

Dutch Barn Tour

Saturday, June 21, 2008, 10 AM

Co-sponsored by the HVVA; coordinated & hosted by Bob Hedges.

Text & Photos by Ned Pratt, DBPS Albany, NY

Meet at the Quitman Resource Center on Route 9 at 10 AM [7015 Route 9 in Rhinebeck.]

Directions: from the east end of the Kingston Rhinecliff Bridge, go east on 199 to the second light; turn right on to 9G to the first light; turn left on Route 9 less than a mile; QRC is on the left.



We had a great day for it-sunny and clear all day, t-shirt weather; we had perhaps 20-25 people. I rode down with David H, back with Keith C. Among those attending were Alan Scheffer, who talked a lot about history during the tour, esp. about the Palatines and the people involved in the Palatine Farmstead [shown talking above]; the Stevens, Peter Sinclair, Roberta Jeracka, Alice Adams, Barry Benape, Sam, who has a B&B in a Dutch house where a Dutch Barn stood until recently-burned a few years ago, George Van Sickle, several more. Ned, David Hodgdon, Keith Cramer...

The Quitman Resource Center is in an old house, perhaps a bit Dutch, from the late 1700's, I think. It houses the Rhinebeck Historical Society, the Winnakee Land trust, and several other non-profits, we didn't go inside, but I took some pictures.



Our first site was the Palatine Farmstead, about ¼ mile towards Rhinebeck on Route 9 and across from the Quitman Center. At the site are an old house, a barn, and the remains of an outhouse. The Farmstead is owned by the Quitman Resource Center. The house is very close to the road, on the east side of Route 9, in what was the first area of settlement of Rhinebeck- here and stretching another ¼ of a mile south, perhaps. There's a website with pictures of restorations at <http://www.quitmanpreservation.org/palatine.htm>



Alan Scheffer is very involved in this restoration project, and he talked a lot about the house, while Bob Hedges talked about the barn. **We began at the barn.** The barn doesn't look like much, and is so small you wouldn't think to look twice at it. It is, however, the core of an early- 1770- Dutch Barn. It is a three bay barn, with a center span of about 18 feet; there are no side aisles surviving, and the anchor beam posts have been cut off just above the anchor beams. You can see the braces are at about a 45 degree angle going into the purlin, about 4 feet from the posts, but there are no mortises in the posts below the anchor beam; therefore, we assume the posts originally carried on above the anchor beam at least 4 feet, where the braces would have been tenoned into the post.

We entered from the west, coming from the road past the house perhaps 50 yards to the barn. **On the second Anchor beam is carved the initials MD, and below that a stylized carving of an anchor beam, and in it, the date 1770.** The workmanship of the barn is very fine; Bob Hedges said it was one of the most finely crafted barns he had seen.

The barn is located on the edge of a hillside, the hill going up to the south of the side of the barn; there's a stone wall 6 or 8 feet into the hill, so perhaps there was a side aisle on that side- or the barn was moved here.

The Barn was repaired in part at an HVVA Workshop funded in part by a grant from the DBPS. Peter wrote an article on it in **the May 2005 HVVA Newsletter, copied here:**

“From the Editor... The week-long barn repair workshop at the Palatine Farmstead in Rhinebeck was a great success blessed by the best weather. The building was leveled and secured to new 7x9-inch white oak sill plates. A dedicated and hard working crew of instructors and participants cut the traditional scarf joint, lap dovetails and mortises in the north sill using hand tools and some modern shortcuts, rebuilt part of the dry-wall stone foundation on the north side, numbered and removed the 2-inch oak floor boards, dug out the accumulation of dirt bellow the floor exposing the internal sills and

“The project was funded by gifts of \$1,000 each from HVVA and the Dutch Barn Preservation Society, fees and contributions added \$1,436. Costs of \$2,296 left \$1,140 on hand to begin a two day workshop later in the month.

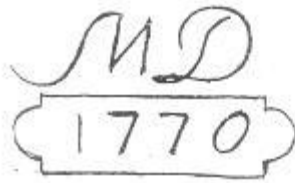
Eric Schatzel of Hurley

Seated at the shave-bench, using a draw knife, Eric shapes a trunnel (wooden peg) riven from a block of locust wood. photo by Bob Hedges

This beginning of the restoration process stabilized the timber frame but there are other things that need attention before the building is fully secure. We will be treating parts of the old frame with antifungal chemicals and we have ordered new 12"x3/4" pine siding to enclose some of the barn. It is being cut on a Wood-Miser band; saw mill that will give it a vintage look of vertical saw marks as if the wood were cut: on an early sash mill. We will be planning another work session soon. (see Coming Events)



Whether the barn was original to the site or moved here remains a question. Uncovering some of the stone foundation has helped support the notion of the barn being original to the site. A date and initials carved on the anchorbeam of a nearby Dutch barn suggests the "MD 1770" inscribed in the Palatine Farmstead barn may refer to the carpenter rather than the family.



MD

1770

Date Carved on Anchorbeam
 Palatine Farmstead (Dut-Rhi-20)
 3-bay scribe-rule Dutch Barn



IHD

M, 11, 1781

Date Carved on Anchorbeam
 The Beekman/Whitney (Dut-Rhi-16)
 4-bay scribe-rule Dutch U-Barn
 Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, NY

Back of the Barn, Facing Northwest

Bent 3. Facing East

The Nehr/Elseffer/Losee, Palatine Farmstead, (Dut-Rhi-20)

3-bay scribe-rule Dutch Barn, Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, NY

The drawing shows a bent of the present cut-down frame of the barn and a conjectured original barn with 5'5" column (post) above the anchorbeam and an 11'6" side aisle. Only one side aisle is indicated in the drawing.

The Palatine Farmstead barn is missing its columns above the anchorbeams. Why these were removed is not clear. The original plates were reused and are in good condition, indicating the upper columns (*verdiepingh*) were also in good condition. Using a nearby barn as a model, The Mosher (Dut-Rhi-18) 3-bay Dutch barn, 11'6" wide side aisles, are conjectured and a 5'5" column above the anchorbeam for the original Palatine Farmstead barn. There is a north side wall foundation that has not

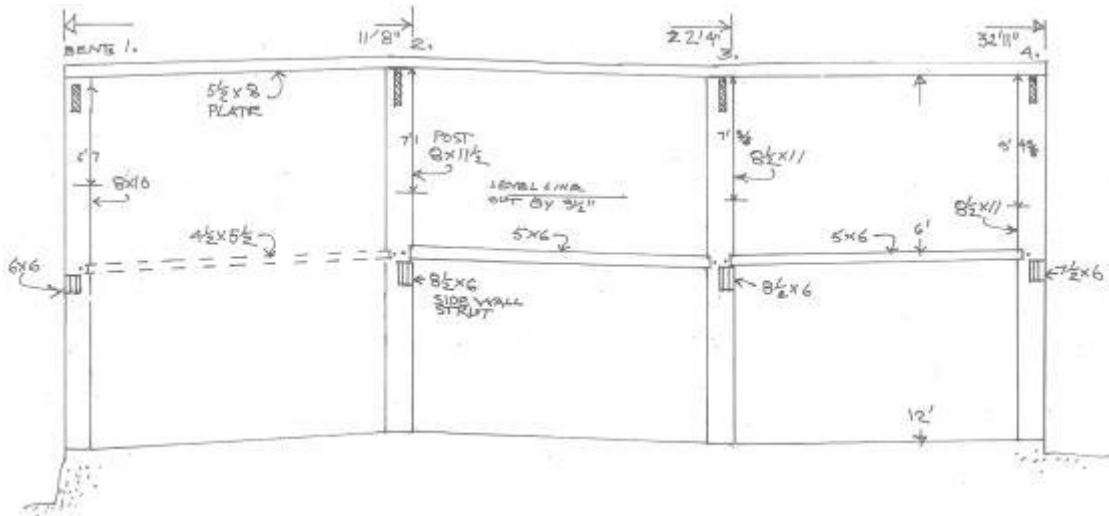
been looked at, it measures 11'6" from the center aisle. One feature that gets in the way of our conjecture is the hill on



the south side that is held back 9 feet from the nave with a 4 foot high stone wall. Does this all represent accumulated dirt eroded from the steep hillside? There should be a dig done to uncover foundation evidence. Devan found one bottle fragment in the soil close to the stone foundation wall that he was rebuilding. It suggests an 18th century date for the foundation wall.

Preparing a sill plate.->

Wide side aisles on Dutch barns may be a Rhinebeck feature. I noted in the December 2004 newsletter, pages 4& 5 on the report of a Rhinebeck. tour of four barns, that these had side aisles of 11', 10'6", 11'2" and 12' whereas the Ulster County barns on page 3. have 10' and 10' 2" aisles.



The North Side Wall, Facing South

The Nehr/Elseffer/Losee, Palatine Farmstead, (Dut-Rhi-20)

3-bay scribe-rule Dutch Barn, Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, NY

Using a \$30 laser leveler we found that the north wall posts were out at level by 9 1/2-inches. The drawing does not show the posts out-at-plumb which they were.

Bob and his wife Marg move a 20 foot 7"X9" white oak timber.

Devin repairs the stone foundation





The House: The property was owned by Franz Neher, who was in the area by 1729; [pronounced something like “Near.”] There is a 1750 map which shows a Neher house, but there are some differences between it and the current house, so it is not certain if that is this house. It is 1700’s, anyway. There was a Historic Structures report done a few years ago by Crawford and Stearns of Syracuse, but Alan says there have been many things found since then- when was it built? If Alan knows, he’s not telling. According to the brochure, the site was owned by the Elseffer family from 1762 until 2000, but Alan said it stayed in the Neher family, so we assume they are the same. I think it often descended on the female side, so the names changed.

The house is a 5 bay center entry house with a lean to addition at the back, and a couple of later additions at one end, the south. There’s a center door facing west, toward Route 89, which can’t be much more than 10 yards away. The back addition has a nice reconstructed beehive oven; the size and location were determined by the foundation.



There's a great back door, with an unusual stepped hinge, which was propped up in the living room. The door actually on the back is a very expensive reproduction. It was not clear why they did this, I think to preserve the door more as a museum artifact. I gather there's a Director for the site, and a restoration Committee, that Alan and Bob may be on, but they don't necessarily agree with all the decisions.

There's a good discussion of this hinge, and some others, in the June 2005 HVVA Newsletter, which I've copied below.

I could see the rafters and collar ties in the attic, and they are all similar, suggesting the roof of the main house was all put on at the same time; the rafters are open tenoned and pegged at the peak, spaced perhaps 4 feet apart. The collar tie I could see well had a half dovetail pegged joint [or called a lapped dovetail?]

The foundation in the basement suggests an earlier house. The interior dimensions of the stone basement are 22'-2" wide, by 16'-8" deep [so the longer side faced the road.] We suspect that it was a gable roof with the gable facing the road.

From HVVA- Editor's comments [Peter?]

"I received some information on local hinges from Frank White, of Lebanon, New Jersey, whom we had met last winter when HVVA visited the Voght House in Clinton Township, Hunterdon County, NJ. (see Newsletter Vol. 7, No 2.). That 18th century German stone house with decorative plaster ceilings is still being protected by the State of New Jersey as a historically significant building against its planned destruction by the local public school but so far no use has been found or group has yet adopted it.

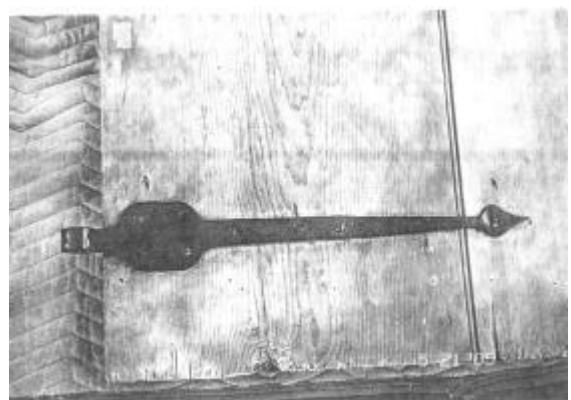
Frank sent me pictures of strap hinges from two doors from houses in Clinton Township, NJ. The one illustrated here is associated with a 1735 house in a Dutch settlement in Readington. The other was from a 1750 Palatine German house. He wanted to know if I had ever seen a hinge pad like that on the 1735 Dutch house. I began to document what I think are the early hinges of the Palatine Farmstead House circa 1740, in Rhinebeck, New York, and was surprised to find a similar but more refined example on the remains of a three-batten cellar. door. In this case the hinge has a soft-arrow finial.

Strap Hinge from a circa 1735 Dutch House Readington, -->

Clinton Township,
Hunterdon County,
New Jersey



<-Strap Hinge from
the Cellar Door of the
circa 1740 Palatine
Farmstead House



Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, New York. (ny/du/rh/0020). This Dutch pad hinge with a soft-arrow finial has a similar nailing pattern to the Readington, New Jersey, example. The wooden batten to which it is nailed is from a later enlargement and reconstruction of the door.



Strap Hinge from the. Kitchen Door, Palatine Farmstead, Rhinebeck.

<-This strap hinge is on the door of the kitchen added to the 1790 house but reconfigured from an earlier construction. The hinges are encrusted with paint but their classic Dutch form is visible. Today people of The Valley are proud of their old Dutch doors and hardware. The hinges and latches are usually painted black to

emphasize them but in the 18th century they were not painted a separate color.

Suffolk Latch from the Possible 1740 Front Door Palatine Farmstead, Rhinebeck.

This latch has been renailed to the reused false panel door. It has a Pennsylvania German look and its method of attachment is unique.

On the remains of a reused false-panel door, that may have been the front-door to the original circa 1740 Rhinebeck house, there is the imprint of a missing pad hinge with a pointed finial. The cellar door and the false panel door have the same molding profile and so appear contemporary. It seems that the cellar hinge was given an earlier more Dutch style finial while the front door adopts a more English style finial. A door into the early undated kitchen addition has small pad hinges with soft arrow finials.



The decorative Suffolk latch that has survived on the 1740 front door of the Palatine House in Rhinebeck is very unique. Of the 198 Suffolk latches illustrated in *Early American Wrought Iron*, 1979 edition, by Albert H. Sonn, none has the bottom plate turned up as this example does. Perhaps this was done later when the latch was renailed to the door. The decorative feature of the top pad has a German look.



<-Finally the remains of a three-batten door were found in the 1770 barn at the Palatine farmstead in Rhinebeck. It might have been an animal door. The surviving hinge has a pointed finial and a round pad.

Strap Hinge from the 1770 Dutch Barn Palatine Farmstead, Rhinebeck." This hinge from a door fragment found in the barn has adopted a pointed



finial. The door is particularly well made with 1.26-inch splines joining the three vertical boards.

The holes are rectangular and the hinge is nailed with the same hand-forged T-headed nails used to construct the door.

Despite the distance from Clinton Township, NJ, to Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, NY, close to 100-miles, in the 18th century their strap hinges were made pretty much the same, be it for a Dutch or a Palatine German family."

Our next stop was another Dutch Barn. This has all new siding- novelty wood siding, a new roof, and new sliding doors, replaced corner doors, etc. It is near an older house, but we didn't go there. Inside, the barn is quite well preserved.

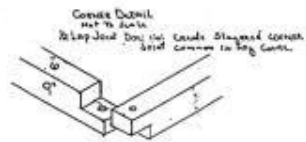
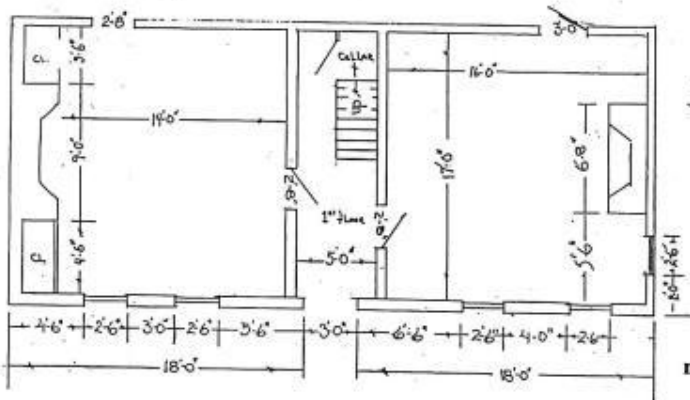
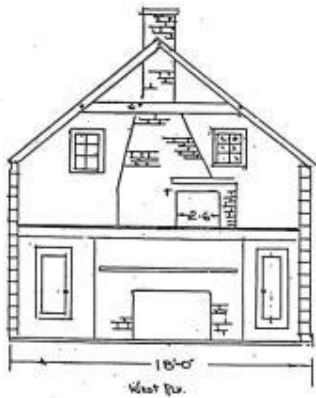


This was a 4 bay Dutch Barn with two side aisles. Originally a 3 bay barn, a bay was added at the rear, and the anchor beam posts were extended about 4 feet; it also looks like the roof pitch was lowered. Some of the rafters show an extra bird's mouth. There are no wedges in the tenons of the anchor beams, and it is a scribe rule



barn.

Our next stop was **the Brush [Sp?] Log Cabin in downtown Pine Plains**, a fabulous building being saved by the historical society. A log cabin, with the first part built perhaps 1747, and an addition 1776?, then a lean-to on back, and covered by siding in the 1880's.



measured drawing by R. Hedges

Bob Hedges did these drawings, which were published in their June 1999 Newsletter



We then had lunch at the Mountain Cow Café, in Pine Plains.



After lunch we had a brief DBPS Board Meeting. Keith reported that our grants from the Kellogg foundation are almost all expended and the survey is back on a volunteer basis again. Steve Jones, our Director at the beginning and again this year to help finish up what we could, was terrific. We have quite a number of buildings on our database, which is still very much a work in progress. We have a new laptop and several good new powerpoint shows about Dutch Barns and the survey.



Gallatin Barn: Our last stop was near the Roleoff Janssen Kill in Gallatin; Bob has been working on this one. This is an English Barn, but probably on the site of an earlier Dutch Barn. A number of the beams in the barn are reused Dutch Barn parts, or Hay Barrack parts. The upright beam behind the ladder in the photo below is a reused anchor beam; several of the anchor beam ends which were cut off are still in the barn. Bob and John Stevens were especially excited by finding most of the superstructure from an early Dutch Hay Barrack reused in the shed

