

Society for the Preservation of
HUDSON VALLEY
VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE



February 2006

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 8, No.2

HVVA MEETING.....Maggie MacDowell, Secretary

Saturday, January 21, 2006, The meeting held at the Marbletown firehouse was called to order at 10:45 AM by President, Paul Spencer.

Old business: Paul suggested we pay a computer expert to assist us with producing the newsletter and Web site. We should have E-mail addresses for all members.

New Business: election of officers. Alvin Sheffer nominated Jim Decker for President and Rob Sweeney as Vice President. They were voted in with no objections. Peter Sinclair remains Treasurer and Editor, and Maggie MacDowell as Secretary. Officers are counted as trustees, 25 are allowed 10 to 15 is more workable.

(continued next page)

FROM THE JOURNAL=====

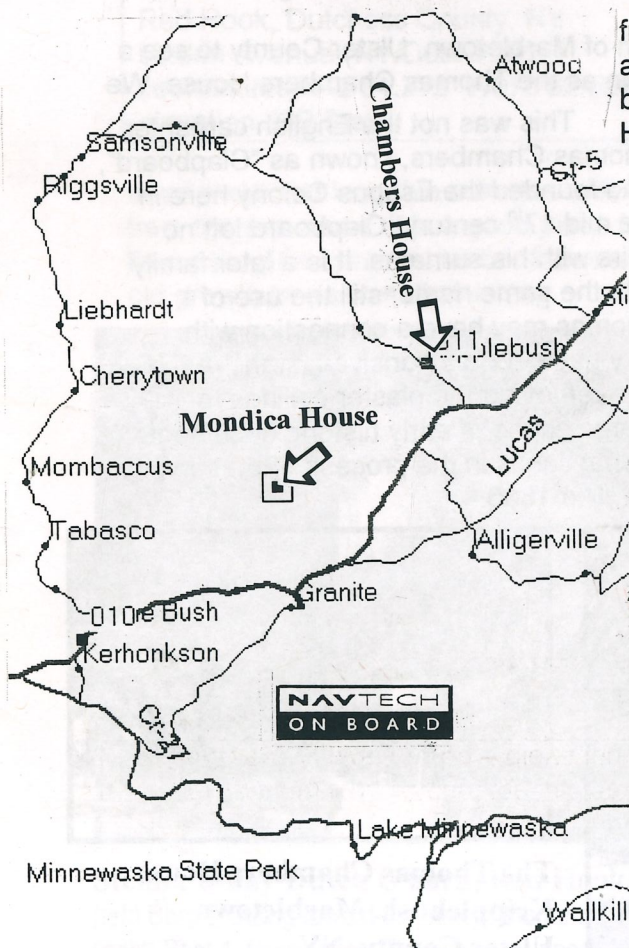
Saturday, January 21, About 18 HVVA members met in Marbletown and later visited two sites. The --/Lee-Mondica house of Susan Lee and Kristi Mondica on Lower Whitfield Road in Accord, Ulster County. This site presently operates as a small horse breeding farm. Some pasture land has been cleared recently. The maple trees will be used for fire wood and the tall straight white-pine used for a future barn frame. We registered it:

Two-room story-and-a-half frame house
--/Lee-Mondica (Ny/Uls/Roc/16)
Lower Whitfield Rd., Rochester, Ulster County, NY
N 41'48.749' W 074'14.160 – elevation 475 feet

This two room frame house is thought to date from the 18th century. There is a stone hearth support for a corner fireplace in the cellar but no evidence in the present

frame for such a thing. Perhaps the foundation was for an earlier house. The present H-bent frame seems to be early 19th century. Corner fireplaces are rare in the Hudson Valley.

(see page 95 of John Stevens new book, *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America*) (continued next page)



**Lee-Mondica House
Town of Rochester, Ulster County, NY**



(HVVA Meeting, continued)

Dennis Tierney reported on the progress of his Staten Island House book, consisting of 68 early photographs from The Historic Richmondtown Collection. The book will include a short article Staten Island Architecture, written in 1941 by Loring McMillan, pioneer in the development of the Richmondtown. Dennis has verbal approval to use the material and we have begun the final stages of writing captions and getting it ready for the printer.

Wally Wheeler, of Hartgan Archeology Associates, presented the plans for the Dutch Cultural Resource Survey. He has organized the forms for the first two levels of documentation, one a drive-by description and location and the second level a more detailed structural and historical report. The main office of the survey will be at the Mabee Farm Museum in Schenectady County. SHBO, the Farm Museum in The Netherlands at Arnhem, is planning to send two interns to help with the project. They will need volunteers to assist them. The volunteers will need training and a coordinator will be needed. HVVA is co-sponsoring the Survey. Ned Pratt and Keith Cramer are working on a grant application. A discussion was held regarding prioritizing things to include in the Survey.

Several properties were suggested for future visits such as the Weaver House in Rock City, the Squire Nicoll House in New Windsor, The Lem Boce House in Ulster and the Van Heusen House in Hudson. Columbia County that was tentatively set for our next third-Saturday, February 18 meeting. March 18 John Stevens talks at the Ulster County Historical Society and in the afternoon we go to measure and document the Lem Boice House in Ulster. Saturday, April 15, John Stevens is speaking in Albany at the Institute, so we will have to hold our April meeting there.

The following members attended: Jon Boka, Jim Decker, Robert Hedges, Roberta Jeracka, Dough Johnsen, Maggie MacDowell, Karen Markisenis, Betty Mosny, Jonathan Nedbor, Richard Rydant, Alvin Sheffer, Peter Sinclair, George Van Sickle, Paul Spencer, Rob Sweeney, Dennis Tierney, Alvin Wanzer, and Wally Wheeler.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 and the group left to visit two nearby sites.

(from *The Journal*, continued)

We next went to the village of Kripplebush, Town of Marbletown, Ulster County to see a two-room Dutch stone house with an addition, It is known as the Thomas Chambers House. We registered it:

Two-room stone house with addition, corn crib and English barn
The Thomas Chambers House (NY/Uls/Mar/30)
Kripplebush, Marbletown, Ulster County, NY
N 41°50,393' W 074°11,470 - elevation 375 feet

This was not the English carpenter Thomas Chambers, known as "Clapboard", who founded the Esopus Colony here in the mid 17th century. Clapboard left no heirs with his surname. It is a later family with the same name, still the use of Thomas may have a connection with

Clapboard. The present owners, Jon Boka and his family have done extensive historic research on the ownership of the site and during restoration, while removing the plaster ceilings to expose the original beaded beams, they discovered a large cache of early historic documents, an important collection of inventories, maps and deeds that Jon is in the process of preserving and copying. He believes the house is early 19th century, like 1800.



**The Thomas Chambers House
Kripplebush, Marbletown
Ulster County, NY**

The 19th century 3-bay English barn, with vertical board-and-batten siding, is situated behind the Chambers house. It has a common plan but an unusual feature in the framing where the tie-beams are not dropped a foot below the plates as is usual in the American square-rule frame, but joined between the post and plate. The posts do have raising holes but perhaps this tie beam is an English feature. I am unfamiliar with it in Ulster County. A closer look at this joint would be good.



There is lamp-black harvest writing in the barn, indicating the baling of hay in the 19th century. One inscription reads, "Erected May 5. 1877". This could date the barn but normally barns are dated with chiseled or inscribed numbers rather than painted. The erection date could refer to a stationary hay-press erected inside the barn but now gone. These were tall structures sometimes horse-powered. There may be evidence of it in the barn's timbers.

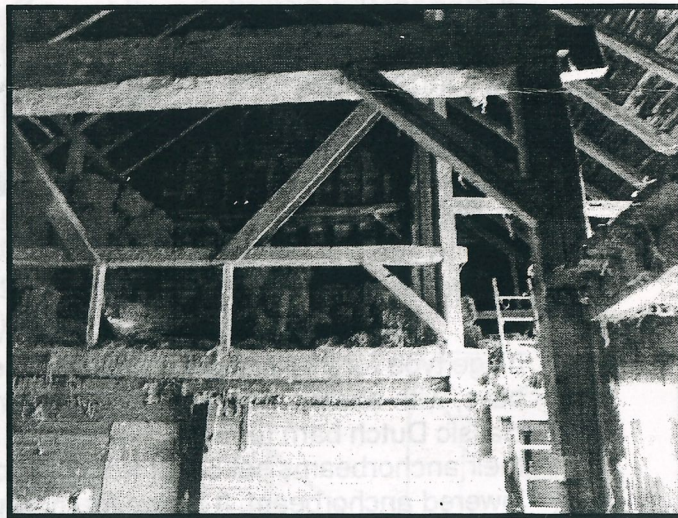
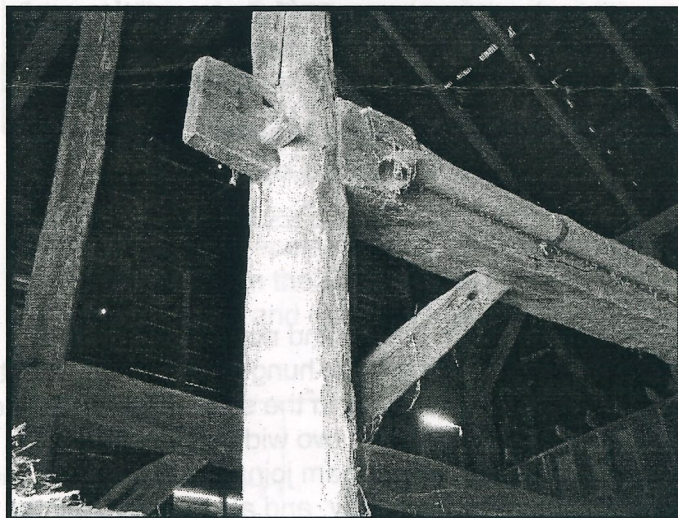
The Thomas Chambers Barn
Kripplebush, Marbletown, Ulster County, NY

Friday, December 2, I met with Craig and Patsy Vogel to visit the J. Steiner farm and were given a tour by Joe Howard, the farm manager. We registered it:

J. Steiner farm with 5-bay Dutch U barn
in a working barn complex
Red Hook, Dutchess County, NY
Linden Avenue (NY/Dut/RH/017)
coordinates N42°01.272' W073°52.590'
elevation 239-feet

The Steiner 5-bay Dutch barn is a unique example of the New World Dutch barn in transition. Its side entrance is not an anglicizing of the form. It is a development that was adopting to changes in agriculture and the environment.

The Steiner barn has a late scribe-rule frame that makes use of a variety of wood types, used parts and long thin columns with lots of wane. Wane is the exposed outer layer of the tree, the sap-wood. It is a good place for taking core samples used in dendro-dating trees and thus dating timbers and timber frames. The presence of wane also indicates that availability of old growth trees was diminishing.



Steiner 5-bay Dutch U barn, Red Hook, Dutchess County, NY

(left) Bent 3. facing toward the front of the barn. One tenon wedge is missing. The column has a lot of wane.

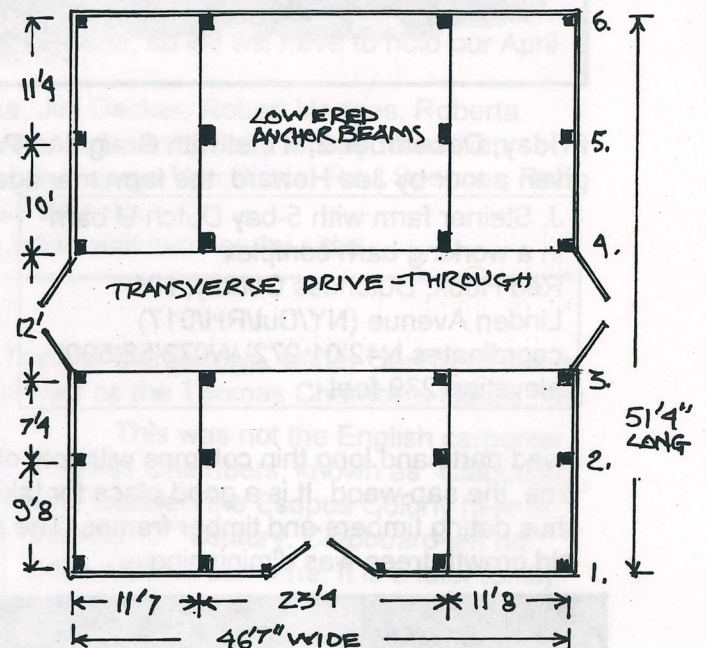
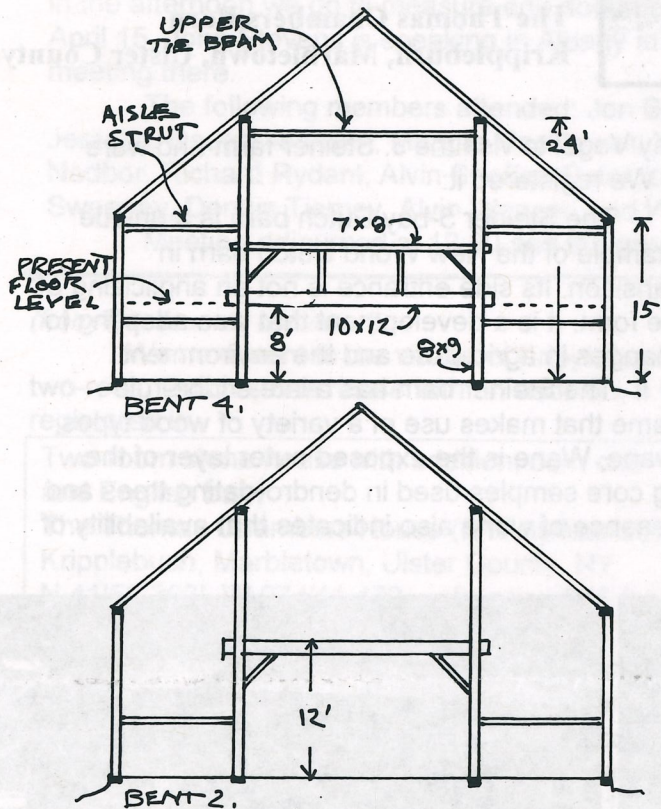
(right) Bent 4. facing back. The two long upper braces are made from two planks each, nailed to the sides of the beam and column. They replace the upper tie that was removed when a hay track was installed. Originally, there were no upper tie-beams on bents 2., 3. and 5..

4.

The timbers in early Dutch barns and houses in Dutchess County, are normally of white-oak, have little wane and their dimensions are rectangular. Later barns use a variety of wood types. The timbers become less rectangular and squarer, also indicating the builders inability to find large trees. The Steiner farm is on a very low flat piece of land that would have lent itself to early settlement and tree removal.

Of special note in this barn are the extended beam tenons that are wedged and pinned. This is the early, Old World form of Dutch barn joinery, later the tenons extend but are not wedged and finally they are not extended, but flush with the back of the column.

One weakness of the traditional timber frame is that the joints of braces and beams, held together with wooden pins, trunnels, do not work well in tension, extended wedged tenons help. From our brief examination and a few measurements, cold and windy, I concluded the barn was built in circa 1800, originally had wooden hinged wagon doors on the gable end and the builder had reverted to the use of wedged tenons to add tensile strength to this tall and lightly framed Dutch barn that has survived relatively intact after an active life of 200-years, still useful for equipment and hay storage.



Steiner 5-bay Dutch U barn
Red Hook, Dutchess County, NY

The barn had a center-bay transverse drive-through. I could find no evidence of the hinge type for these doors. They have been replaced by sliding track-hung doors. The two left bays, with anchorbeams set 12-feet from the floor and animal stalls in the side aisles, have the classic Dutch barn form used for storing and processing grain. The two wider right bays have their anchorbeams set 8-feet from the floor. Bent 4. has a lighter beam joined 4-feet above the lowered anchorbeam. It allows for mow poles to span the center bay, and also holds back the mound of loose hay that was supported on mow poles resting on the lowered anchorbeams.

The use of lowered anchorbeams in the back bay/bays of later Dutch barns is common and widespread. The space bellow the lowered beams could be used for animals. I have been calling this lowered anchorbeam form a "Dutch U-barn". They are similar to what some call a "swing-beam barn".



**Steiner 5-bay Dutch U barn
Red Hook, Dutchess County, NY**

(left) The original gable entrance has been boarded over. The side doors have been replaced with sliding doors mounted on a metal track.

(right) Bents 2 and 3, of the grain end of the barn, facing front.

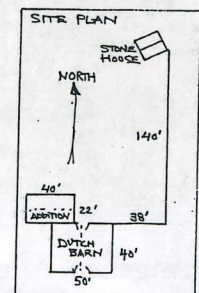
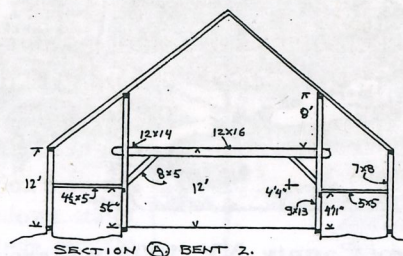
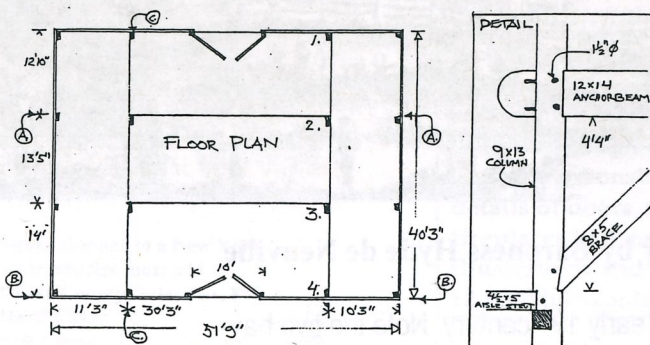
Tuesday, January 17 I returned to the Steiner farm to re-check measurements. An interesting feature that had been missed was that the two bays with 12-foot high anchorbeams had no upper aisle struts. The bays on the other side have double aisle struts. Single aisle struts are characteristic of early Dutch barns which normally have low verdiepingh (column above the beam) and low side walls so there is no need, in fact often no room for double struts. This feature appears later when the barns grow taller. The following features make me think this may be an 18th century barn: the grain side of the Steiner barn retains the single strut early framing style, as well as wooden hinged wagon doors, and there are a number of re used parts of earlier barns and barracks which show that it is not a first generation barn at the site.

Thursday, January 26 On a recommendation from Alice Cross, I went to see an 18th century three-aisle Dutch barn with a stone house in Kerhonkson, Town of Rochester, Ulster County, and re-registered it:

3-bay scribe-rule Dutch barn, straw mow addition and stone house
____/McDonald/Macauley/Miller-Felicia (NY/Uls/Roc/01)
Kerhonkson, Town of Rochester, Ulster County, NY
N 41°46,741 W 074°17,723 elevation 288-feet

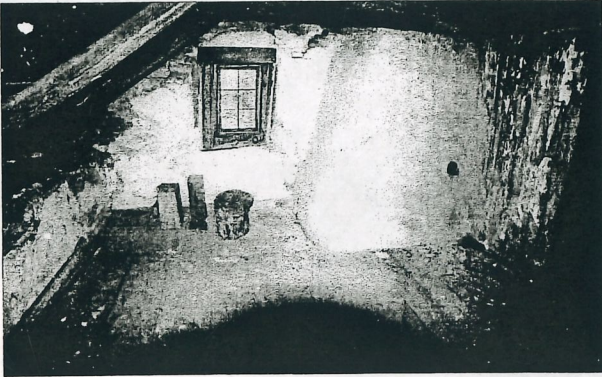
The new owners,
Felicia S. Raphael &
Don Miller, bought the
property in April. I had
measured and
documented this barn

with Susanne Sahler for the town's Historic Preservation Commission in 1996 and published drawings, etc. in Report on Historic Barns and Timber Framing, Town of Rochester, Spillway Press, 1997. This report includes 11 Dutch barns and 9 side-entrance barns. The site is registered as #68 in the Town of Rochester's very large survey of over 300 historic properties, including 72 stone and masonry houses. The survey was begun in 1987.



**Miller-Felicia 3-bay scribe-rule Dutch barn
Kerhonkson, Town of Rochester, Ulster Co.,**

From the Editor... Jim Decker has informed me that the Bevier/Newkerk stone house on the Leuren Kill in the Town of Wawarsing (NY/Uls/Waw/04) (see *HVVA Newsletter November 1999*) has been demolished. We first became aware of this house in 1999 when the owner was restoring it. It was recently sold and torn down. We hope to find out more about the circumstances, were they issued a demolition permit?



**Bevier/Newkerk stone house
Town of Wawarsing
Ulster County, NY**

Half of the stone smoke-hood is exposed in this small side-room in the loft of the original house.

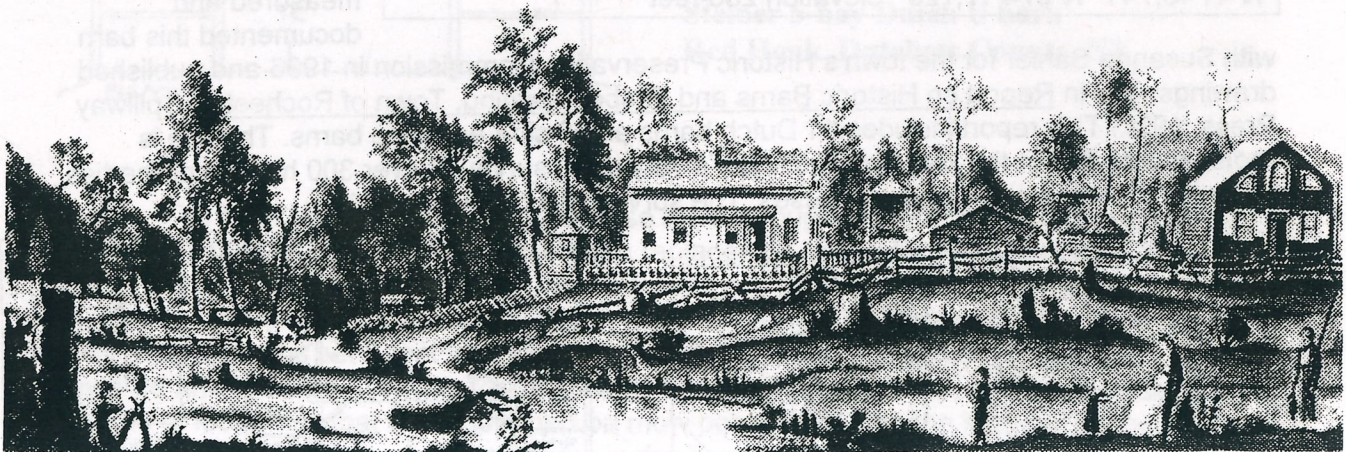


The house is described in Helen Reynolds', 1929 book, *Dutch Houses in The Hudson Valley*, page 185 and in C.G. Hine's book, *The Old Mine Road*. Hine was an early student of the region's folk-lore. The house was evidently begun in the early 18th century as one-room with a Dutch jambless fireplace. The smoke hood had survived, one of a very few examples of this feature and unique in that the hood was constructed of stone rather than brick. This attested to its isolated frontier setting where brick was unavailable. The house was associated with the Bevier Warwasing Patent of 1705.

A family story from the French-and-Indian War was re-called. Mrs. Bevier was alone in the house, it is said. The doors and windows had been planked over, but six hostile Indians who wanted to get in, climbed up on the roof and were going to go down the chimney. Mrs. Bevier kept a good fire going on the hearth to deter them and they eventually went away. Later her husband, Conrad Bevier, returned home to find her safe. There are a number of accounts of Indian attacks during the French-and-Indian and Revolutionary War in this region, but the Bevier story raises some questions, like, why didn't the Indians go through the roof instead?

What the Indians could not destroy has been accomplished by an unrestrained modern land developer. If you have information on the incident, let us know.

Peter Sinclair, Editor, West Hurley, Ulster County, NY



**Angelica, Allegany County, NY, 1808, watercolor by Baroness Hyde de Neuville
New-York Historical Society**

Angelica was a center for French refugees in the early 19th century. Note the two hay-barracks behind the center chimney house.

NEWS FROM NEW JERSEY

Carla Cielo has been trying to set up a tour of early Dutch houses in Jersey City, an area of the state she did not know well. She wrote, "I previewed some of The Jersey City houses and re-learned the lesson of not listening to a historian who says he has old Dutch houses in his town. The 1690 house has only three original stone walls. The front wall was removed in 1920 and replaced. The interior was gutted and the frame replaced. It is on the National Register and listed as the oldest house in Hudson County! The two 18th century houses are English and the one that is dated 1680 in an Architect's HSR (Historic Structures Report) is mostly 1840 Greek-Revival. I didn't get in that one yet but will and see if its worth the groups time. I still plan to preview the Sip house. Greg Huber said that he was in it about 12 years ago and that it is worth going to.

CORRECTIONS

My apologies to the Lown family. Alvin Sheffer pointed out that the last newsletter contained some incorrect information on page 3.. The last barn visited was not in Chatham but Claverack, Columbia County, and it was a Loomis family farm, a family prominent in the 18th century boarder wars in this New York/Massachusetts frontier in the Taconic Mountains. It is a lesser known piece of New York State history but well covered in Sung Bok Kim's book of 1978, Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York.

Also, the Dutch Hay Barrack web site was incorrectly listed. It should be <www.hooiberg.info>

and it was Conrad Fingado, not John Stevens, who discovered the cross-casement window frame in the Lem Boice House. (see page 5., Vol. 7, No. 11).

Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830 by John Stevens,

published by, Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture (HVVA), 2005
(ISBN) 0976599007

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COMING EVENTS 2005-2006=====



Sunday February 12, 3PM at the Marbletown Community Center, Route 209 Stone Ridge, Ulster County **A talk by John Winthrop Aldrich, former NYS Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation, on the Benefits of Historic Preservation** for information call: Ben Shor (845) 687-9004 <benshor@earthlink.net>

Saturday, February 18, 10AM at The 1747 Germantown Parsonage **HVVA Meeting** and visit to some nearby sites in Colombia County, NY

Saturday, February 25 at Old Sturbridge Village **Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF) New England Winter Meeting** talks, etc. This is all we have till now, Check their web-site.

Sunday, March 12, 3PM at the Marbletown Community Center, Route 209 Stone Ridge, Ulster County **A talk by Peter Kenny, Curator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, on Dutch Architecture in the Hudson Valley** for information call: Ben Shor (845) 687-9004 <benshor@earthlink.net>

Saturday, March 18, 10AM at the Bevier House, Ulster County Historical Society, Route 209 Marbletown **HVVA Meeting and John Stevens, talk and book signing.** This will be followed, after lunch, by a documentation of the Lem Boice House in The Town of Ulster.

March 24-26 at Philipsburg Manor, Sleepy Hollow, NY **Association for Living History, Farms and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM) Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting** The conference will focus on how living history museums in the 21st-century can address sensitive or controversial subject matter to recapture the public imagination, increase attendance and provide quality education.

Conference registration fee, \$125.00.

Contact: Philipsburg Manor (914) 631-3992 ex. 12

Saturday, April 15, 1:30 PM at The Albany Institute of History and Art, Key Conference Center, **John Stevens, Lecture and Book Signing.**

(518) 463-4478 or <information@albanyinstitute.org>

May 12-14, 2006 at the Eastover Resort, Lenox, Mass. **Annual Meeting of the Traditional Timberframers Research and Advisory Group (TTRAG)**

Contact: Will Beemer, <will@tfguild.org> (413) 623-9926

Sometime in May Carla Cielo is setting up a tour of early houses in Jersey City. Perhaps the 6th. <Farmhouseruins@cs.com> see News from NewJersey page

May 22-26, 2006 at the Palatine Farmstead, Route 9, Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, NY. **A 5-Day Barn Restoration Workshop** will be held. This will continue last year's work of restoring the frame of the 1770 Dutch barn and rebuilding the foundation. We will also be shaving shingles, making doors and hope to have a blacksmith making nails and hardware. Lunch will be provided and fun is guaranteed. The project will be developed over the next two months. If you have suggestions or are interested in participating or supporting the workshop please contact HVVA and we will keep you informed.

June 1-3 in New York City **Annual Conference on New York State History** A meeting of academic and public historians, librarians and archivists, educators and publishers who discuss topics and issues related to the people of NY State in historical perspective and share information and ideas. Ten to fifteen presentation sessions and workshop permit more than fifty individuals to make presentations.

For information contact: <conference@nyhistory.net>

June 8-10 at SUNY Plaza, Albany, NY. **AANS/NNI Conference; From De Halve Maen to KLM; 400 Years of Dutch-American Exchange** Papers and workshops. It will serve as what was the New Netherland Project's Annual. Contact <www.nnp.org> for information.

June 14-17 in New York City **Meeting of The Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF).** papers, talks and tours. More later.