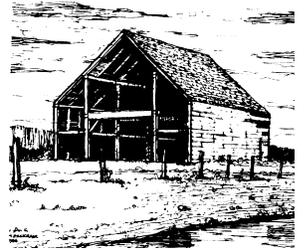


DUTCH BARN PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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The Dutch Farm Survey

A Survey of New World Dutch Cultural Resources

The First Two Years, February 2006 - December 2007

Ned Pratt, with contributions by Steve Jones

Although New England's Puritans have received more press, the history of the United States as a multicultural entity virtually began with the Dutch and their New Netherland settlement. Their legacy lives on, not only through our culture and Constitution, but in their built environments. Hundreds of farmhouses, barns and farmsteads demonstrating this legacy remain, scattered across our countryside. They are largely ignored, often disfigured, and ever in danger of disappearing through neglect, moving or demolition.

The Survey of New World Dutch Cultural Resources ("The Survey") is designed to discover, promote, research and record all buildings whose construction indicates a Dutch cultural influence in New Netherland and other parts of North America settled by persons of Dutch heritage. The majority of these structures are located in present or former agricultural districts, but a number remain in urban areas. The idea for the survey grew out of efforts by the Dutch Barn Preservation Society (DBPS), the Society for the Preservation

of Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture (HVVA), and the Institute for Historic Farm Research at Arnhem in the Netherlands (*Stichting Historisch Boerderij-Onderzoek* — SHBO).

We are interested in much more than just data; our purpose is to create an extensive grassroots network of people — especially young people — who can record, preserve, and enjoy the precious surviving structures which recall our New Netherland heritage.

In the nearly two years since we began, the Survey has already brought these buildings, and the need to record them, to the attention of communities in the Capital Region of New York State, and has developed numerous educational projects to encourage teachers to incorporate exposure to New World Dutch agriculture and architecture into grade-school curricula. It has enlisted professional and nonprofessional volunteers from both New York and New Jersey. Also, not incidentally, it has assembled an ever-growing catalog and computer database of (to date) roughly nine hundred structures, many little known or unknown until now.



Photo 1. Aerial view of Glenvue Farm, Town of Glen, Montgomery County, August 1993, showing a New World Dutch barn and house. Photo courtesy of Judy and Russ Kelly.

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Dutch Farm Survey

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Many of the buildings identified by the Survey have until now remained unknown outside their local town or County. In the example of the Fry-Grattan barn in Waterford, the owner received confirmation 40 years ago from Dr. John Fitchen that his was a New World Dutch Barn, but local historians remained unaware of it. On two recent occasions I have visited sites whose owners had maintained their barns for years, but didn't know they had Dutch Barns. The Survey will bring all this knowledge together, becoming over time a rich resource.

The Survey has received substantial support, most notably in the form of generous grants from the Kellogg Foundation. This enabled us to hire part-time staff to get the Survey moving. Additional support has been received from Hartgen Archeological Associates, Hubert de Leue, and in the form of countless volunteer hours by DBPS and HVVA members, local historians, and enthusiasts.

Survey Goals

The goals of the Survey are:

- (1) to build public understanding and appreciation for this vernacular architecture through publicity, educational programs, and membership development in our organizations;
- (2) to target youth as future volunteers and preservationists through attractive and enjoyable education projects, particularly those we can get incorporated in school programs; and
- (3) to create a detailed database of all extant and documented New World Dutch cultural resources for use by researchers worldwide.

An implicit goal of the DBPS and the HVVA, the Survey's sponsoring organizations, is the preservation of these resources and the unique historical data they contain. This goal can only be achieved by establishing a broad base of enthusiasts and support for preservation into the future, and by locating and publicizing threat-

ened structures. The Survey has been designed to address all of these tasks.

The Survey began operation in February 2006 with the design of the computer database for compiling field data, funded by Hartgen Archeological Associates. This was initially guided by a committee including Peter Sinclair, Paul Huey, Keith Cramer, Ned Pratt, Neil Larson, and Walter (Wally) Wheeler, all board members of the HVVA and the DBPS. The field forms were designed by Wally, but much of the credit for setting up the database itself goes to Justin Divirgilio of Hartgen. Wally and Justin have been refining and tweaking the database almost constantly since then.

Beginnings

A series of mailings were sent to county historians, to inform them about our project, and to ask them to serve as our county coordinators. While many of these historians supported our survey, however, many were very busy with their own projects, and few volunteered to help coordinate our effort. Initially all survey work was done by volunteers, and it moved quite slowly.

A grant from the Kellogg Foundation was a breakthrough in getting the effort moving more rapidly, since it allowed us to hire part-time staff. In June 2006, we appointed a part-time Survey Coordinator to design and coordinate publicity, educational projects, and volunteer activities. Over the course of the project we have had two Coordinators: Stephen D. Jones, PhD, RPA, an anthropologist, archaeologist, and former visiting professor at Union College, with teaching experience at elementary, middle, and high school levels; and Chris Templin, a historian and re-enactor, who has worked with several state historic



Photo 2. Volunteer Coordinator Steve Jones.



Photo 3. Intern Emily Hart and Marieke Leeverink conducting field work, November 2006.

sites and on a documentary for PBS (Photo 2).

By the end of the summer of 2006, we had retained two interns, also funded primarily through the Kellogg grant. Emily Hart, a graduate student in the history department at the University at Albany, has a hands-on background in historic preservation through her work at the Mabee Farm, just outside of Schenectady; she also has had experience working as an intern with the New York State Assembly. The other intern, Marieke Leeverink, has studied and recorded historic structures for the municipality of Deventer, the Dutch National Monument Preservation Office (*Rijksdienst Monumentenzorg*), and the Institute for Historic Farm Research (SHBO); she has degrees in architectural engineering and urban planning (Photo 3). Since our interns are student-age, their hiring immediately reinforced the intergenerational component of the Survey. Often an intern accompanied a retired historian in field surveys, and worked side by side with more senior professionals and volunteers in combing the archives.

Because Marieke is from the Netherlands, many historical societies were particularly keen to meet with our team.

While the activities of the Survey team have been varied, their principal projects can be categorized generally as public outreach, educational outreach, and information collection. The first and third categories are automatically linked by the very nature of the Survey.

We are now promoting the Survey county by county; in each county a training session is arranged, which serves as an introduction both to us and to the Survey. Several weeks before the meeting, press releases are sent to local periodicals, and letters are sent to local historians, societies, and other interested people.

Lectures and Exhibits

Survey training sessions have been presented in the New York counties of Albany, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Ulster, and Delaware. We have also promoted the Survey with lectures,

presentations, and exhibits at the National and State Barn Conferences, and at regional historians' conferences.

The Survey has also been promoted through a number of other venues, such as an exhibit table at the Clarksville Heritage Day, held in a village just south of the City of Albany, on 26 August 2006. On 16 September of that year, a table was set up at Crailo State Historic Site, and we had a table at the Stockade Walkabout in Schenectady in that same month. So far Niskayuna in Schenectady County has benefited from two lectures: a talk by DBPS president, Keith Cramer, and another led by Steve Jones and arranged by the town historian, Linda Champagne, in a threatened historic building behind the Niskayuna Baptist Church. County historian (and Schoharie County Survey Coordinator) Harold Zoch arranged an important meeting between Steve Jones, intern Emily Hart, and Cobleskill *Times Journal* reporter David Avitable.

Ulster County is home of HVVA, whose many survey and public relations projects inspired the Survey. Survey staff presented the project and results-to-date at a packed joint DBPS/HVVA meeting in Saugerties on 18 November 2006. Walter Wheeler presented training sessions at the New York State Museum in Albany and at the Ulster County Historical Society in January and February of 2007. Ned Pratt presented programs in 2007 in Pittstown, North Greenbush, and Troy. The list grows longer weekly.

Additional presentations are scheduled for Columbia, Dutchess, Saratoga (Clifton Falls), Schenectady (Niskayuna), and Schoharie counties in New York State, as well as Hunterdon, Monmouth, and Morris counties in New Jersey.

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Dutch Farm Survey

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Educational Outreach

While young people have been our most important target audience, it is not practical for all age groups to drive around the countryside in search of New World Dutch structures. Therefore we have devoted much effort to devising and producing entertaining educational materials, and to discussing lecture and workshop opportunities with teachers, historians, and museum personnel.

The approaching 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's voyage to the "New World" presents a unique opportunity, since it will bring nation-wide attention and appreciation to the history of the region. Students at every level will be learning more about the history of European settlement of our area and the seminal influence of the Dutch settlers. The required curriculum in New York State already includes segments on New Netherland for 4th and 7th graders, but we can enhance the learning experience and increase appreciation for historic sites through teaching packets combining texts and activities, workshops, lectures, and possibly field-trips.

We have designed our first packets for 2nd and 4th graders. Second graders will be introduced to New Netherland buildings and

history at a formative stage of their education; the packet produced for 4th graders will enliven those students' New Netherland studies. We are also preparing materials for the 7th grade level. Details of these projects will be covered in a future article.

Teacher-Education Programs

A number of educational packets have already been developed, and we are working to present the materials to teachers as well as to give them a background in New World Dutch colonial farming and culture. Such presentations can include in-person workshops, or take the form of publications, such as the book developed for the Half Moon Museum, or the booklet written for the Mabee Farm Historic Site by DBPS secretary Ned Pratt. The Greater Capital Region Teacher's Center has shown an interest in promoting our packets and programs once they are finished and tested.

Survey Status

Through the work of our interns and volunteers we have covered most of Schenectady and Albany Counties and have begun work on a dozen more. Many buildings and other resources have been identified and recorded using existing studies and histories, and that information has been supplemented with trips into the field to verify the information. We have also collected data on New World

Dutch structures from the National Register and the New York State archives, as well as from town and county archives in Rensselaer and Schenectady counties. We now have people signed on as County Coordinators in Albany, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Schoharie, and Ulster counties in New York State, as well as Hunterdon, Monmouth, and Morris counties in New Jersey, and Berkshire County in Massachusetts.

We have so far assembled a catalog and database of roughly 900 structures or sites which evidence New World Dutch cultural influence. These are located throughout the territory formerly encompassed by New Netherland, even though the comprehensive field surveys have yet to begin in most counties. For the first time there will be a central source for all parts of the region, and researchers will have a resource for a variety of inquiries into the distribution and location of landscape patterns, architectural styles, construction methods, and materials.

The Future

The Survey fieldwork has only just begun. Training sessions and other recruitment efforts will be expanded to the lower Hudson region, Long Island, and other states during 2008. The year 2009 will be devoted to filling in gaps in our coverage.

From the Survey

A "hayberg" in Otley, Iowa (IA-MA-OT-001)

Contributed by Kevin DeReus

My great-grandparents, Robert & Hendreka Van Essen, moved to an 80-acre farm near Otley, Iowa in the spring of 1921. My grandfather, Nicholas Roy Van Essen,

was only 7 years old. He lived in the same house until he died in 2001 at the age of 87. His parents moved to town when he got married. I have many fond mem-

ories of staying with my grandparents when I was young. Grandpa kept his horse-drawn machinery even after the switch to tractors.

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Photo 1. General view of the Van Essen "hayberg."

Photo by Kevin DeReus.

The corn binder, hay loader, dump rake and cultivator were some of my favorites. I would sit on the one-row cultivator for hours and pretend that I was driving a team.

One farm building that dates back to the horse era is the "hayberg". As a child I thought grandpa called it a "hay bird". My great-grandpa built this hayberg sometime in the 1920s (Photo 1). He set the four 25-foot poles all by himself. Grandpa can't remember how his father accomplished this alone, but he does remember that as a young boy he had to crawl up on the roof to give it a coat of red paint.

Construction was simple and functional. Four 25-foot poles were set five feet into the ground. With 20 feet above ground, holes were drilled every 12 inches from six up to 19 feet. The bottom framework for the roof was made of 2 x 8s, each 20 feet long. The corners were bolted together by a 90 degree iron angle. The

inside of each corner was a 3 x 12 bolted in place. This formed a triangle around each pole (Photo 2).

The roof could be raised, one corner at a time, to any desired height by using a home-made jig and handy-man jack (Photos 2 and 3). The process involved

jacking one corner up 12 inches and inserting an iron rod through the next hole. This was slow, but it worked.

The rafters and horizontal bracing were made from 2 x 4s. The center peak is seven feet above the bottom of the roof framework. One rafter went up from each corner and one from the middle of each side. All eight met at the center peak. The roofing appears to be cyprus wood.

Back when my grandpa put up loose hay, two doors would open on one side of the roof. A track was attached from the peak of the roof to an A-frame over the wagon. This contraption allowed them to pull the loose hay into the barn with a hayfork and rope.

As a child, I watched my dad and grandpa put small square bales under the hayberg. By this time an elevator replaced the hayfork and rope. The horses were

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Photo 2. Corner detail showing roof jig in place.

Photo by Kevin DeReus.

A Hayberg in Otley

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gone too. Grandpa only had eight cows and calves, so this was sufficient hay to last through the winter months. Most haybergs disappeared when their owners passed away.

My wife and I moved to grandpa's farm in 2002. I hope to keep the farm looking much like it did in the 1940s and '50s. All of the buildings are considered obsolete by the tax man. However, minor repairs and a coat of paint can keep them looking good for years to come. This is one farm that will continue to have a hayberg.

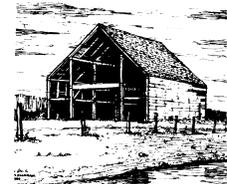
Kevin DeReus lives near the Dutch community of Pella, Iowa.



Photo 3. The roof jig.

Photo by Kevin DeReus.

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This newsletter is printed by the Dutch Barn Preservation Society, a non-profit organization incorporated by the Regents of the State of New York.

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