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# The Corridor

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Newsletter of the Old York Road Historical Society

Spring 2025

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## LECTURE SERIES

The Program Committee has arranged for the following presentations to be held on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in the John Barnes Room of Abington Friends Meeting. The programs are also accessible live via Zoom. The lecture series is sponsored by a grant from the Jenkintown Lyceum and all programs are offered free of charge.

**March 12 – Tinicum & Eastwick: Environmental Justice and Racial Injustice** – When plans to overhaul Southwest Philadelphia in the 1950s included the razing of both the integrated neighborhood of Eastwick and the ecologically valuable Tinicum marshes, two grassroots movements took up the cause to battle eminent domain. Amid protest marches and political intrigue, a question emerged that would forever influence the region: Who deserves a home: wildlife or human beings? Author Will Caverly confronts the intersection of eminent domain and the environment as told through the struggles everyday residents endured to pursue justice.

**April 9 – Rogues' Gallery: When Rich People Spend Good Money for Bad Art** – Assembling a world-class art collection has always been a mark of arrival at the top of the social ladder. But in their haste, many arrivistes have fallen victim to fraudsters. As Philadelphia historian and author Tom Keels will elucidate, in the early 20th century Philadelphia multi-millionaires P.A.B. Widener and John G. Johnson paid a not-so-small fortune to a European grifter named Leo Nardus who supplied them with da Vincis, Rembrandts, Vermeers, and other Old Masters – all of which were bogus. Later, both men would be redeemed by assembling world-class collections.

**May 14 – Beaver College** – Ken Samen of Arcadia University will discuss a new book on the history of Beaver College/Arcadia University beginning with the founding of Beaver College in western Pennsylvania in 1853, as well as the reasons behind the college's move to Jenkintown in 1925 and subsequently to Glenside in 1928. From Harrison's Grey Towers to campus development and expansion in the 1960s, Samen will describe the changes made to the property to make it suitable for academic use as well as student life throughout the years.

## - - - SPRING OUTING - - -

## Lynnewood Hall

Sunday, April 27, 1:15 p.m.

The Society is thrilled to be offering a private tour of Widener's Lynnewood Hall for our Spring Outing. For decades, Lynnewood Hall has stood silent along Ashbourne Avenue in a plaintive slow state of decay. However, in 2023, the Lynnewood Hall Preservation Foundation was able to purchase the property and thus has begun the mammoth effort to restore the estate to its former grandeur.

Lynnewood Hall was built in 1898-99 by Peter A.B. Widener as a home for his family (3 generations) and as an art gallery to display his vast collection. Designed by Jenkintown resident and Philadelphia architect Horace Trumbauer, the house was one of the largest and most sumptuous in the country when it opened in December 1899. The Widener family lived on the estate until 1944, when it was sold, first to a religious school, then to the developer of Lynnewood Garden Apartments, and then in 1952 to Carl McIntire whose Faith Theological Seminary based itself there until 1996 when Dr. Yoon, a board member of the seminary, purchased the property. It was from Dr. Yoon that the Foundation bought the property.

The Society is grateful to the Lynnewood Hall Preservation Foundation and its staff, who will guide tours throughout the main residence, answer questions, and share their vision for restoration.

This tour is for MEMBERS ONLY, and the cost is \$45 per person. Individual members are limited to 1 ticket, while all other membership categories are limited to 2 tickets; tickets are NOT transferable. Please register using the enclosed form. All attendees will be required to sign a liability waiver before entering the grounds. Attendees should be aware that there are no restroom facilities on site, no handicap accommodations on the grounds or in the building, and no climate control inside the residence. The Spring Avenue gates and the grounds will open at 1:15 with the program and tours to begin inside at 2:00. It is our intent to honor all reservations, but the Society reserves the right to limit the total number of attendees.

# A Bit of History – Horsham Minutes Preparatory Meeting

By Sharee L. Solow

In 2021, Leslie C. Morris-Smith and I transcribed the handwritten minutes and indexed the names found in the Horsham [Young Friends] Meeting Minutes 1897 to 1908. The handwritten book is held in the archives of the Old York Road Historical Society and was loaned under a COVID work-at-home program. Leslie and I worked together to scan the cover and each page with a professional book scanner. I focused on typing the transcription, Leslie and I reviewed and edited the text together, and finally the index and compilation was completed by Leslie. The journal was returned to the archive and a digital version of this new work can be found in Series 2, Volume 119, at the DAR Library, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), Washington, D.C. A printed copy was presented to the Society in December 2024.

This journal is not the Friends meeting minutes that document marriages, membership transfers, and important decisions of the day. Instead, the entries were from young adults planning monthly programs to help them concentrate on their religious studies. The dates cover eleven years of meetings for ten months a year and the subjects discussed vary greatly according to the times.

A sample of the content for the Organizing Structure, extracted from page 298:

Horsham Friend's Association shall be composed of the members of Warminster Upper Dublin, Ambler, Horsham Meetings, and any others interested in the Friends.



It is organized for the purpose of studying the History and Literature of Friends, and discussing questions of interest to the Society.

It shall hold a meeting on the last Firstday in each month for ten months of the year, At Horsham Friend's Meetinghouse commencing 9 months, 1897 at 3 P.M.

Its member officers shall consist of President, Vice President, Secretary and Executive Committee, Who shall serve the association for five consecutive meetings.

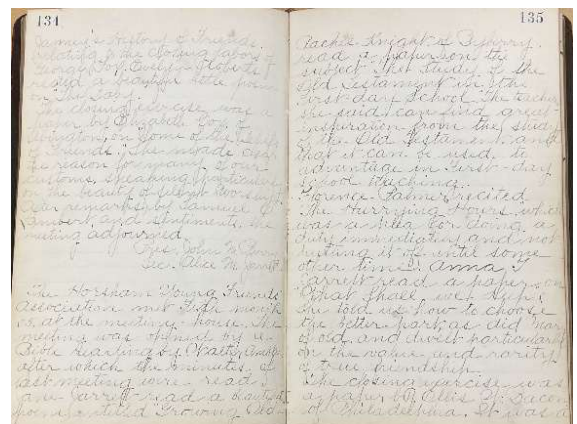
The Executive Committee to be composed of six young friends, three women and three men whose duty shall be to present to each meeting of the association, a programme to consist of A Bible reading, An Essay, An extract from Friend's History, An extract from Friend's Discipline, A reading from Friends Literature, A recitation from a member of one of the Firstday Schools, Voluntary exercises, sentiments Etc.

These officers to be appointed by the Association every five Months.

Care was taken to follow the rules for transcription, so spelling, grammar, and corrections are shown as the original author created them. An image of each page accompanies the typed transcription for comparison and subjective review. Name variations were kept as written.

In the back of the volume is the surname index. Common names in the area include: Atkinson, Carter, Comly, Hallowell, Jarrett, Knight, Lippincott, Morris, Paxson, Penrose, Stackhouse, Satterthwait, Tomlinson, Twining, Walton, Wanamaker, Wood. Some were members while others were guests or mentioned in discussions. For example, as regards John Wanamaker,

George Fox was the subject of a paper read by Seth T Walton which he had. It was a very interesting and carefully prepared paper giving a thorough account of George Foxes life. Susan H. Jarrett after discussing the papers said called attention to the Rev. Charles Wagner, who was then visiting Phila. the guest of John Wannamaker and who is the author of "the



Simple Life.” He is particularly interested in Friends whom he considers the best exponents of a simple life.

Archival pieces like this are often passed-by in genealogical research because they are not transcribed or

indexed. It takes extra work to read everyone’s handwriting, but this journal clearly places these people by location and date. Often, they discuss how they are related to each other while revealing their attitudes about current affairs, family matters, fellow members’ involve-

ment in Meetings or just the weather. It gives a snapshot of their lives.

*Sharee L. Solow is a member of the William Penn Chapter of the NSDAR as well as a board member of the Society.*

## THANKS TO OUR MAJOR MEMBERSHIP DONORS

The Society gratefully recognizes those who have so far supported our work for the 2025 program year through membership at the Patron level and above.

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# Happenings Along the Corridor

(Events are open to the public free of charge.)

## The Rebirth of American's Forgotten Palace: Lynnewood Hall

The Athenaeum of Philadelphia has organized an exhibition in cooperation with the Lynnewood Hall Preservation Foundation that runs from January 24 to March 15. This is the first exhibition to display fragments from the building, personal items from the Widener family, and archival photographs that tell the rich history of Lynnewood Hall and what the future might hold for this storied property. The Athenaeum is located at 219 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street on the east side of Washington Square. Hours are 9-5 weekdays and 10-3 on Saturdays. On Monday evening March 10<sup>th</sup>, Foundation President Edward Thome will give guided tours of the exhibition at 5:00 and 6:00 p.m.

## Crooked Billet History Fair

The Society will have a booth at the Crooked Billet History Fair to be held in the auditorium of the Keith Valley Middle School (227 Meetinghouse Road, Horsham) on Saturday, April 26 from 10 to 4. The event will feature representatives from the many historical organizations in Eastern Montgomery and Lower Bucks Counties. Come support the various organizations that keep local history alive in our region.

## Membership Reminder

We are midway through our 2024-2025 membership year. If the mailing label on your envelope does not read "2025" or if you are receiving a membership form with this newsletter, you are not current. Please consider renewing at the Patron level or above. Your generous support is critical for our sound fiscal operation and is greatly appreciated.

For those that would like to join our tour of Lynnewood Hall but are not currently members, there is only one word to say – "JOIN!" For Individual members who want to take a guest – "UPGRADE." While the perks of membership are valuable, it is the dedicated support by members that keeps the Society operating. We are one of the largest all-volunteer historical organizations in the Delaware Valley and we do not receive any government funds. We rely solely upon interested persons and so invite your support.

*The Annual Meeting of the Society will precede the May lecture. Officer and Committee reports will be given and the Nominating Committee will present a slate of Officers and Directors to be elected for the 2025-2026 program year.*

## Recent Archival Donations

The Society is pleased to have received a number of gifts over the past several months, the following being the most significant:

- Records of the Rotary Club of Jenkintown, from Robert McFarland on behalf of the Club.
- Photos and ephemera related to William Fletcher of Glenside, from Austin Myers.
- Materials related to the Standard Pressed Steel Company including eight display boards mounted with various products of SPS, from The George School, David Long, Archivist.
- Upper Moreland historical ephemera and booklets, from Mildred M. Wintz.
- An extensive run of the journal, "The Germantown Crier" (1949-2003), from Susan Bockius.
- Records from the Artists Cultural Exchange, an organization that promoted art workshops and exhibitions throughout Abington and Cheltenham townships, from Maxine Schwartz.
- Ceramic plates and other objects related to various organizations and businesses in Cheltenham Village, from Katherine Swift.
- A 1936 photograph of the Sacony-Vacuum Oil Company in Wyncote, from Bill Johns.
- Jarrett family memorabilia including material pertaining to I.M. Jarrett and Franklin Jarrett including yearbooks, photographs, programs, certificates and other ephemera, from Frank Jarrett.
- Jenkintown community related ephemera, from Lynn and Joe Pokrifka.
- Hellerman family photographs and memorabilia from John Hagerty.
- Memorabilia and ephemera related to the athletic achievements of David Harrar (Abington, Class of 1981) and Margaret Vogt Riggs (Abington, Class 1928), from Brenda Krzaczek.

## NEW BOOK ON THE MONTIERS OF CHELTENHAM

The most recent work by local historian and author Donald Scott is entitled, *The Montiers: From Enslavement to Paul Robeson and Beyond* (Brookline Books, Haverford, Penna., 2025). The work traces the history of the Montier family beginning with Richard and Cremona Morrey. Illustrious descendants include David Bustill, Paul Robeson and William Pickens. Books can be requested through the Society for \$25 per copy. We hope to have this as the feature of a future lecture.