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THE CULPRIT BELOW

New research into NJ 2024 earthquake revealed unknown fault

Amanda Wallace
NorthJersey.com
USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY

More than two years after an earthquake rattled the Garden State, a group of researchers are continuing to unravel its unusual nature, officially naming a previously unmapped fault where the quake occurred.

The 4.8-magnitude earthquake struck near Tewksbury on April 5, 2024, rattling homes from Boston to Washington. The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake was felt by 42 million people, triggering a rare response. The USGS online portal, which crowdsources first-person reports of shaking, received nearly 184,000 entries, the most from any U.S. earthquake.

Scientists were immediately shaken into action, later telling NorthJersey.com that the quake was unusual.

Based on existing models, the epicenter of the earthquake, Tewksbury Township, should have sustained substantial damage. It did not, according to a study from the Columbia Climate School's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory.

Meanwhile, New York City shook much harder than expected and was left with some minor damage. The high number of aftershocks were also unusual, the study said.

An analysis from scientists at South Korea's Seoul National University suggested that the earthquake occurred



The 2024 quake's epicenter is believed to have been on Hill & Dale Road in Tewksbury Township.
PHOTOS BY NORTHJERSEY.COM STAFF FILE



GETTY IMAGES

on a previously unmapped fault in the area.

Now, recently published research is helping to piece together some of those curiosities, designating the Mountainville Fault.

"The 2024 Mw4.8 Tewksbury, New Jersey earthquake occurred near the ~300-km long Ramapo Fault, which, although constituting the largest regional fault, is misoriented for slip in the current tectonic stress regime," reads the study, published in the Journal of Geophysical Research: Solid Earth. "The upward projection of aftershocks aligns with the topographic trace of a previously unmapped fault zone 3.5 km west of the epicenter."

Here's a look at some of the study's key findings and why they are significant, according to lead researcher Folarin Kolawole, a structural geologist and professor at Columbia University.

The Mountainville Fault

In April 2024, just hours after the earthquake hit, Kolawole and two post-doctoral researchers came to the epicenter area to take advantage of the rare opportunity to gather new data in real time amid the aftershocks.

Kolawole and his team have since determined that the prominent, structurally mature Ramapo Fault is not to blame,

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Folarin Kolawole, a professor at Columbia University, examines an outcropping of rocks near the quake's epicenter in April 2024.

Historic log cabin could be out of time

William Westhoven
Morristown Daily Record
USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY

Time is running out for a historic log cabin in Rockaway Township that has already dodged the wrecking ball once but is back on the endangered list.

Councilman Tucker Kelley was shocked to uncover the 19th-century dwelling on one of his properties in late 2023, hidden behind clapboard, shingles and aluminum siding covering a vacant, deteriorating home on a lot he wanted to clear to build a new home.

With more than two years of efforts to gain financial support for its preservation falling short, Kelley told the council at its meeting on Aug. 18 that the time has come to dismantle and remove his amazing discovery.

"I'm going to give it another two weeks," Kelley said, inviting the public to check out the cabin on Green Pond Road before it disappears forever. "Hopefully, more people will come before I take it down by the holidays that are coming. Anybody that wishes to come and inspect it and see it, please reach out to me."

Kelley lists his email address and cell phone number on the township website.

Two rooms had also been added to the rough-hewn, one-room dwelling believed to have served as a mine worker's home in the 1800s. It is also one of the few remaining structures from the 200-year-old history of a once-thriving mining village in the Hibernia section of the township, offering insights into what historians call "the last ghost town in Morris County."

Kelley bought the lot in 2007 from an elderly woman who lived in a small

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Advice for Sherrill: Beware the ghosts of Drumthwacket



Political Stile
Charles Stile
USA TODAY NETWORK

Gov. Mikie Sherrill declared this month that she was "thrilled" to have finally moved her family into Drumthwacket, the governor's mansion in Princeton.

That's understandable. It's not every day that you get a chance to live property-tax-free in New Jersey. The 18-room Greek Revival mansion is bounded by stately Ionic columns, stretches into a wooded glade and is tucked safely behind a gated fence, guarded 24-7 by the State Police.

The 191-year-old manor off Route 206 has a great backyard, Italianate gardens and a fireplace that crackles right out of an episode of "Masterpiece." Its plush carpets, airy library and hand-painted

paneling evoke an imposing, regal formality. Even the "Real Housewives of New Jersey" would behave themselves on a tour (though there is always the risk of their heaving the imported China at one another if an argument breaks out).

But "thrilled?" The governor may want to reconsider that, given some of the residence's modern history. Despite its charms, Drumthwacket should be certified as a political trauma center. It is where electoral careers have crashed and burned.

Sure, its 19th-century origin story is storybook colorful. It was built in 1835 by Charles Smith Olden, who would live there as New Jersey's anti-secessionist governor during the Civil War. Olden named the home "Drumthwacket," using a Scots-Gaelic phrase that means "wooded hill."

The property was sold in 1893 to industrialist Moses Taylor Pyne, who expanded the building. In the 1940s, it was

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