THE STORY OF GOAT HILL
From the Revolutionary War to the Fight to Save It

Goat Hill's claim to fame goes back to the Revolutionary War and a visit by a renowned general but there's a lot more to the story of Goat Hill - as a quarry site, a scout camp, and as the focus of an epic legal battle and preservation effort. This is that story.

Legendary Overlook

Goat Hill lies at the far western edge of the Sourlands and is part of a high bluff overlooking the Delaware River just south of Lambertville in West Amwell Township.* Goat Hill is best known for its "overlooks," one of which, according to legend, General George Washington visited in December 1776 just before the Battle of Trenton. The owner of the land, Cornelius Coryell, escorted him to a rock outcropping to view the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River. Washington wanted to make sure that boats to be used by Continental Army for the December 25th crossing were well hidden from Tory sympathizers.

The legend has credibility because Washington was then staying at a house just south of today's New Hope. Years later, Martin Coryell, a great grandson of Cornelius' brother Joseph, passed on the story of Washington's visit. He may have heard the story from Cornelius himself since he was 16 years old when Cornelius died. Or Martin may have heard it from his wife Hannah, Cornelius' great granddaughter.

*Goat Hill refers to the area shown on the map on page 3 which includes two "summits."

An historic marker, erected by the Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission at the entrance to Goat Hill state park, asserts that Gen. Cornwallis also visited Goat Hill for its overlook. Although Cornwallis went to Coryell's ferry, he went there to look for boats to be used by the British and had no reason to climb up Goat Hill. Also, Washington did not go to Goat Hill to view "opposing activity," but to see if Continental Army boats were well hidden.
Fast forward to the 21st century. The "Washington Rock" outcropping is still there along with Goat Hill's most popular hiking spot, a 150-foot wide cleared area that provides a panoramic view of the Delaware River valley looking north (see photograph below). Around 1950, former property owner Col. Kenneth McIntosh created this cleared viewing area. And, in 2009, the view and Goat Hill itself was preserved when the State of New Jersey acquired the Goat Hill property for publically accessible open space. But before that could happen, it took years of litigation by West Amwell Township and its residents to prevent a quarry operation from destroying Goat Hill.

Coryell Ownership (1737-1831)

Going back to the early 18th century, Emanuel Coryell acquired over a thousand acres of property that extended from the middle of today's Lambertville south and east including Goat Hill. Coryell, one of the first settlers at today's Lambertville along with John Holcombe, operated a strategically located ferry that traversed the Delaware between Coryell's property and Pennsylvania. Coryell's Ferry was licensed by King George II in 1733.* After Emanuel's untimely death at age 49, one of his four sons, Cornelius, inherited at age 28 a sizeable piece of his father's land holdings. A 19th century map showing the division of land inherited by Emanuel's sons indicates that Cornelius acquired 340 acres, which included most of Goat Hill.

Cornelius Coryell married his wife Sallie in 1759, a year before he inherited his father's land. He and his new bride Sallie settled into their new homestead on Goat Hill where they raised a large family. The first of their nine children, George, was born in 1759. Cornelius lived there for 71 years until his death in 1831 at age 99.

In the late 1700s, Goat Hill was not accessible by road from the small settlement at Coryell's Ferry. Goat Hill Road, which today provides access via George Washington Road, did not exist until after 1850. An 1851 map of Hunterdon County shows the area with the name Goat Hill and today's Goat Hill Road without a name. This may have been the earliest map to identify Goat Hill.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps first designated the Goat Hill summit in 1906. The actual summit is identified by a 1929 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey marker in a rock pile just off a trail to the summit (see photo below).

*The ferry was the critical crossing point for 18th century Old York Road, a well traveled route between Philadelphia and the "North River" (the Hudson) and used by Washington's army in 1778 en route to the Battle of Monmouth.
The Coryell family's ownership of Goat Hill ended about the time Cornelius died in 1831. The year before he died, Cornelius was forced to sell most of his property at auction for $185 to pay his debts. A year after his death, his estate sold his remaining land at auction for $22 to cover additional debts. The successful bidder was Gershom Lambert, a descendent of John Lambert the postmaster for whom Lambertville is named.

The quarry's blocks were probably used for street "paving." Large nearby cities - New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore - used Belgian blocks from Europe and similar size diabase rocks from the U.S. as a paving material. The diminishing market for Belgian block street pavers in the early 20th century may have saved Goat Hill from being quarried to a much greater extent.

*Belgian blocks (which were not quarried in Belgium) were transported as ballast in the keels of ships coming from Europe to make up for the lack of cargo on the trip over to the U.S. The term was also used to refer to diabase blocks quarried in the U.S. which were of similar size and are now often used as curbing.

Goat Hill Quarry (1888-1930)

By 1888, Goat Hill was owned by the Delaware River Quarry Company which operated a quarry on the western slope facing the Delaware River. The annual report of the State's Geological Office that year indicated that the "Goat Hill quarry" produced "Belgian block," rather than crushed stone.* The hardness of the diabase rock and not having equipment to crush it may have been reasons for the quarry to produce blocks instead of stone.

The circa 1900 photo below shows Belgian blocks piled to the left of the railroad tracks below the Goat Hill quarry. These tracks would have been a loading spur to connect with the Pennsylvania Railroad's Belvidere line tracks on the opposite side of the D&R Canal.
Early 20th century postcards featured photographs of the "Goat Hill quarry" showing a large expanse of bare rock facing the river and the mining process. According to the Lambertville Beacon newspaper, about 300 carloads were filled with rock in July and in August of 1892.

Postcards circa 1910

![Image of postcards]

Text: Goat Hill Quarry Along the Delaware, Lambertville, NJ
        Courtesy Jeff McVey

There were two areas where rock was quarried at Goat Hill: a strip along the slope facing the Delaware and an oblong strip directly east as shown on the 1930 aerial below. (All mining ended in 1930.) The quarried area along the slope to the river is just off a nearby trail. The "interior" mining area, which left multiple excavated holes of up to 10 feet deep, is several hundred feet off the trail.

McIntosh Ownership of Goat Hill and the Donation to the Boy Scouts (1948-1964)

In 1948 Col. Kenneth McIntosh and his wife Jessie of Princeton acquired 213 acres on Goat Hill. At that time Col. McIntosh, a retired World War I and II veteran, and his wife apparently wanted a retirement home with a view. They had a stone cottage built at what is today the main overlook at Goat Hill. After clearing the area of trees, Col McIntosh and his wife enjoyed a panoramic view of the Delaware River valley.

The Goat Hill quarry had several owners including the Delaware River Quarry and Construction Company and the Birdsboro Stone Company. The last owner to operate a quarry was the John T. Dyer Quarry Company. In 1930, that company sold its land holding of 220 acres for a non-quarry use. To prevent competition with its other quarries, the deed to the buyer prohibited the use of the land as a quarry for the next 25 years.
from their cottage with its porch facing the river (see photo below). The Mcintosh's lived there until the mid-1960's.

Col. McIntosh accessed his property from Goat Hill Road via George Washington Road, a road once used for access to quarry sites at Goat Hill. From this road, Col. McIntosh was able to construct a driveway to their cottage at the overlook.

In 1964, sixteen years after their acquisition of the Goat Hill property, Kenneth and Jessie McIntosh decided to donate their land for a Boy Scout camp. The Colonel was an ardent admirer of the Boy Scouts. He was quoted as saying that it was "a privilege to turn over the historic site to the custody of so magnificent an organization as the Boy Scouts of America." The donation of the 213 acres was done in increments over the course of seven years with different sections being conveyed by deed year by year until 1971. This arrangement may have allowed the McIntosh's to remain at Goat Hill for a few more years and perhaps spread out his charitable tax deductions.

Col. McIntosh's donation was made to the George Washington Council, a regional scout organization. The GW Council was composed of four districts with troops in the Hunterdon District, the "home" district, given the privilege of camping there. Over a dozen troops in the Hunterdon District camped at what was known as the George Washington Scout Reservation or "The Rock" for short.

The Boy Scout Reservation (1964-83)

The scouts pitched tents in a large field near the entrance and off the trail to the Goat Hill summit. Drinking water was piped to the site. A 3' high pipe with faucet remains standing near the trail.

A few years after the donation of Goat Hill, the GW Council built a lodge for meetings and ceremonies in another field near the entrance (see photo below).

James Kerney, Jr., publisher of The Trenton Times, donated the funds to construct the lodge. The scouts recognized his donation by calling it the Kerney Lodge. Scout leaders constructed a large stone fireplace and chimney for the lodge.

A full time "ranger" occupied the stone cottage overlooking the Delaware, where Col. McIntosh and his wife once lived. Both the McIntosh's stone cottage and the scouts' Kerney Lodge were demolished by the state's Division of Parks and Forestry shortly after the state's acquisition of the property in 2009.
The above sketch of the Scout Reservation shows the Ranger House (formerly the McIntosh's stone cottage) at the main overlook and the Scout lodge across from the parking area.

In 1983, the George Washington Council was facing financial difficulties which included some large debts. As a solution to retiring debt, the Council decided to sell the Goat Hill property that year. Some scouts felt betrayed by the sale. Col. McIntosh's death the previous year in 1982 undoubtedly made the decision to sell a lot easier. The sale of the land, however, meant not just a loss of a scout camp, but potentially a loss of Goat Hill itself. The buyer was a concrete company which needed crushed stone and wanted to operate a quarry to provide it. So, in September, 1983, a subsidiary of the Silvi Concrete Company of Morrisville, PA, purchased the property for a rock bottom price of $605,000.

As a direct result of the sale of the Goat Hill Boy Scout Reservation to Silvi, the State's Green Acres Program changed its land acquisition policy to deter other scout organizations from selling their camp properties to developers. As proposed by Deputy Director Dennis Davidson, Green Acres offered to purchase development rights as an alternative way of generating cash for non-profits. Green Acres would in turn obtain a conservation easement to preserve the land forever.


Since the Goat Hill property was zoned by West Amwell Township for a residential use only, Silvi needed to persuade the Township Committee to agree to a zoning change to allow a quarry.* A letter sent to the Committee in November, 1983, requesting the change was followed by a special meeting of the Committee to hear a presentation by consultants hired by Silvi. Residents were told that a quarry would not generate significant noise, dust, blasting vibrations, truck traffic and would have no impact on wells. Many residents in attendance remained skeptical and raised questions. This lengthy meeting, ending at 11:30 p.m., would be a preview of scores of late night meetings to come over the next three-plus years.

The first shot across the bow at Silvi's quarry proposal was fired by the Township's Environmental Commission which sent a letter to the Township Committee in December, 1983, opposing the proposal for destroying a "unique natural site."

In early January 1984, the Committee heard from the Township engineer who reviewed an engineering report on the feasibility of the proposal paid for by Silvi. The engineer suggested that the Township hire its own "geotechnical engineer" to review the report for an independent analysis of the quarry's impact. At that meeting, Silvi tried to sway the mayor and committee members with dollars by offering

* The name Silvi in this article is short hand for Silvi Concrete Products Company of Morrisville, PA, and Silvi's subsidiary companies such as Fort Comanche and Constructural Dynamics.
a "royalty" payment to the Township of approximately $60,000 a year in addition to property taxes. At this point, the mayor and committee were keeping an open mind on the quarry but that was before the opposition got in gear for the next Committee meeting two weeks later.

Well before the next Committee meeting, long-time Goat Hill Road residents Joe and Carolyn Deal, whose 50-plus acre property actually included part of Goat Hill, had sprung into action. They organized resident opposition and helped formed a group called Save West Amwell Township or S.W.A.T. In the days before the internet, they managed to get the word out to hundreds of residents that they were organizing resistance to the quarry proposal and were circulating a petition to oppose it.*

At the January 19, 1964 Committee meeting, the most vocal opponent of the quarry was Goat Hill Road resident Joe Deal. Joe Deal brought with him the petition against the quarry with some 700 signatures that he claimed represented 60% of the Township voters. Given the overwhelming resident opposition, Joe Deal told the mayor and committee that since the people had spoken, it was time for their elected officials to "put this matter to bed" and vote to deny the requested zoning. That vote, however, was still two months away.

Resident opposition to the quarry continued to be heard at the next two Committee meetings in February. Meanwhile opposition was being expressed by others outside the Township including the Executive Director of the D&R Canal Commission. The quarry continued to be an agenda item at March Committee meetings as resident opposition reached a crescendo with 300 people packing the Committee meeting on March 1st. That meeting featured more presentations by Silvi consultants and reports by some residents who had made a trip to see a quarry in Ravina, New York, which Silvi said would be similar to the one at Goat Hill.

*The quarry proposal motivated Carolyn Deal to run for Township Committee in the next election. After winning a three-year term on the Committee, her fellow Committee members elected her mayor for three years (1988 to 1991).

While some residents who saw the working quarry up close expressed little concern, Bob French, president of S.W.A.T., expressed great concern. He was joined by S.W.A.T.'s own consulting engineer who challenged the report done by the engineering consultant for Silvi. S.W.A.T. also came prepared with their own attorney to show their willingness to continue to fight the quarry proposal in court - either in support of the Township if the Committee denied the zoning request or against the Township if it was approved.**

**S.W.A.T. hired the Princeton law firm of Jamieson, Moore, Peskin and Spicer, with fellow West Amwell resident Mark First being the lead attorney. Mark First later handled the case with the law firm of Fox, Rothschild.
At the March meeting, Mayor Richard Gulick and two committee members concluded that they had heard enough and were ready for a vote.* All three voted in favor of a motion to deny the zoning change. Although they gave no reasons for their votes, as elected township officials, they were no doubt responding to overwhelming public opposition to the plan and gave less weight to conflicting engineering opinions and the promise of $60,000 in annual "royalties."

Silvi, however, was not about to give up. If Silvi could convince the Zoning Board to grant a use variance, it did not need the Township Committee to change the zoning designation. So, in the spring of 1984 Silvi applied for the variance. The zoning board held 30 public hearings on the application over a span of the next 21 months, meeting weekly in some months and typically late into the night!

At the first public hearing in June, 1984, owner Laurence Silvi explained that his company needed the crushed stone from the Goat Hill quarry to supply his concrete plant in Morrisville, Pennsylvania. There were other quarries in the Delaware River area, but he said that he could get the stone cheaper if his company owned one. Enriching Silvi, however, was not a valid reason for granting a variance. The granting of a use variance required testimony by a professional planner that the proposed use would satisfy the statutory criteria of "special reasons" or "hardship" under the Municipal Land Use Law. To provide that, Silvi's planner pointed out that Goat Hill offered the best type of rock for concrete, that the supply of such rock was a diminishing natural resource, and that the site was unsuited for residential use. The planner also noted that Washington's Rock would be preserved but with limited public access.

At the second public hearing, S.W.A.T.'s attorney, Mark First, made the case that granting a use variance for such a large property and changing the use from residential to "heavy industrial" would be so drastic a change in use that the Board did not have the authority or jurisdiction to grant the variance. Only the Township Committee, he argued, was empowered to allow the quarry use by amending the zoning ordinance.

At its January 7, 1985 public hearing, the Zoning Board was ready to vote on the question of whether it had the authority to consider a use variance for the quarry. The seven-member board voted unanimously to deny the variance for "lack of jurisdiction."

Silvi struck back again. The company appealed the decision to the New Jersey Superior Court in Flemington and a hearing was scheduled in March. The zoning board was represented by its attorney, Stewart Palilonis. The Township retained Mark First, then with the firm of Fox, Rothschild, as outside counsel, the same attorney engaged by S.W.A.T.

**The Township Committee at that time had only two members.**
At its June meeting, the Zoning Board learned that the judge chose to ignore the jurisdictional issue and ordered the Board to conduct additional public hearings on the merits of whether to grant the use variance. This launched a series of 27 more public hearings which stretched into the following year! These hearings would be a battle of the experts - ecologists, planners, and engineers - with residents having to wait from June, 1985 until January of 1986 to have their say after the second round of hearings.

In February 1986, the board heard final arguments from attorneys for both sides. Mark First claimed that any "hardship" suffered by Silvi was self-imposed. He said that Silvi knew he was taking a risk when he purchased a property currently zoned residential with the intention of using it for a quarry. Silvi should not have assumed that he could get the Township to change the zoning. Attorney First questioned the opinions of experts who asserted a variety of "valid" reasons to grant this variance. He also challenged the assumption that property values would not be affected, and that the quarry would not have other negative impacts. Silvi's attorney countered that Goat Hill's rock was needed by the state of New Jersey for construction purposes, that it was close to users of crushed stone, and that the site was unsuitable for residential use.

After 30 public hearings over 21 months and after listening to countless hours of testimony and final arguments, the board finally voted at its meeting on February 11, 1986. The vote was 5 against and 2 in favor of granting the variance. The board's decision brought the matter back to the Superior County judge who had remanded the case for further hearings assuming the board had jurisdiction. After reviewing the transcript of thousands of pages, Judge Arthur Meredith upheld the board's decision in August, 1987. This was the third strike for Silvi. He had lost before the Township Committee, the Zoning Board, and now in Superior Court.

After "three strikes" Silvi wanted to take one more swing. In August, 1989, he filed an appeal with the New Jersey Appellate Division. In October, just two months later, the court denied Silvi's petition for appellate review. Case closed.

The prolonged series of Zoning Board hearings totaling over 100 hours and four years of litigation was costly to both the Township and S.W.A.T. The former had to pay its Zoning Board attorney, board secretary, and outside counsel. S.W.A.T.'s even higher tab included attorney fees and numerous consultants as expert witnesses.

S.W.A.T. and West Amwell Township had prevailed over a big company with deep pockets. Mark First, special counsel for the Township, speculated to The New York Times that Silvi did not expect a small township like West Amwell and its residents to withstand a very expensive legal offensive that stretched over six years. But they did! West Amwell Township and its residents can be proud of their stand to preserve land that was worthy of being acquired by the state for public use and enjoyment a few years later.

With its quarry proposal dead, Silvi came up with a plan for 26 detached dwelling units on the site consistent with the existing residential three-acre zoning. The plan was similar to the one prepared by S.W.A.T. years before that Silvi's consultants said was impractical. Silvi's plan was never presented to the West Amwell Planning Board for site
plan approval. Its real purpose may have been to enhance the value of the site in negotiating a selling price. Giving existing zoning, an appraiser, for example, would have to consider residential as the "highest and best use" to establishing the property's value. The hard rock of Goat Hill, however, would present a challenge for septic systems and excavations for footings and foundations. One indication of this difficulty was a failed 2004 Perc test on a property adjacent to the Silvi site.

**Preserving Goat Hill (2005-2009)**

In 2005, the D&R Greenway Land Trust of Princeton acquired a 54-acre parcel adjacent to the Silvi property. This was the beginning of land acquisition that led to the preservation of Goat Hill. D&R Greenway had been targeting its preservation efforts on the Sourlands for some time. The non-profit's interest in the Goat Hill property in particular was sparked by Silvi's acquisition of the Boy Scout reservation. It decided to buy the adjacent parcel to try to undermine the development potential of the Silvi property. D&R Greenway's ultimate goal was for the 54-acre property to become part of a larger preserved area that would include the Silvi property should it be acquired.

A group of Asian investors, under the name Supreme 10, had owned the 54-acre wooded, rock-strewn property for almost 30 years. Fortunately, Supreme 10 was ready to sell their land when D&R Greenway approached the group. The non-profit was able to negotiate a very reasonable price of $270,550 based on the appraised value of the parcel. As part of its focus on preserving land in the Sourlands, D&R Greenway had previously acquired a conservation easement on 34 acres of land further north on Goat Hill Road just below Goat Hill in 1999.

D&R Greenway did not hold on to the 54-acre property for long, selling it just a few months later to the State's Green Acres Program in the Department of Environmental Protection. The sale to Green Acres had been pre-arranged given the state's previously expressed interest in buying the property in anticipation of its possible acquisition of the Silvi property.

Acquisition of the Silvi property presented more of a challenge. In the 1990s, Green Acres staff reached out to Silvi about selling its land after it lost its zoning battle with West Amwell Township. At the time, the company had little interest in selling, because it still hoped to operate a quarry at Goat Hill in the future to supply its concrete business with crushed stone.

In 2006, Green Acres staff had the property appraised in the hopes of reaching a deal with Silvi, but an offer based on appraised value was rejected. Silvi then put the site on the market with the hope of attracting a residential developer, but Silvi had no success.

In 2008, D&R Greenway staff contacted Silvi with a new proposal that addressed the company's need for a quarry. Under the proposal, Silvi would use the proceeds from the sale of its Goat Hill property to acquire another quarry in Somerset County. The other quarry, which was owned by the 3M Company, was located in Belle Mead, Somerset County.
The timing for acquiring the 3M quarry was just right. 3M had closed the quarry the previous year in 2007 for environmental and financial reasons and was ready to sell. At that same time, Somerset County had hoped to preserve over 200 acres of the 1,440-acre quarry property as open space. By getting Silvi and Somerset County to work out a deal with the 3M Company, D&R Greenway staff facilitated the preservation of land in Somerset County as well as Goat Hill. The next step was for Silvi and Green Acres to make a deal.

Given the opportunity to acquire the 3M quarry and the apparent futility in selling the site or getting West Amwell to reconsider its zoning, Silvi finally agreed to sell the Goat Hill site to Green Acres for its market value based on an appraisal. A price of $4.57 million was agreed to in early 2009.

The sale proceeds from Goat Hill not only helped Silvi acquire the 3M quarry. By using the money to buy a "like" property in the same tax year, Silvi avoided having to pay federal tax on a capital gain of almost $4 million resulting from the sale of Goat Hill.

As it turned out, the purchase of the Belle Mead quarry provided Silvi with crushed stone for its expanding concrete business in northern New Jersey. Within four years, Silvi would buy four existing concrete plants in northern New Jersey which would get their crushed stone from the Belle Mead quarry.

The closing for the Silvi property occurred on May 27, 2009. A celebratory dedication of the acquisition occurred on October 14, 2009, with Acting DEP Commissioner Mark Mauriello, Assistant Commissioner Jay Watson, West Amwell Township Mayor Bill Corboy, Green Acres Program staff, and D&R Greenway staff attending.

With the acquisition of the two parcels on Goat Hill, a total of 267 acres of forested land was preserved (see aerial photo). The Division of Parks and Forestry in the Department of Environmental Protection was given the responsibility for managing the site which comprises what is unofficially called the Goat Hill Preserve.*

*The Division of Parks and Forestry in the Department of Environmental Protection does not include Goat Hill on its online list of State owned sites, nor is there is any on-site identification as a state owned preserve either at the entrance or on the kiosk by the parking area.
Saving the Sourlands Along the Delaware

Goat Hill is one of two high points in the Sourlands overlooking the Delaware River. The other is Baldpate Mountain just to the south in Hopewell Township. Baldpate Mountain, at an elevation of 479 feet, is the slightly higher than Goat Hill at an elevation of 457 feet.

Goat Hill and Baldpate Mountain have a lot more in common. Both were purchased to be quarried in the 1980s to provide crushed stone. Almost all of Goat Hill and Baldpate Mountain were spared from being quarried as a result of organized local opposition to zoning changes which would have allowed quarries. And both were preserved as open space with total or partial funding provided by the State Green Acres Program.

Thanks to local residents and the Green Acres Program, the public can forever enjoy the views from and hike the trails on Goat Hill and Baldpate Mountain.

Goat Hill from New Hope, PA

Postscripts

Goats on Goat Hill

How Goat Hill got its name in the 19th century is unknown but it may have resulted from goats being raised there for milk. What is known is that goats were raised there in the 1920's during Prohibition. The owners of a multi-acre section of Goat Hill to the south of the Goat Hill summit raised goats to make cheese in which they concealed moonshine. They made blocks of cheese with cavities where they inserted pints of bootleg liquor. It was a clever smuggling ruse, but Federal agents got wind of the hollowed-out cheese.

The owners, after being fined twice, eventually had to give up their business when the Federal government took possession of the land and sold it at auction. The buyer was the grandfather of Joe Deal, husband of Carolyn Deal who continues to live on the property in her senior years.

The tradition of raising goats on Goat Hill continues to this day. Carolyn Deal's grandson and son-in-law raise a small herd of goats for goat milk (see photo below).

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Goat Hill "Mysteries"

Washington's Rock

Goat Hill's most famous rock was photographed as early as 1908. A postcard at that time featured the rock on the occasion of the 175th anniversary of Coryell's ferry (see photo below). The ferry is connected to the rock because it is on land once owned by Emanuel Coryell, the ferry's operator. Had the rock and its legend become well known before 1908? Or, did postcards, which were first allowed to have photographs cover the "front" side in 1907 with an address and message on the "back," make the rock well known?

Quarried Rock

Large quarried blocks of diabase rock can be seen clumped together among young trees just to the rear of the main overlook (see photo below). These blocks appear to have been dumped there by Silvi around the year 2000 judging by the age of the surrounding trees. But why?

Rows of Rocks

There are three long rows of piled up rocks on Goat Hill (see photo of one row in next column). The rows could have marked property lines. Did one or more of these rows mark where land was subdivided between Cornelius Coryell and his brother John when they inherited adjacent parcels of land on Goat Hill? Cornelius's land, which included Washington's Rock, would have been to the north. John inherited land to the south.

Big Boulder Inscription

Along the trail near Washington's Rock is a large bolder which has an inscription chiseled on top with the date July 4, 1866 and a name: T. N. Bradfield DDS (see photos on next page). Thomas N. Bradfield
of Trenton, who briefly owned property in Lambertville, was the likely chiseler and a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS). Why did he chisel his name here? Was he an early hiker on Goat Hill? Did he follow a trail or create one on Goat Hill?

Hiking on Goat Hill

Goat Hill offers several hiking trails, short and long, through mature woodlands. In addition to the wide, stone covered trail to the main overlook, there are two trails beginning at that trail which take hikers to the summit of Goat Hill, the remnants of old quarries, the famous Washington's Rock, and other overlooks. These trails are a legacy of access roads to old quarries, Col. McIntosh's drive-way, and the Boy Scout reservation.

The trail to the Goat Hill main overlook has been a hiking destination for at least 100 years as evidenced by the circa 1910 photograph below.

A description of Goat Hill trails along with a sketched trail map can be found on the inside back cover.

Tom Ogren

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Epilogue

The New Jersey State Park Service regards Goat Hill as an appendage of Washington Crossing State Park in Mercer County. It has no separate identity. Some are of the opinion that it's time for its nameless orphan status to end and that it become a recognized preserve administered either by the State or Hunterdon County. The Sourland Conservancy's Hiking Atlas and the njtrails.org website use the name "Goat Hill Preserve" as does this booklet.

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t.o.
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Appellate Division, NJ Superior Court
Central New Jersey Council, Boy Scouts of America, website pages, 2003
Hunterdon County Historical Society
Hunterdon County Clerk's Office - recorded deeds
Minutes of West Amwell Township Committee meetings, 1983-1984
Minutes of West Amwell Township Zoning Board of Adjustment, 1984-1986
NJ State Geological Annual Report, 1888
Silvi Concrete Products Company website and facebook page
Steward Associates, survey of Block 21, Lot 26, 2-15-09 for NJ DEP
West Jersey History Project images, 2002
Online descriptions of GW Scout Reservation - author not identified

Photography: All photos are in the public domain or were taken by the author except as noted.
Goat Hill Timeline

1733-1831  Land acquired by Emanuel Coryell, who operated Coryell's Ferry, and inherited in 1760 by his son Cornelius, a Revolutionary War soldier, who lived there until his death in 1831 at age 99.

1776  From a rock overlooking the Delaware, George Washington is said to have viewed the western shore to see if boats to be used for the crossing of the Delaware on December 26 were well hidden.

1880's -1930  Goat Hill quarry in operation.

1949  Col. Kenneth McIntosh and his wife acquired 213 acres on Goat Hill and constructed a stone lodge at the overlook.

1964  Col. Kenneth McIntosh and wife donated their Goat Hill property to the George Washington Council of the Boy Scouts.

1983  The George Washington Council sold the Boy Scout reservation to a subsidiary of Silvi Concrete Products of Morrisville, PA.

1984  The West Amwell Township Committee voted against re-zoning site for a quarry as requested. Prior to the vote, residents had formed a group called SWAT (Save West Amwell Township) to oppose the proposed quarry.

1984-85  The West Amwell Zoning Board held 3 hearings on the application and voted to deny the variance. Silvi then sued the board.

1985-86  The Superior Court remanded the case to the Zoning Board for additional hearings. 27 more hearings were held and the board again voted to deny the zoning variance.

1987  The case went back to the Superior Court which ruled in favor of the Zoning Board's decision.

1989  Silvi requested Appellate Court review which was denied.

2005  D&R Greenway Land Trust and NJ DEP acquired 54 acres of land on Goat Hill Road which was adjacent to Silvi's 213 acres.

2009  NJ DEP acquired from Silvi's company land once donated to the Boy Scouts. The Goat Hill property was officially opened to the public on October 14.
Goat Hill Trails

All trails are accessed from the wide crushed stone trail by the parking area named the Overlook Trail (see trail map below).* The trail ends at the overlook where there is a large lawn. To the rear of the overlook, a "spur trail" marked with red blazes, winds though a wooded area strewn with large slabs of quarried diabase rock.

Branching off the Overlook Trail are two longer trails. The first trail, the Goat Hill Trail, extends to the summit of Goat Hill where there is a survey marker about 30 feet off to the right. The trail, which is marked with yellow blazes, follows an old quarry access road and a row of rocks to the left.

The second trail off to the left of the Overlook Trail is the Quarry Trail so named since it passes old quarried sites. Shortly after the start of the trail, marked with white blazes, there is a red blazed spur trail to the right heading down to Washington's Rock.

This and other spur trails offer dramatic views of the Delaware River valley.

Continuing along the Quarry Trail, there three more spur trails off to the right marked with red blazes. One leads to an old quarry site. Further on, the trail passes numerous excavated pits to the left. The pits, about 50 yards off the trail, are up to 10 feet in depth. The last spur trail to the right offers a view of Bowman's Tower looking south on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware.

More information about Goat Hill trails is available on the njtrails.org website.