



## Friends Meeting House and Cemetery Association of Randolph Township, NJ

An Independent Preservation Association

### Association News

**2022 Preservation Schedule.** Preservation work has been slowed by the Pandemic. Roof replacement and asbestos removal will begin as soon as the shingles arrive, probably late Spring. Exterior restoration should begin at about the same time. Parking and paths could be delayed pending our ability to raise matching funds.

**Annex upgrades.** We managed to squeeze into the budget much-needed upgrades to the Annex. For the first time, there will be hot water in both the kitchen and bathroom. Heating system upgrades will eliminate the need to drain the plumbing every week in the winter.

**Endowments.** Two donors have expressed an interest in establishing endowments to support, respectively, the Meeting House and the Cemetery. This will be in addition to our current endowment, which is being reinvested to provide more income. Final plans for the three endowments will be discussed at Annual Meeting.

**Annual Meeting.** To be set early next year, either **June 4 or June 11.**

### Archival Tidbits

#### The Quaker Mills along the Mill Brook\*

**The earliest mill.** Tradition passed down through Richard Brotherton and others credits the grist mill as the first mill built along the Mill Brook. (Megie, *History of Morris County, 1882, p. 291*; Platt, *History of Dover, 1914, p. 439*)

William Mott purchased the grist mill from William Shotwell in 1810. Shotwell may have purchased it from Robert Schooley, who bought land along the Mill Brook in 1758.

Evidence supporting early Schooley ownership of a mill in the area can be found in a road survey conducted in 1769. The survey:

...began at an apple tree near Robert Young's dwelling (near Shongum Lake) and ended on a road that leads from Morgan Young's to Schooley's Mill. (Young, *Young Family, 1947, p. 230*)

Quakers Robert and Morgan Young owned large plots of land south of Mill Brook. The road leading from Morgan Young's land to Schooley's Mill would have followed roughly the current route of Millbrook Ave. This reference to a Schooley mill suggests Schooley did in fact build a mill along the Mill Brook as early as 1769. (continued page 3)

\*Mill Brook was originally called Meadow Brook



Dear Newsletter Readers and Friends,

The success of our preservation efforts is measured in two ways: the funds we are able to raise and the number of people who support our efforts.

Our Association has no dues or membership fees. Fortunately, we have been able to raise the funds needed to maintain the site, but unfortunately our donor numbers have declined.

Please consider giving our donation numbers a boost by sending whatever you can afford. No amount is too small.

If you have already given, thanks again. We are working hard to open a restored Meeting House and Cemetery to the public as soon as possible.

Nick Steneck,  
Association President

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### Roof Replacement: The Cost of Preservation Decisions

Next Fall the Association should be able to re-open the Meeting House to the general public. Thanks to generous support from the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund and the State of New Jersey Historic Trust we have the funding needed to remove the asbestos that has prompted limiting public access and to replace the roof.

Forty-five years ago, the Association paid just under \$5,000 to replace the aging slate roof with a new, hand-cut cedar shingle\* roof. This time, the new roof will cost about \$200,000. The increase in cost raises an important question: *Why is the new roof so much more expensive than the roof installed in 1978?* (continued page 2)

\* The roofing material for this project will be crafted in the tradition of 18th century shingles, which were hand-split and dressed to a smooth surface. Shakes, which are usually sawed but not dressed, became popular in the 19th century for their "rustic" look.



visit us at: [www.randolphmeetinghouse.org](http://www.randolphmeetinghouse.org)  
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☞ **Roof Replacement continued...** ☞

Some of the increase in cost is due to inflation. A \$5,000 renovation project in 1978 would cost about \$40,000 today. To understand why the new roof is costing an additional \$160,000 requires a close look at the preservation decisions made in 1978 compared to the decisions the Association has made in planning this replacement.

**First steps.** When the Association began planning for the new roof in 1976, they turned first to a new slate roof. The existing roof had lasted for nearly a century. Wood might last 40-50 years at best. Therefore they began by getting bids for a new slate roof and turned to Randolph Township for funding through the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDP).

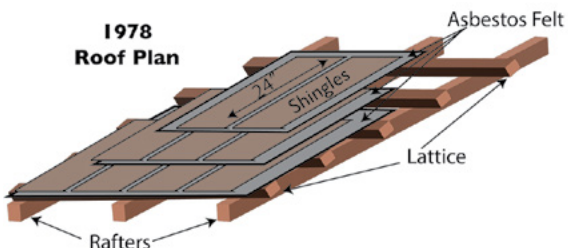
The Township agreed to include the Meeting House in its CDP program and proposed to manage bidding and contract management. As a cautionary measure the Association requested that a preservation architect be engaged to assure the work met National and State historic preservation standards. Preservation architect John Dodd was hired in this capacity and paid his first visit to the Meeting House in June 1977. Based on that visit, he made three recommendations:

- a) the roof should be replaced with cedar shingles, not slate;
- b) the overhangs, which were not original, should be removed and wooden gutters added; and
- c) asbestos felt should be interleaved with the shingles for fire protection.

Each of these recommendations had cost implications both for the project itself and for long-term expenses.

**Wood vs. slate.** Since slate roofs did not become popular until the middle to end of the 19th century, the decision to return to wood was fairly obvious for historical reasons. But the size of the shingles and how they should be installed required more complex decisions.

The slate roof had been laid over an older wooden roof made up of 24" saw-cut shingles nailed to a horizontal lattice spaced at about 6" apart. However, notches set 11" apart in the rafters suggested that the original shingles were longer and nailed to the lattice set into the rafters.

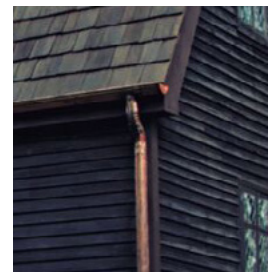


Whether for cost or other reasons, Dodd recommended that 24", hand-cut shingles should be used and nailed to the lattice installed for the slate. This time, following the Preservation Plan developed by Connolly and Hickey, the Association decided to replace the original lattice and install the longer (36") shingles, returning the roof to its original appearance. ***This one decision raised the cost of replacing the roof about \$60,000.***

Why does 12" make such a difference in price? Primarily because the longer shingles are not commonly used today and are difficult to manufacture. Asking a lumber company to manufacture the shingles needed for a small roof in NJ might be compared to asking Ford Motor Company to manufacture a Model T. They could do it, but not for the same low price of the original Model T.

**Gutters and overhang.** The 1978 decision to remove the overhangs and add wooden gutters restored the Meeting House to its original structure. These changes unfortunately complicated moisture control. The wooden gutters were difficult to clean and quickly rotted. Adding metal inserts helped, but the gutters still needed constant maintenance. In addition, with the overhangs removed, the lower siding developed mildew and rot.

Based on this experience, Connolly and Hickey recommended replacing the wooden gutters with copper gutters and downspouts linked to an improved underground drainage system. Initially, the gutters will look like modern additions, but copper ages quickly and should blend in with the wooden roof and siding. Adding drainage in a later stage will remove water from the foundation area and allow the siding to dry more quickly after rain. ***Installing copper gutters added another \$20,000 to the cost of the new roof.***



Aged copper gutters on a woodframe building with shingle roof.

**Fire Protection.** Wooden roofs pose a fire hazard and require adding fire protection. In 1978, based on the building code of the International Conference of Building Officials, Dodd recommended using asbestos felt for fire protection. He supported this recommendation by noting:

*...the National Park Service has researched the alternatives and thought well enough of this particular method to use it on Independence Hall in downtown Philadelphia.  
 (Letter to Richard Irwin, 9/19/1977)*

## Join us for Annual Meeting at the Meeting House on June 4 or 11, 2021 at 11:00 am

This plan was approved by the Township, County, State Historic Preservation Office and Department of the Interior.

Association and Meeting member John Ruch raised questions about this approach. His main concern was the lack of insulation. Rather than beginning with a layer of asbestos felt laid on the slate lattice, he proposed

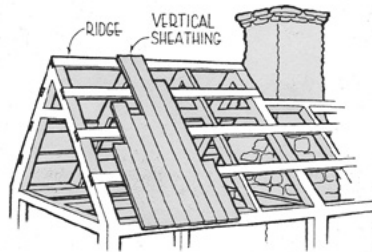


Illustration provided by John Ruch, 1978.

reinstalling the original lattice and laying vertical sheathing before installing the asbestos and shingles. Apart from adding some insulation, he felt this alternative approach would provide better moisture control and look better from the interior. (Letter to John Dodd, June 30, 1978)

Installing wood sheathing under the asbestos felt would have in the long run been less costly. By the early 1990s, the asbestos felt was crumbling on to the floor of the loft, posing a health hazard. In 1992 the Association paid contractor Paul Basile \$8,000 to encapsulate the asbestos. **In 2022, it will cost an additional \$50,000 to remove the asbestos before installing the new roof.**

**Contracting & management costs.** Most of the remaining \$30,000 increase in the cost of the new roof can be accounted for by the decision to rely more heavily on professional project management. In 1978, Dodd provided the plans and specifications, but the project was bid and managed by both the Township and the Association. The contract was given to the lowest bidder, who was not an experienced preservation contractor.

Problems quickly emerged when Dodd discovered that the shingles the contractor ordered did not meet the contract specifications. He had specified "No. 1 Taper-split Red Cedar Shakes." The contractor had purchased "Handsplit and Resawn" shakes. As Dodd explained:

*The "taper-splits" are much more uniform shingles in grain, thickness, and cut and flatness. As a result, they produce a roof which, although hand-crafted, looks as if it were done with care, by a skilled workman." ...The "resawn" variety, on the other hand, is rough in all respects and produces a modern "rustic" appearance. (Dodd to Contractor, 10/27/1978)*

The difference was both noticeable and would have impacted how the roof aged.

As a result of the incorrect order, the roof replacement project dragged on through the winter, during which there

was water damage to the interior due to the contractor's unwillingness to replace temporary plastic covering with a canvas tarpaulin. When the new shingles arrived the following Spring, some had been improperly sawn and had to be resawn. In early May, seven months after the first shingles were removed, the Association was finally able to hold an open house celebrating the completion of the roof replacement project.

Reflecting on the "turmoil" of the roof replacement project in a letter to Peter Braun, the Township official who patiently kept the project moving forward, John Ruch wrote:

*I think everyone involved has learned something from the experience that will prevent similar circumstances from developing on such projects in the future. (Ruch to Braun, 7/18/1979)*

For the Association, the lesson learned has been that professional guidance and management on projects such as this is not only advisable but essential. The new roof is expensive but based on the professional planning, review, and management of this project, the Association can be confident that it has done its best to maintain the integrity of an important NJ State and National Register site and Randolph Landmark.

### 🌀 Quaker Mills continued ... 🌀

**The Hance Mill.** In 1782, Hartshorne Fitz Randolph paid off his investment in the construction of a new sawmill:

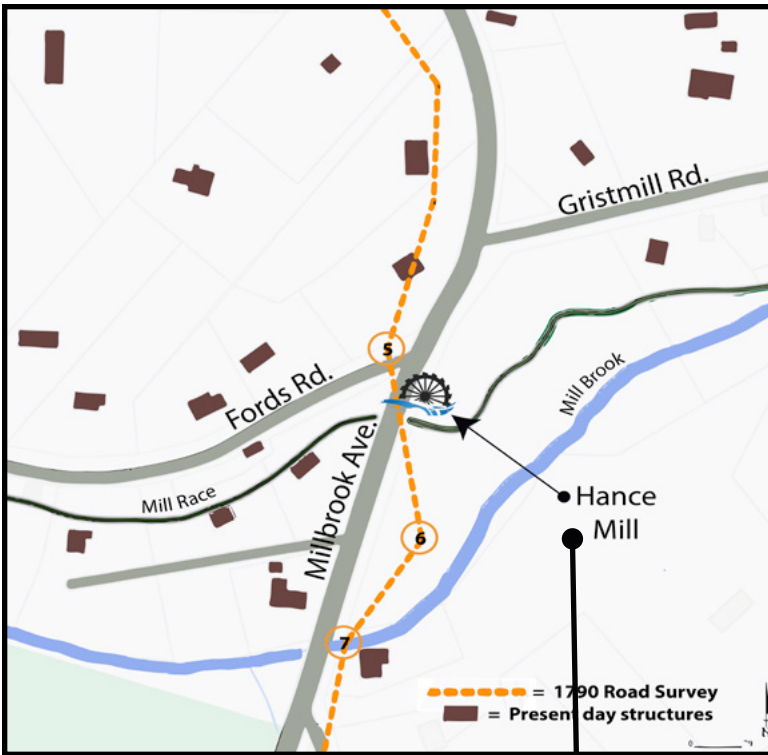
*Received October 11th 1782 of Hartshorne Fitz Randolph the sum of £28.11.1. It being in full of his moiety or half part of the building a sawmill in partnership with Isaac Hance. (Platt, Dover History, 1914, p. 456)*

While the receipt does not indicate where the mill was built, a reference in the 1790 road survey that formally laid out Millbrook Ave. suggests that it probably was along the Mill Brook.

The 1790 survey began at the road leading from the Friends Meeting House to Rockaway (Quaker Church Rd.) and headed south toward Mill Brook. Survey line #5 ended at "Isaac Hance's Mill." Lines #6 & #7 then continued across the mill race below the mill to a stake on the bank of the Mill Brook. (See map, p. 4) If Isaac Hance owned only one mill in 1790, the mill mentioned in the survey would be the sawmill built in 1782--a previously unknown Mill Brook mill.

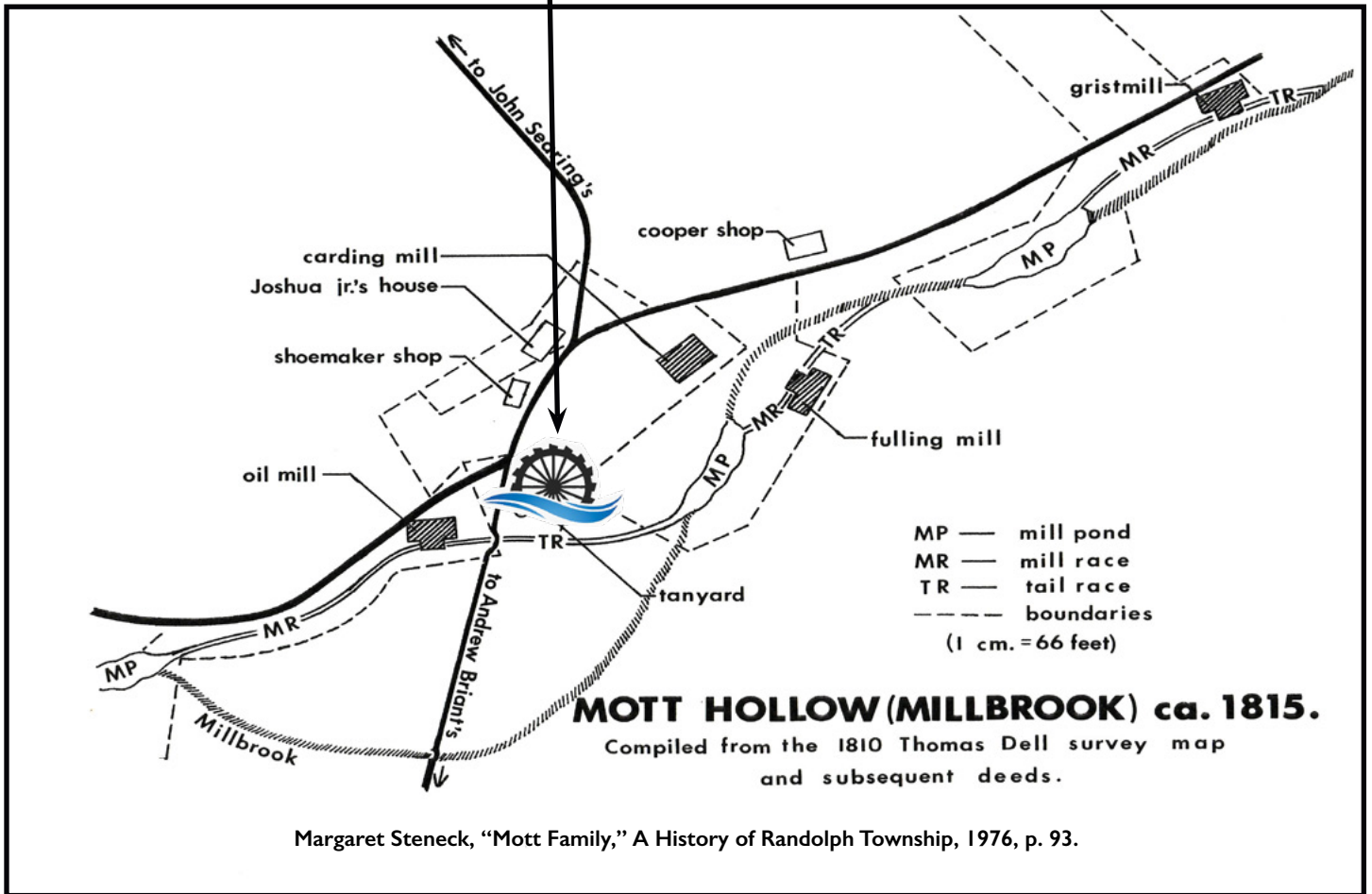
We are sharing this information on the Hance & Schooley Mills with the hope that others might have information on the placement and dating of the early mills along the Mill Brook. Please get in touch if you do!





In this issue:  
 ...identifying and dating the  
 Quaker mills along the Mill Brook

... the cost of installing a new roof  
 explained



Margaret Steneck, "Mott Family," A History of Randolph Township, 1976, p. 93.