



1758

## **NEWSLETTER AND ANNUAL APPEAL 2006**

**Friends Meeting House and Cemetery  
Association of Randolph Township, NJ  
Established 1898**

Dear Association Members and Friends,

A year has passed since the last Newsletter and Annual Appeal. Much has been accomplished at the Meeting House and in the Cemetery during this time; notably, the completion of the installation of the new heating system. The insert in the current newsletter, prepared for the Open House in the fall of 2005, will give you an excellent overview of the project.

The most exciting news for 2006 is that the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund has awarded the association a grant in the amount of \$13,500 for exterior restoration of the Meeting House and the Annex, including the roof. We are most grateful to our President, Margaret L. Steneck, PhD, for using her expertise to secure this grant and to the Friends Meeting which is contributing \$2,000 toward the match. The total cost of the project is \$16,875 with a required match of \$3,375.

The completion of this newest project will accomplish three goals: 1) finish rehabilitation and restoration of the exterior of the 1758 Meeting House, returning it to its original 18th century appearance; 2) rehabilitate the exterior of the twentieth-century Annex; 3) clean, rehabilitate and treat with preservative the wood shake roof of the Meeting House. The Meeting House will be sanded and treated with linseed oil, insecticide and mildewcide. This will conclude the final stage in the exterior restoration process already begun. The Annex will be scrapped, sanded and stained a color complementary to the Meeting House. Siding will be replaced as needed on the Annex. Cracked or missing shingles on the roof will be replaced as needed.

There has been a real concern within the community about the appearance of the building and how it affects visitors. The completion of this project is expected to give a real boost to visitation to the site.

### **ADDITION TO CEMETERY**

Trustee Richard Irwin and his family enhanced the Cemetery with a memorial addition of two Dogwood trees and an attractive bench. The Alward replacement tree is doing well.



## LIGHTNING STRIKES GIANT SPRUCE

On or about July 7, 2006 lightning struck one of the original Norway Spruce trees in the Cemetery, located near the Brotherton plot. The picture at the right shows the damage to the tree, 25 ft. from the base. The tree has been weakened and will have to be treated and/or removed eventually. Tree experts have been consulted; however, no final decision has been made concerning the fate of the tree. Although the damage is not immediately life threatening to the tree, the 80 foot spruce is only 20 feet from the Meeting House.



When the lightning struck, the earth exploded. From the tree the lightning then entered the Meeting House from the Northwest corner. A wooden panel was dislodged from the Meeting House which was found over 100 feet away from its origin. It must have sailed high through the air and then dropped to the ground near the Southwest corner of the stone wall.

A comprehensive check was made by an electrician and all necessary electrical and building repairs were made. .

When Paul Basile removed the Facing Bench and necessary floor boards for the electrical repairs, he gave the floor a treatment for powder post beetles which have become active again. There is no indication of beetle activity anywhere else in the building.

Although the lightning damage to the Meeting House was covered by insurance, the possibility of the removal of the spruce tree, and the matching funds required by the grant, have drained our resources. Please make a special effort to increase your support of the preservation of this historic landmark in Randolph Township.



Origin of board, ripped from Meeting House



Board which landed over 100 feet away

## WHO ARE THE TRUSTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION?

The Friends Meeting House and Cemetery Association of Randolph Township was organized in October of 1898 by descendants of the Randolph Meeting and of individuals interred in the Quaker Cemetery, beginning in 1758. They agreed to form an association to acquire and to preserve the meeting House and Cemetery of their ancestors, James W. Brotherton, his wife, Etta, and his sister, Rachel Vail, then transferred title and responsibility for the site to the Association. The first Board of Trustees and Officers were elected on October 22, 1898.



Trustees, enjoying lunch in the Annex.

Commencing in 2004, the Bylaws were revised to state that "trustees shall be elected for terms of one to five years with no limit on re-election. Elections shall be staggered so that no more than three terms expire each year." The total number of trustees shall not exceed fifteen. **The present trustees are: Margaret L. Steneck, President, Wm. Hal Haydock, Vice President for Buildings & Grounds, Henry A. Emmans, Secretary, James T. Brotherton, Jr., Treasurer, Mary F. Brotherton, Helen R. Emire, Marion W. Irving, Richard T. Irwin, Richard V. Lenat, Kathryn M. Munch, Mary E. Robinson, John Ruch, and Lenore Whildin.**

The trustees usually meet for Annual Meeting in the spring and FitzRandolph Day in the fall to conduct the business of the Association. These occasions are hosted by the present Friends Meeting whose members take an active interest in the Association.

Under the direction of Margaret Steneck the past ten years have been spent securing grants and planning the implementation of the rehabilitation and restoration of the Meeting House and the site. As these projects are now coming to completion, the Trustees are looking forward to the celebration of the 250th anniversary in 2008 of the building of the Meeting House and establishment of the Cemetery.

The Trustees want to involve the community of Randolph as much as possible in the celebration of this historic event. The plain clapboard two-story Meeting House is the oldest religious building in continuous use in Monmouth County, used only for that purpose. If you have any suggestions of how this event can be best celebrated in your community, please contact any Trustee. We not only need your financial help, but also your ideas concerning the presentation of this historic treasure to the Randolph community.

**Randolph Friends Meeting House  
& Cemetery Association  
James T. Brotherton  
13 Colonial Drive N.  
Bordentown, NJ 08505**

## **CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**



## **FIRST CLASS**

The 1758 Friends Meeting House is owned by the Friends Meeting House and Cemetery Association of Randolph Township, the oldest preservation society in Morris County and among the oldest in New Jersey. It is an independent organization, dedicated exclusively to the preservation of the historic site. Since the founding of the Association in the late nineteenth century, the property has been maintained by private funds.

Your generous contributions in the past have helped us meet the matches required by the last two grants that have been awarded. They have also enabled our contractor, Paul Basile, to finish the work described in the last Newsletter i.e. finishing stripping the paint from the Meeting House; rebuilding of studs and joists on the first floor, etc.

Unexpected expenses such as those incurred by the lightning strike have further depleted our modest treasury. If you share our concern with preservation of the Meeting House as an important reminder of our heritage as a people, the Association would welcome and greatly appreciate your contribution.

**Thank you for your contribution in the enclosed envelope.**  
**Please note: An all-day meeting of the Association will be held at  
The Meeting House on Saturday, September 23, 2006, beginning at 9:30 AM**