



Historical Exchange Program



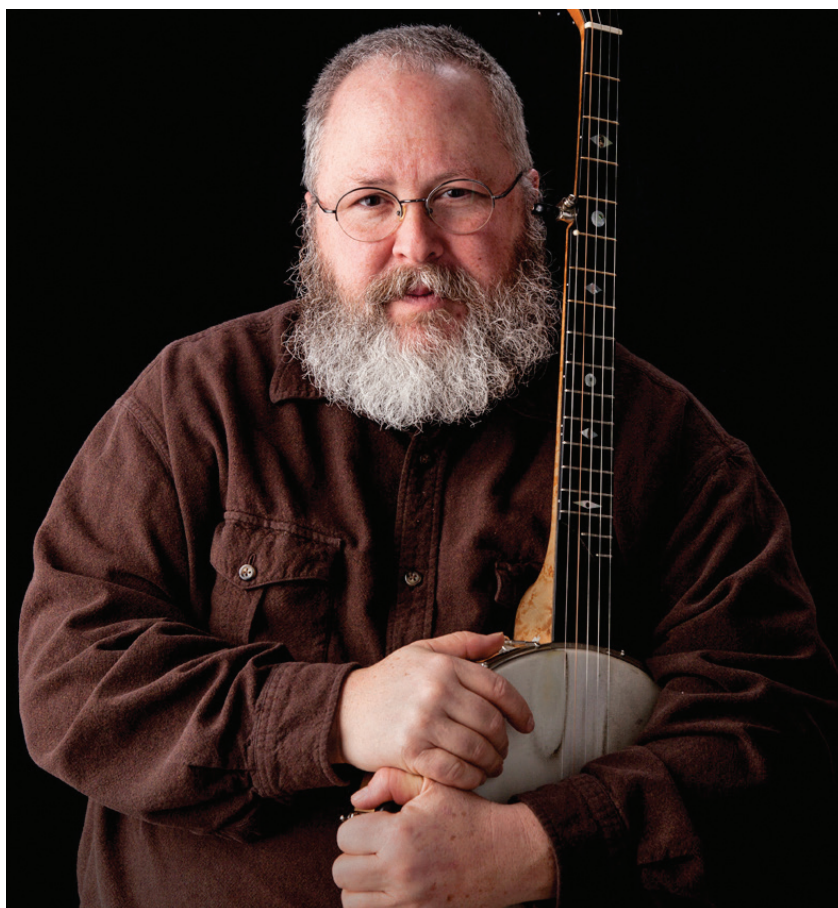
Board Members of the Campwoods Grounds and the Jug Tavern of Sparta, spent the afternoon together on July 28, for two tours: a tour of Sparta (by Sparta's own Alan Stahl) and Campwoods Grounds (by Katie Gorycki, a Campwoods resident for over 20 years). We ended the

day with a potluck supper at Campwoods Auditorium. Many thanks to Alan and Katie for their informative tours, and also to Katie and fellow resident Daniel Jackson for approaching the Jug with the idea that led to a great afternoon of neighborhood sharing and learning. May this be the start of many joint programs for the Ossining community.



Ossining Fair '18

We always enjoy making new friends at the Ossining Village Fair in June. Each year we introduce Sparta to a new group of Ossining residents and visitors. This year Assemblywoman Sandy Galef stopped by our Ye Olde Selfie booth.



Save the Date
October 20th

Tim Rowell, banjo, and Ambrose Verdibello, fiddle, will return with an all-new program of American Roots Music. This is the duo's third year at the Jug. They will perform two shows, so make this the year to hear these great musicians!



The Jug Tavern of Sparta, Inc.

The Jug Tavern of Sparta, Inc. is a nonprofit organization formed in 1986 to preserve The Jug Tavern for future generations. Built as a farmhouse around 1760, "The Jug" stands at the gateway to Sparta, Ossining's oldest neighborhood. After an 1884 fire, it was rebuilt on the original foundation. In 1976 the Village of Ossining and the Ossining Restoration Committee purchased the building, saving it from demolition. The same year it was placed on the National Register. Today the Jug Tavern is a focus of community engagement and the centerpiece of the Sparta Historic District.



1



2



3



4



5

Back to School

Old class photos show Sparta children posing in front of their schoolhouse. The children are gone, but the school remains, in a different form.

It can be bittersweet to look at the eyes of schoolchildren in vintage photographs. They seem so serious, as if smiling will get them a whack with a ruler. We look in their eyes knowing we were young once too, with the rest of our lives ahead of us.

These five photos, found in the files of the Ossining Historical Society Museum, show students of the Sparta school in its final years, from 1900 to around 1905. The school was established around 1840 at the corner of Spring St. and Fairview and closed in 1907, when the growing village of Ossining absorbed the little community inside its borders. Its students were working class and poor, their parents labourers and immigrants who could not afford to send their children to the private schools which far outnumbered public ones at that time.

Sparta school (1) was a two-story structure with four grades to a floor and surrounded by a yellow fence. In the 1922 volume “Reminiscences of Ossining,” the school is described as “a square building with a little entry on one end. Around the four sides of the classroom was a raised platform and long plain board desks and benches. The teacher’s desk was at one end of the room and the little scholars sat on the edge of her platform to be within reach of the switch, for the little folks are restless... ‘Spare the rod and spoil the child’ was an adage strictly adhered to.”

This photo is well known, for it hangs in the Jug Tavern: a group of children and their two teachers, Miss Kelly and Mr. Lee. The massive American flag waving from the flagpole is blurred by the long exposure. Calvary Chapel stands in the background. Today both structures are private homes, but the original school building is barely visible after being extensively remodelled (2).

The third photo (3) shows the largest group of students. Miss Kelly appears increasingly frazzled. Whoever donated the photos to the Museum was

kind enough to write names on the back of two of them, but not kind enough to attach the name to a child; the fourth photo (4) features children named Sallazo, Smith, Stewart, Brash, Totten, Luby. Names you find in Sparta Cemetery, where some of these children no doubt lie.

The last photo (5) was taken about 1905. Mr. Lee has a white moustache by now. Perhaps Miss Kelly has resigned for a quiet life in the country. The African-American child on the left is possibly descended from Lewis Brady, a former slave who escaped captivity in Maryland and became a river captain in Sparta. Born in 1780, Brady lived to the ripe of age of 108 and had 11 children with his much-younger wife Sarah. Behind him, a friend rests a hand on the boy’s shoulder. The tiny Brady cottage still stands on Rockledge Avenue at the entrance to Scarborough Manor.

We can be more certain of the identity of Chester Cornelius Hoff. The cocksure teenager in the middle of the top row, Hoff was born in 1891, making his age about 14 in this photo. He lived at 14 Agate with his family. He and his brother Archie and sister Edith were the youngest of seven; they are pictured here as well. At age 20, about five years after this photo was taken, Chester, who went by Chet and “Red” — for his ginger hair — would be travelling the country as a leftie pitcher for the New York Highlanders, a precursor to the Yankees. His four-year career was undistinguished except for the time he struck out Ty Cobb in his rookie year of 1911. He moved back to Ossining and went to work as a map-cutter at the Randy McNally factory on the waterfront while pitching local semipro games. He died in Florida in 1998, at the age of 107, making him the longest-living major league player in American history. Hoff is buried in Dale Cemetery, and his grave site is included on the new Dale Cemetery Heritage Trail. —Dana White