

# Hedgerows

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## 89 Acres of Schooley's Mountain Forest Preserved

by Tim Morris

*LONG VALLEY, NJ, May 5, 2006 – The Township of Washington and the Washington Township Land Trust today announced the preservation of 89 acres along Califon Road on Schooley's Mountain, permanently protecting beautiful forest and critical water resources, and providing opportunities for public recreation.*



This project adds to a cluster of over 1,100 acres of protected forest and farmland that stretches across Schooley's Mountain and spans municipal boundaries into Lebanon Township, Hunterdon County. In addition, this land protects the water quality of the South Branch of the Raritan River and the Spruce Run, two of the area's most important trout production streams and drinking water sources.

*"This property is part of one of the most important forest patches in Washington Township", according to Keith Hayes, Washington Township Land Trust President. "This largely unbroken forest covers a significant portion of Schooley's Mountain between Long Valley and Califon, and provides exceptional habitat for wildlife species that are losing habitat throughout the region."*

The 89-acre property was purchased from Dr. Bernard Covalesky of Ran-

dolph for \$1,050,000. Washington Township Land Trust contributed \$350,000 in NJ Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program Funding, and Washington Township added a \$700,000 grant from the Morris County Open Space Trust Fund.

*"Washington Township has a long history of supporting land preservation", said Kevin Walsh, Vice Mayor and former Chairman to the Township Open Space Committee. "By tapping into public funding sources and partnering with the local Land Trust, we were able to stretch our precious open space funds and protect this critical property at little cost to the local taxpayer."*

The Township and Land Trust will jointly own and manage the property, and will make the property available to the public for hiking, wildlife viewing, and other passive recreational pursuits. Plans are being made to establish a hiking trail.



### Mill Update

by Caryl Brackenridge

In May, the Washington Township Historic Preservation Commission presented an award to the volunteers of the WTLT "for outstanding effort in the completion of the front facade and the accurate window restoration in the on-going preservation of the Obadiah LaTourette Grist and Saw Mill."

We have now completed nine of the thirteen windows being funded by our Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund grant. The four remaining window frames and sash will be inserted into openings in the stone foundation on the lower level of the mill.



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## Mission Statement

The Washington Township Land Trust was organized to protect and preserve the ecological, cultural, and historical integrity of the areas that contribute to and enhance the rural character of Washington Township and its environs. The Trust also promotes public interest in conserving land for open space uses in harmony with the natural environment and acquires interests in land by purchase or donation. It also manages land and property easements for the benefit of the public and educates the public to be stewards of the land.

## 2006 OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Keith Hayes  
908.876.4603

### VICE PRESIDENT

Karen Richards  
908.832.7005

### TREASURER

Chris Steffan  
908.832.9603

### SECRETARY

Caryl Brackenridge  
908.876.4478

### NEWSLETTER

Paul Krylowski  
908.832.6936

### MILL OFFICE

12 East Mill Rd.  
Long Valley, NJ 07853  
908.876.5986

## Mill Update

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Once the scope of work funded by the grant is completed, our Window Adoption fund will enable us to continue work on the other seventeen windows which await restoration.

Photo on previous page, Caryl Brackenridge with the recent Historic Preservation Award recognition sign.

### Congratulations Caryl!

Caryl Brackenridge is the project manager for the Land Trust's mill and has faithfully kept the project moving through her devotion, determination and commitment to the project. She has put in many hours to secure grant funding, maintain the grant commitments and keep the contracted labor on schedule. *(That alone should get her Knighted, Sainthood or the Congressional Medal of Honor.)*

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## THE BACK DOOR *The Price of Perfection*

*Restoration can mean loss as well as gain.*

BY DWIGHT YOUNG

*Here's a little insider tip: When you're looking for a thought-provoking (and sometimes startling) preservation read, you can almost always find one in John Ruskin, the British art critic and reformer. I'm telling you, the man is a veritable fountain of pith.*

I had occasion to wrestle with a bit of Ruskinian wisdom recently. As I was driving out of town for the weekend, I realized that my route took me near a much-publicized, award-winning preservation-revitalization project, so I pulled off the interstate to take a look at it. Sure enough, it was impressive: On a scruffy street in a long-decayed urban neighborhood, a row of restored buildings gleamed. Most of them had endured decades of hard use and neglect, but you'd never know it now. Brickwork was freshly scrubbed, woodwork freshly painted. Signs advertised cheery apartments on the upper floors. At street level, some of the spiffed-up storefronts were already occupied, while others were decked with "opening soon" banners that promised a plenitude of cappuccinos and iPods and designer shoes in the coming months. It all looked bright and hopeful ... and disturbingly brand-new.

That's when Ruskin popped into my head. The words are from chapter six of his classic book *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, published in 1849:

Neither by the public, nor by those who have the care of public monuments, is the true meaning of the word restoration understood. It means the most total destruction which a building can suffer: a destruction out of which no remnants can be gathered: a destruction accompanied with false description of the thing destroyed. ... [I]t is impossible, as impossible as to raise the dead, to restore anything that has ever been great or beautiful in architecture. ... Do not let us talk then of restoration. The thing is a Lie from beginning to end."

OK, it's a bit of a rant, and that capital L turns the last line into the thunderous climax of a pulp-pounding sermon. But behind the take-no-prisoners rhetoric, Ruskin

suggests that we ask ourselves a few questions about what we're up to. For instance: Is it possible that when people—including preservationists—wax rhapsodic about their deep-rooted affection for old buildings, what they really mean is, "Of course I like them... as long as they don't look old"?

Somewhere along the way, we've drifted from the basic concept of preservation. Instead of just doing what's needed to keep a building's integrity, stability, and usefulness, we're all too eager to slam it with the architectural equivalent of a face peel, a tummy tuck, and a hefty dose of Botox. It's downright disrespectful. An old building looks the way it does because it's old, for Pete's sake, and stripping away all evidence of its age just turns it into a newly minted replica of itself. If Antiques Roadshow teaches us anything, it is that patina is a highly desirable commodity—true of buildings as well as Chippendale chairs.

Don't get me wrong. I know that crumbling mortar and rotten wood have to be replaced, roofs fixed, windows reglazed, and foundations lev-

eled. But does every surface have to be scrubbed, scraped, planed, sanded, shined up, and laminated so that the old building winds up looking as new and slick as a peeled egg? If so, I dread a future in which older neighborhoods are indistinguishable from theme parks.

Years ago in Charleston, S.C., I walked on East Bay Street one day with Frances Edmunds, the city's grande dame of preservation. The area was in the throes of heavy-duty revitalization, with blocks of old stores and warehouses being transformed into upscale restaurants and shops. As Frances surveyed the bustle of bricklayers, sheetrockers, and sign painters, her voice got wistful. "You know," she said, "someday we may be sorry we didn't leave one of these buildings alone, just as a reminder of what this place used to be."

She understood something that many of us have lost sight of: "Looks old" may be a terrifying phrase to hear if you're a lingerie model or a TV anchorman, but it isn't necessarily a bad thing if you're a historic building.

## Restoration over Renovation

*(Restore to put back into an original state, renew.)*

by Paul Krylowski

What is an old building? I guess you could call it an antique. A time capsule of building techniques and materials. A glimpse into the past which can tell the viewer about the economic times and values of the society that created it. An old building illustrates the availability of building materials in a region by the nature of its construction and showcases problem solving solutions craftsmen developed to overcome the forces of nature.

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The 1905 Dufford home in Middle Valley awaits restoration.

## 2006 Wine Tasting

*The Washington Township Land Trust of Morris County would like to thank all those who attended our April 22nd wine tasting event or supported it with donations. We would also like to thank Steve Sturges of Peapack Fine Wines for the tasting arrangements, Tim Janiszewski of Valley Restaurant for the catering, and Susan Lembo and Connor Dugan Leszczuk for the music.*



The proceeds will benefit our land conservation and historic preservation projects. To-date, the Land Trust has been instrumental in the permanent preservation of approximately 300 acres of land in our project area and is currently involved in negotiations to preserve another 225 acres. We are also restoring the 1750 Obadiah LaTourette Grist and Saw Mill on East Mill Road in Long Valley, aided by volunteers, donations and grants.

## Citrus growing wild in Northern New Jersey

### Bitter Orange—*Poncirus trifoliata*

by Keith Hayes



*While riding the train to New York City many years ago, I would often catch a quick glimpse of a number of unusual shrubs growing alongside the tracks in the Summit/Chatham area. Trying to get a close look at a*

shrub growing 30 feet away while on a moving train was difficult, but I was sure that I was seeing some sort of citrus plant.

The shrubs were dark green with dozens of ping pong ball sized, orange colored fruits hanging from the branches. I was sure that it had to be a citrus, but how could they possibly grow in an area with winter temperatures below 0? After debating whether this was some hardy mutation that grew from a tangerine or orange seed spit out by someone on the train platform, I decided to do some research.

Well, who knew ... what I was seeing was the Bitter Orange. It is a close relative of the citrus family and those were oranges, not very edible, but they were oranges. Unlike most citrus, the bitter orange is cold hardy to almost 20 degrees below zero, it could grow quite well along the train tracks in Northern New Jersey. What I could not see from the moving train was that the plant is just as famous for its intense thorniness. When I finally did see one up close, I was impressed by the quantity and sharpness of those thorns.

The Bitter Orange grows to 20 feet in height but is usually not much taller than 8 to 10 feet. The spread is about one half to two thirds of the height. The stems of the plant are a deep green and are mostly three sided when young, turning more round as they mature. The stems have green thorns located at every leaf node, these thorns can be up to an inch long. The plants have often been described as viciously thorny.

The leaves are composed of three leaflets and are about 1 to 1-1/2" inch long. They are a dark green color matching the stems and thorns. The leaf stem often has two flattened sides known as wings. Late in April the plant produces white flowers up to 1-1/2" across. The flower is lightly fragrant, unlike most citrus flowers which are highly fragrant. After the flower is pollinated, a hard fuzzy green

fruit develops, this eventually reaches 1-1/2" across and turns a yellow/orange color by late September. The small orange contains a tiny amount of pulp and is mostly filled with seeds, the taste is extremely bitter.

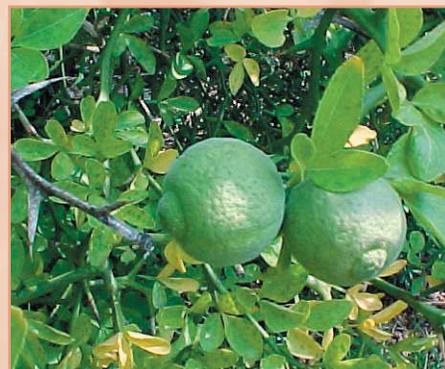
The seeds are eaten by a variety of rodents, but are not a very important food source for wildlife. The peels can be candied and the bitter orange could be used as a lemon substitute, but that is a great deal of work for such a tiny fruit. The best use of this plant is as a hedge, one that people will never squeeze through or try to climb over, this plant puts barbed wire to shame. Once established, it is impenetrable.

**... this plant puts barbed wire to shame.**

**Once established, it is impenetrable.**

So, has the bitter orange been here all along? No, the plant is native to China and Korea. It is thought to have been introduced to the United States around the middle of the 19th century and was probably brought here as a novelty. The plant has been used as a hardy rootstock in the citrus industry, but it was most likely introduced as a novelty first. Since then, it appears to have escaped and adapted to growing in the wild, but has definitely not become invasive.

So, the next time that you are on the train to New York City, make sure to get a window seat on the left side of the car. Try to stay awake long enough to look at the plant-life growing alongside the tracks near Summit and Chatham. If you have a good eye, you will see the deep green stems and leaves among the less green weeds and brush. If you can't see them, then wait until September, when you will have hundreds of small orange fruits to help you. Once you see them, you will wonder how you ever missed them in the past.



**Restoration over Renovation** (continued from page 2)

Unfortunately time and neglect take their toll on these structures and as repairs are made, the features that make a building look "old" can be lost. But what elements make a building old; chipped paint, sagging floors, collapsing roof lines?

Well yes and no. These conditions occur in time and are caused by many factors such as adverse weather conditions, gravitational forces, and poor maintenance/repair practices. We expect to see these conditions on older buildings and these conditions influence our perception of what constitutes an old building look. But are these the elements that make a building look old?

Study an old building and observe what you are looking at. What makes a building old are the details. Details such as the:

- construction techniques—the way timbers and boards are joined, there is less reliance on glues and caulks
- construction material—old lumber is thicker and wider than today's stock lumber. Old moulding profiles also reflect the use of this older lumber stock. Metal roofs were flat seamed and made up of many panels
- windows and surrounding trim—the number of glass panes (lights) in each sash. Quite often the lower windows are larger than the upper windows though at first glance they appear the same size. Many windows have drip caps to shed water and wide side trim boards to cover the weight cavity openings
- siding exposure proportions—equally spaced siding is not always evident nor do corner boards always visually align when viewed from an angle
- foundation construction—in our area stone was prevalent and was usually covered with a coarse plaster coat

For anyone who appreciates old buildings and wishes to restore one the challenges are great. It is not an easy process and can be expensive if done "right". Many materials are difficult to find and many will need to be fabricated. Keeping true to the original design is an important step in maintaining the old look. The craftsmen who constructed these old buildings knew a lot about their trade and these structures have stood many years for good reasons.

It basically comes down to "an attention to detail". *The success formula for so many things in life!*

**Stan Andrews**

Stan Andrews, Trustee Emeritus and a founding member of the WTLT, passed away on June 17, 2006. He was born in Dover in 1913 and moved to Long Valley in 1940. Stan's community service included the School Board, the Township Committee, the Long Valley Fire Company, the Washington Township Historical Society, coaching lacrosse, teaching Sunday School and singing in the choir at the Zion Lutheran Church.

Stan's farming activities benefited the entire farming community. For 15 years he was a 4-H Agent for cattle and tractors. On the Board of Artificial Breeding, Stan worked to improve the caliber of dairy herds. He was also President of the Morris County Board of Agriculture and the Northeast New Jersey District Agent for the Farm Bureau Insurance Service. A staunch advocate of farmland preservation, Stan was one of the first farmers in Morris county to place his farm in the New Jersey Farmland Preservation Program.

On a more personal level, Stan was a valued member of our Board, donating time, assets and physical labor. He particularly loved working in the Helen T. Andrews Memorial Garden, a daffodil garden dedicated in our Mill Pond Park in memory of his beloved wife. In every endeavor, Stan's warm, caring personality brightened the day.

We will miss him.



**Washington Township Land Trust**  
PO Box 4  
Long Valley, NJ 07853-0004

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