

From the Editor...The Palatine barn workshop on Route 9, Rhinebeck, planned for May 22 to 26 is still being planned but since its purpose is really to repair the barn and not teach a formal class, it was decided that the workshop is free to those who wish to attend to work and learn about repairing barns. Free lunch for a day's free labor. The work will be directed By Bob Hedges of Pine Plains and Conrad Fingado from Pleasant Valley. We plan to finish stone work, sill replacement and frame repairs, make hardware and nails on-site, as well as harr and key-hinged wagon doors.

A barrack project is formally underway, a joint effort of HVVA and DBPS being led by myself and funded already by a \$2,000 pledge. The aim of the project is to construct a full scale barrack and interpretive display for the 2007 Dutch Legacy of America Exhibition in Albany. After the Albany exhibition of 2 to 3-months, the barrack will be moved to the Mabee farm Museum in Schenectady County. The project will include classes held on site and at the Mabee Farm in historic agriculture, crafts, timber-framing, black-smithing and thatching.

(continued next page)

FROM THE JOURNAL =====

Saturday, March 11, I drove with John Stevens to Cohoes, Albany County, a small hilly town where the Mohawk River empties into the Hudson. The Cohoes Falls remain sacred to the Mohawk but the early trade routs to the west that passed through the lands of the Five-Nation Confederacy, took the easier portage to the south past Schenectady. Cohoes was slow in getting going but became a manufacturing giant once the water power was tapped, and later abandoned by the mills when cheaper labor was available in the south. The town has more ancient rail lines, canals and twisted streets with dead-ends of any place in America. It is filled with interesting survivals of 18th and 19th century vernacular architecture.

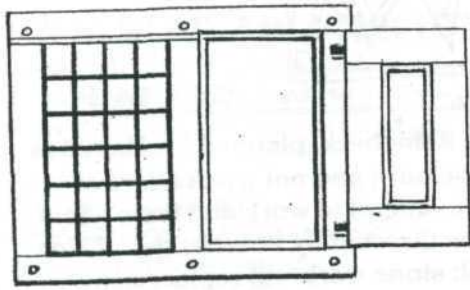
About 50 people met at the Douw Fonda House in Cohoes, for a Dutch Barn Preservation Society (DBPS) tour and annual meeting organized by the president Keith Cramer and others. The Fonda house is a small timber frame brick veneer house with a gambrel roof and a generous owner who let us inspect it in detail. The tightly-packed crowd of enthusiasts moved slowly through main floor rooms and cellar, noting familiar features and guessing at what might lie behind the tin ceiling. Parts of a hood beam with corbels could be deduced, an early feature. Although listed on the National Register as a 1724 house, it seems more likely 1750-60 to Wally Wheeler, who has studied the house carefully, and a number of the group who were in it for the first time.

(Continued next page)



**The Douw Fonda House Cohoes, Albany County, NY
(back view)**

This timber frame house with brick veneer was built in about 1750-1760. The front section with the gambrel roof was built at the same time as the back wing with the gable roof. The back wing was originally 5-bays long. Three-bays were removed at a later date and the back wall covered with weatherboards. The front section is a center-hall plan of two 3-bay rooms with end-wall fireplaces and a one-bay center hall.



Early *Bolkozijn* with fixed leaded glass on one side and shuttered opening on the other,

In the loft, the framing of its gambrel roof is classic New World Dutch with the use of plank purlins. There is also an early discarded casement window frame there, with a vertical mullion, what the Dutch call *bolkozijn*. John Stevens thought the frame might be from another earlier house and the main wing of the Fonda house may always have had double-hung sash. John and Bill McMillan took measurements of the frame.

It had been said that there was evidence of pit-sawn boards in the loft but it was agreed by many and explained by Bill McMillan that these familiar kinds of markings, are caused by a misalignment of the sawmill blade. They are often found used as floor-boards in lofts of houses, because they were hard to plain smooth for finished

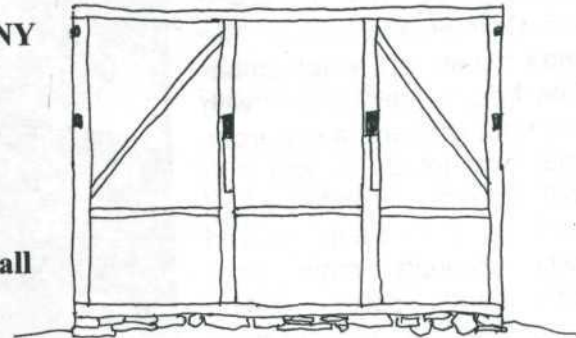
boards. They are often miss-interpreted as pit-sawn. Those present agreed that pit-sawing evidence is rare in the Hudson valley.

Next we drove north to Waterford to visit a newly discovered scribe-rule Dutch barn that is probably a first generation barn, circa 1760. The Grattan Dutch barn is being used to store hay. It has massive anchorbeam braces and a unique longitudinal bracing system, new to all present.



Grattan Dutch barn, Waterford, Albany County, NY

**Center Section
unmeasured sketch
showing unique
longitudinal bracing
system in the column-wall**



(From the Editor, continued)

We hope to send a small group soon to meet with Wim Lanphen and his barrack preservationist friends in Holland for guidance on using and constructing thatched barracks. We welcome information and images to add to our archive that will eventually be edited and published for the exhibition.

If you are interested in participating or contributing to this barrack project or perhaps joining the trip to The Netherlands, contact the Editor:

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(845) 338-0257 <hvvernar@netstep.net>

After lunch in Cohoes and an introduction to the town by the Spindle City Historic Society, who publish a very good newsletter, we visited the historic Van Schaick Mansion, recently acquired by the Daughters of the American Revolution. It is located on Cohoes Island in The Hudson River. It is probably from the same period as the Fonda House. It is also a timber frame building with a veneer of brick and a gambrel roof. The center hall retains its decoratively turned balustrade and paneling. The ceilings are plastered. Its large front door is two-part with pad-hinges and interesting latches and locks. The Van Schaick house was built by people of wealthy. The Douw Fonda house for a tenant farmer. The framing for the gambrel roof in the Van Schaick Mansion is very similar to the Fonda House.

The DBPS held its annual meeting in the Van Schaick Mansion. President, Keith Cramer announced that the Society had been granted \$25,000 by the W.K.Kellogg Foundation to fund their Dutch Cultural Resource Survey. Half of the grant will go for a Volunteer Coordinator, someone who will coordinate the volunteers. The Mabee Farm will serve as the Survey's office and archive.

Peter Sinclair of HVVA requested \$1,500 for the Barn Repair Workshop, planned for May at the Dutch barn on the Palatine Farmstead in Rhinebeck, Dutchess County. The workshop will continue the work begun last summer that was supported by the DBPS with a \$1,000 gift. Bob Andersen asked that HVVA submit a short article with pictures of last year's workshop and plans for the barn.



Van Schaick Mansion
Cohoes Island, Albany County, NY

Saturday, March 18 In the morning, John Stevens drove over from Connecticut to give a talk and signed books at the Ulster County Historical Society in Marbletown. It was well attended. By the time a few of the group left for the Columbia County Historical Society, in Kinderhook, to hear a talk on the restoration and archaeology being done on the Van Allen House, the crowd was so involved in conversations that it had no time to hold an HVVA meeting.

Sunday, March 19, I drove with Alvin Sheffer to hear Wally Wheeler's talk on the Dutch houses in the Town of Colonie, Albany County. it includes Cohoes. Colonie was part of the large and successful manor of the Van Rensselaer family, a vast estate of tenant farmers and prosperous grist mills, a territory that makes up a large part of present day Albany and Rensselaer Counties. Wally and the staff of Hartgen Associates have been studying the New World Dutch architecture of the town. They believe there are only ten to fifteen 18th century buildings still standing. Some of these have been tentatively identified by using 18th century road maps and overlaying them on Government Geodetic maps. Some of these overlooked houses are hiding behind modern siding and alterations.

We learned more interesting things about the two Cohose houses we had visited on Friday. Wally showed a floor plan drawing of the Fonda House making its present form much clearer. There are still questions about how the house was originally used and arranged.

Wally has discovered that the water table of the Van Schaick house was capped with pieces of clay pan-tiles, giving it a molded look. The water table is a 2-inch enlargement of the foundation that forms a ledge all around a stone or brick building at floor level. Often the top bricks are molded or rubbed round on the upper exposed edge. The water table seems to be for style rather than function. Loren McMillan pointed out that often foundations of stone houses measure 2-feet thick and walls above the water table, 22-inches. Little is known of the use of clay pan-tiles on early buildings but Wally recognized these from ones he has seen from archaeology.

CORRECTIONS & ADDITIONS
 to previous March 2006 HVVA Newsletter
 The author of the report on the
 Brigg/Hatfield/Smith farm
 incorrectly named it the Jones farm
 This is being corrected on our web site

Tuesday, January 31 I went to see a farm in Hyde Park on the Fallkill (Valkill). It is owned by Jim Smith and is on North Quaker Lane. The complex of buildings maintains a little-altered historic farm setting. It received a NY State Barn Repair Grant last year. Bob Hedges, his son Nathaniel and John Copell, have begun the repairs. I registered it:

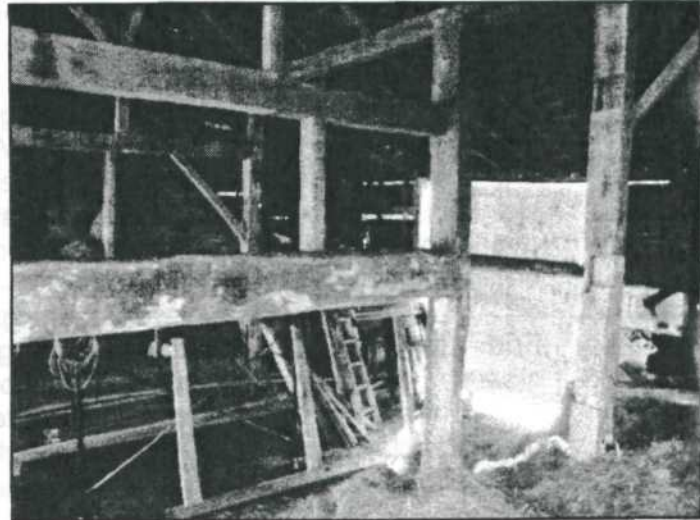
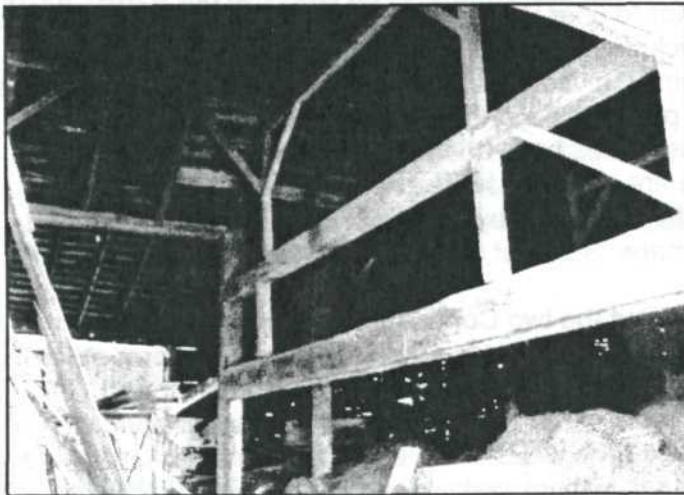
4-bay swing-beam, side-entrance, scribe-rule barn with double beams, added side-aisle and extension, also outbuildings and contemporary frame house, circa 1790
 Briggs/Hatfield/Smith (NY/Dut/HP/07)
 North Quaker Lane, Hyde Park, Dutchess County, NY
 N 41°48.566 - W 073°52.097 - elevation 308'

Friday, March 3 I returned to the Smith farm. Randy Nash, who has been coordinating the barn repair grants for the state, had come by to see its progress. He said that the timber frame restoration work in the Smith barn was the best he had seen in this State wide program. He said the over 2 million dollars program proposed for next year has the support of Governor Pataki and is part of the present budget being debated.

One important result of the program is the data base that has been created by the thousands of barn repair applications from throughout New York State. Randy said that students at Cornell have now digitalized it.

Randy corrected and added to our observations. The lowered beam in bent 5. did not necessarily mean that the north bay was a mow that reached to the ground. He is familiar with mows that are angled and Bob and I also knew of examples. Randy thinks that the north bay functioned like south bay to keep animals. He pointed out that the English key-hinged doors did have a "middle man" (removable center pole) like the Dutch. The door header was replaced.

Tuesday, March 28 I returned to the Smith farm. They have removed the plank wall exposing the swing beam and evidence of the speculated human door. Framing repairs are done and Bob has mortised his style and is adzing the rail for his first key-hinged door. The hardware has not yet arrived.



**Front and Back View of the Swingbeam
 Briggs/Smith 4-Bay English Threshing Barn,
 North Quaker Lane, Hyde Park,
 Dutchess County, NY**

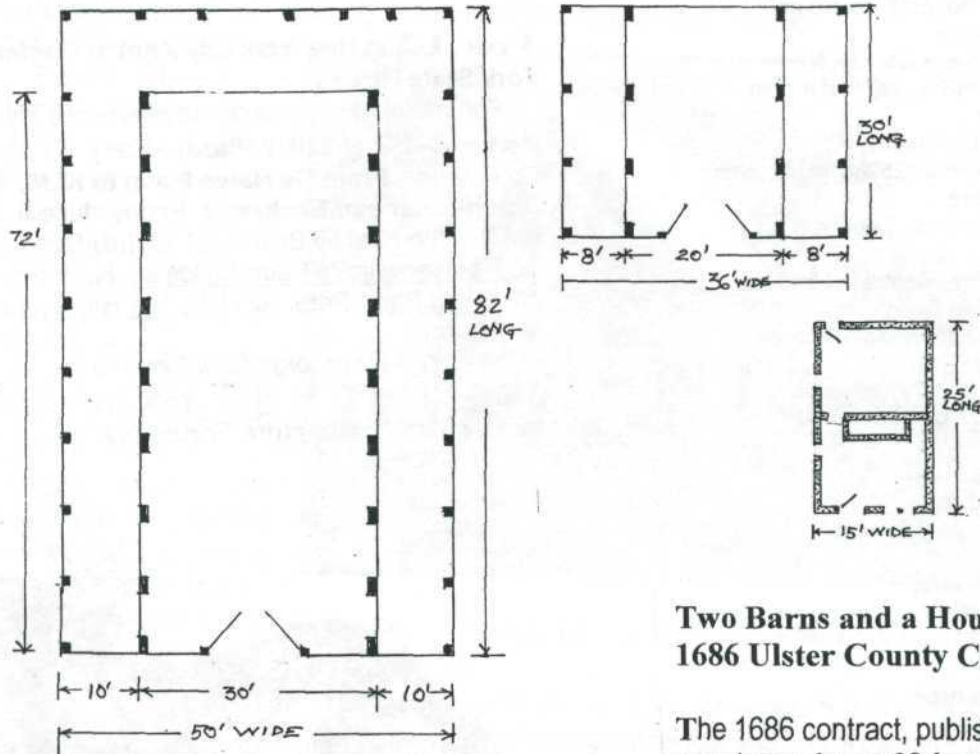
George found another description of a 1685 Ulster County barn in the Zimm manuscript in the Ulster County Genealogical Society Library. It is reproduced here as typed. The previous contract was for a large, 50-foot wide by 82-foot long barn with two side-aisles and a back aisle. It might be called a plantation barn. The new description is the house and barn of a tenant farmer.

Jacob Rutsen, the landlord, grants a ten-year lease to John Arney. He is to clear 60 acres and build a house and barn. No materials are specified for the small, what might be a two room house, perhaps built of logs. The small 36' wide by 30' long barn follows the classic wider-than-deep proportion of the three and four-bay New World Dutch barns into the 19th century. The 8-foot side aisles are the shortest recorded.

14 October 1685, Jacob Rutsen in the county of Ulster shoemaker, to John Arney of Marbletown, yeoman, doth lett land in Mombackus containing 300 Acres or thereabouts for ten years: John Arney to occupye improve and clear 60 acres of said land and put it in good sufficient fence According to the custom of the said county: and doth engage himself to build or cause to be built a good sufficient dwelling house 25 foot long & 15 foot bread of a Story and a half high - And alsoe a sufficient barne 30 foot long And 20 foot wide with two Lean-tos 8 foot wide on each side - and doth further engage that he shall pay $37\frac{1}{2}$ bushels winter wheat for each year of the two last years. N.B. That this bargaine not to begin before the 25 march 1686 and John Arney is to pay 5 bushels of wheat more every years. Signed, John Arney, Jacob Rutgerson. Wits: cornelius hoogeboom, John Ward, in presence of me, Thomas Chambers.

Transcribed in condensed form from Deed Books in the County Clerk's Office, Kingston, N. Y. by

Louise Hasbrouck Zimm, Woodstock, New York.



**Two Barns and a House
1686 Ulster County Contracts**

The 1686 contract, published in the last newsletter, for an 82-foot long 8-bay Dutch barn

(A. left) with two side-aisles and a back-aisle, might be termed a plantation barn and was funded by Manhattan money. It makes an interesting comparison with the 1641 9-bay Achter Col barn/house contract from Bergen County, New Jersey (see *DVA/NA* plate 6.). This 43 by 90-foot long barn had 9 and 10-foot wide side aisles. A T.C. DeWitt 1670 contract for a slightly shorter and wider 6-bay barn at Kingston measured 50-feet wide and 60-feet long. When all of these early contract are compared we have a picture of conformity of structure but variety in size and profile.

HUDSON VALLEY VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Is a not-for-profit corporation formed to study and preserve vernacular architecture and material culture. The following people are the trustees and officers of the society.
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Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture Newsletter

is available with a
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Detail of a Rembrandt Etching
(collection Amsterdam, Rembrandthuis)

COMING EVENTS 2006=====

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

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

April 26-29 at Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, **Annual Meeting of Early American Industries Association (EAIA)** This event is jam-packed with historic trades, behind-the-scenes tours, new interpretive programs and a tour of the Jamestown Settlement.

for information: e-mail, judytb@aol.com,
or phone Judith McMillan (518) 462-1264

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

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**

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.** Friday, June 9, 8:30 -10:00 AM "Hudson Valley Buildings". Shirley Dunn, Rensselaerswijck's Farm Buildings, Keith Cramer, Defining the Dutch Barn, Peter Sinclair, The Hay Barrack, Ned Pratt, Moderator.

Contact <www.nnp.org> for information.

June 14-17 in New York City **Meeting of The Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF).**

