



New Images of Old Sparta



New images of old Sparta are like red diamonds: highly desirable but hard to find. Recently, three photographs that we at the Jug Tavern had never seen before surfaced, thanks to the Ossining Historical Society Museum. Two of them, both images of Revolutionary Road around 1900, were discovered in an attic on Dale Avenue, when a member of the Museum was preparing the property for an estate sale. We can see the greenhouses that stood on what is now the Arcadian shopping center site. The third was hiding in plain sight, sort of. While perusing the Museum's collection of glass plate photographs in its William Slater Collection, Ossining Village Historian Dana White came across this image of Spring Street in the 1930s as it descends toward the intersection of Liberty and Rockledge Streets. A truck loaded with pipes seems to have skidded into a house on the rain-slick road. The caption sheds little light on the situation; it reads: "Sparta brick--auto and house." The photographs will be scanned and hung on the walls of the Jug Tavern, adding to the visual history of this special neighborhood. —Dana White



A Walk in Time

From June through October, the Jug Tavern will conduct monthly walking tours of the historic Sparta. Dr. Alan Stahl, a neighborhood resident and former president of the Jug Tavern, who teaches in the History Department of Princeton University, will lead the tours. Each tour will begin at the Jug Tavern at 1 p.m. Participants will then walk about six blocks through the neighborhood learning about the historic homes in the landmarked district; the tour will end at around 3 p.m.

Upcoming dates for 2018 are all Sundays: **June 10, July 8, August 12, September 7, and October 7.** The tour is free, but participation is limited to 20 people. For a reservation or further information, contact alan@jugtavern.org.



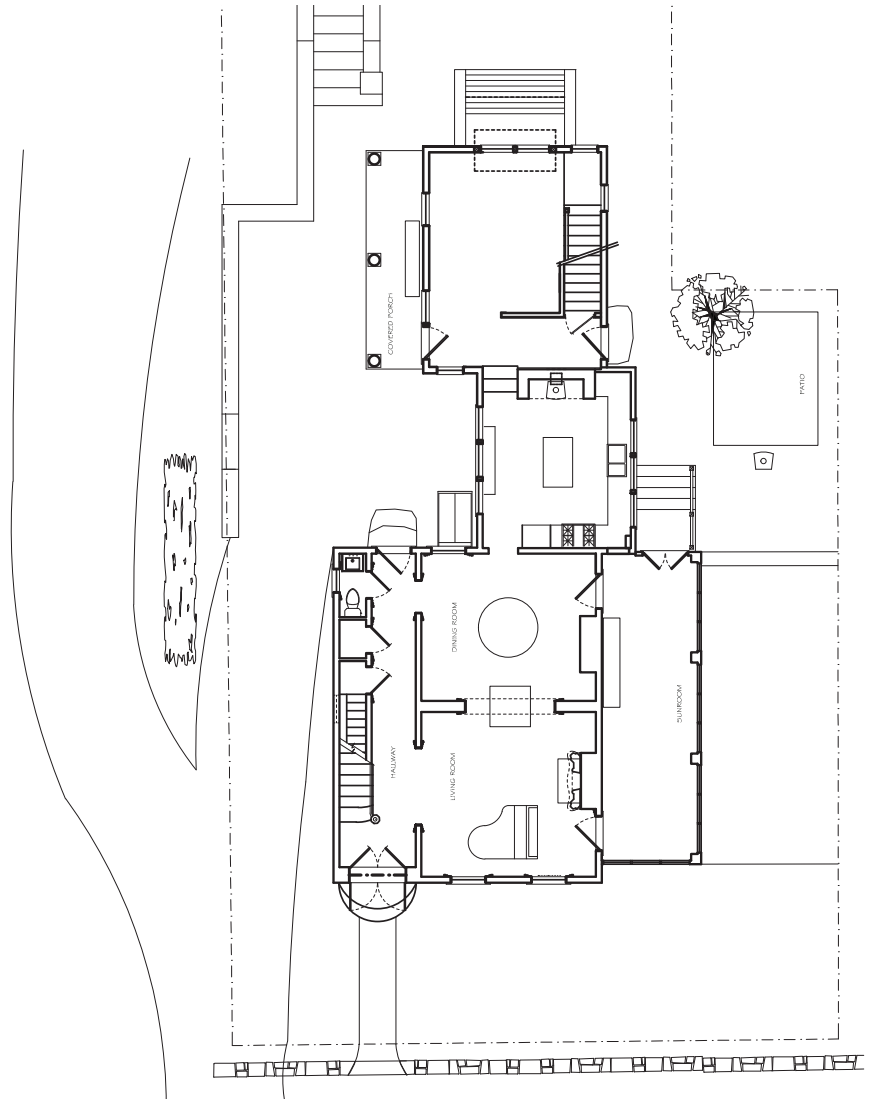
Sparta Speaks Back by Popular Demand...

Monday, August 13 at 7:00pm, **Peter G. Rose**, historian and author on Dutch American culinary history will present: *From Garden to Table.*

Saturday, October 20 at 3:00 and 7:00 pm, **Tim Rowell**, banjo, and **Ambrose Verdibello**, fiddle, will present *The Roots of American Folk Music.*



Look for us on Saturday, June 9th at the Ossining Village Fair



TOP LEFT: 1850s main section and 1920s double porch. MIDDLE LEFT: Rear view showing 1790s portion of house TOP RIGHT: Floor plan including 2006 addition, Liberty St. is at bottom. BOTTOM LEFT: long view from addition to front windows. BOTTOM CENTER: view of living room and dining room from front hall. BOTTOM RIGHT: a summer day on the porch. Images courtesy of Joanne Tall

PROPERTY PROFILE: *4 Liberty Street*

Around 1920, the traditional front porch on the front of 4 Liberty Street was removed and a graceful two-story glass porch was added to the west side of the house. For about 100 years the teachers, writers and artists who have lived there have enjoyed spectacular views of the Hudson River. For the past 27 years this charming house has been the home of Joanne Tall and Scott Kamen, architects who specialize in historic preservation, restoration, and architectural design.

House-hunting brought Scott and Joanne to Sparta in the early 1990s. After viewing another home, they almost missed 4 Liberty because there was no sign indicating its availability on the lawn. But as they were admiring the glass porch from the sidewalk, a chance encounter with a neighbor, who knew it was for sale, opened the way. "As soon as we crossed the threshold of the front door, Scott and I knew this was the one for us," Joanne recalls.

Scott and Joanne have lovingly restored the interior of the house to its original plan before building an addition in 2006. The original footprint of the house, possibly dating back to the 1790s, contains the kitchen and an upper floor. Originally a steep ladder stair connected the levels and the front door faced the street. Today the colonial front door and the stair/ladder were removed to accommodate an updated kitchen with a river view.

Around 1830 the main portion of the house was built, with two rooms up and down. The elegant living and dining room feature 9-1/2-foot ceilings and a Carrara marble fireplace.

Before the house became one of the present owners' projects, it was remodeled in the 1920s during Frank Vanderlip's rehabilitation of the Sparta neighborhood. Vanderlip's plan included reorienting several properties toward the river, at which point the glass porch facing the river was added. It was said that one of Vanderlip's interests in Sparta was to create affordable housing stock for teachers at his Scarborough School. A 1930 census record for this block lends credibility to this claim. It indicates that several teachers rented homes on Liberty street including two private school teachers at 4 Liberty.

The earliest known owner of the house was William Jones, a sea captain who lived here with his mother Rebecca and other family members in the 1860s and 1870s. There is evidence of a second kitchen on the second floor, and the first floor at one time had a room with a private outdoor entrance at the back of the first floor stair hall. It has come down through previous owners that this house may have been a boarding house during the Depression.

Since the 1940s the house has been a single family residence with three owners. First it was

owned by Peter and Hilde Oldenburg. Peter was a well-known book designer who also designed art bulletins for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Oldenburgs sold to the Cheneys, both of whom worked in publishing. It was Mrs. Cheney that sold the house to Joanne and Scott, after which she moved across the street.

Joanne recalls a day in the early 1990s when she and Scott hosted Mrs. Cheney and Mrs. Oldenburg for brunch, bringing three consecutive owners under the same roof. Mrs. Oldenburg was in her 90s at the time and walked through the house with Mrs. Cheney, as they shared anecdotes of the children raised there. "Both women were avid gardeners and spoke about the gardens as passionately as the house," Joanne says.

Scott and Joanne love the Sparta neighborhood and have wonderful neighbors. As for the house, it always comes back to that river view from the glass porch. "We enjoy both a sunrise and a sunset to the west," Joanne explains, adding that at sunrise "the Palisades across the river glow." All day the river presents a continually shifting color scheme, and whether for the clouds, the river barges, or the changing seasons, the porch is an inviting space to take in the river scene.

—Martha Mesiti from Joanne Tall's house history