

**MID-HUDSON CHAPTER of the DUTCH BARN PRESERVATION SOCIETY**  
**May, 1999 Newsletter**

The Mid-Hudson Chapter of the Dutch Barn Society is an un-official and un-structured group of local barn enthusiasts who feel a need for a regional focus. A group that can organize local workshops, tours and fund raising events, reach out to new members and create a public awareness of the region's Dutch heritage in its traditional timber frame barns and domestic architecture.

We have a site that will serve a number of functions. It is the Oliver/Erusard Dutch barn (Mar-6) on Route 209, Marbletown, Ulster County, New York. Final arrangements have not been worked out with the owner but we have been working with the caretaker and tenants of the property to improve the site and bring electric power to the barn.

**Friday, April 16, 1999** - A day of clearing out the Oliver barn with Renee Danboise, Bruce Palen, Alvin Shaffer and Ken Maromeer. We took five truck loads of metal, tires and plastic to the Marbletown dump. Discovered new artifacts. During the past week with Roger Scheff and Bob Hedges, we built a set of white oak steps to the library entrance, laid a pine storage floor in part of the library loft and began fitting the five-pairs of sashes to the five window frames that John Kaufman built ten years ago during his stabilization of the barn's structure. We needed only to lower the sill two-inches to fit the first sash. On the outside surface of John's board-and-batten library entrance door the ten-year-old pine wood with a wash of boiled linseed oil is weathered to a warm mellow brown. In the right upper corner, a woodpecker has cut two ugly gashes, evidently looking for the pine bore larva that left a neat round hole almost 1/4 of an inch in diameter. The burn pile was a heap of embers at five-o'clock when it began to rain.

**Saturday** - With Fred Steuding and Roger Scheff, final clean-up and sweep-out.

**Sunday Gathering at the Oliver barn, Marbletown, Ulster County**

It was a perfect bright cool day. About 40 people came to the gathering. People from Albany, Columbia, Ulster and Dutchess Counties attended. The chapter took in \$140 from its first 14 members and \$30.35 of DBPS newsletters were sold. John Stevens documented the early four-bay section of the seven-bay Dutch aisle barn. He and Greg Huber came to some conclusions on the evolution of the Oliver barn which they will be submitting to the chapter's newsletter. We need to do a site plan next including the house and outbuildings.

Frank, who spent many years restoring the Widow Davis Tavern on the other side of Route 209, said that the present barn is built on the foundation of the original house which served as a meeting place during the early years of settlement after 1672. It was used again for meetings following the burning of Kingston in 1777. The homestead's cast iron historic marker, placed there in 1939, is broken off and missing. Frank said that the present two-story Oliver stone house was built in 1816.

At about 3 PM a small mob did a tour of the Oliver house from attic to cellar. In the cellar two incomplete but identical pairs of reused doorposts were found with evidence of leaded glass transoms. They are like the fragment found in the 1743 Brink/Boice house in Saugerties and the cross casement frame in the circa 1690 Bevier/Elting house in New Paltz. Sashes with wooden muntins replaced lead by the 1750s.

An altered but early reused batten door with distinctive molding patterns was found re-used in the cellar. It has a well preserved original surface, like the oak door posts. Another batten door has a reused butterfly hinge dating to the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. Three Beaded beams in a Kitchen addition may also come from an earlier house. A 24x16 inch cast iron plate, used as a fireback in an upstairs fireplace, may be the top or bottom plate of a five-plate stove dating before 1760. It would be the only top or bottom plate known in the mid-Hudson Valley. John suggested making a cast of a corner. I could not see an end bolt lug. It should be examined more closely.

A five-minute business meeting was held and a Saturday, May 22 Documentation Workshop was scheduled with Michael Carr to do a Dutch barn in Columbia County. Two weeks later this was combined with a trustee meeting to be held at the Germantown Parsonage 10AM.

There is an endangered Dutch barn on East Dorsey Lane, Hyde Park, Dutchess County also the abandoned Dutch barn on Quaker Lane nearby has not been well documented and is going down.

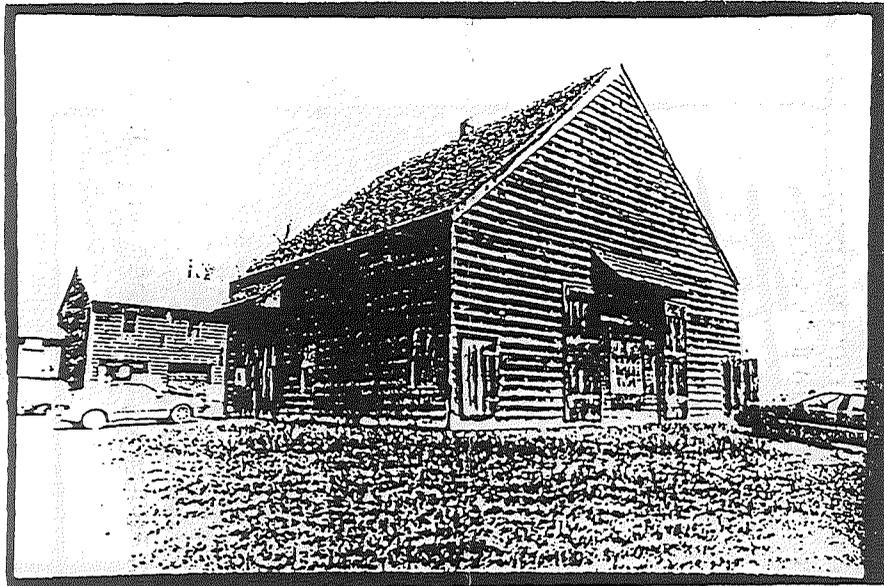
#### **Five Mohawk Valley Dutch Barns by Peter Sinclair & Roger Scheff**

The recent article in The Bulletin, Journal of the New York State Archaeological Association, Number 114, by Dean R. Snow, concerning the Mohawk Upper Castle Historic District, writes about the Molly Brant 4-bay Dutch barn, located near the 1769 Indian Castle Church. He mentions its 24 foot tall columns, braced upper tie beam on the middle bent and unusually long 21 inch extended tenons. "Widely considered diagnostic of eighteenth-century Dutch barns," he writes (p.41), "the presence of these and other contemporary structural features in the present Welden Family Farm barn support its identification as the structure mentioned in Molly Brant's Revolutionary War loss claim inventory and the subsequent 1789 Cockburn survey of the former Brant property." He writes (p.39) that the barn is "...believed to be the only remaining standing structure associated with the Brant family occupation of the site."

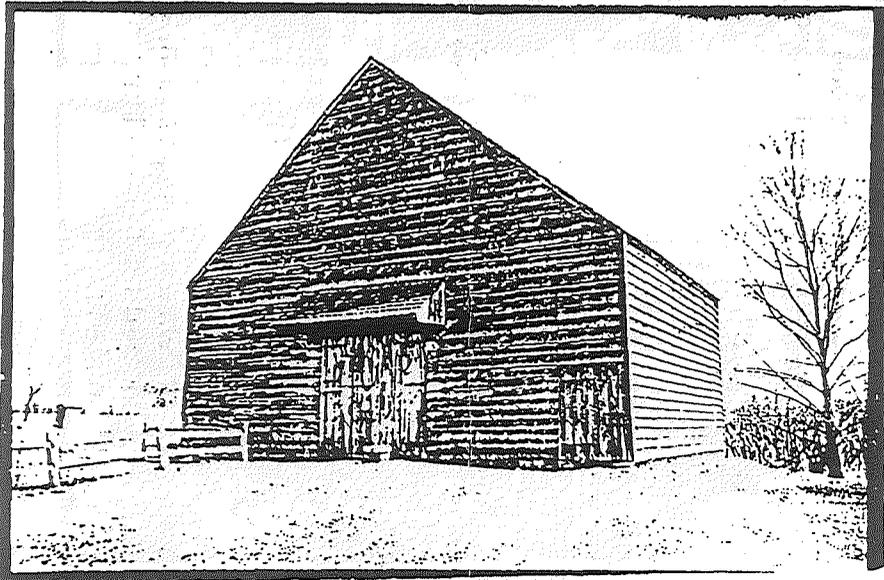
This kind of speculation shows the need for dendrochronology to help in the dating of wooden structures. Greg Huber, Bob Andersen and others were not very familiar with the Brant barn and from what could be deduce from Fitchen's documentation of the barn numbered 25 (p.102), the tall columns and braced upper tie beam sound more like a late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century barn.

John Stevens noted that Fitchen's Drawing 4 (p. 117) of transverse (bent) sections shows that the Indian castle Dutch barn (designated A) is very like another Dutch barn (D) nearby and like the East of Sharon barn (E) (Fitchen #33) which he helped move to Bethpage Village on Long Island. He now considers the Bethpage barn an early nineteenth century example. K, L and M with low side walls and single aisle struts that Fitchen found only in the Hudson Valley seem more typical of a pre-revolutionary Dutch barn. John Stevens said that the Indian Castle Dutch barn may be the most westerly example. It can be seen from the thoroughway near Herkimer. He thought the roof looked in poor shape the last time he passed it. Todd Scheff and others suggested we drive up Sunday and take a look.

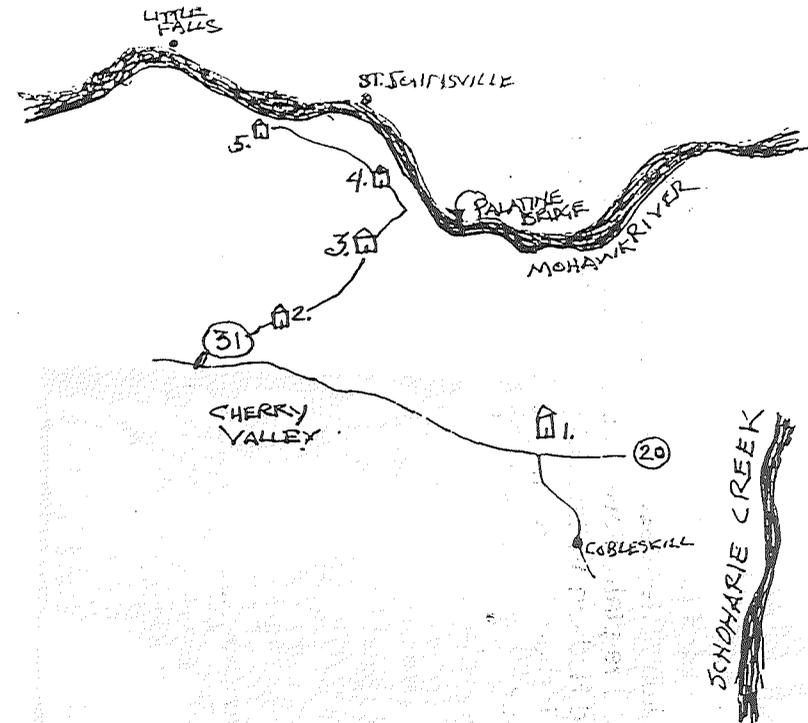
Thursday, April 29, 1999, we drove to the Upper Castle Dutch barn (5.), (Fitchen #25) and met with its present owner Charles Welden, 2105 River Road, Little Falls, NY 13365; (315) 823-3089. He suggested I call Paul Flanders (518) 568-2487, about the barn. It has a good metal roof and is in stable condition.

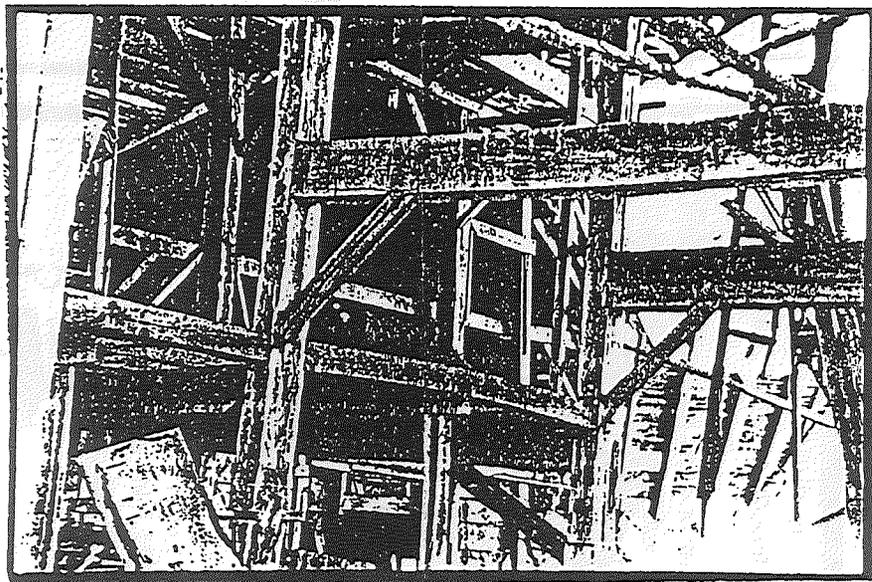
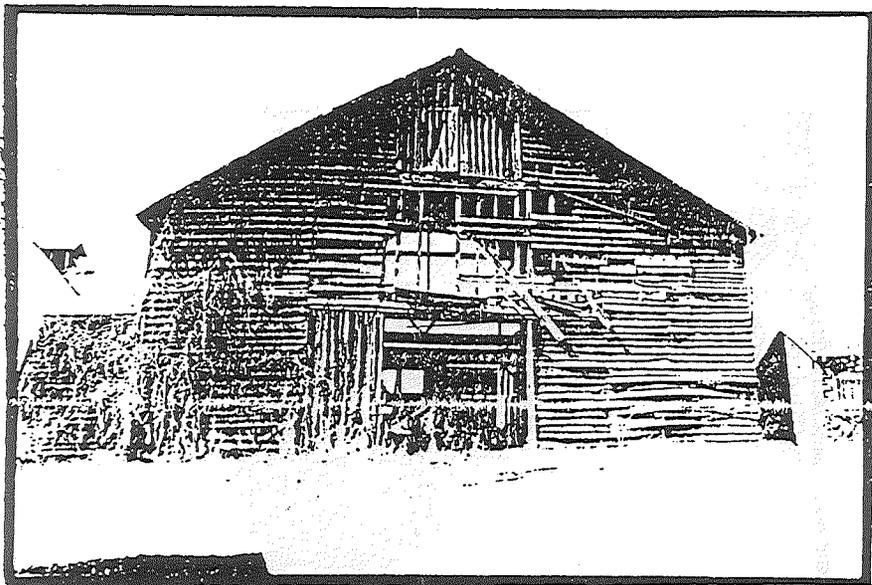


(1.) **Cobleskill Dutch Barn.** This barn was moved to its present location in the 1970s. It has a square-rule frame, a system of lay-out and measurement adopted after 1815. In the left background is the frame building with an English principle rafter system.

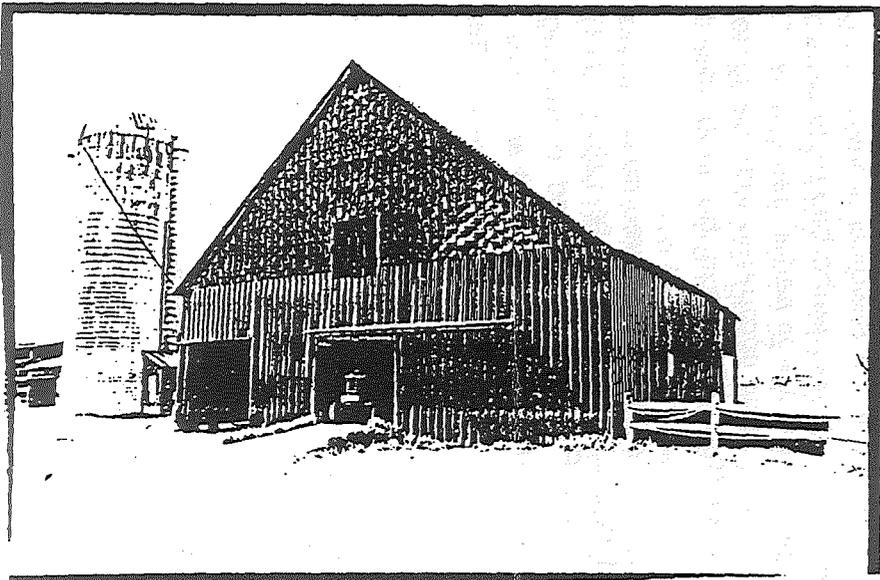


(2.) **Windfall Dutch barn.** This barn was restored in the 1970s and is now a community center.

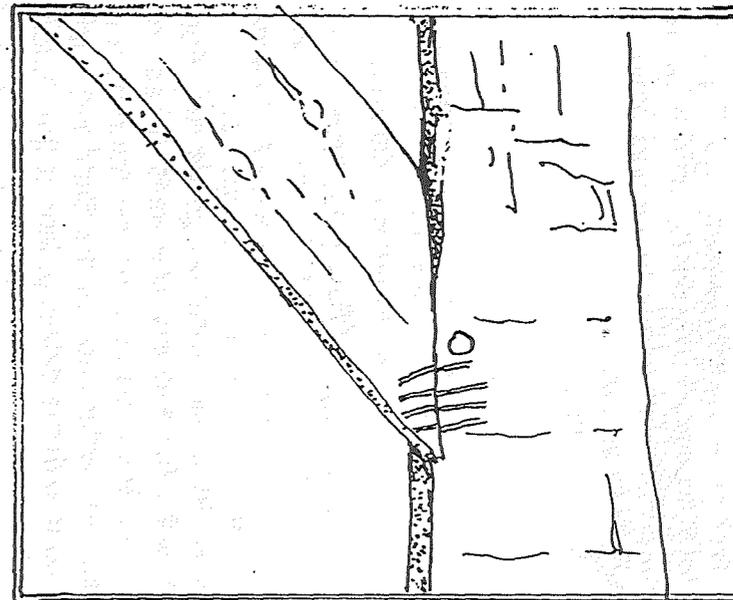
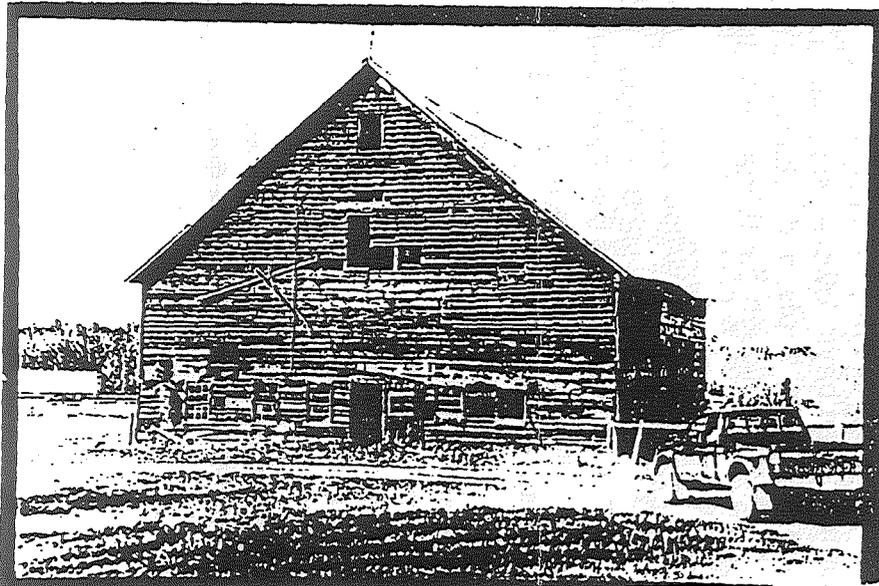




**(3.) Unidentified Dutch Barn and House.** This barn has a low pitched roof and the anchorbeam tenons do not extend, indicating a later date for this barn than the other five barns visited.



(4.) **Sand Hill Farm Dutch barn.** This barn had the lowest side walls of the six visited and the shoulders of the anchorbeams at the columns are diminished, indicating it is the earliest of the six.



(5.) **Upper Castle Dutch barn.** This barn has been changed from an end-entrance to a side-entrance barn. The drawing on the right shows an internal anchorbeam brace joined to a column with a diminished shoulder. Four race-knife marriage marks are cut across the lay-out face of the joint just below the trunnel.

We did not spend more than an hour examining the barn but a number of features seemed to suggest that the construction of the present barn did not pre-date the Revolution and so was not Molly Brant's barn but perhaps an early nineteenth century example.

There is a small lead screw on the drill bit used to drill the mortises. The twist bit with lead screw is said to post-date 1790. The purlin braces are sawn. The anchorbeams are set with square shoulders into the columns. The side walls and columns are very tall. The rafter feet are joined to the wall plate with a tenon and the only marriage marks found were light race-knife lines cut across the joint, both of these last features are found in some barns in Columbia County but not in Ulster, perhaps indicating a Palatine connection.

Features which indicate an earlier date for the Upper Castle barn are the steep pitch of the roof, the heavy braces set with a diminished shoulder, the heavy pine beams and braces and the long extended anchorbeam tenons with rounded ends. This last feature may have become a persistent element of regional style, like the extended tenons of the pentice outriggers, both northern features of the Dutch barn.

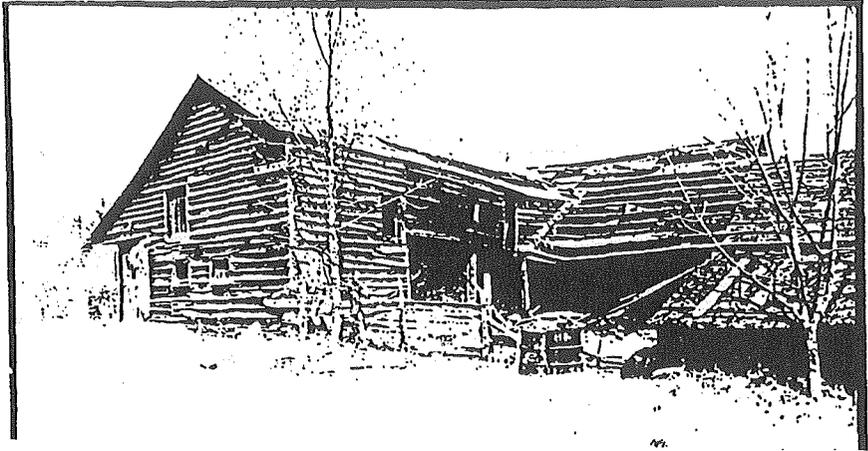
On the way to the Upper Castle barn we examined four Dutch barns along the way north of Albany. Two of them have proportions very similar to the Upper Castle barn, high side-walls and steep roof pitch. One (3.) that was in ruins has tall side walls but lower roof pitch. The Sand Hill Farm four-bay barn (4.) at Fort Plains owned by James R. & M.C. Wichols, Sand Hill Farm, 127 Lewis Rd., Fort Plain, NY 13339; (518) 993-4205, has a steep roof pitch and low side walls. It has chiseled marriage marks, diminished shoulders where the anchorbeams join the columns and all braces are hewn. All of these features indicate an earlier date for the Sand Hill barn than the Upper Castle barn and are consistent with the development of the Dutch barn in the Mid-Hudson Valley.

The five northern Dutch barns we examined were all originally drive-through single level barns where-as the Mid-Hudson Dutch barns built after the Revolution often diverge more from the true-form drive-through. They often have lowered anchorbeams to enlarge hay storage, open bays, lowered side aisles and sometimes full or partial basements. The large size of beams, struts, and columns of the northern barns compared with the lighter frames of the Mid-Hudson barns may indicate a better stand of trees in the north after the Revolution.

The first Dutch barn visited was a Diefendorf family barn (1.) moved from Carrytown to Cobleskill in the 1970s by John A Wigen, RD#1 Box 400, Cobleskill, NY 12043; (518) 234-4109. It is near the site of the East of Sharon barn (Fitchen #33) moved to Bethpage Village. John showed us through his barn and the church he moved next to it and uses for his construction company. This church frame has king post trusses and an English rafter system with principle and common rafters.

The Cobleskill barn frame is of hemlock. There are no marriage marks and some of the beams are diminished at the shoulder indicating square rule and probably a later date than the Upper Castle barn. John Wigen suggested we see the 4-bay Windfall Dutch barn (2.) that was restored and is now used as a community center in Salt Springville. This barn has marriage marks but light sawn braces on the anchorbeams. Its frame is pine and it has a unique set of transverse raising holes in all of the wall posts indicating the wall posts may have been raised with the H-bents and later connected with wall plates.

Saturday, April 24 at the Shultis farm in the Whitenberg area of Woodstock with Mitch Vinicor, the present owner, and Leif Christensen who may be working on the repairs for the scribe-rule single-aisle Dutch barn (Wod-3) with key-hinge doors, stake mangers, log troths and additions. One area of an early square rule framed addition has failed and four beams have come loose from a rotten column. The beams needs immediate support and the roof needs a few tarps. There are a number of small outbuilding that are also in need of attention.



**Shultis/Vinicor (Wod-3)**  
**four-bay single-aisle Dutch barn**  
**with additions, circa 1835**  
**Whitenberg Rd.**  
**Woodstock, Ulster County, NY**

**Sunday** in the morning with Dave Cree and his friend Donna, we visited the Eckert stone bear trap in West Shokan with Bud Eckert. Dave is one of two bear people for NYS' Dept. of Environmental Conservation. He had heard of stone bear traps but had never seen one. Bud has a photo of another of a different type from Wawarsing. Spent the afternoon with Fred Steuding at Alf Ever's house in Shady. Helped with organizing papers.

**Wednesday, April 28, 1999** late afternoon with Bob Hedges and Roger Scheff at the Vinicor/Shultis barn.

**Saturday, May 1, 1999** about 10 people attended a Dutch barn tour in Ulster county that was sponsored by the Catskill Center for Conservation of Arkville, Delaware County. The tour group came from Albany County, Delaware County, Long Island, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. A slide presentation was made at the Stone Ridge Library and five Dutch barns within 15 miles were toured ending at the Oliver barn. Three DBPS Newsletter Collections were sold at \$21. The Mid-Hudson Chapter of the DBPS now has 15 paying members and \$190 in the bank.

Date: 01/11/00

Meeting of the Dutch Barn Preservation Society  
and Tour of some Local Barns  
**Saturday, May 22, 1999, 10:00 AM**  
**The Germantown Parsonage**  
**Maple Lane, off 9G**  
**Germantown**  
**Columbia County, NY**



**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**of The Dutch Barn Preservation Society**  
**Saturday, October 23, 1999**  
**Old Stone Fort Museum Complex**  
**Schoharie, New York**



**MEETINGS OF THE MID\_HUDSON CHAPTER 10 to 5 PM**  
**Oliver Dutch barn**  
**2911 Route 209**  
**Marbletown, Ulster Co., NY**  
**across from the Widow Davis Tavern**

**Saturday, May 29, 1999**  
**Saturday, June 5, 1999**



**The Newsletter of the Mid-Hudson Chapter of the Dutch Barn Preservation Society**  
and notice of up-coming events will be made available with a \$10 membership.  
Mail to Peter Sinclair, 83 Spillway Rd., West Hurley, NY 12491; (914) 338-0257

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