



Fall 2019 Newsletter

Friends Meeting House and Cemetery Association of Randolph Township, NJ

An Independent Preservation Association

Editor's note. For a historic site to receive State and National Register recognition, it must represent a significant event, person or design/construction. Our 1973 State and National Register nomination is based on design/construction. The Meeting House is distinguished by its age, rustic plan and unchanged interior. Few sites in the area offer such a unique opportunity to experience a colonial building as constructed over 250 years ago.

Our current nomination unfortunately does not include the Cemetery, which limits our funding opportunities. County and State funds are generally limited to the features of sites included in their nomination. However, the Cemetery is significant, not primarily for its design but for the persons who are buried on the Meeting House grounds.

The main article in this *Newsletter* introduces four individuals spread over four generations who will be highlighted in our new nomination application to justify the significance of the Cemetery: William Schooley, Hartshorn Fitz Randolph, Joshua Mott, and Jacob Lundy Brotherton.

Of the many individuals who could be mentioned, these four were selected because their recognition and accomplishments are well documented. Our challenge moving forward is to gain more recognition for the other men and women who over the years contributed to the Mendham/Randolph Friends Meeting and later the Association.

As we look back and recognize those who built and maintained the Meeting House site over the past three centuries, we hope you will keep in mind that its future still depends on people. Fall is when we ask for support for the work of the Association. To donate online [Click here](#). Your contribution will be greatly appreciated and well used for maintenance, preservation and matching funds for the Morris County and New Jersey State grants we were fortunate to receive this year. NHS

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Association News

☞ Phase II Preservation Begins ☞

As soon as the last leaves fall, the first step will be taken to restore the Meeting House grounds and Cemetery and replace the aging cedar shake roof.

We have contracted with Fullerton Ground Maintenance of Kenvil NJ to completely clean up the grounds, removing leaves, branches and logs as well as clearing weeds growing in the stone wall. The meadow that sprouted up over the past few months will also be mowed.

Apart from appearances, the grounds must be cleared for step two, the ground penetrating radar survey now scheduled for sometime in January. Before we lay out new paths and parking space, we must try to locate the dozens of early burials on the site that were not marked, in accordance with Quaker practices at the time. If unmarked burials are located, decisions will have to be made about how to identify and respect them.

As the new paths and parking are being designed by our preservation architects Connolly and Hickey, the

process of replacing the roof will begin. (Planning for both the grounds and roof is funded by our grant from the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund.) Installing a new cedar shake roof is expensive, in part because the shakes must be specially made and in part due to the cost of removing the asbestos layer installed in the 1970s. By March of next year, the construction documents and contracts required for bidding will be finished, which should coincide with the release of the construction funds approved in our New Jersey Trust Fund grant.



Meeting with Fullerton Ground Maintenance to discuss fall clean up plans

If plans develop as expected, work on the new roof should begin next summer, possibly being completed by Fall Meeting, in time to celebrate the 280th anniversary of the first Quaker meetings in northwest NJ. Work on the grounds and the installation of parking and new paths will require another round of grant applications and hopefully will be completed in 2021, the 265th anniversary of Mendham PM.



visit us at: www.randolphmeetinghouse.org

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Meeting House Notables

Properties qualify for State and National Register designation if they are associated with a person who is “demonstrably important within a local, State, or national historic context.” (National Parks Bulletin, *How to Apply*, 1995) At least four Mendham/Randolph Quakers were recognized as leaders in their day and add greatly to the significance of the site.

Pioneering Generation William Schooley (1691-??)

William Schooley played a leading role in the establishment of the Mendham Preparative Meeting (1756) and the development of Sussex County (1753 ff.) The Mendham Preparative Meeting grew out of meetings held in his house as early as 1740. In the 1750s, he served on the commission that organized Sussex County and on several Sussex County grand juries (one year as foreman) and was appointed as a County Freeholder. William not only settled the northwest New Jersey frontier, he was also instrumental in its social and political organization.

Later historians described William as the rugged Quaker pioneer who during the severe winter of 1739-40 travelled...

...more than once a distance of thirty miles through the snow to an Indian settlement to obtain corn, which he brought home in a bag on his shoulders, making his way over the snow by means of snowshoes. (History of Morris County, 1882, p. 303)

As one of the first settlers in the area, self-sufficiency, trading with the native population and a sturdy constitution were essential.

Although we do not know where on the northwest frontier William settled, he had strong ties to the Mendham Quakers. He and his wife Elizabeth transferred their membership from Kingwood to Woodbridge MM in 1742. Their sons Robert and William Jr. were founding members of Mendham PM. His wife Elizabeth and brother Samuel were buried in the Mendham burying ground. William's date and place of burial are not known.



William Schooley's land near Schooley's Mountain (Chambers, *Early Germans*, 1895, p. 146)

Whether or not William lived or owned land near the Mendham Meeting House, he was essential to the Mendham Meeting's development and the opening of the northwest New Jersey Frontier.

1st Generation Community Leader Hartshorn Fitz Randolph (1722-1806)

Hartshorn Fitz Randolph was born in the Raritan River town of Woodbridge at roughly the same time as the William Schooley family moved to the northwest New Jersey frontier. With his wife Ruth Dennis of nearby Piscataway and their young children, Hartshorn moved north to Mendham Township in the early 1750s. Although he invested broadly in a range of endeavors, he was recognized primarily as a farmer and the community leader behind the formation of the township that bears his name, Randolph Township.



His name appears frequently in the minutes of meetings, on marriage certificates, and on wills and other Friends business, including the construction of the Mendham Meeting House. In Mendham Township, he was an elected Freeholder and served at various times as mayor, tax accessor and a road commissioner. After the Revolution, he served as a Morris County delegate to the 1793 convention of the New Jersey Society to Promote the Abolition of Slavery.

Later accounts of Hartshorn emphasized his strong commitment to Quaker principles and the dilemmas they created for him. He had goods taken for refusing to train during the French and Indian War, but then was reprimanded by the Friends for buying back his goods. During the Revolution, he had goods taken and gave up some public offices even though he affirmed his allegiance to New Jersey.

Hartshorn may have been a pacifist, but he did not have a passive personality. A dispute with fellow Quaker, Hercules Young, resulted in a letter of apology:

*To our monthly meeting at Woodbridge,
19th day, 6th month, 1760*

Whereas a difference happened between Hercules Young and me and after being much imposed upon did appoint to meet him at a certain time and place and in a manner by which sum people may think it was to fight, for which I am sorry for making that appointment. Hartshorn Fitz Randolph (Woodbridge MM)

Hartshorn Fitz Randolph's leadership and Quaker principles served both the Friends and the people in the area that became Randolph Township the year before his death.

Join us for Annual Meeting June 13, 2020, 11:00 am at the Meeting House



Dial-in meeting participation will be available

Call (973-361-9427) or message (editor@randolphmeetinghouse.org) for details

2nd Generation Business Leader Joshua Mott (1751-1837)

Joshua Mott was raised in Amwell. Through his parents, Gerhsom Mott and Rachael Vansant, he had ties to Maryland's Eastern Shore Quaker community and the milling industries there. Over his lifetime he operated mills in Delaware, Hunterdon County, Sussex County and eventually Morris County, where he and his sons were instrumental in developing the industrial complex/village that came to be called "Mott Hollow."

Running a mill required more than hard work. Joshua and his sons were trained business professionals, educated through what was referred to as "the rule of three" (basic algebra). Besides knowing how to work with shillings, bushels, ells, barrels, perches, and other systems of measurement used at the time, students trained in the rule of three learned to calculate interest, rebates, discounts, commissions and the future worth of property. Their training, as illustrated by some of the problems in his son William's (1780-1855) cyphering book, required solving problems such as:

What may a broker demand for brokerage when he sells goods to the value of 500£ 10s at 7 percent?

My correspondent disbursed upon my account the sum of 1,009£ 18s. What must he demand for his commission when I allow him 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ percent?

At its peak, the Mott Hollow complex included grain, fulling, carding, saw and oil mills, a rope walk, and small trade shops. In size and the value of land, in the 1820s it far exceeded nearby Dover. Unfortunately, Mott Hollow felt the economic effects of the War of 1812 and was eventually eclipsed by the growing nearby industrial town of Dover. Over time:



Wooden gears, Mott grist mill

*The industries our fathers knew,
The places where they toiled and spun,
Have also vanished like a dew
Beneath a risen summer sun.
(A Vanished Village by Theodore F. Mott)*

What was once a flourishing industrial complex is today a wooded area along the stream from which Millbrook Avenue gets its name, and a State and National Register site.

Last Generation Anti-Slavery Organizer Jacob Lundy Brotherton (1810-1887)

Jacob Lundy Brotherton was part of the generation that lived to see the Meeting laid down in 1865. A physician by profession, he was best known for his anti-slavery and temperance activities.

The details of Jacob's life apart from his efforts to reform society are sketchy. His family moved from Randolph to Sussex County when he was four. By then, his distant cousin and a leading anti-slavery advocate, Benjamin Lundy, had moved from Hardwick to Ohio, but no doubt was widely talked about in Hardwick as his reputation spread. It is through his connections with Benjamin Lundy's anti-slavery newspapers, the *Genius of Universal Emancipation* and *National Inquirer*, that Jacob was first drawn to Philadelphia and the cause of anti-slavery.

In the late 1830s, Jacob returned to the Mendham area and joined the New Jersey Anti-slavery Society, working for a time as a paid agent to promote the agenda of the Society in Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties. On his travels, he came across many willing listeners, but "not enough to frown down the opposition of others and get suitable places to hold meetings." Promoting anti-slavery on a grass-roots level was arduous and sometimes dangerous.

All that could be done was in small congregations, in private dwellings, occasionally in a school house, and sometimes under the trees—churches were invariably closed against him and he received no encouragement from the clergy.

(New Jersey Freeman, January 31, 1845)

In 1844, he ran for the New Jersey State Assembly on the Liberty ticket, which did not win any seats. He was also briefly involved in the organization of the Morris County Temperance Society, serving as one of its vice-presidents.

Sometime after 1848, Jacob moved to Sussex County and took on the editorship of the *Belvidere Apollo* (1867-71). While there, he travelled to Randolph when the Meeting was laid down in 1865. A few years later, in 1872, he moved back to Philadelphia where he renewed his friendship with Lucretia Mott and other leading social reformers of the day.

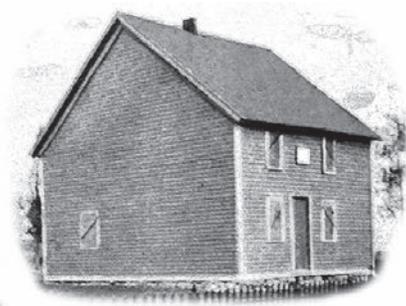


Jacob Lundy Brotherton
(taken in Philadelphia)

Friends Meeting House and Cemetery Association
of Randolph Township, New Jersey

return to:

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To donate to the preservation of this historic site,
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Nick Steneck, Editor

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