



Historic Walking Tours



Over 75 people attended our popular walking tours of Sparta in 2016. Occurring once per month from April through October, the tour begins at the Jug Tavern with a screening of "The Battle for Sparta," followed by a house-to-

house tour of the neighborhood led by Dr. Alan Stahl, who is a Sparta resident, past president of the Jug Tavern of Sparta, and Princeton University faculty member. Our tours have wrapped up for 2016, but will begin again in April 2017. Hope to see you next year!



Cider: Now & Then

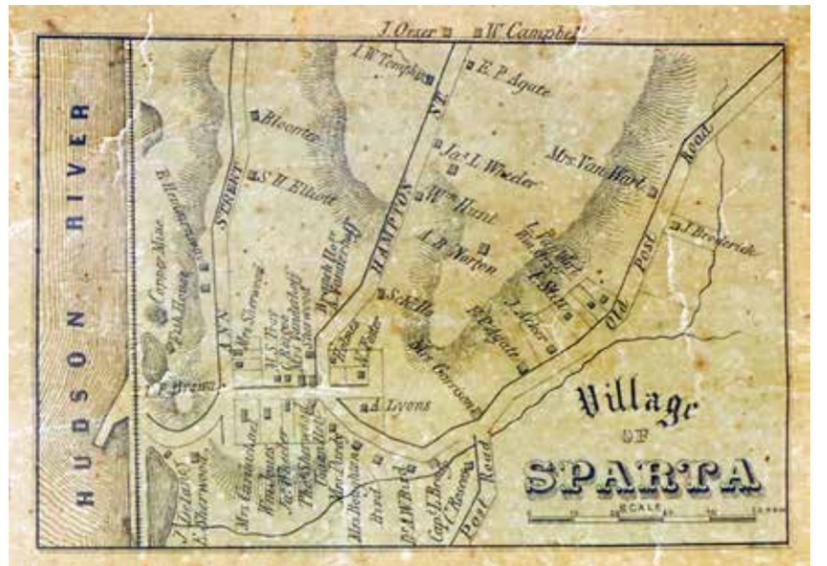
On a warm and sunny September Sunday, The Jug Tavern was delighted to host Andy Brennan for a program about the history of cider making in the United States. Andy is owner of Aaron Burr Cidery in Wurtsboro, New York, and a leader in the craft cider movement, which is gaining momentum throughout New York State and the country. He spoke for about an hour on the history of the apple (did you know it is not native to these parts?), the importance of cider as a beverage in the early years of the country, the variety and differences between wild apples and the cultivated apples we buy in the store, and the process of making cider. All aspects were infused with Andy's philosophy of the craft cider movement, clearly a topic close to his heart. And you can taste it.

Following his talk, the audience reassembled on the front lawn for a tasting of different types of apples, several varieties of hard cider, and a general Q&A. Andy's enthusiasm for all things apple came through as he answered all questions, spoke to like-minded cider enthusiasts and created new fans of apples with attitude.

SPARTA SPEAKS 2017

Sparta: The Place and the People

The programming committee is currently at work lining up programs for our third Sparta Speaks Series, kicking off with our Annual Meeting in May 2017. Our speaker for the May meeting will be Dana White, Village Historian, who will talk to us about the relationship between Sing Sing Prison and Sparta's residents. In November, Town Historian, Martha Mesiti, will talk about the people who made up Sparta in the nineteenth century as revealed through census documentation. The third program to take place in March of 2018 is still in the works, but here's a hint: a living history event to share memories and add to Sparta's oral history. More details will follow, so stay tuned!

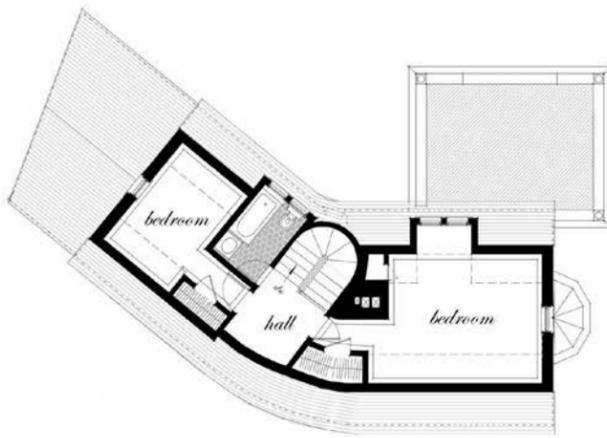


Detail from Clark & Wagner, *Map of the Townships of Ossining and Mount Pleasant* (1862).

Save the Date

for our annual *Holiday Gathering*
on December 18, 2016 (5:00pm to 7:00pm).
Watch for your invitation in the mail.





Top left to right: Sparta ca. 1919 looking southeast from hill; Sparta ca. 1920, view west down Liberty Street. Middle left to right: 12 Liberty Street today; Floorplan from 1950s Real Estate brochure; Back porch. Bottom left to right: 55 Wall Street, New York City, ca. 1910; 12 Liberty front door exterior; 12 Liberty front door interior.

PROPERTY PROFILE: *12 Liberty Street*

Located at the central intersection of the Sparta historic district, 12 Liberty Street is the landmark that everyone remembers. It is the lovely red brick house with a twist: a curved façade that fits into the gentle bend at the junction of Liberty Street and Rockledge Avenue. Since 2007 it is the home of Doug Turshen and Rochelle Udell (Doug serves as the president of the Jug Tavern of Sparta and Rochelle is a board member).

This home has seen many changes over the years. It is one of about forty contributing structures (i.e., historically significant) in the Sparta Historic and Architectural Design District, established in 1975. The original part of the house was built as early as 1787, a simple two-story building with a steep pitched roof. This small building at the bustling center of the growing hamlet of Sparta served as a boarding house throughout much of the nineteenth century. A place to stay over for workers in the busy river trade from Sparta Dock early on, it continued in the 1860s as the Union Hotel, and for a time as the Washington Inn in the 1890s. Unfortunately, we may never know if George slept there. In the early twentieth century it was home to the St. Mary's Church Reading Room, an outreach of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Scarborough.

In the 1920s, Frank A. Vanderlip, the former president of the National City Bank of New York, and owner of Beechwood Estate in Scarborough, took on Sparta as a development project, revitalizing the hamlet as part of his larger vision of the suburban development of Scarborough. At that time many of the buildings in Sparta had become run-down or vacant. Frank and his wife, Narcissa Cox Vanderlip, purchased about 20 properties between 1919 and 1922. Dilapidated structures were demolished, while other buildings were restored, remodeled, or relocated within the neighborhood. In addition streets were paved and services improved. Properties initially available to rent turned over to private ownership between 1930 and 1970.

One of the most dramatically altered buildings, 12 Liberty Street received the special attention of architect Arthur Loomis Harmon (formerly a designer with McKim, Mead, and White, and later a partner of Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon, known for design of the Empire State Building). The little house at 12 Liberty more than doubled in size. If you look closely, you will see a difference in color and pattern of the brickwork between the original structure to the right of the front door and the addition, which starts with the front entrance and continues on the left-hand side. The kitchen is one story on the eastern end of the addition.

Let's take a closer look at the front. Renovated in the Georgian Colonial style, the house is arranged symmetrically around the entrance. The front door with arched fanlight is balanced by two inset arched windows, and a circular window adorns the center of the second story, beneath the decorative dentil molding at the roof line. The custom lantern is a recent addition, as is the oval plaque with the year of construction, found on many Sparta homes (a project of the Jug Tavern of Sparta).

A beautiful and significant detail is the wrought-iron fence between the house and the sidewalk at 12 Liberty, and also at 2 Liberty. This fencing was part of the U.S. Customs House at 55 Wall Street in New York City. National City Bank purchased the building in 1907 and proceeded to renovate it for its banking headquarters. During the process some materials were repurposed by Frank Vanderlip. In addition to transplanting this fencing, Vanderlip shipped two of the building's massive Ionic granite columns to his Scarborough home. You can see them today at the original entrance of Beechwood just north of the Clear View School.

It is the combination of history, preservation, and thoughtful new details by today's Sparta homeowners that keeps the neighborhood's heritage alive.