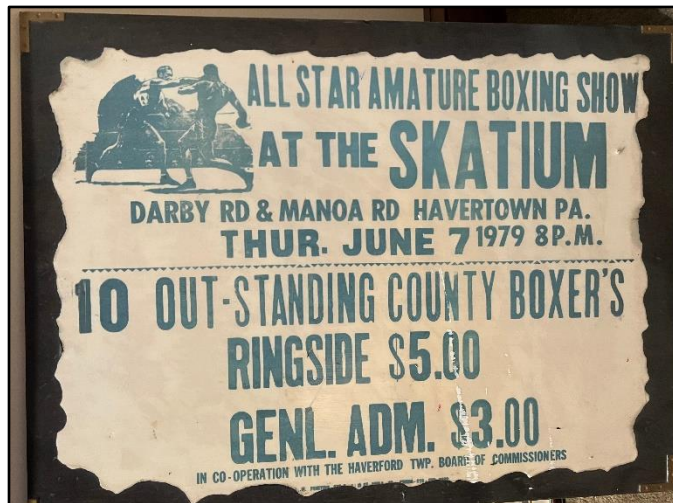
info@haverfordhistoricalsociety.org

More about Michael:

Michael got into boxing in his early 20s from watching Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) and Henry Cooper's fight in 1963. Muhammad Ali had a training camp in Deer Lake PA.

The fight at the Skatium was one of many amateur boxing matches that were held, and Michael was asked to be in a second fight in Reading, but he was warned about last minute replacements with ringers, so he declined to fight. He retired from boxing undefeated (he won his one fight), although he continued practicing. Fighters would practice with headgear but were not allowed to use them during the fights, and they would get points on skilled hits, not just knockouts.

Michael later joined the army reserve as a medic at age 27 as there was a program to become an LPN. He continued working as a nurse (LPN in the army reserve and an RN as a civilian) and eventually retired from the profession. While in the army reserve, he was deployed to Germany during Iraqi Freedom and they occupied a hospital while soldiers went to Iraq. He was in the army reserve for 20 years.



Looking For Board Members!

Are you fascinated by Haverford Township's rich history? Do you have a talent for research and analysis? Are you detail-oriented and enthusiastic about sharing your findings? Do you want to be more involved with your community?

The Haverford Township Historical Society, a non-profit organization, is seeking dedicated Haverford Township residents to fill open positions on our Board. It has been several years since we have had a full Board, making this opportunity especially exciting!

If you are interested in this opportunity, please reach out to us at info@haverfordhistoricalsociety.org.

Upcoming Events

Apr. 20: Spring meeting and public program
At the Haverford Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

May 6 - 7: DELCO GIVES deadline!

June 7: Haverford Township Heritage Festival
on Karakung Drive, 11am-4pm

June 28: Open House at Nitre Hall, 10am-1pm

July 26: Open House at Nitre Hall, 10am-1pm

Aug. 30: Open House at Nitre Hall, 10am-1pm

Sept. 27: Open House at Nitre Hall, 10am-1pm

We need volunteers for all of our events. Look for more information on how to attend and volunteer on our website haverfordhistoricalsociety.org

HIDDEN IN HAVERFORD: A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS by Kenny Ayres

In 1907, a 28-year-old Philadelphia native and University of Pennsylvania graduate named Arthur Dougherty Rees published his first play; a five-act, 85-page tragedy about a woman named Margaret, torn between two lovers. The work was titled “The Double Love: A Drama of American Life,” and was published by the Philadelphia-based John C. Winston Company. The original copies were bound by a simple dark green cover with a gold leaf title, which would have been pressed on by a heated brass die affixed to a machine.

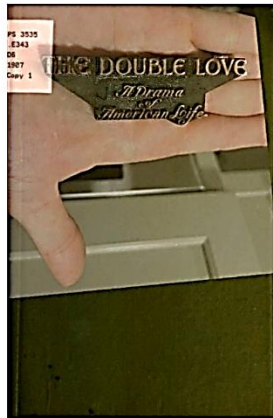
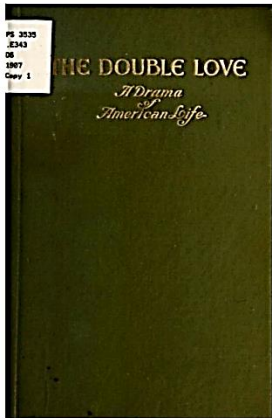
This artifact, found in Havertown, is almost certainly one of the original dies used in stamping those copies. Shown to the right in its mirrored state (the original is backward so it presses forward), and here overlaid on the original cover, this die’s size and unique title and subtitle fonts align perfectly with images of the original copy.

Almost.

If you look closely at the die, you will notice the word “The” is removable, fitting into the rest of the piece like a puzzle. It causes an alignment discrepancy on that word when overlaid with this specific image of the cover.



Mirrored image photo of an original die used in stamping The Double Love: A Drama of American Life



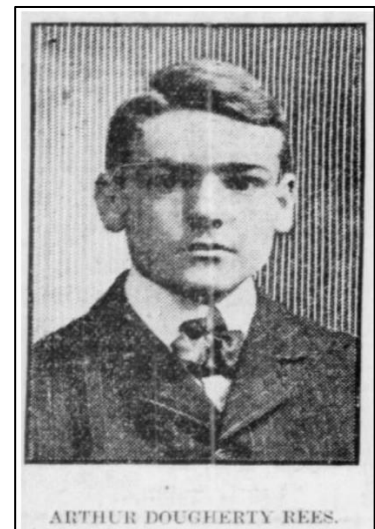
This could indicate that the die was damaged on that portion at some point during production, and just that word—rather than the whole item— was replaced before continuing, slightly altering the spacing on subsequent copies. It also could have been purposeful, to easily create an abbreviated or alternate title. As for Rees’ tragedy, it was, well...tragic.

Written in Shakespearean language and in iambic pentameter, the play was reviewed mostly unfavorably by newspapers across the country, with one critic stating, “the story as a story is ridiculous, and as a play is simply impossible,” and another calling it an “attempt to make a poetic drama out of some rather recalcitrant elements of American life.”

Rees wrote five plays and ultimately made quite a national name for himself as a lecturer, giving talks on history, politics and literature around the country. He continued to write as well living to the age of 83 before being tragically killed by a car in New York City.

Modern reproductions of “The Double Love” made after his passing seem to suggest a warming to the work over time, with some descriptions referring to it as “culturally important.” Either way, this die, uncovered from its inexplicable resting place in Havertown, is a unique representation of early 20th century American literature, industry and local life.

“Hidden in Haverford” tells local history stories through the lens of artifacts either found in or associated with Haverford Township. If you have such an artifact that you would like to be considered for this series, please contact HTHS volunteer Kenny Ayres at kayres8@gmail.com. Other Hidden in Haverford articles can be found on our website: haverfordhistoricalsociety.org/hidden-in-haverford/



Credit: The Philadelphia Inquirer

OKTOBERFEST THANK YOU!

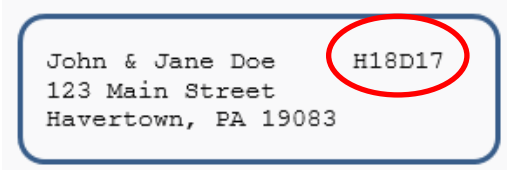
On October 17, 2025, we had our annual Oktoberfest fundraiser with live music by Over the Garage Band, seasonal food and drinks and a silent auction/ chance raffle. We had over 200 people come out to this event. Thank you to everyone who came out to support us and bid on wonderful items donated by local businesses. If you are interested in donating an item for this year's Oktoberfest, please email us.

Check your mailing label to determine your HTHS membership or financial donation status. Here are the codes:

- Ixx **Individual** member and 2-digit year for which dues were paid (\$20)
- Hxx **Household** member and 2-digit year for which dues were paid (\$30)
- Dxx **Donor** and 2-digit year of most recent general donation
- Nxx **Nitre Club** donor and 2-digit year of most recent donation (\$25)
- Lxx **Lawrence Club** donor and 2-digit year of most recent donation (\$50)
- Fxx **Federal Club** donor and 2-digit year of most recent donation (\$100)
- Pxx **Powder Master Club** donor & 2-digit year of most recent donation (\$200)

COMPL. Complimentary newsletter (other history groups and some officials)

All 2026 memberships are now due. Please renew today! (Send check to "HTHS" or use Paypal on our website.)



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Find Us Online!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Haverford.Historical
Instagram: www.instagram.com/HaverfordHistorical

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Send your comments and suggestions for this newsletter to us via email: info@haverfordhistoricalsociety.org
Editor Spring 2026 – John Kirkland



HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Chartered 1964**

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