



The Society for the Preservation of  
**Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture**

June-July 2007

**Newsletter**

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The Society for the Preservation of  
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Vernacular Architecture**  
is a not-for-profit corporation formed  
to study and preserve vernacular  
architecture and material culture.

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The sheepdog inspects the "huge tongue" on the one of the great anchor beams in a circa 1799 Dutch barn relocated to Anramdale, NY from Fort Plains, NY.

## From the Editor

During the past month I realized just how much dedication Peter Sinclair has given to the running of HVVA over the past ten years. While the weather was cold and the days were short, I found plenty of time to deal with the various HVVA issues, but as the days have grown longer and the grass quickly follows, I find that much more discipline is required to keep everything moving along! I have to admit that the call of the great outdoors and all the chores of old house ownership compete with my HVVA duties! I look forward each month to taking time out to explore our past with such wonderful and inspiring people. I went to Paul Spencer's Mohawk Valley Dutch Barn which was relocated in Anramdale, NY. This barn is truly a magnificent structure – one I hope our newer members will journey to see and experience for themselves. As the summer goes on I hope to continue the work of opening doors to historic houses for our membership to study.

HVVA has been consistently meeting on the 3rd Saturday of each month while the location (posted on [www.hvva.org](http://www.hvva.org)) did change depending on the houses scheduled to be studied. Each month we try visit at least one building after our meeting and these tours are open to all interested members. To keep everyone informed of what is being planned, we are updating our members' email list. Please send your email address to our President, Jim Decker, at [jdeck@frontiernet.net](mailto:jdeck@frontiernet.net). For those interested in joining an HVVA monthly study tour and do not have access to the internet,

please call me for the monthly location or check the back page of this newsletter. If you have a house or barn you would like to share with other members please call me and we can schedule a time to visit.

A couple very special events I wish to remind everyone of are: the Annual HVVA picnic (July 21) and the Historic House tour (October 13). The Benjamin Ten Broeck house will host the picnic and the same day we'll also dedicate our new office and archive space. As tradition has it the picnic is potluck so bring something to share and please remember to RSVP, just so we can keep track of the head count. We'll begin with a brief meeting, then a special house tour, and return to the Ten Broeck house for the potluck lunch. This has always been a special time with a big crowd so please come and join the fun. The second event I want to encourage everyone to consider is the special tour that HVVA and Friends of Historic Kingston have put together, we call it our "Stellar Teller Tour" (more information inside this issue). I hope we'll have a big turn out as it promises to be a unique and highly educational tour. So please mark your calendars and send those checks to reserve your place for the October 13 tour.

Good luck during this season of restoration projects and remember: "Restoration begins at home."

**Rob Sweeney** – HVVA's sheepdog

## Upcoming Events

9th Annual Researching  
New York Conference

November 15-16, 2007

University at Albany, Albany, NY

## Call for proposals

The organizers invite proposals for papers, panels, workshops, exhibits, documentary, and media presentations on any facet of the history of New York State – from settlement to the present. We especially encourage proposals that explore the varied and complex role New York State has played in American political life.

New York State and its people have helped set the tone for political leadership and the development of public policy nationwide. We invite paper and panel submissions that explore this rich and diverse history from any perspective and in any period.

Researching New York brings together historians, researchers, archivists, museum curators, librarians, graduate students, teachers, Web site creators, filmmakers, and documentarians to share their work on New York State history. Presentations that highlight the vast resources available to researchers, as well as scholarship drawn from those resources, are also sought. Proposals are due by June 24, 2007. Full panel proposals, workshops, roundtables, exhibits, and media presentations are encouraged. Partial panels and individual submissions will be considered. For panels and full proposals, please submit a one-page abstract of the complete session, a one page abstract for each paper or presentation, and a one-page curriculum vita for each participant. Individual submissions should include a one-page abstract and one-page curriculum vita. All submissions must include name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address. All proposals must include any anticipated audio visual needs. We prefer electronic submission to [resrchny@albany.edu](mailto:resrchny@albany.edu)

If you would like to serve as a commentator, please send us a note to [resrchny@albany.edu](mailto:resrchny@albany.edu) indicating your area of expertise, along with a one-page curriculum vita.

[nystatehistory.org/researchnrv/rsnv.html](http://nystatehistory.org/researchnrv/rsnv.html)

## Van Ostrand - Radliff - Holt - Saul Building

by John R. Stevens

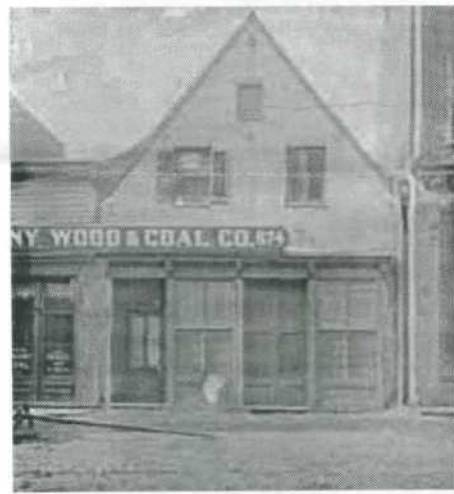


Old buildings of the simple sort, particularly those from the eighteenth century, have had a difficult time surviving in Albany. Two of them, located at 674 and 922 Broadway in the northern part of Albany, which had been surveyed by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), were demolished in the 1940s.<sup>1</sup> One of these, identified as a Slingerland house (922 Broadway), was a one-and-a-half story gablefronted house only one room deep. Its side walls were weatherboarded. Its lower facade was of cross-bond brickwork, above which the gable was shingled. Old photographs show that these shingles had clipped corners, indicating that they could have dated from the eighteenth century. This example of a shingle-over-brick facade was thought unique until the Pieter Winne house was "discovered" in 1999 at Bethlehem, a short distance south of Albany (see *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830*, Plate 128, 129).<sup>2</sup>

This house was basically an urban-type house in a rural setting. It has been dated by dendrochronology (tree ring analysis) to 1723.

The Quackenbush house on Upper Broadway, estimated to date to the third decade of the eighteenth century, narrowly escaped demolition in the early 1970s. In a 1971 newspaper article, the house was dated "roughly to either 1730 or 1760."<sup>3</sup> An article in a 1972 paper said that "most local historians believe that the Quackenbush house is one of the oldest Dutch townhouses in the nation, if not the oldest, theorizing that it may have been built in the 1680's."<sup>4</sup> The writer had an opportunity to survey this house, and drawings of it are in *Dutch Vernacular Architecture*, Plate 36. This is a two and one half story building with a timber frame. It had brick end walls (the one at the street end survives), and the side walls are filled with brick between the posts and veneered with brick. Because another building had

674 Broadway, Albany.  
Photograph 31, Series 23, Main  
Photograph Collection, AIHA Library



1. See the schematic plan and section of the house formerly at 674 Broadway, north of the stockade. It was slightly smaller than the Van Ostrand house but structurally quite similar. It originally had a full brick facade. It may have dated to c.1750 and has been identified as the Vanderburgh-Quackenbush house. Photographs reproduced courtesy of the Albany Institute of History & Art.

2. John R. Stevens, *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830* (West Hurley, NY, 2005).

3. Carol Schlageter, "Historic Albany House Saved," *Knickerbocker News*, April 2, 1971.

4. Marcia Roth, "Oldest Dutch Townhouse in the Western World," *Knickerbocker News*, 25 Aug. 1972.

been constructed against its south side wall at an early date, the cross-bond brickwork of this wall survived in pristine condition. In the later 18th Century, an addition was built on to the back (east) wall and a lower-pitched roof built over the expanded structure. The present gable facing Broadway has a different brick bond from the lower part of the wall. The two window frames in this gable appear to date to the late eighteenth century. Internally, nothing survived on the first floor, but there were indications of early partitions and a stair location on the second floor. There was an 18th Century five-panel door with appropriate casings in the addition on its second floor. The house was rehabilitated in the later 1970s and is now used as a restaurant.

A surviving eighteenth-century house, identified as the Johannes Radliff house, is at 48 Hudson Avenue, Albany, New York, on the south side, between Dalius (formerly Grass Lane) and Green Streets. The house is described and illustrated in the section titled "Early Albany" by Paul Huey, in *Albany Architecture*.<sup>5</sup>

*The 1698 Roemer Map shows the location of the Johannes Radliff house in relation to the original city wall of Albany.*



*Slingerland House, 922 Broadway,*

It was Mr. Huey's opinion that the house had to have been built after 1756 when the stockade that formed the south boundary of Albany was moved a city block's distance further south to where Division Street is today.<sup>6</sup> He thought it was possible that the house was built at the time of Johannes Radliff's wedding to Elizabeth Singleton in 1759. In 1834, the house was owned by Jared Holt, who at first occupied it as his home.

Subsequently, he used it and an addition constructed on the south end as a factory for the manufacture of a

waxed thread that he developed for sewing boots, shoes and other leather goods. The last use of the building was by a dealer in restaurant equipment named Saul.

At the beginning of 2006, the building under discussion was purchased by Brian Parker, the owner and restorer of the previously mentioned Pieter Winne house. The writer and a group of fellow members of the Society for the Preservation of Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture (HVVA) had an opportunity to examine the building in detail on February 3rd. Sufficient measurements were taken to enable the production of a set of framing drawings that are herewith reproduced. These drawings show a certain amount of conjectural reconstruction.

Mr. Parker had a dendrochronological study made on selected timbers in the house by the Lamont-Doherty Earth Sciences Laboratory of Columbia University. The results came back in early May and revealed a date of circa 1728 for its construction. Also, John Wolcott, an Albany historian who had known about this house since the 1970s and had done considerable research on it, contacted Mr. Parker with his information.<sup>7</sup> Mr. Wolcott's research had determined that it was occupied by Johannes van Ostrande between 1728 and 1734 while he was a member of the Albany County Council, representing the First Ward. There is also the record of a mortgage on the house given to Johannes Radliff in which it is referred to as "formerly van Ostrande."

So, it was determined that the house had, in fact, been built outside the stockade and within tight property lines, as is indicated by the fact that its front (north) wall is set on an angle

5. Diana S. Waite, ed., *Albany Architecture* (Albany, NY, 1992).

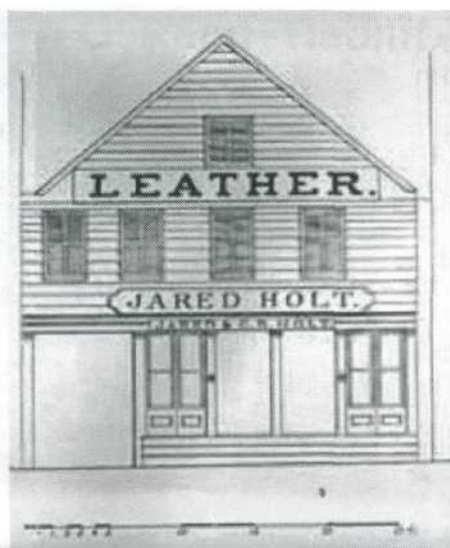
6. "Part of Plan de la Ville d'Albanie dans la Province de la Nouvelle Yorck en Amerique," by Colonel Wolfgang Wilhelm Romer, 1698, showing the old location of the south stockade. Courtesy of the British Library, from Walter Wheeler of Hartgen Archaeology Associates, Rensselaer, New York. See also, part of plan of Albany, 1758, identified as the Amherst Map, that shows the south stockade as relocated in 1756. Courtesy of the Albany Institute of History & Art.

7. Documentation on the Van Ostrande house was provided by John Wolcott.

to the side walls (skewed). There was probably a roadway between it and the stockade that, with the stockade's removal, was named Hudson Street (see Simeon de Witt's 1794 plan of Albany).<sup>1</sup>

The house was originally one-and-a-half stories in height with a steeply pitched gable roof of 54 degrees. There are seven full rafter pairs and one partial pair in the way of the chimney of the fireplaces on the west wall. The shortened rafter on the west side was footed on a trimmer set between two full rafters. The roof is boarded with close-fitting, bevel-jointed boarding. The rafters are joined at the ridge with a half-lap that was nailed rather than having the more usual wooden pin. There had been two tiers of collar ties, joined to the rafters with lap and half-dovetails and fastened with nails. While there had been upper collar ties to every rafter pair, the lower collar tie in the way of the west chimney was omitted. This was one indication that there had not been a floor laid on the lower collar ties, as was customary, because the spacing between the collars of the full rafter pairs in the way of the chimney was too great. Also, it was found that the lower collar ties varied somewhat in height from rafter pair to rafter pair and that the collars were not set level, one end being inches higher or lower than the other.

The frame consists of seven Dutch H-bents as well as a partial bent, the beam of which is framed into a trimmer between full bents 2 and 3 (from the front wall). This was to make the opening for the hood of a jambless fireplace located on the west wall. Three of the complete H-bents had braces, Dutch designation *gebint-balkschoor, korbeel*. These were bents 2, 3 and 6. Bents 2 and 3 were on either side of the west wall jambless fireplace, and 6 was the hood



Above: a reconstruction of the house as it looked after 1834. Below: a late nineteenth-century view of the structure.



beam for the jambless fireplace on the south end wall. Part of the brace at the west end of bent beam 4 survives. These braces had been the same size and profile as the ones in the Pieter Winne house (see *Dutch Vernacular Architecture*, Plate 129C) and the Coeymans secondary house (see Plate 75B).

All that is left of the original facade (north elevation) is the end anchor beam. Like that of the Pieter Winne house, it is molded (see comparison end beam molding sections). Originally, it had partially rested on a

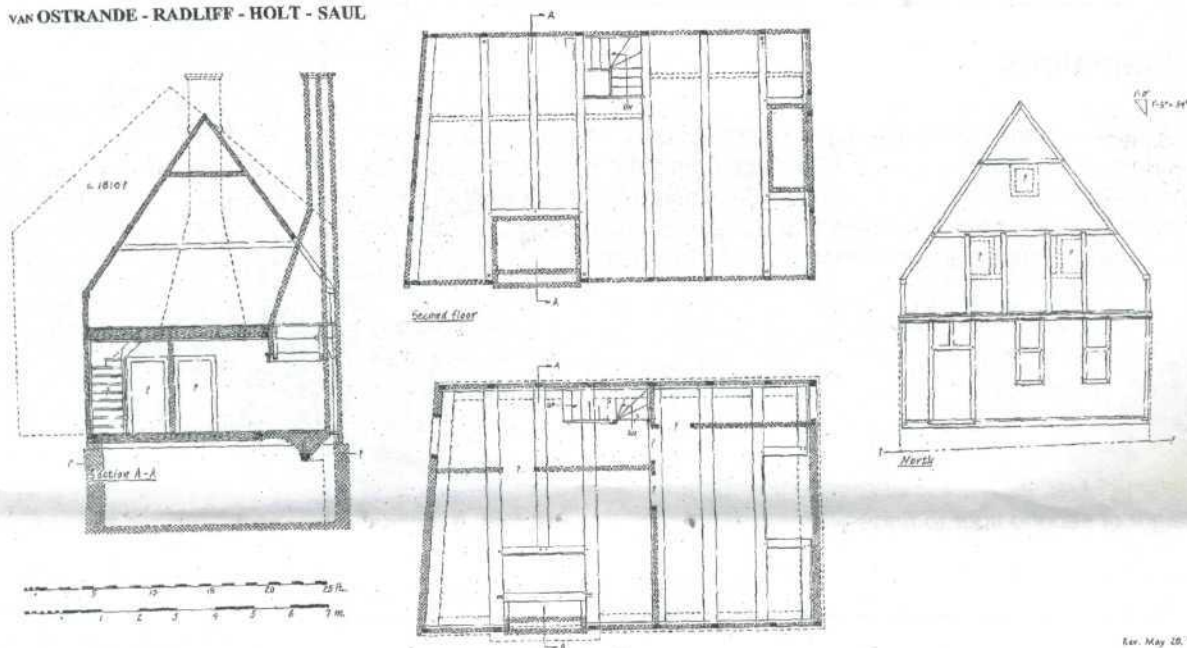
brick wall, as in the Winne house. Mortise holes in its underside show that it originally had a doorway toward the east side, topped with a mullioned transom.

There had been two windows, Dutch designation *kloosterkozijn* – in effect, half of a cross window divided vertically. Cut into the underside of the end beam over the doorway and window locations are grooves to house the top edges of the panels of leaded glass. The molding on the beam creates a four-inch overhang. The top surface of the beam has four mortises for gable studs. The spacing of these would suggest a possible doorway in the middle of the second floor, although there is the distinct possibility that there had not, in fact, been a door, judging from the width of the studs forming the jambs (not wide enough) and the absence of signs of wear on the molded end beam in the way of a possible door location. A window on either side of the second floor facade would be typical, but the spacing between the studs precludes the use of mullioned frames, Dutch designation *bolkozijn*, as were used in the restoration of the Pieter Winne house. No evidence was found for a central doorway between the windows.

The rear wall did not have an overhang. It was of brick up to the end anchor beam and within the corner posts. Mortise holes in the underside of the beam indicate that there had been a doorway at the eastern side and a cross-window, Dutch designation *cruiskozijn*, at its western side set right against the corner post. There are four gains cut into the beam on its top outside corner for studs arranged in pairs, with about an 18-inch space between each pair for small windows flanking the hood of the jambless fireplace. That there were so few studs in both the north and south gables presents an interesting dilemma. In North American Dutch experience, one might have expected the gables to be covered with weatherboards, but this does not seem to be the case with this house. The writer suggests that the gables may have had vertical

1. Part of the map of Albany by Simeon De Witt published in 1794. Lithographed copy from J. Munsell, ed., *Annals of Albany*, 10 vols. (1850-1859), 3: 156. The Van Ostrande house is in the block bounded on the north by Hudson Street (now Avenue); on the east by Grass Lane (now Dallius Street); on the south by Bone Lane (now Division Street) and on the west by Green Street.

## VAN OSTRANDE - RADLIFF - HOLT - SAUL



boarding, for the support of which horizontal rails were used. Vertical boarding was certainly the standard usage in the Old World, as can be seen in numerous examples in the Zaan region of the Netherlands and particularly at the museum village Zaanse Schans.

The side walls of the house were weatherboarded. A brick building was constructed immediately to the west of the van Ostrande house at the end of the eighteenth or in the early nineteenth century, leaving a space about a foot wide between the two buildings. Because of this, most of the 54 de Halve Maen weatherboards of the west wall of the van Ostrande house survive. Their run is interrupted by brickwork of the side wall fireplaces. The weatherboards vary considerably in thickness and one example is much thicker at the bottom than the top. They show no signs of any kind of finish having been applied to them. Inside the weatherboards, the spaces between the posts are infilled with brick that was whitewashed. Several wall panels survive with many coats of whitewash from the early years of the house.

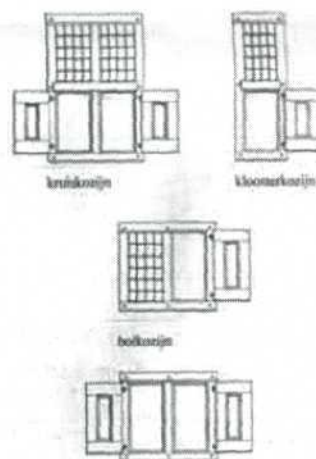
The internal arrangement of the first floor of the house was, for the first four bays, a space divided between a seven-foot hallway and a large room

with a jambless fireplace centered on its west wall and lit by two windows in its north wall. At the back of the hallway, there had been a stair with a change of direction in it through a number of winders. The back room occupied three bays and was the full width of the house. There had been a jambless fireplace set slightly off-center to the east on its south wall with, as previously noted, a cross-window on the west side and a doorway on the east side.

There had been a basement fireplace under that of the front room on the west wall. Its flue had passed behind that of the fireplace of the room above, similar to the situation in the brick and timberframed kitchen building at the Mabee farm at Rotterdam Junction (see *Dutch Vernacular Architecture*, Plate 16, section B-B). The lintel of this fireplace had been hung on iron straps let into the first floor beams, similar to the basement fireplace of the Schermerhorn-Pruyn house in Kinderhook (see *Dutch Vernacular Architecture*, Plate 89, 90).

It is difficult to assess the phasing of the alterations that the van Ostrande house underwent at the end of the eighteenth and into the early nineteenth century. The writer has made a drawing in which he

hypothesizes the stages it might have passed through and is aware that this is highly speculative. Determining when certain of these changes took place is conditional on knowing the constructional date of the (originally) two-story brick building immediately to the west of it. We know that this building was standing prior to the walls of the van Ostrande house being raised by five feet in height above the original wall plates. It can be seen that below the level of the west wall plate, the mortar joints of the brick building were left in a rough state with much extruded mortar, whereas above the



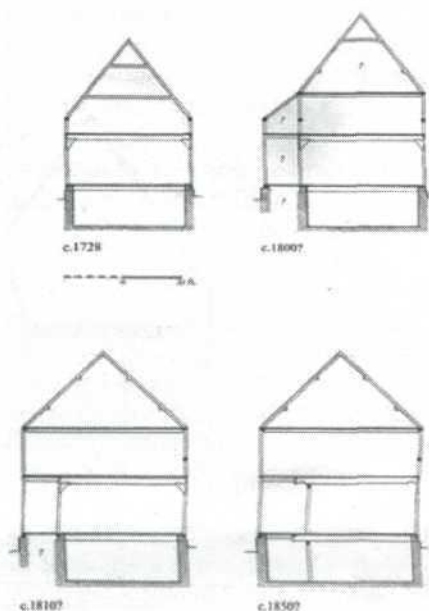
Old World Dutch window types found in American houses.

## Dimensions

The van Ostrande house framing is entirely of pine. The first floor beams measure on the average about 13 inches in height and 15 inches in width. The posts are about 4.5 inches in thickness and 8 inches in width. The second floor beams are 8 inches in width and about 14 inches in height. The rafters measure about 18 feet, 6 inches in length.

Width of house over the posts	21 feet, 7 inches
Length of east wall	33 feet, 4 inches
Length of west wall	35 feet, 4 inches
Length of molded north anchor beam	22 feet, 0 inches
Height of side walls, top of sills to top of plates	12 feet, 6 inches
Height of first floor, to top of second floor beams	9 feet, 4 inches
Height of second floor to ridge	18 feet, 0 inches

Note: The measurements given are subject to verification.



plate, the surplus mortar was neatly cut off. This would not have been done had the bricklayer been working in a confined space with another wall a foot away from him. The writer has seen the year 1796 applied to the construction of the brick building, but Albany historian John Wolcott reports a record of it having been built in 1814.

It is possible that the widening of the van Ostrande house by six feet was accomplished prior to the raising of its roof. The molded end beam had a new piece with the correct profile added to it on its east side. Possibly

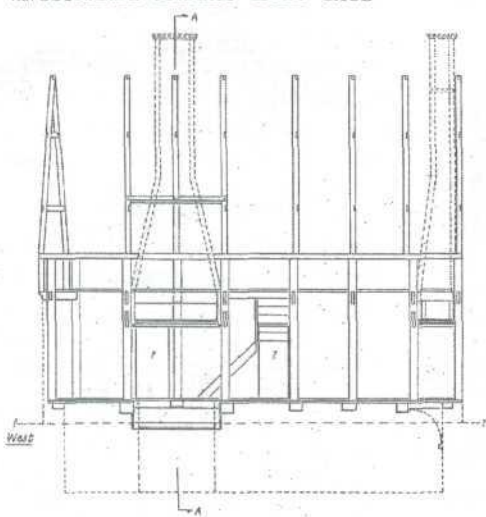
the brick lower facade was also extended. Raising the roof of the building by five feet while still its original width would have been something of a challenge, considering the equipment available at the time. But at this stage, the roof would have possessed a degree of structural integrity because of the collar ties. However, spreading the roof entailed the removal of the collar ties (the stumps of a number of them are still in place). The ridge joints of the rafters were forced to the new angle, which was relatively easy inasmuch as these joints were only nailed. Nonetheless,

with the removal of the collar ties the roof would have been a very flimsy and unstable piece of construction, requiring great care and skill to "walk" one side of it to the new east side wall line – a very daunting job, indeed. Much more needs to be learned about the structural development of the building and about the people who lived and worked in it for more than two-and-a-half centuries.

As the building exists today, a substantial part of its original structure survives in generally good condition, leaving significant clues that help to reconstruct missing aspects of its early structure and layout. In contrast, much of the timber used in the late-eighteenth-century enlargement was replaced in the twentieth century. It is, therefore, much more practicable to accurately reconstruct the house in its "as built" form and details than to attempt a restoration of its appearance at the end of the 18th Century.

**John R. Stevens** is an architectural historian. He has served as a consultant to Old Bethpage Village Restoration, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, and the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, among other organizations. His most recent work, *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830*, appeared in 2005.

VAN OSTRANDE - RADLIFF - HOLT - SAUL





Bevier House, Wawarsing, Ulster County, NY

## Gable-fronted Dutch-American houses\*

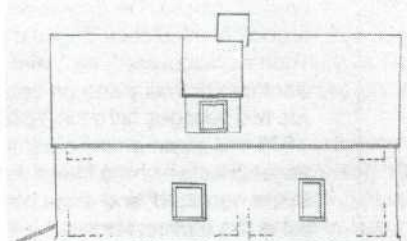
by John R. Stevens

– In chronological order –

NAME	TOWN	COUNTY	DATE
Pieter Bronck	Coxsackie	Greene	1663 ?
Bevier-Elting	New Paltz	Ulster	c. 1695 ?
Brouwer-Rosa**	Schenectady	Schenectady	c. 1700 ?
Du Bois Fort**	New Paltz	Ulster	c. 1705 ?
Elmendorf**	Hurley	Ulster	c. 1710 ?
Rossa/Elmendorf/Bevier**	Hurley	Ulster	c. 1711 ?
Coeymans Secondary**	Coeymans	Albany	c. 1710 ?
Adam Vrooman	Schenectady	Schenectady	c. 1720 ?
Pieter Winne	Bethlehem	Albany	c. 1723 ?
Van Loon**	Athens	Greene	1724
Abraham Yates	Schenectady	Schenectady	c. 1725 ?
Du Bois - Kierstede**	Saugerties	Ulster	1727
Johannes Van Ostrande	Albany	Albany	c. 1728
Quackenbush	Albany	Albany	c. 1730 ?
Vernooy-Bevier	Wawarsing	Ulster	c. 1740 ?
Mathew Ten Eyck	Hurley	Ulster	1750
Adrian Van Slyck	Schenectady	Schenectady	c. 1750 ?
Daniel Winne	Bethlehem	Albany	c. 1751 ?
Lasher	Germantown	Columbia	1752
Abraham Fonda	Schenectady	Schenectady	c. 1752 ?
Isaac Vrooman	Schenectady	Schenectady	c. 1756 ?
Teunis Slingerland	Feura Bush	Albany	1762

\* These examples are known to the preparer at the time of compilation (June 22, 2006); there are probably more.

\*\* Houses rebuilt with roofs re-oriented at right angles to original position.



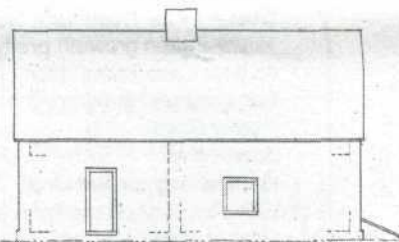
North

J. R. Stevens, '06.

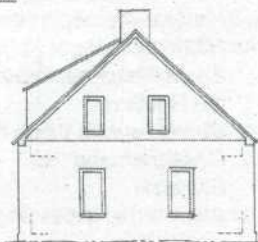


East

0 5 10 15 20 25 ft.



South



West

## HORTUS

This new column in our newsletter will be used to further expand our realm of study and increase our knowledge of the vernacular as it pertains to the garden. Our first article (below, right) is taken from *The New Traditional Garden* (Ballantine Books, 1999)

We should have scant notion of the gardens of these New England colonists in the seventeenth century were it not for a cheerful traveller named John Josselyn, a man of everyday tastes and much inquisitiveness, and the pleasing literary style which comes from directness, and an absence of self-consciousness. He published in 1672 a book entitled *New England's Rarities discovered, etc.*, and in 1674 another volume giving an account of his two voyages hither in 1638 and 1663. He made a very careful list of vegetables which he found thriving in the new land; and since his flower list is the earliest known, I will transcribe it in full; it isn't long, but there is enough in it to make it a suggestive outline which we can fill in from what we know of the plants to-day, and form a very fair picture of those gardens.

“

*Spearmint*,  
*Rew*, will hardly grow,  
*Fatherfew* prospereth exceedingly;  
*Southernwood*, is no Plant for this  
Country, Nor *Rosemary*. Nor *Bayes*.  
*White-Satten* groweth pretty well,  
so doth *Lavender-Cotton*.  
But *Lavender* is not for the Climate.  
*Penny Royal*.  
*Smalledge*.  
*Ground Ivey*, or *Ale Hoof*.  
*Gilly Flowers* will continue two Years.  
*Fennel* must be taken up, and kept  
in a Warm Cellar all Winter.  
*Horseleek* prospereth notably.  
*Holly hocks*,  
*Enula Canpana*, in two years time  
the Roots rot.  
*Comferie*, with White Flowers.  
*Coriander*, and  
*Dill*, and  
*Annis* thrive exceedingly, but *Annis*

seed, as also the seed of *Fennel*  
seldom come to maturity; the seed of  
*Annis* is commonly eaten with a Fly.  
*Clary* never lasts but one Summer,  
the Roots rot with the Frost.  
*Sparagus* thrives exceedingly,  
so does  
*Garden Sorrel*, and  
*Sweet Bryer* or *Eglantine*  
*Bloodwort* but sorrowfully,  
but *Patience* and  
*English Roses* very pleasantly.  
*Celandine*, by the West Country  
now called *Kenning Wort* grows  
but slowly.  
*Muschater*, as well as in England  
*Dittander* or *Pepperwort* flourisheth  
notably and so doth *Tansie*.

”

These lists were published fifty years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth; from them we find that the country was just as well stocked with vegetables as it was a hundred years later when other travellers made lists, but the flowers seem few; still, such as they were, they formed a goodly sight. With rows of Hollyhocks glowing against the rude stone walls and rail fences of their little yards; with clumps of Lavender Cotton and Honesty and Gillyflowers blossoming freely; with Feverfew "prospering" to sow and slip and pot and give to neighbors just as New England women have done with Feverfew every year of the centuries that have followed; with "a Rose looking in at the window" — a Sweetbrier, Eglantine, or English Rose—these colonial dames might well find "Patience growing very pleasantly" in their hearts as in their gardens.

From *Colonial Garden Making*,  
originally published in 1901.

## Restore or Evoke?

by Michael Weishan

The issue of whether to exactly duplicate a period of landscape or to simply evoke the feeling of a particular time is one that comes up frequently and often stirs debate. In some ways, new-house owners are lucky — they don't have to account to anyone but themselves.

Old-house owners, however, inherit considerable historical baggage. Many times sensitive owners feel guilty for not restoring or exactly duplicating historical features, as if somehow they are cheating themselves and the past. My personal opinion is this: in a museum-like setting, historical accuracy is not only desirable but essential. For other older homes, especially those of historic or aesthetic importance, owners should by all means strive to preserve and protect whatever has managed to survive into our time. We are, after all, merely trustees of our properties, and we owe it to ourselves and our children to preserve and protect this heritage.

Nevertheless, certain facts of modern living must be taken into account. In the same way most of us would demand indoor plumbing instead of an outhouse, we most make certain choices outdoors to accommodate the modern life style. It is important to remember that our forebears did not consider their homes or gardens sacrosanct either: with each new innovation, out went the old, so much so that today we are often forced to undo their modernizations. What is important to keep in mind is that any changes you plan in your landscape should be sympathetic in style and feeling with the property as a whole.



# Common Recipes for Home Improvement

by Robert Sweeney

As I travel from house to house I am commonly asked questions regarding mortar. So I thought it would be a good idea to write down a couple recipes which might be needed at this time of the year. Old houses require old style mortar. This is a fact! The main reason for this is that modern Portland mixes are just too hard. Although Portland cement is acclaimed for its strength and workability within today's construction standards, it is not suitable for historic structures. Older brick and stone house need a mixture which is similar to what holds them together – a much softer, more flexible lime rich mortar. Old brick is quite hard and when it comes in contact with a hard modern Portland mortar the brick will suffer. The main reason is that the expansion rates are extremely different. The soft brick will grow and shrink as the temperature and humidity change, but the modern mortar mix won't. So the wonderful handmade historic bricks just crumble under the force of the freeze-thaw cycle for it has no ability to move as the hard mortar has it trapped. The same can be said for old stone house as well, but the stones higher density offers it a slightly better chance against the crushing force of the Portland mortars. This being said we must realize that as in permanent as stone does look they are in every season moving. Most stone houses are only held together with clay and the more durable mortar on the outside is its only defense to keep the clay dry and the wall sound. Clay certainly is in a perpetual state of flux and to point a building with a material which isn't likely to move with

it is a recipe for disaster. So the following historic mixtures are recommended for use on both old brick and stone structures.

## Traditional Mortar

- Three parts sand
- One part hydrated lime
- Water

## Mortar for Below Grade

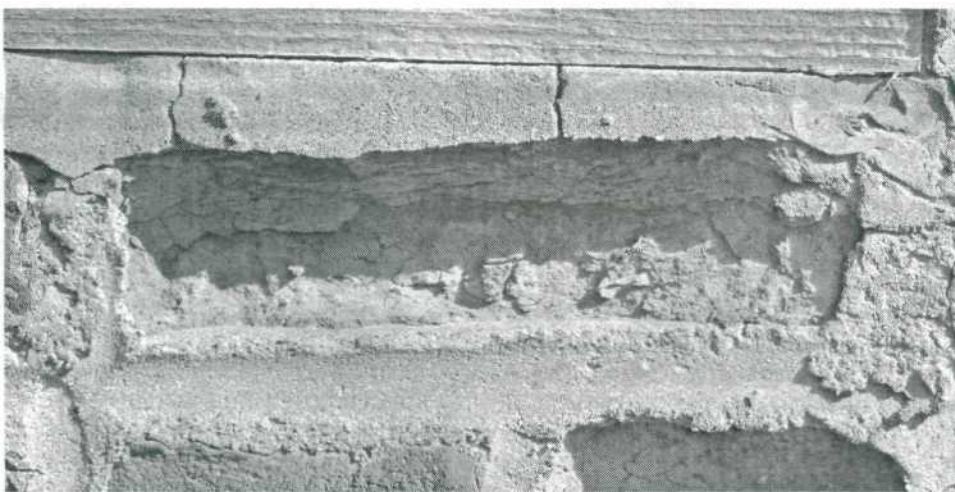
- One part white Portland
- One quarter part hydrated lime
- Three parts sand
- Water

## Whitewash Recipe

- One part hydrated lime
- One part water

On a less devastating point the Portland based modern mixture is also the wrong color for our vernacular houses. Its dull gray industrial color can never compare with subtle soft hue of a historic lime and local sand mixture. Note I did say local sand, as a general rule all the components for the construction of Hudson Valley houses came from the close vicinity of the building site. Sand color varies from place to place so it is always a good idea to try to find a local sand deposit to attain the right color variant for your pointing project.

I hope you and your home will enjoy this month's recipes.



This photo was taken during a recent study tour to the Skinkle House near Stuyvesant Falls, Columbia County. Here it is easy to see why Portland mortar should not be used in repairing historic brick structures. The extreme difference in the expansion rate between the mortar and the brick has virtually turned the brick to dust.

Now available!



**"Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830** is a significant and important contribution to architectural history and our understanding of the early Dutch settlers. It will be invaluable to those interested in Dutch-American architecture, buildings, and culture. Moreover, it is an indispensable guide to those restoring early Dutch houses."

Dr. Natalie Naylor  
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P.O. Box 202, West Hurley, NY 12491.



## Early Houses – Staten Island

Photos from the Archives Staten Island Historical Society. 70 rare B&W photographs of Dutch Vernacular Architecture. Large photo format (8.5"x11" ) with concise information regarding Dutch construction and building traditions.

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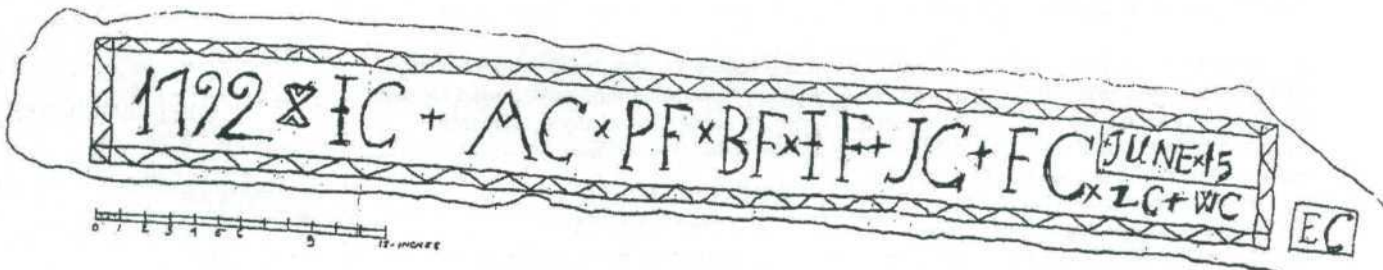
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# From the mail: Datestone Riddle



For years, I have collected information about our "old stone house" in Saugerties, NY. By now, I have a wealth of information, but something is still elusive. That is an interpretation of the datestone that faces East on the house. It's become a sort of riddle for me, and I am wondering if any HVVA readers can help. (My husband and I are members of HVVA.) Attached you will find a jpeg file which will show the tracing that Peter Sinclair and others did in 2003. (When I asked Peter about the symbols on the stone, he said he wasn't able to help.) Here is what I know about the stone: The year 1792 is inscribed, but the house dates to an earlier time. In records at the county office building, I was able to trace information about the house to 1786, but there is implication that it existed before this. **IC + AC** stands for Jacob Conyes and Annatje (Dederick) Conyes. (Jacob signed the Articles of Confederation and fought in the Revolution as part of the DeWitt-Wyncoop regiment. The Dederick family were Palatines and known as an influential family.) **PFxBFxIF** probably stands for members of the Folant family. Note that the + sign changes to an x between these initials. (In some early records, Folant is spelled Van Atte/Ette or Volland. Grietje Conyes, Jacob and Annatje's third child, married a Jacob Folant. Does anyone

know of this family? I have not been able to find out much.) **JC + FC** is for Jacob and Annatje's older sons, James and Frederick. June 15 is one of the riddles; I do have a theory, though. **zC + wC** are the younger sons, Zachariah and William. (Zachariah heads the farm in the next generation and William eventually heads the farm in the "old stone house" on the other side of the Vlykill Creek. The houses are within waving



distance of one another.) **EC**, etched outside the incised box, are the initials of the 7th Conyes child, Eva. In 1792, when presumably the stone was etched, Jacob was 60 or 62; Annatje 52; James ?; Frederick single at 17; Zachariah single and 15; William 13 and Eva 19. Other progeny had married and moved on by this time. Jacob and Annatje had been living in the house since at least 1786. Here are my wonderments:

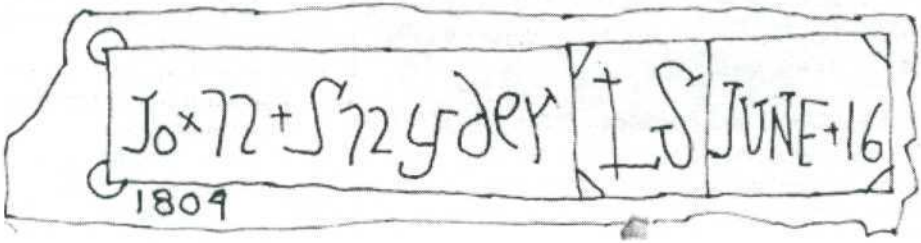
- Why go up in 1792, after the family has been living here for some years, and record this date? What are the symbols telling us?

- What do the symbols between the initials mean? The switch from + to x indicates something, but what?
- Why June 15?
- Why are the initials **zC** and **wC** so much smaller than the others?
- Why is **EC** outside the box? Why is it there at all? According to records, Eva Conyes married Ego Van Hoevenberg in 1790. Wouldn't she be out of the household by this time? If she is married, why are her initials **EC** rather than **EVH**?
- Did the Dutch usually put datestones on a particular side of the house? East, West, North, South? Were datestones usually on the back or front of a house? East, where the datestone resides, is now the "back" of the house, but we wonder if the East was once the "front". Were there "professional engravers" who went around doing datestones for families, telling stories with their symbols?

HVVA did a feature on the Felton/Markisenis (Uls-Uls4), and I noted that the symbols on this 1798 datestone are very similar to the ones on our house. The two stone houses are located within 2+ miles of each other, as the crow flies. Can any readers shed any light on any of these questions? If they can, I will be very grateful and I thank them in advance for their help. I have been searching for years for a source on datestone interpretation – to no avail.

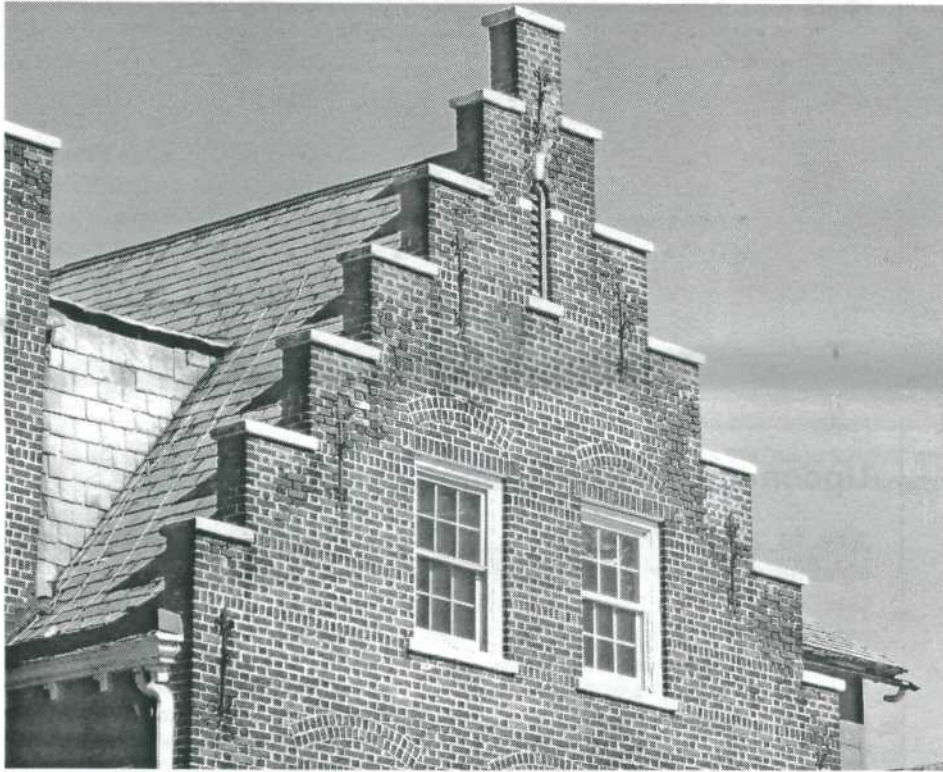
Best wishes,

**Mary Alice Lindquist**  
650 Schoolhouse Rd., Saugerties, NY  
marvalicerf@aol.com



# Historic House Tour

October 13, 2007 / 9:30 am - 4:00 pm



Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture and the Friends of Historic Kingston will, for the first time, join forces to bring you a "Stellar Teller Tour." Anyone who has visited old stone houses in Ulster County has more than likely come across the architectural work of Kingston native, Myron Steadman Teller (1875-1959). Teller can truly be called the first man of Hudson Valley Vernacular as we know it today. Early in his career his "restoration" of the Sleight – Tappen house, headquarters of the Wiltwyck Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, won him much acclaim. Later he honed his skills on numerous other local homes and was thereafter recommend as an architect with specialized knowledge of the stone house of Ulster County by Helen Wilkinson Reynolds, author of *Dutch Houses in the Hudson Valley Before 1776*, (also know as the Bible to HVVA members). A very full day has been planned, devoted entirely to the exploration of Teller's works and lifelong love of colonial Dutch architecture.

The day begins at the Friends of Historic Kingston Museum building located at 63 Main Street, Kingston at 9:30 am, where you'll enjoy coffee and doughnuts during a

brief slide lecture about Tellers' prolific career. Then off to the streets for a guided walking tour of both Teller's modern structures like the Wiltwyck Inn (pictured) and to his adaptations of colonial structures into "modern homes," many of which we'll enter! Later in the day we'll break for a wonderful catered lunch in the DAR House and resume our tour by car (self-driven) to the Stone Ridge area where we will enter three more buildings Teller refashioned, winding the day down with some fresh pressed cider and homemade cookies.

The tour was envisioned foremost as an educational tool to heighten awareness of historic structures and also as a fund raising effort for both FHK and HVVA. The total, inclusive price for the daylong event is \$50.00 per person for members of either group, and \$65.00 for nonmembers. Space is limited to the first forty participants, so reserve your place by purchasing your tickets early.

#### Mail checks payable to FHK to:

Friends of Historic Kingston  
P.O. Box 3763, Kingston, NY 12402  
For further information call Rob Sweeney at 845-336-0232.

## Preventive Care Workshops at Cornell University

September 11-14, 2007

October 2-5, 2007

November 6-9, 2007

The Department of Preservation and Collection Maintenance at Cornell University is offering three four-day workshops on the Preventive Care of Historic and Artistic Works on Paper, and Photographic Materials. Each workshop will address the history, structural composition, identification methods, handling and storage possibilities relevant to works on paper and photographic materials. Participants will learn through hands-on studio experience, visits to the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art and topic lectures. The workshops are limited to six participants, and is intended for curators, registrars, preservation librarians, and other museum, library, or historical society personnel responsible for the handling and preservation of these types of works.

For more information, please visit <http://www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/announcements/index.html>



## Early American Industries Association

invites you to a Regional Meeting on **Saturday July 21, 2007** from 11 AM to 4 PM at Willis "Skip" Barsheid's Farmstead in New York's Historic Mohawk Valley.

There is a Dutch barn filled with tools for various trades, an 18th Century farmhouse, a 19th Century farmhouse, a shoemaker's shop, and more. This uniquely local collection is not open to the public but Skip is pleased to share it with EAIA members on this special day. Registration is \$10.00 per person. A simple lunch can be provided for a nominal extra fee. Deadline is July 13, 2007. For more info and directions, please contact Win & Flo Bigelow (518-399-4742 or [winbigflo@aol.com](mailto:winbigflo@aol.com)).

# Membership info

If you have been receiving this newsletter, but your membership is not current and you wish to continue to receive the HVVA newsletter and participate in the many house study tours offered each year, **please send in your dues.**

Membership currently pays all the HVVA bills and to keep us operating in the black **each of us must contribute a little.**

Membership dues remains at a low \$20 per year (\$15 for Students). So if you haven't sent in your dues or given a tax deductible donation to the HVVA mission, **please consider doing so now.**

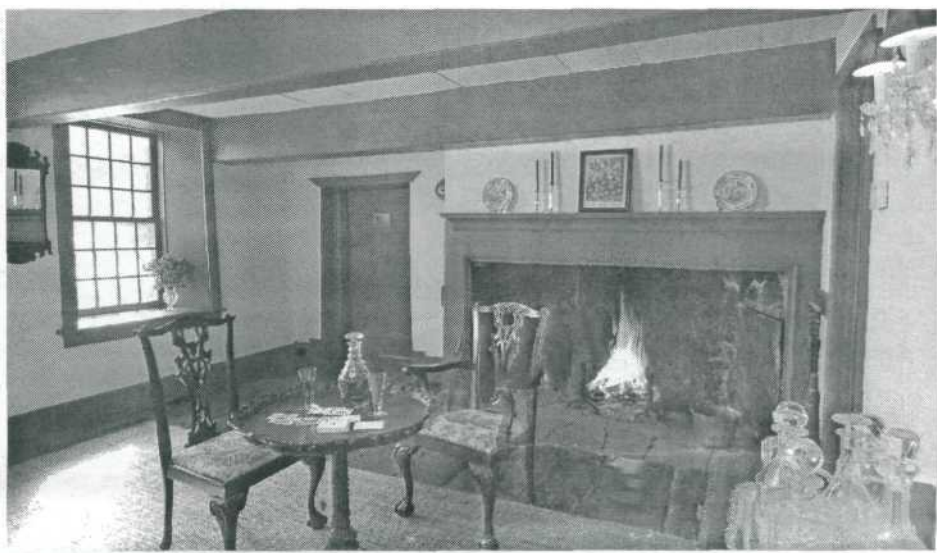


Yes, I would like to renew my membership in the amount of \$.....  
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Benjamin Ten Broeck House, Kingston.

## Upcoming HVVA meeting schedule

June 16, 2007 – 10:00 am  
**Meeting at the home of Maggie MacDowell** – After the meeting we will search out an old house and find lunch!  
**Directions:** Address is 222 Farmers Turnpike, Gardiner. Route 208 South to Ireland Corners (intersection of 208 and 44-55). Go West on 44-55, through Gardiner, past the white Reformed Church on the right. Take the left turn just past the church, onto Murphy Lane (see sign for Majestic Park). Veterinarian is on the corner. Next right is Farmers T. Go down the hill almost to the Wallkill River, see blue (some say green) Cape on right. White mail box with 222 on the front, and little house sign on tree says "Riverwatch."

July 14, 2007 9:30 am – 4:00 pm  
**Stone House day in Hurley** – We will need volunteers to man our HVVA display. To volunteer please contact Jim Decker at jdeck@frontiernet.net or (845) 895-3272. You need not stay the full day! We'll be set up on the front lawn of the late Bob Eurich's house, located across from the bank on Main Street in Hurley.

July 21, 2007 – 10:00 am  
**Meeting at the Benjamin Ten Broeck, House Tour and Picnic.** Also planned as an HVVA get-together to celebrate the completion of our humble office. Please bring something to share at the potluck luncheon and also remember to RSVP, so we can get an idea about the number to expect. All are welcome!

Call Rob Sweeney at 845.336.0232 or email Gallusguy@msn.com.  
**Directions:** 1019 Flatbush Rd., Kingston. From the NYS Thruway take exit 19, follow signs for Rhinecliff Bridge and 209 North. Travel on 209 for about 4.5 miles (do not cross bridge). Take exit for Route 32 to Kingston/Saugerties. Turn South towards Kingston on Route 32, travel about 300 feet, first house on the left.

August 18, 2007 – 10:00 am  
**House Study Tour gathering at the Benjamin Ten Broeck House** (see above for directions) **NO MEETING**, just traveling to study an early house in Zena, then on to Woodstock to see a later two full story stone house circa 1790. Be prepared to document!

Judge Hasbrouck's House, Woodstock.

