





Brief History & Recommendation for the Disposition of Spar Hill Farm

*Kennett Township Historical Commission
Lars Farmer - Chairperson*

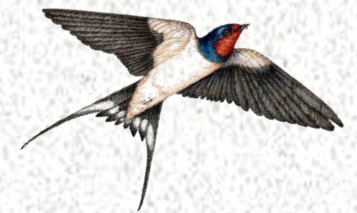
Spar Hill Farm



History of Spar Hill Farm

438 Burnt Mill Road
Kennett Square, PA 19348

Spar Hill is 137-acre farm named for the Feldspar that was mined there. It was originally called the Way Farm and was managed by Quakers for over 100 years. It was one of the most productive farms in Kennett Township and leaves us a rich history.





William Penn

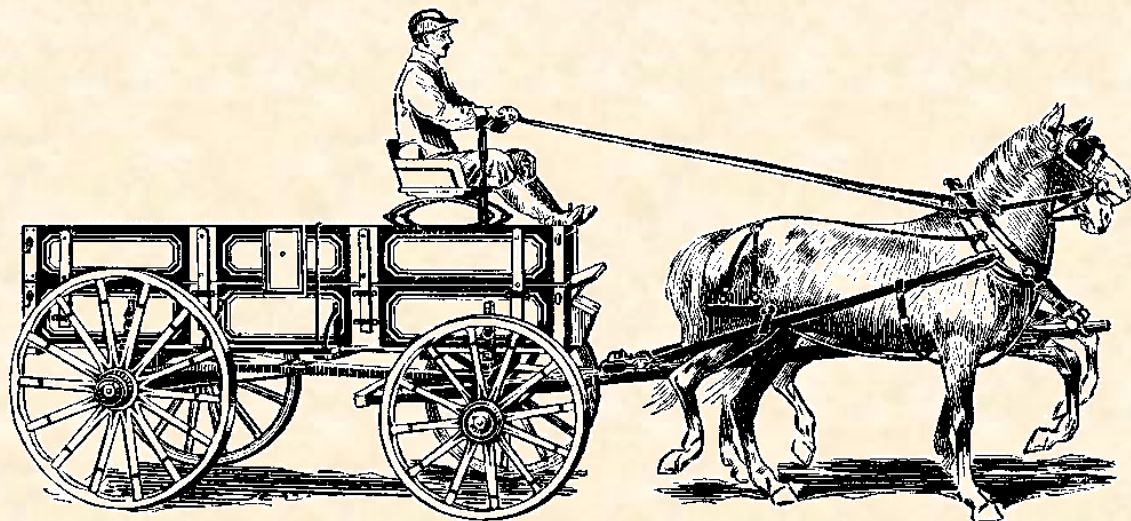


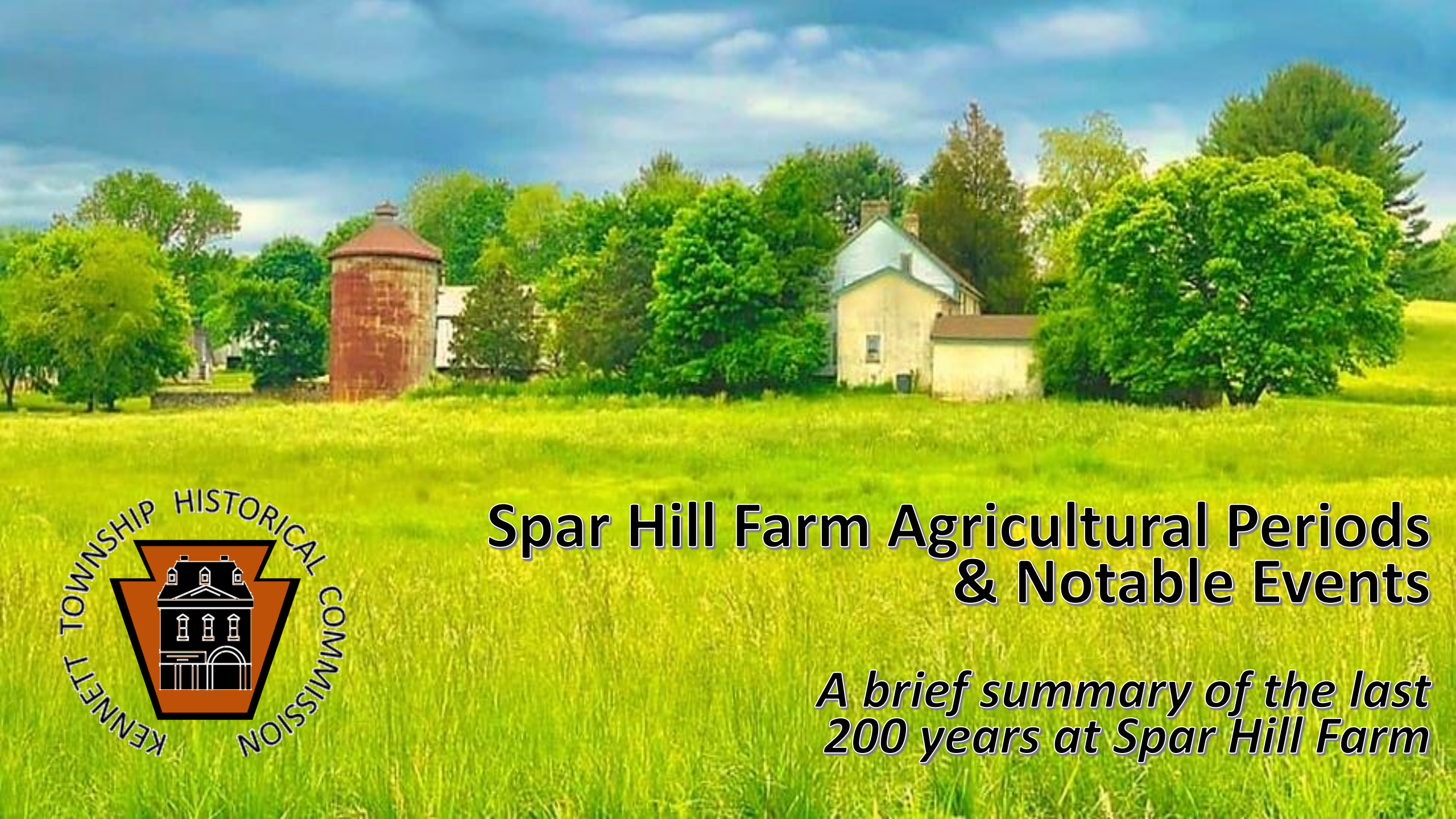
Old Kennett Meetinghouse

Land ownership since William Penn

- 1681** William Penn
- 1718** Letitia (Penn) Aubrey
- 1713** George Harlan/Joseph Harlan
- 1797** Celeb Hoopes*
- 1804** John Way* (Way Farm)
- 1848** Pennock Way*
- 1877** Emeline Way*
- 1925** Edward Buffington
- 1935** Harold Shutt (Spar Hill Turkey Farm)
- 1963** Shutt dies, land to Wilmington Trust
- 1976** Norway Road house sold to Shutt
- 2014** Wilmington Trust to Spar Hill LLC
- 2018** Kennett Township

* - Indicates owners interred at Old Kennett Cemetery

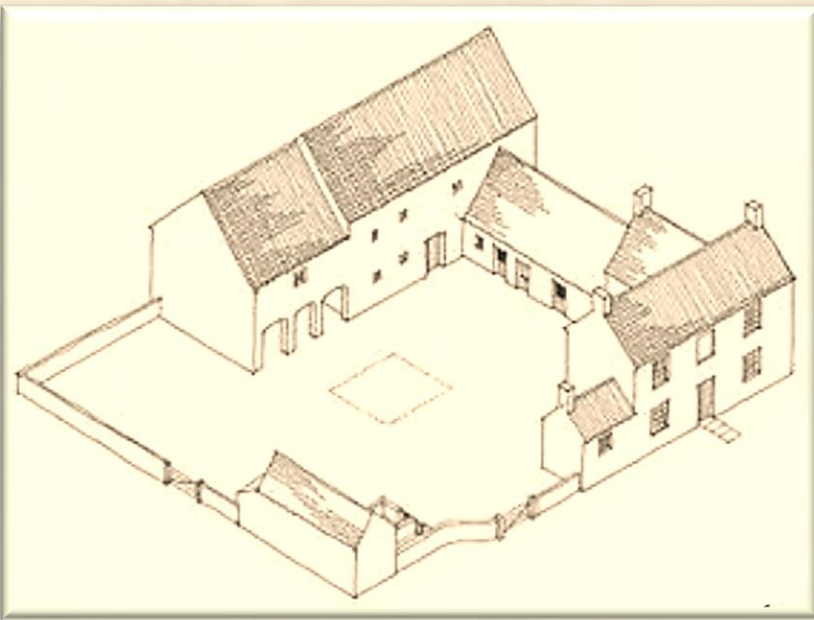




Spar Hill Farm Agricultural Periods & Notable Events

*A brief summary of the last
200 years at Spar Hill Farm*





Courtyard Farm Layout



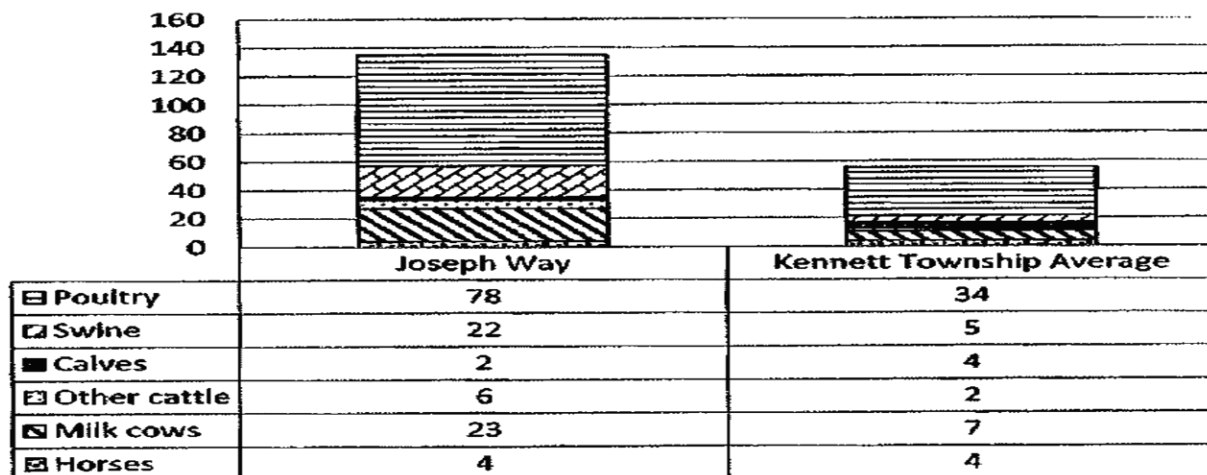
Arc Stone

LIVESTOCK FEEDING & HOME DAIRYING IN A DIVERSIFIED SYSTEM

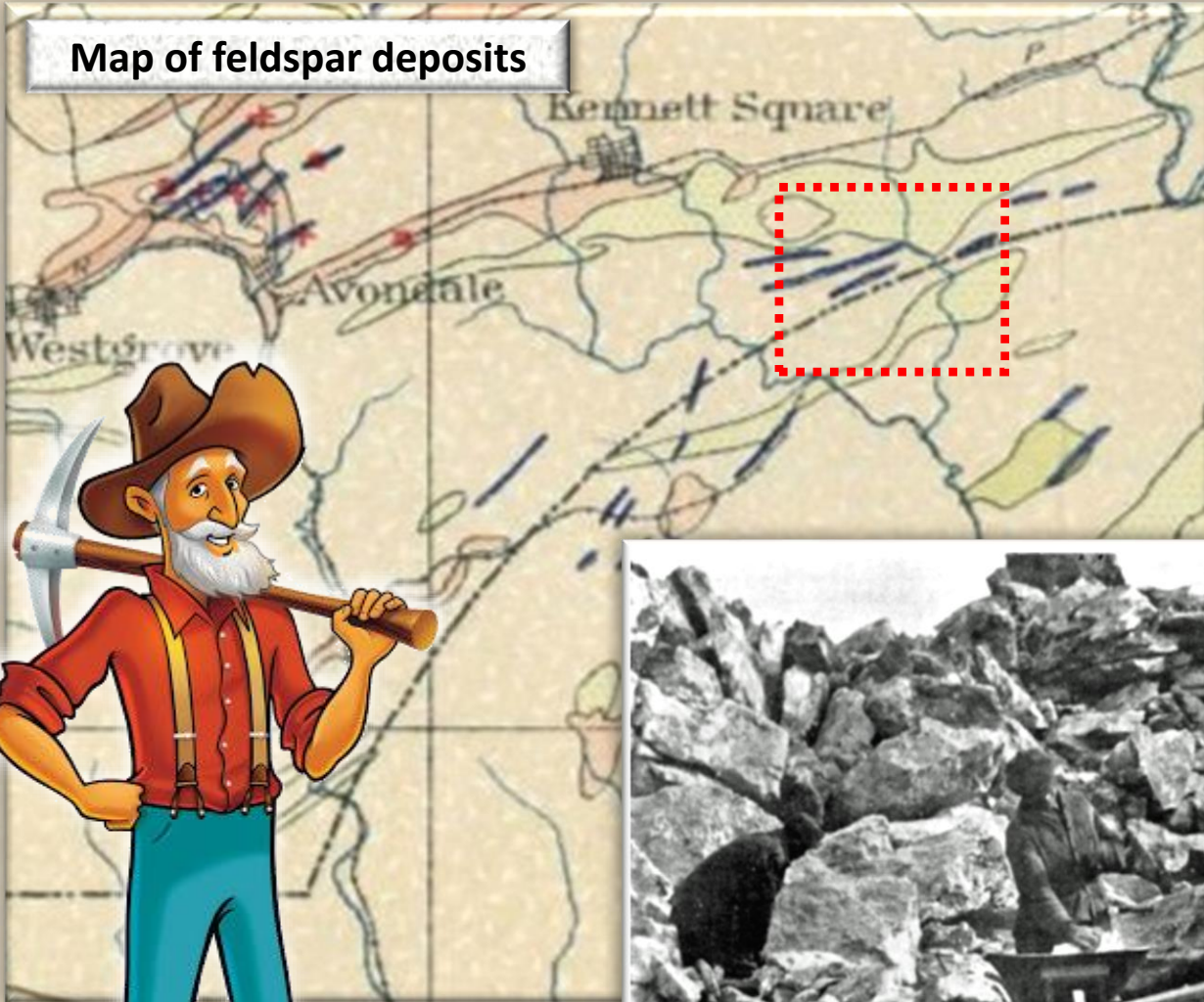
1800 – 1925: WAY FARM

- **1804** - Land was farmed to feed livestock, and the livestock were raised for dairy products (butter/milk)
The farm was started as a **courtyard style farm**
- **1848** - The main farmhouse is built, and the carriage house, original barn, stone barnyard and ice house, which all still remain, were all built circa 1848
- **1880** - Records show that the farm was the most productive farm in Kennett Township. In 1880, Joseph Way reported above average poultry (229 percent of avg), swine (440 percent of avg), and milk cows (328 percent of avg)
- **1892** - Colonel W.C. Hodgkins of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey was commissioned to mark the PA/DE border, and placed a stone on the farm

Comparison of Way Farm Livestock to Kennett Township Averages in 1880



Map of feldspar deposits



Feldspar



Miners working for feldspar in the early 1900's location unknown. This would have been very typical of the Havey mine operation. Photo from The Maine Feldspar Company promotional brochure

FELDSPAR MINING

In the early 1800s Feldspar was mined from two quarries and taken to be milled in Toughkenamon, PA.

Feldspar is a group of nonmetallic minerals used in ceramics. Uses ranged from false teeth and porcelain, to pottery, tiles, scouring soaps, and glass manufacturing. During a brief mining period from 1898 to the early 20th century, southeastern PA was one of the three largest producers of feldspar in the United States.



Spar Hill Aerial Photo - Linear Farm Layout

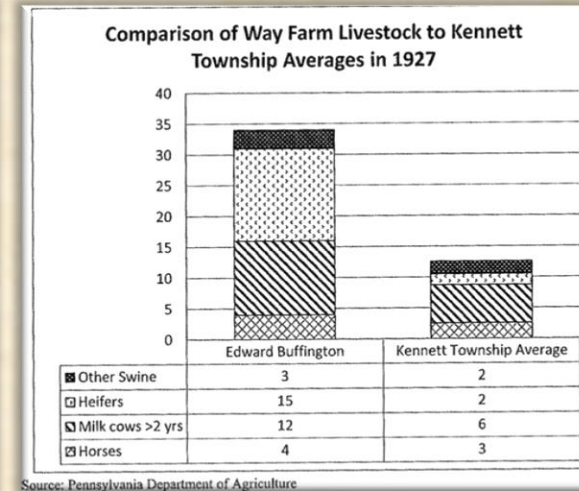
FLUID MILK DAIRYING, POULTRY, TRUCK FARMING, NURSERIES, & SPECIALTY PRODUCTS (QUAKER DAIRY PERIOD)

1925 – 1940: SHUTT FARM

- **1925** - The farm becomes a linear type layout as dairy is predominant during this period. The *circa*-1925 cow barn and stable were built
- **1927** - Edward Buffington reported 750 percent of Kennett Township averages of heifers



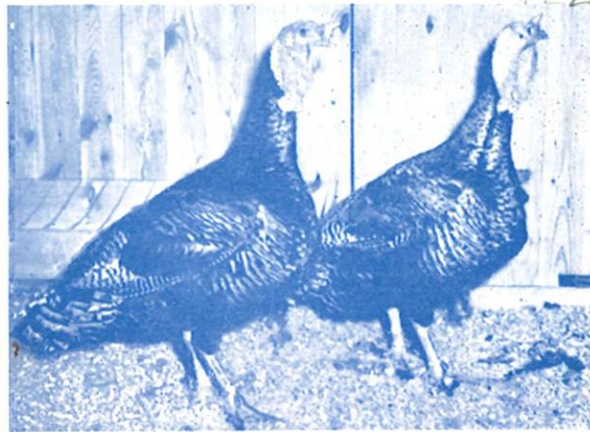
Cow Barn



USDA Livestock Chart



Prisoners of War – WWII



SPAR HILL BROAD BREASTED BRONZE TURKEYS

Trapnest, Pedigree bred for
MAXIMUM MEAT PRODUCTION
and PROFITS



SPAR HILL TURKEY FARM

Chadd's Ford, Pa. - - Greenville, Del.
C. P. SCHUTT H. S. SCHUTT, JR.

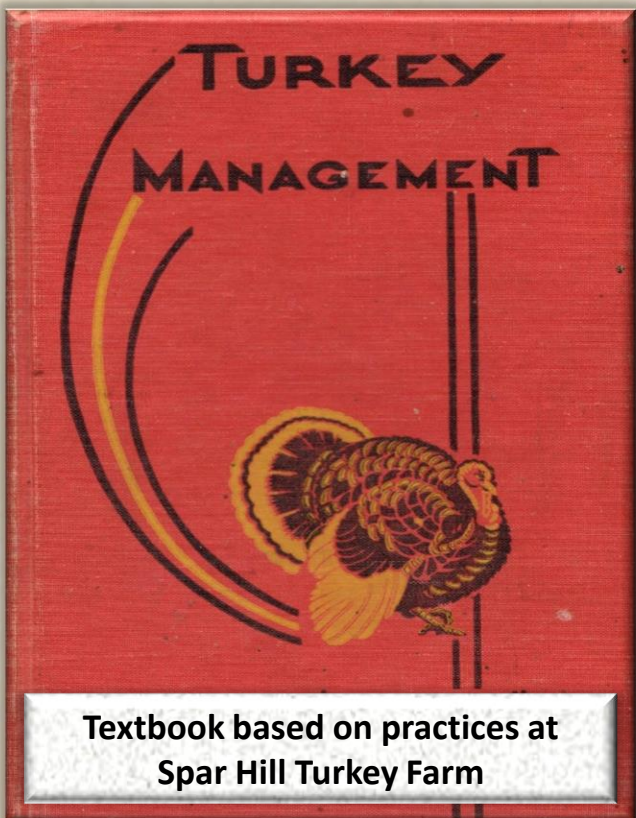
Spar Hill Turkey Farm Brochure

SUBURBANIZATION AND SPECIALIZATION

1940 - 1960: SPAR HILL TURKEY FARM

Way Farm became Spar Hill Turkey Farm, a complex was constructed, including the large turkey house

- **WWII** - Prisoners of War worked at the farm
- **1950** - A study called Turkey Management in 1955 used Spar Hill Turkey Farm as an example, including photographs of brooder houses, rearing platforms, and other structures, which were some of the 19 outbuildings visible in the aerial photographs. The textbook became the standard for poultry production at the time
- **1958** - Spar Hill Farm is recorded as having produced 45,000 turkeys



Textbook based on practices at Spar Hill Turkey Farm

Charcoal drawing 1982



Scene from Mare of Easttown

The abandoned barn scene with Dawn Bailey (played by Enid Graham) was filmed at the **Spar Hill Farm in Kennett Township**, near the border with Delaware. <https://www.atlasofwonders.com/2021/04/mare-of-easttown-filming-locations.html>

CONTEMPORARY USE

1960 - Present: SPAR HILL FARM

- **1965** - By this time most of the turkey facilities are demolished other than a *circa-2005* shed and a *circa-2012* calf shed
- **1970s - 1980** - Summer weekly community softball games were held in the field north of Burnt Mill Road
- The farm continues to have limited agricultural use
- The site was used to house miniature horses
- **2018** - Emergent Abundance Farming Collective (EAFC) starts one-acre vegetable garden
- **2021** - Popular HBO Series “Mare of Easttown” abandoned barn scene was filmed at Spar Hill Farm’s cow barn and stable workshop, thus bringing fans of the show and curiosity seekers to visit the farm



Kennett Township Historical Commission Recommendations

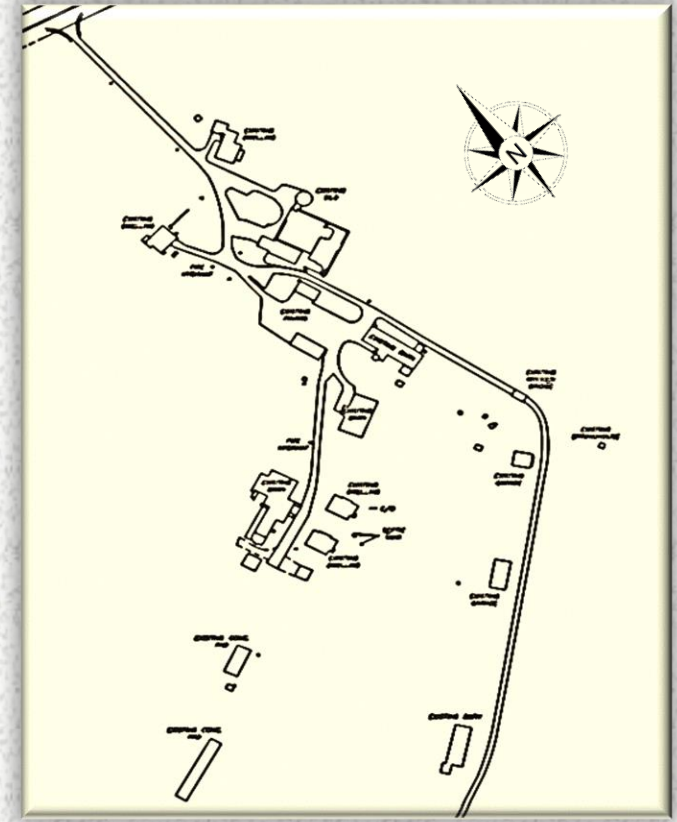
*List of Historic Resources to
Preserve at Spar Hill Farm*





What should be preserved at Spar Hill Farm?

- Many houses and buildings at Spar Hill Farm still remain. Once these buildings are gone, there will be nothing to show future generations one of the most productive farms in Kennett Township. The farm has important local historical significance and is a township historical asset and visual resource. The scenic farm has become iconic view in our landscape
- We want to preserve evidence of the three agricultural periods and the shift from a courtyard to a linear farming layout
- **The Kennett Township Historical Commission recommends preserving the following 7 buildings and structures on the farm:**



Survey of Spar Hill Farm

Historical Resources from the era of “Livestock Feeding and Home Dairying” circa 1848:



1. 1848 Main Farmhouse Dwelling

- Recommend a study to determine and **keep the core of the original structure only**

Some possible uses:

- KTHC Office/History Room
- Agricultural Museum
- Agency office
- Police sub station
- Land Use Office



2. 1848 Barn Wall and Stone courtyard

Importance:

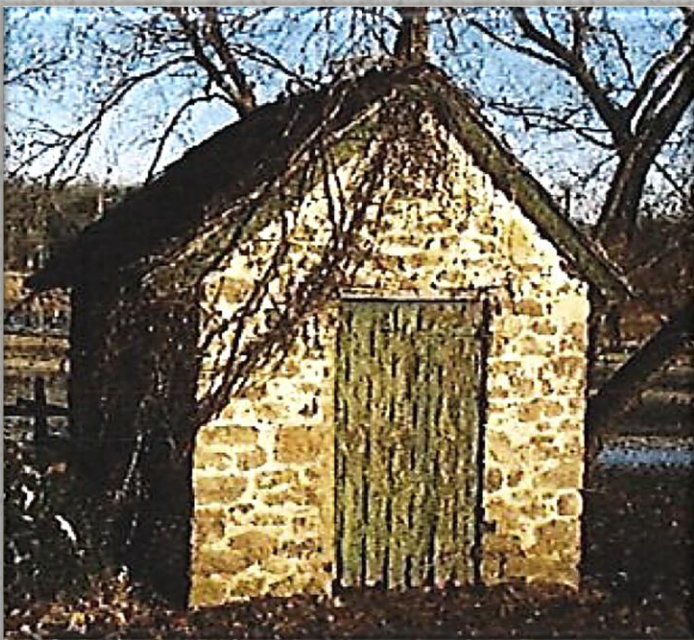
- Retaining the courtyard wall leaves evidence of the era of courtyard farming

Historical Resources from the era of “Livestock Feeding and Home Dairying” circa 1848:



3. Carriage House (foundation only)

- Saving this foundation allow us to preserve evidence of the courtyard farm layout



4. Ice House

- There is no reason to disturb this structure

Historical resources in a shift to linear farming in the “Suburbanization & Specialization” era circa 1925:

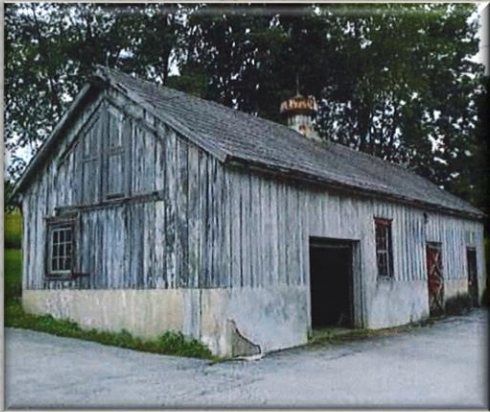


5. Circa 1925 Cow Barn

- This is an excellent example of the dairy farming era Wisconsin dairy barn in sound condition
- The barn shows the progression to the linear farm layout and evidence to the high productivity of the farm during the dairy farm era
- This building is currently drawing visitors due to it's role on “Mare of Easttown”

Some possible uses:

- Education center
- Livestock Boarding
- Police Equestrian facility
- Livestock rescue
- Farming Museum
- Township utility building



6. Circa 1925 Stable Workshop

- This building is also an excellent example of the dairy farming era that's in sound condition
- Another example of the move to linear farming
- This building is still quite functional

Some possible uses:

- Township garage
- Farming storage
- Snow plow/tractor parking
- Bike/Scooter Rental
- Scout Headquarters
- Camping Store
- Police car garage



7. Cement Cattle Husbandry Block

- KTHC would put an educational plaque here



Kennett Township Historical Commission Recommendations

Protective Laws and Recommendations



Legal Protection for Spar Hill Farm

The township has enacted ordinances to protect the historical resources within its boundaries. These laws were made by the Township and should be followed by the township.

Kennett Township Code of Ordinances Sec. 240-102. - Community development objectives.

C. Maintain and protect historic structures, sites and landscapes to preserve the context of the Township's heritage and character.





Kennett Township Code of Ordinances Sec. Sec. 240-2019. Delay of demolition for historic resources.

- (1) Retain the character of the Township through recognition and protection of historic and cultural resources.
- (2) Establish a clear process by which proposed changes affecting historic resources are reviewed to mitigate the negative effects.
- (3) Encourage the continued use of historic resources and facilitate their appropriate reuse.
- (4) Encourage the preservation of historic settings and landscapes.
- (5) Discourage the demolition of historic resources.
- (6) Implement the goals of the Pennsylvania Constitution within Article I, Section 27, which establishes the state policy of encouraging the preservation of historic and aesthetic resources





Barn Swallows have been living in the barns at Spar Hill Farm since they were built.

Barn Swallows are by no means considered to be an endangered species. However, they are included under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 which prohibits disturbing the birds, their **nests**, or their eggs.

All swallows are **State and federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918**. It is illegal for any person to take, possess, transport, sell, or purchase them or their parts, such as feathers, nests, or eggs, without a permit.



Barn Swallows in the barn



Barn Swallow





Conclusion/Recommendation

The **Kennett Township Historical Commission** recommends that a historic preservation consultant be hired by the Township to work with the commission to review the recommendations in this report and develop a final preservation plan for the Spar Hill Farm. The plan would include preservation, restoration, stabilization, mothballing and full and partial demolition of all the existing historic resources within the complex, support for each recommendation, and the associated costs of each recommendation. This would be presented to the Planning Commission for further recommendations to the Board of Supervisors prior to any further conversation about demolition of resources on the farm property.



THANK YOU!

**For more information contact the
Kennett Township Historical Commission**

