



Skills Developed by a Free Hunterdon County Black Man: 1754–1836

Tuesday, May 24, 2022 7:00 pm

Presented by Larry Kidder

Hopewell Branch of the Mercer County Library
245 Pennington–Titusville Rd. Pennington, NJ

Free, but limited space – please register at:
<https://tinyurl.com/kidderHVHW>

About the Speaker:



Larry Kidder is a retired history teacher who taught for 40 years, including 32 years at The Hun School of Princeton. He is a graduate of Allegheny College (BA 1967, MS

1969) and served four years in the US Navy. Larry has been a volunteer historian and historical interpreter for the Howell Living History Farm in Hopewell for over 30 years and is a member of the board of the Princeton Battlefield Society where he focuses on educational programs and battlefield tours. He is a past president of the Hopewell Valley Historical Society and has served on the board for many years. The author of two books on rural New Jersey history and three on aspects of the American Revolution in Mercer County, Larry is a frequent speaker throughout New Jersey. He has also been a presenter at conferences on the American Revolution in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and New York. For more of Larry's projects and books, visit his website, wkidderhistorian.com.

This is the story of Jacob Francis who was born free in Amwell Township, served as an indentured servant to age 21, served in the Continental Army – including the Battle of Trenton – and New Jersey militia, then established himself against all odds as a successful farmer. He interacted with many enslaved people, including the woman he married and set free, and helped his son develop skills to be an important abolitionist seeking not just an end to enslavement but also racial equality. Throughout his life, Jacob developed many physical and mental skills needed to overcome the racist obstacles that society placed in his path. The life of Jacob Francis and the family he created with his wife, Mary, richly illustrates how human beings often have to reach deeply and persistently to acquire and use important skills.

A **Hopewell Valley Heritage Week** event, co-sponsored by the Hopewell Valley Historical Society and the Hopewell Branch of the Mercer County Library.



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Brian M. Hughes, County Executive