



## DUTCH FARM SURVEY

# The Search for Colonial America

The year 2009 marks the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's voyage that led to the creation of New Netherland. The most visible and invaluable documents of this, the very birth of New York State, are the buildings that the Dutch and fellow colonists erected.

The **Dutch Farm Survey** (DFS) — a.k.a. the Survey of New World Dutch Cultural Resources — has launched a search for all surviving Dutch-influenced buildings in the region that was New Netherland. We are **locating, describing, and cataloging** the Dutch-style barns, farm outbuildings, rural and city homes in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and parts of Connecticut, Vermont, and Pennsylvania. The information is placed on a database that will include all buildings, all surveys, and be accessible to all researchers.

The principal Survey goals are to:

- 1) Learn the location and construction of early American buildings
- 2) Demonstrate to the public the richness of our agricultural past
- 3) Pinpoint homes and barns in need of help
- 4) Involve young people in the excitement of exploring and preserving these treasures of colonial America.

This takes place on three levels:

**Level One** is basically finding likely buildings. From this we see which ones need further study, and perhaps immediate aid. Level One form can be completed without going on the property.

**Level Two** is also fairly brief, but some items require access to buildings, if farmers and land-owners permit. This is needed partly to view the interior structure — often the only test of whether the architecture is Dutch-influenced. Almost as important, it is needed to take measurements.

**Level Three** represents more detailed studies, focusing on specific research aspects of the building or the property.

The people who are doing the project include both professional historians and architects and local people who want to learn more about their history.

The 2009 anniversary is a vital opportunity to show the value of our historic buildings, and to attract new partners to vital preservation efforts. Without surveys like this — and without your help — most of these priceless documents of our country's birth will be gone before we can learn from them. If you would like to participate, or know of a building that may be Dutch-influenced, please contact [info@dutchbarns.org](mailto:info@dutchbarns.org). You can also visit [www.dutchbarnsurvey.org](http://www.dutchbarnsurvey.org), or write the Dutch Barn Preservation Society, c/o Mabee Farm Historic Site, 1080 Main Street, Rotterdam Junction, NY 12150.