

The “*Friends Meeting House and Cemetery Association of Randolph Township, New Jersey*” was formed in 1898 by descendants of the pioneer Quakers to preserve the graves of their ancestors and the meetinghouse that was the focus of their lives. It is independent and a New Jersey non-profit corporation.



“*The heritage we fail to preserve, vanishes forever.*”

John R. Mott, descendant

Hartshorn FitzRandolph, Isaac Hance, Jacob L. Brotherton and Richard and Mary Brotherton are among the anti-slavery leaders buried in Quaker Cemetery. For further information on anti-slavery activity or the Quaker Cemetery consult:

Time Erases All Epitaphs Graven in Stone by Richard T. Irwin and Richard G. Irwin, 1993.

Richard T. Irwin, editor. *A History of Randolph Township: Morris County's First Bicentennial Community*. Township of Randolph. First Edition, 1976; Second Edition, 2002.

“The Hardwick and Randolph Monthly Meetings of the Society of Friends,” 1999. Request a copy from the author: S.Shepherd@worldnet.att.net or call: 973-292-0548

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The 1758 Friends Meeting House and Quaker Cemetery are located at

190 Quaker Church Rd., Randolph, NJ
Corner of Quaker Ave. and Quaker Church Rd.
You can reach us at: 973-361-9427

Historical Enactment

Friends Meeting House, Randolph, New Jersey
February 15, 2004 1:30 p.m.
in celebration of
“*An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery*”
passed by the New Jersey State Legislature
February 15, 1804

Program

Enactment: 3 anti-slavery advocates and members of Mendham Meeting receive news of the passage of “*An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery*” February 15, 1804:

Hartshorn FitzRandolph

portrayed by *Peter Lubrecht*, Ph.D., Randolph
Adjunct Professor of English, Sussex Co. College

Henry Moore

portrayed by *Ron Assante*, Butler
Mayor of Butler

Isaac Hance

portrayed by *Don Fitzpatrick*, Roxbury

Presentation of Proclamation: From the Randolph Township Council on the occasion of the passage of “*An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery.*”

Presenter: *Edward Tamm*, Mayor of Randolph

Refreshments in the Annex

Costumes courtesy of Norcosto Eastern Costume Company, Fairfield, NJ

Event Committee: Concept and Event Chairman, Richard Irwin;
Publicity, John Ruch; Logistics, Hal Haydock; Refreshments, Lee Whildin; Program, Peg Steneck

Mendham (Randolph) Quakers and Anti-Slavery

Members of the Society of Friends, historically called Quakers, were the first organized group in America to oppose the institution of slavery. Their belief that all human beings are created equal led Quakers in New Jersey, such as the great Quaker preacher John Woolman from Mt. Holly, to speak out uncompromisingly against the slave trade and then against the institution of slavery itself. In 1758, Quakers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania began expelling members who traded in slaves. By the 1770s they were expelling members for slave holding.

It was in that important year of 1758 that the newly organized Quakers in Mendham built their meetinghouse. The pioneering Brotherton, Schooley, Dell and other Quaker families accepted the Quaker belief that slavery was a great evil that must end. However, convincing people in New Jersey of their anti-slavery views was not easy. New Jersey was a major slave-owning state with over 12,000 slaves by 1800.

Frustration with the slow progress toward abolition of slavery in New Jersey led to the establishment of the first anti-slavery societies. One of the earliest was founded in 1776, the “New Jersey Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery.” **Hartshorn Fitz Randolph, Isaac Hance, and Henry Moore**, three Quakers from Mendham Meeting, were among the founders.

Anti-slavery advocates such as **FitzRandolph, Hance and Moore** were instrumental in the passage of several small pieces of legislation aimed at improving the lot of slaves. Finally in 1804 their efforts were rewarded. With Joseph Bloomfield, president of their NJ abolition society serving as Governor, the legislature passed an act, modeled on acts of PA and NY, that established a mechanism by which slavery could be gradually, and far more slowly than they had hoped, eliminated in New Jersey.

“An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery” (exerpts)

Section 1. *Be it enacted by the Council and General Assembly of this State ...* That every child born of a slave within this state, after the

fourth day of July next, shall be free; but shall remain the servant of the owner of his or her mother, ... and shall continue in such service, if a male, until the age of twenty five years; and if a female until the age of twenty one years.

2. *And be it enacted*, That every person being an inhabitant of this state, who shall be entitled to the service of a child born as aforesaid, after the said fourth day of July next, shall within nine months after the birth of such child, cause to be delivered to the clerk of the county ... a certificate in writing, containing the name ... and sex of the child so born; which certificate, ... shall be by the said clerk recorded in a book ... and such record thereof shall be good evidence of the age of such child

**Passed at Trenton, New Jersey
February 15, 1804**

When the northern portion of Mendham Township became Randolph Township in 1805, the name “Randolph” was chosen to honor the most respected citizen of the new Township, **Hartshorn FitzRandolph. Isaac Hance** was elected the first mayor.

The next generation of Quakers continued the work of **FitzRandolph, Moore and Hance**. Benjamin Lundy left home in 1809 to become the first important national anti-slavery organizer and publisher of the first major, long-running anti-slavery newspaper, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Jacob Lundy Brotherton helped found the “NJ State Anti-Slavery Society” in 1839. As agent for the NJSAS, he held anti-slavery meetings across Sussex, Warren and Morris Counties, often before hostile crowds. The farm of Richard and Mary Brotherton was widely believed to be a haven for slaves escaping to freedom. No one bought goods made or produce harvested by slave labor. Along with unceasing consciousness-raising activity, the Randolph Quakers ran for public office with Elijah & William Brotherton running for state office on the anti-slavery Liberty Party ticket in 1844.

Although committed to peaceful, non-violent means to end slavery, the ardent anti-slavery activity of the Mendham/Randolph Quakers would help propel a deeply divided nation into a devastating civil war, a war that would ultimately bring to an end an evil institution and would result in freedom, though not yet equality, for all Americans.