

The Society for the Preservation of
HUDSON VALLEY VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE
NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2006

VOL. 8, NO. 11

Peter Sinclair - an Appreciation.

Many of you have heard that Peter recently suffered a stroke. He was home at the time but as not found for some hours, which will slow his recovery and make it more difficult. Taken to hospital in Kingston, he is progressing nicely but it will be some time before he will be back to normal.

Born and educated in the mid-west, where his father was an artist, Peter too, developed artistic interests. He studied and taught at the University of Wisconsin, later continuing with the study of art in Italy, particularly Florence.

He always had a keen interest in early- especially primitive- arts and crafts. After moving to New York City he started a business mounting examples of art for museums, antique dealers and private collectors. This work requires artistic sensitivity as well as technical prowess (he has mounted African carved masks, religious figures, weapons, models, items large, small and varied- even manhole covers). Moving to Ulster County, his New York clientele continued to seek him out in addition to local dealers. During his recuperation, Zoe Bissell, his talented assistant will continue the work.

Because of Peter's interest in cultural arts, for some years he published *Living History*, a publication encouraging the revival of forgotten arts and trades, and the tools used in connection with them. It also included American Indian lore- another of Peter's favourite studies.

A few years after becoming involved with the Dutch Barn Preservation Society, he started the Mid-Hudson Chapter of that organization. This led to the origin of the Society for the Preservation of Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture (HVVA) which Peter established in the mid 1990-s. With Peter as the prime mover and shaker, the group arranges tours of early Dutch (and other) houses and barns; assists with workshops- teaching skills such as thatching, how to construct a hay barrack or move a barn. The group also aids historical societies and old house and barn owners with advice; provides displays for regional festivals and helps historic groups with programs. HVVA has also published *Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640 - 1840* produced by HVVA member John Stevens. This traces building development and details from European precedents to their use in the United States and Canada.

Another facet of HVVA is its monthly *Newsletter*. Produced almost entirely by Peter, it contains information about buildings examined by members, relating discoveries to examples in the Netherlands and elsewhere; reports on upcoming events of special interest to the group, and maintains contact with vernacular study groups throughout the World.

In the ten years that the HVVA *Newsletter* has been published, Peter's work has contributed significantly to the history of the Hudson Valley region, investigating, recording and sharing information on early structures that no other organization or individual is doing. For this he deserves hearty appreciation from the State of New York. A quiet, modest man with a constantly enquiring mind and boundless enthusiasm, we look forward to his complete recovery.

Marion F. Moore.

Thursday, November 16, 2006

Conference theme of African American History -Researching African American Dwellings in New York State, Before and after Slavery.

SUNY Albany Campus Center Ballroom - Lecture 1:00- 2:30 pm

Presenters - Walter R. Wheeler, Hartgen Archeological Associates, Inc , -Neil Larson, Larson Fisher Associates, Woodstock NY -

Joint Meeting HVVA and DBPS November 18th Kierstead House 10:00 am

Held at the Kierstead House Museum, Saugerties, Ulster County, Joint meeting of HVVA and the Dutch Barn Preservation Society. Followed by a tour of two important Dutch barns in the town of Saugerties. Topics that will be presented are the reconstruction of the Solite Dutch barn at the Keirstead House, the DBPS Kellogg grant for a survey of Dutch cultural landscapes and the Saugerties Historic Commission's survey of historic houses in Saugerties.

For more information contact : Bob Hedges (518) 398-7773

Holiday Party December 16, 2006 Meeting at Senate House 10:00 am

This year we are planning something a little different from our usual holiday party. I hope we still have the stellar turn outs we have had in the past. This year we have made reservations at the Hoffman House for lunch located in the Stockade District, Kingston, NY, and our house tour for the day will be to the Senate House State Historic Site.

We will meet at the Senate House Grounds located at Clinton Ave. at 10:00. A thorough tour of both cellar and garret are planned for HVVA members, this is a very rare treat. It is then planned to proceed to the Hoffman House for lunch, just a short walk from the Senate House.

Both of these buildings have great histories and although altered have great vernacular appeal, they truly represent the very best in early Hudson Valley house style.

The cost of the event is \$20, this will include full lunch and dessert, coffee and tea, with tax and tip included, also included is the fee to The Senate House itself. Please send checks payable to HVVA, to Rob Sweeney, 1019 Flatbush Road, Kingston NY. We need to have your **reservations by December 10th**. Please indicate lunch entree:

*Sliced **London broil** w/ mushroom sauce served w/ house Fries.

*Vegetable and cheese **Quiche** served w/ salad.

*Penne pasta w/ **shrimp** and veggies in garlic.

*oversize grilled **chicken** Caesar salad.



THE SENATE HOUSE

House Tour Planning:

One of the proposed idea for a HVVA fund raising event is to host a vernacular house tour. This project will require a lot of planning, but could put us on good financial ground. Although the board would hold final approval, a committee of interested members should be formed to do a majority of the planning in caucus, rather than adding to the length of the general monthly board meetings. If you are interest in this project please contact one of our board members and we would be delighted to get anyone with interest involved. The tour would more than likely be in September 2006. Not only do we need our members to be planners, we are going to need their house as well. If you own a historic house and would like to offer the house for the tour please let us know. At this point we are looking for interested property owners just to see what we come up with, then we can see if we want to localize the tour or open it up to the whole area and call it an HVVA Open House Day. Many of us are very fortunate to live in one of these wonderful historic structures, I always welcome any chance to bring others into them and share the unique qualities of these homes. A house tour for the general public is one of the best ways to preserve our architectural heritage. So please get on board and offer your help and your home. Lets hear from you soon so the work can

HVVA MINUTES October 21, 2006

Bevier House, Stone Ridge, NY

Present were Jim Decker, Rob Sweeney, George Van Sickle, Betty Mosny, and Maggie MacDowell. The meeting was opened at 10:30 am.

New Business:

Jim has pricing for projectors and we can purchase an Epson for under \$1000.00. We tabled the actual purchase until the new year, as there is no rush to procure the projector the fund for the purchase will come for the book fund.

The main concern at present is Peter Sincliar's health. He is now in Benedictine Hospital and progress is being made. Robert Jaracka has offered to help retrieve the mailing label files for Peters computer.

George Van Sickle was asked to write an article on his choice of topic for the up coming newsletters. Marion Stevens will contribute a story about Peter.

The holiday party is being planned. Rob will do some investigating and provide the information for the next newsletter.

Old Business:

Rob says we are averaging 3 book sales a week. We will plan a Christmas Special for soft cover books and also offer the special price for the November 9th lecture and book signing at SUNY New Paltz.

The "About Town" for northern Dutchess County had a small blurb about the book but failed to include contact information to purchase it. Maggie suggested we try to get the New Paltz About Town edition to review the book as well.

Jim announced the cross windows for the Jean Hasbrouck House are ready to be installed. The cellar windows have been replaced as well.

Several houses were discussed to visit for another meeting. We seem to have better attendance when we plan a meeting and a house study tour on the same day.

The tool room at Bevier House was inspected by those present and appreciation, again of Peter's involvement was discussed. We all feel fortunate to be welcomed into the Bevier House for our meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Maggie MacDowell, Secretary HVVA

Book Sale:

For HVVA members only, through December 25th we will be offering the softbound edition of, Dutch Vernacular Architecture in North America, 1640-1830, For a special holiday gift price of \$45.00 including tax and shipping! Limited hardbound editions are available at the standard rate of \$74.00, shipping and tax included. Order early to ensure holiday arrival.

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HELP WANTED

In Peters absence HVVA needs the further support of its membership. We are in need of copy for the newsletter, events of interest for the group to attend and help with compiling information regarding vernacular structures.

It is apparent by the formatting of this edition of the newsletter that Peters creative touch in the production and editing is sorely missed. However at various meetings and focus groups Peter and other board members were determined to find an easier way to produce our newsletter and also find a way to collaborate on line during its production. Although Peter maintained it was easier to "cut and Paste" each edition, we now need to prove the new format will work to our advantage, but the "vernacular style" of the old format well unfortunately disappear. We look to Peter's guidance and approval as we continue his work until he is able return. More photos and graphics will be added to future newsletters, but in our rush to inform our members about Peters condition and upcoming events we produced a rather sparse edition. Help us make that not so in the future.

It has not official been decided as to who will edit the newsletter so several of us will try to do this work through the coming months, so please bear with us. If you wish to send articles of interest for publication please send them to: Robert Sweeney 1019 Flatbush Rd, Kingston NY 12401, or email them to Gallusguy@msn.com.

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
\$20 membership.
\$15 for students and the poor
Mail to: HVVA
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