



The Haverford Herald

Spring 2022

Newsletter of the Haverford Township Historical Society

Our 83rd Year

www.haverfordhistoricalsociety.org

APRIL 2: 2022 COBBS CREEK CLEANUP

By Kate Clifford

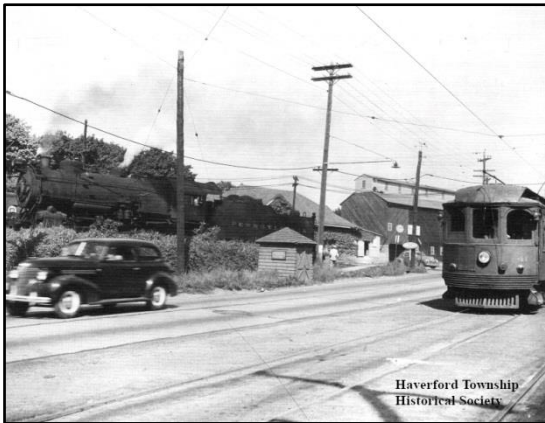
Join us on Saturday, April 2 from 9am to Noon! Help clean up Cobbs Creek and Karakung Drive with the Haverford Township Historical Society and the Darby Creek Valley Association.

- T-shirts, gloves and bags will be provided.
- Bring your own mask, and work gloves if desired.
- Social distancing will be observed.
- All ages welcome!



Sign up here:

argentasoftware.com/interfaces/dcva/frmEventTicketSalesForm.aspx?EventID=3403



APRIL 12: HTHS MEETING ONLINE

On Tuesday, April 12 at 7pm HTHS, partnering with our friends at the Haverford Township Free Library, will present a Zoom online event, with our History Researcher Rich Kerr providing a history of railways in Haverford Township. Join us for an illustrated visual presentation on the many and diverse rail lines in Haverford Township's history, and how they precipitated the township's transition from rural farms to suburban development. FREE and open to the public!

Use this link to register for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZEKceuqgTotG9F0LQHhKuJw6ywTIdReLul>

SUNDAY, JUNE 5: HAVERFORD HERITAGE FESTIVAL IS SCHEDULED

On Sunday, June 5, 11am - 4pm, the HTHS Heritage Festival returns to Karakung Drive along the beautiful Cobbs Creek!

Featuring:

- Live Local Music and Entertainment on Two Stages
- Craft Beers and Delicious Food
- Local Artists, Crafts People and Vendors
- Meet Fascinating Historical Characters
- A Family Favorite Event for 14 Years and Counting!

Have Fun & Show Your Support!

- Make a Donation
- Become a Sponsor
- Be a Volunteer
- Be a Craft Vendor



Info: HaverfordHistoricalSociety.org

Volunteer: HaverfordHistoricalSociety.org/volunteer-opportunities/

THE SLINKY: IT HAPPENED IN BROOKLINE

By Kathy Case

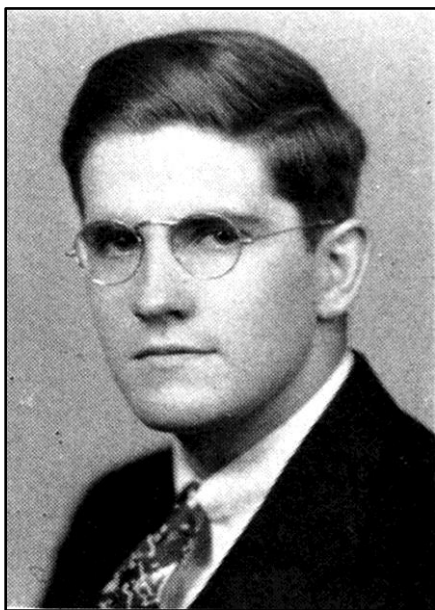
Stories told over years are likely to wander from the truth. Such has been the case with the story of Richard and Betty James and the invention of the Slinky, as revealed in HTHS' apparently unique history file of old local contemporary accounts.

Richard James grew up in Chester Heights, attended the Westtown School and went to Penn State to study mechanical engineering. There he met and married fellow student Betty Mattas, who dropped out in her sophomore year to start a family (thus, she was not a Penn State graduate, as other accounts incorrectly state).



Reproduction "Collector Edition" of original Slinky on display at HTHS

Richard graduated in 1939 (see photo), and in 1942 he and Betty bought a house on Ivy Rock Lane in Westgate Hills. In 1943 they bought and moved to 307 Oxford Road in Brookline (see photo). The 1943 deed lists the Jameses as being from Westgate Hills in Haverford Township. They did not live in Clifton Heights or Philadelphia when the Slinky was invented, as is often reported.



Richard James' Penn State Yearbook Photo

In 1943, Richard was working at Cramp's Shipyard, in the Fishtown section of Philadelphia, which had been reactivated for World War II. He was trying to use springs to isolate delicate meters on ships from unwanted vibrations and movements, and had been experimenting with sizes and wire shapes. According to a 1950 *Philadelphia Inquirer* interview with Richard, he had already decided that he needed a coil made from flat wire, rather than round-wire, and had had one made. It was on a shelf or his desk (accounts differ) with other test springs and fell off, bouncing end-over-end down a series of stacked books to the floor. (His desk was not likely to have been on a ship, even though a 1948 Delaware County *Daily Times* article indicated he had been on a trial cruise testing coils.) After seeing the odd, lively behavior of this coil spring, he took it home so his son Tommy could play with it.

Home was 307 Oxford Road in Haverford Township. From 1943 to 1945, Betty and Richard, their children, and neighborhood children tested and played with a succession of coil springs, in what Richard referred to as a home laboratory, which apparently included their kitchen table, until he perfected his ultimate design for play value and patented it. "Our house was a mess while I experimented," Richard told the *Daily Times* in 1948. He and Betty looked for a product name, and she came up with the work "slinky" after a Swedish word for sinuous. One famous photograph shows Richard and son Tommy, who later helped his mother run the Slinky business, sending Slinkys off down the stairway in their Oxford Road home.

The Jameses pooled resources and contracted a Philadelphia piston ring manufacturer to produce 450 Slinkys to Richard's specifications. According to Richard, the first toy shop to take some of the Slinkys was Jonas' Top Shop, location unknown. They did not sell, primarily because a spring in a box was not very impressive. Next the Jameses took them to Gimbels, where they also did not sell until Richard and Betty started demonstrating the action of the coil. They sold out in less than 2 hours, and the Slinky enterprise was born. The development work, the patenting and the packaging had all occurred at 307 Oxford Road in Haverford Township, as did Richard's work to design a machine to manufacture Slinkys from large raw coils of the flat spring wire. The manufacturing initially took place in Germantown, then in Clifton Heights, Paoli, and eventually in Hollidaysburg (near Altoona), where Betty and her family moved in 1961.

Betty was supportive of Richard giving up his engineering job to devote full time to Slinky, but most accounts agree that the rapid commercial and financial success ended up putting a strain on the James marriage. After a 1952 move from Oxford Road and Haverford Township to a larger multi-acre home in the Bryn Mawr area, Richard started questioning the value of affluence and its trappings. He became involved with the Wycliffe Bible Translators and gave away large sums of money, which put both the family finances and the Slinky enterprise into a tailspin. In 1960, Richard left Betty, their six children and a pile of debt to move to Bolivia with the bible society. Betty disclosed in later years that he repeatedly wrote to her, warning her that she and the children should join him in Bolivia or they would face divine retribution.

Betty James' subsequent taking of the helm of the Slinky business and rebuilding it into a major enterprise, with an estimated 300 million Slinkys sold in her lifetime, is a well-known success story. She moved her children and then the Slinky production equipment to her home town of Hollidaysburg, where she could rely on the support of family members and knew there was an experienced pool of mechanically inclined workers as well.

Today the Slinky is enshrined in the National Toy Hall of Fame. Betty, respected by her peers, was inducted into the Toy Industry Hall of Fame in 2001. In that same year, a bill to make Slinky the official Pennsylvania state toy was introduced, but it was not passed. Betty never remarried, raised her six children, ran the business hands-on, and died in 2008, revered by the town of Hollidaysburg and toy enthusiasts everywhere. Richard died in Bolivia in 1974.

The current owners of the house at 307 Oxford have collected articles about the Jameses and their house's role in the Slinky story. They have photographed their own child sending a Slinky down the stairs, where Tommy James played with Slinkys in the 1940s.

The Oxford Road house predates the neighborhood that now surrounds it. It was built in 1854 by Samuel Johnson and may have more stories to tell. In past years, local students and neighbors were taken to see a small cave or passageway at the house, variously said to have been used by smugglers or as an Underground Railroad station. There is as yet no proof of either role, and little remains of this feature today.

In spite of the many conflicting Slinky stories today, we know one thing is true: The Slinky started its stairway journey to toy fame at 307 Oxford Road in the Brookline neighborhood of Haverford Township.



Wilbur Hall photograph of 307 Oxford Road, ca. 1900-1910.

THE LLOYDS – HAVERFORD’S GREATEST BENEFACTORS – SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN

By Richard Kerr

When Horatio Gates Lloyd became a wealthy and prominent person in society, he moved to Haverford Township. In 1910 and 1911, he hired architect Wilson Eyre to design and oversee construction of his new country estate home, which the family named “Allgates.” The selfless giving of personal time and money to the benefit of Haverford Township and its people by Mr. Lloyd and his sons, H. Gates Lloyd Jr. and Richard Wingate Lloyd, remains lastingly evident today, although their family name has been shamefully allowed to lapse from public memory.

Background on Horatio Gates Lloyd Sr. and Family

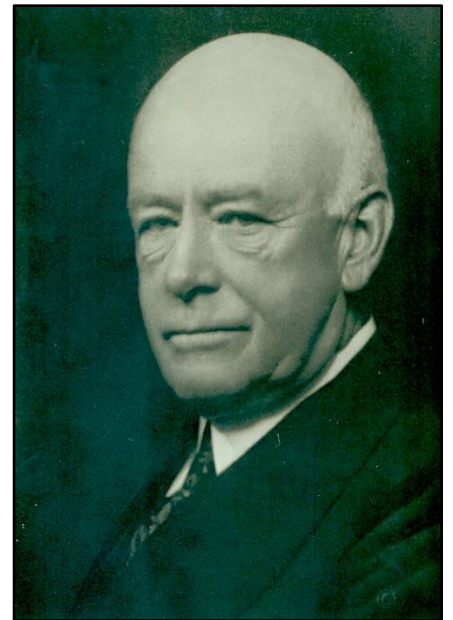
Horatio G. Lloyd was born on January 14, 1867 in Middletown, Delaware. His father was a farmer, while his mother’s father was a military general and lawyer. From the farm, Lloyd went to and graduated from college, then entered the banking business, where he thrived. “The Bankers Magazine” in February 1912 noted, “Mr. Lloyd had been president of the Commercial Trust Co. of Philadelphia. He is credited with having played an important part among the Philadelphia bankers who succeeded in restoring confidence during the panic of 1907.” In 1910 Lloyd became associated with the prestigious banking house of Drexel & Co. of Philadelphia, and in 1912 he was made a partner in the four Morgan firms (J. P. Morgan & Co. in New York; Drexel & Co. in Philadelphia; Morgan, Grenfell & Co. of London and Morgan, Harjes & Co. of Paris). “Moody’s Magazine” in February 1914 stated, “During more than a half century the Drexel houses have financed the largest international banking operations, placing thousands of millions of Government, corporation, railroad and other loans and securities. In magnitude and commanding influence their record will be found without parallel even by the greatest European houses.” Lloyd rose on his own merits at a time when most bankers came from already prominent banking families, and only a few of those men succeeded as well as he did.

Throughout his career, Lloyd undertook civic and charitable work. In Philadelphia, he served as the chairman of both the Bureau of Unemployment Relief and the Committee for Unemployment Relief, successive organizations founded in 1930-1932 to deal with relief and care during the onset of the Great Depression. They provided over 46,000 families with financial relief, until the city transferred this task to its Department of Welfare.

Horatio G. Lloyd had married Mary Helen Wingate (a descendant of John Wingate of colonial New Hampshire) in 1897 in Brooklyn, N. Y., and they had sons H. Gates Lloyd Jr. and Richard Wingate Lloyd. A family story says that when they were searching for a name for their new Haverford country estate, Mrs. Lloyd (nee Wingate) said, “Why don’t we call it ‘Allgates,’ since we are all ‘Gates’ here?”

Serving Haverford Township

In Haverford Township, Horatio G. Lloyd was a founding township commissioner when the township became incorporated in 1912. When the first president of the Board of Commissioners, John R. Valentine of Highland Farm fame, died unexpectedly after one year in office, Lloyd replaced him as president on January 6, 1913 and served in that role until stepping down as a commissioner in 1922. Lloyd also provided the stone from the quarry at Allgates to build the 1916 township administration building in Oakmont. The service of Lloyd and his family to Haverford Township did not end there.



*Horatio G. Lloyd Sr.
(1867-1937)*

Re-establishing Public Trust in Township Governance

Since 1875, Delaware County had been under the political control of the father-son team of William McClure and John J. McClure of Chester. John McClure corrupted and controlled the county Republican Party through an unofficial committee and parallel structure that he led, called the Delaware County Republican Board of Supervisors, colloquially known as the "War Board." Favoritism and patronage permeated the county and municipal governments. One of three McClure "lieutenants" on his committee, tasked with controlling the northern townships, was Thomas Weidemann, characterized by the Delaware County *Daily Times* in his obituary as "30 years political boss of Haverford Township." Weidemann was elected as a Haverford Township commissioner from 1924 to 1937 (board president 1925-1932) and as a State Representative from 1929 to 1938. In 1931-1932 Weidemann faced a few political power setbacks. He had charges filed against Haverford's treasurer and assistant treasurer, who promptly had countercharges brought against him. Trials in Media Courthouse (before a Republican county judge) vindicated Weidemann but found the two less powerful and influential men guilty, whereupon they served brief sentences before another judge released them.

In the aftermath, the Haverford Township board of commissioners, seeking to address public concerns about the propriety of the township's finances, reached out to Horatio G. Lloyd in mid-1932, asking him to serve as township treasurer and restore public confidence. He, in his mid-60s and as one of the most powerful financiers in America, agreed to do this, indicating that he would donate all compensation beyond his direct expenses to Depression-era charity. He served as treasurer until he died; then his son Richard W. Lloyd was appointed on January 27, 1937 to serve until the November 2 municipal election. In April Richard told the commissioners that his compensation was "too great," leading to a newspaper headline declaring "Tax Collector Says He Gets Too Much." Like his father, Richard Lloyd gave his compensation above direct expenses to charity. In a wry political twist, the following year the commissioners appointed Thomas Weidemann, who had stepped down from elected office, as township treasurer and tax collector, a position that he held until 1954.

Giving the Haverford Township Free Library a Permanent Home

In 1933 a committee of interested civic leaders began meeting to establish the Haverford Township Free Library. The fledgling library opened in a vacant store on May 28, 1934, with various organizations donating the monthly rent, but by 1936 it had outgrown that space. The Haverford Township Title & Trust Co., a victim of the financial collapse of the Depression, had a stone building on the northeast corner of East Darby and Mill roads. Horatio G. Lloyd Sr. worked behind the scenes, as a prominent financier could. An agreement was reached and approved for the Library Association to purchase the former bank building. Lloyd then generously offered to contribute the first \$1,000. He died before the deal was finalized, but his sons carried out his benevolent wishes. In the end, Richard W. Lloyd informed the association that "his father's estate had met and agreed to pay \$12,000 for the purchase of the building" – the full cost. A dedication and grand opening has held on May 27, 1938. The Haverford Township Free Library still occupies that building today, thanks to the personal efforts and the financial generosity of the Lloyd family.



H. Gates Lloyd Jr.
(1900-1993)

Horatio G. Lloyd Sr. died at Allgates on January 21, 1937 and is buried at the Church of the Redeemer cemetery in Bryn Mawr. His wife, Mary Helen Wingate Lloyd, had pre-deceased him on September 23, 1934. Sons H. Gates Lloyd Jr. and Richard W. Lloyd dutifully continued to carry forward their father's civic wishes.

Horatio Gates Lloyd Jr.

H. Gates Lloyd (as he was called, while his father went by Horatio G. Gates) was born on December 6, 1900 and graduated from Princeton University in 1923. He joined Drexel & Co. after a one-year stint at Cambridge and became a partner of the firm in 1927. A large piece of land on the southwest side of Darby Road was sold off from his father's Allgates estate for Gates and his family, and architects Willing, Sims and Talbutt designed their house "Linden," built in 1930. (This house later became the general administration building for The Quadrangle

lifecare community.) After serving in World War II with the Interceptor Command in Philadelphia, Gates took a leave of absence in 1950 to join the Central Intelligence Agency. He served as its deputy director of administration under director Allen W. Dulles from 1954 until retiring in 1964. Gates Lloyd died locally on November 9, 1993.

Preserving the Polo Field

In the Fall 2021 issue of *The Haverford Herald* we presented the history of the 18-acre Polo Field in the northeast corner of Haverford Township, noting the following: “By the time the U.S. entered World War II in 1941, the Polo Club no longer existed, the Horse Show and the Hound Show were suspended, and the mortgages and taxes on the land had become seriously in arrears.” Second-generation financier H. Gates Lloyd Jr. offered to assist the township to resolve the Polo Field situation, avoiding potential development on the land. He spent much time and effort investigating the details and devising a workable plan, which he presented to the township in 1942. He personally negotiated arrangements for the purchase of a mortgage existing on the property and settlement of a second mortgage. He persuaded the Haverford Township School District and Delaware County to grant relief of the unpaid back taxes, and Haverford Township reluctantly agreed to do the same. In 1943 some derelict horse stables were dismantled, with the remaining stables kept to store horse show equipment and salvaged lumber. A “Bryn Mawr Playfield Association” was incorporated in 1944 to hold the title, following Lloyd’s plan, and technically still governs the use of the field. The horse and hound shows continued on the site for more several years, with proceeds going to Haverford Township. It is thanks to H. Gates Lloyd’s ingenuity and perseverance that today the Polo Field exists in perpetuity for public recreation.

Richard Wingate Lloyd

Richard W. Lloyd was born on August 5, 1904, graduated from Princeton University in 1928, married Margaret Champlin Perry on June 14, 1941 in Philadelphia and later moved to South Carolina, where he died on January 10, 1980.

Parks and Playgrounds

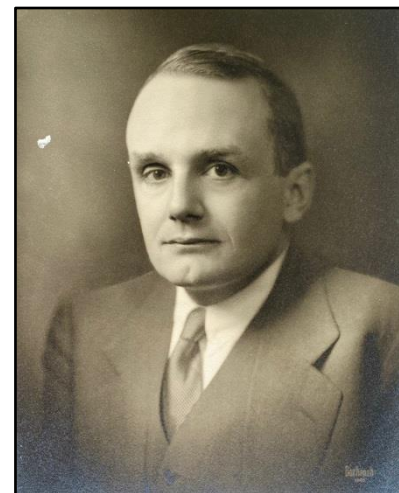
While in Haverford, Richard Lloyd was instrumental in improving township parks and playfields, and funding playground equipment for children. In those days, the parks were a mixture of responsibility by the township, the school board, and even various neighborhood civic associations that took it upon themselves to establish and maintain parks and provide organized activities in them.

As stated on the Brynford Civic Association website, “Preston Field got pieced together in ways strange even for Haverford Township.” The Quaker-affiliated Preston Reading Room Association, the Haverford Township School Board, and the township government itself all staged a protracted soap opera spanning from 1889 until 1972, when the 1913 Preston Public School building was razed and today’s 11-acre Preston Field was fully realized. Cameo appearances were made by Horatio G. Lloyd Sr., who was instrumental in the purchase and funding of two of the four major properties that make up today’s park.

Meanwhile, in 1938 the school board, with funding from community benefactor Richard Lloyd, undertook a program to install modern playground equipment at all schools, “not including Preston . . . due to the fact that their section have a well-equipped playground adjacent to the school.”

Summary

Today we cannot overstate the debt that we in Haverford Township owe to Horatio G. Lloyd Sr. and his two sons, H. Gates Lloyd Jr. and Richard Wingate Lloyd. Between them, they tried to launch our present form of township government with a steady foundation, worked to right it when it went off course, gave our library its permanent home, and greatly aided the development of our wonderful parks with their leadership and generosity. Theirs is a name that should be memorialized and remembered in Haverford Township. They deserve no less.



*Richard W. Lloyd
(1904-1980)*

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP (OR JOIN) FOR 2022 !



It's now time to renew (or join) the Haverford Township Historical Society for 2022. A renewal form and addressed envelope are included with this issue for your convenience, or you can handle this online on our website. If you are presently a paid member, a ballot for the election of HTHS board members is also enclosed. Please vote and mail the ballot to us. We are a non-profit depending entirely on members, donors and volunteers. While we are housed in historic buildings owned by Haverford Township and bring them to life (and contribute to their care and costs), no township funds enter our organization's budget. We rely on our members and donors. Please join us and support our work in 2022 and beyond!

AMERICA 250 PA DELCO

Help celebrate over 250 years of American history in Delaware County! America250PA Delco is an official partner to Pennsylvania's America250PA. The America250PA Delco committee, our official county partner to America250PA, is looking for organizations and individuals to help commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Our mission is to engage all Delaware County residents in this commemoration by providing and supporting experiences, now through 2026, that ignite imaginations, elevate diverse stories, inspire service, and highlight the American founding and 250 years of American history through Delco's unique lens.

Website: www.america250padelco.org Email: info@america250padelco.org



WHERE IS IT NOW?

OLDEST SURVEY MARKER IN HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP - By Kathy Case



Description: Stone marked with the initials of Thomas Ellis (south), Morris Llewellyn (east) and David Llewellyn (west), plus the date 1683. Some initials may have been altered after 1683. Top part of stone was broken off prior to 1928.

Original Location: Line of former Llewellyn property (known as Castle Bith and originally 500 acres) and what became a Haverford College meadow on the NE bank of Cobb's Creek, 200 yards north of today's Ardmore Avenue SEPTA rail station.

History: **1889:** Stone discovered by Samuel Garrigues while surveying. He described it as "oldest linemarkers I have ever seen" (Glenn, T. A., *Merion in the Welsh Tract*; facsimile of 1896 book, p. 39). **1915:** Stone moved to Haverford College grounds. **1928:** Haverford College trustees gave stone to Morris Llewellyn Cooke, descendent of original settler. **1935:** Cooke described stone at his home on St. Georges Road in Chestnut Hill as a "treasured possession" (Cooke, M. L., *Morris Llewellyn of Haverford, 1647-1730*; p. 12. - a self-published pamphlet based on Cooke's presentation to the Historical Society of Montgomery County in 1921). **1960:** Cooke died at age 87, survived by two sisters (*New York Times* obituary, March 6, 1960). **1975:** An owner-commissioned extensive history of Castle Bith noted that the stone was in Cooke's possession as of 1935 (document in HTHS archives).

What happened to this stone?

Please, contact us at info@haverfordhistoricalsociety.org if you have information on where this marker stone is now.

History Pop Quiz Answers (from Last Issue)

In 1912, Haverford Township was incorporated as a "First Class Township" and went from having supervisors to commissioners. In its first 108 years, how many women commissioners has Haverford had? Can you name them?

Answer: We know of 5: [Edith Hannum](#), Joan Genthert, Carolyn Parker, Jan Marie Rushforth and Jane Hall. At present, we have a record 3 female commissioners: Laura Cavender, Sherry Forste-Grupp and Judy Trombetta.

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 (\$15)
- Hxx **Household** member and 2-digit year for which dues were paid (\$25)
- 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)
- COMPL. **Complimentary** newsletter (other history groups and some officials)

Sample label:

John & Jane Doe
123 Main Street
Havertown, PA 19083

H18D17

Only **I22** and **H22** memberships have paid 2022 dues. **Please renew today!** (Send check to "HTHS" or use Paypal on our website.)

Find Us Online!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Haverford.Historical
Instagram: www.instagram.com/haverfordhistorical
Twitter: [@HaverfordHist](https://twitter.com/HaverfordHist)

© Copyright 2022 Haverford Township Historical Society
Send your comments and suggestions for this newsletter to us
via email: info@haverfordhistoricalsociety.org
Editor Spring 2022 – Richard Kerr



HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded 1939
Chartered 1964

PO Box 825
Havertown, PA 19083
(484) 452-3382

See us at:

www.haverfordhistoricalsociety.org

Email:

info@haverfordhistoricalsociety.org