

**Historical Narrative Report
Houghtaling/Kleinke Farm Complex
65 Kenwood Avenue
Town of Bethlehem, Albany County, NY.**

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September 2023

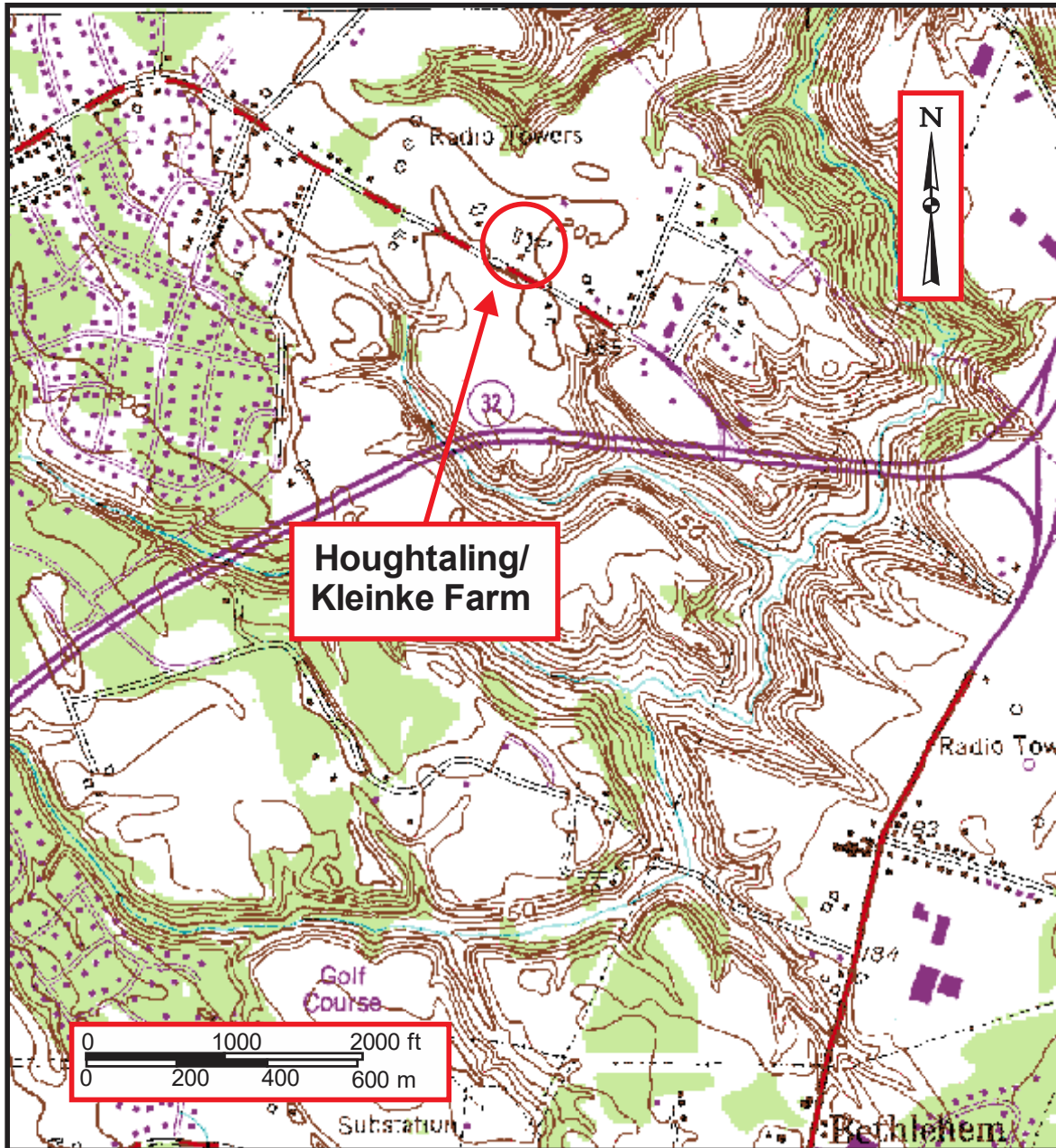


Figure 1. Delmar 7.5 minute USGS topographic map with the Houghtaling/Kleinke farm indicated.

Introduction

The following historical narrative report and photographic catalogue provides the results of a historic architectural assessment and documentation conducted for the Hotaling/Kleinke Farm Complex (00102.000964), located at 65 Kenwood Avenue in the Town of Bethlehem, Albany County, New York (Figures 1 and 2). The farm complex was initially identified as part of a Phase 1A/1B cultural resources survey conducted in the Fall of 2016 as part of a proposed residential development project (15PR01267). A NYS Historic Resource Inventory Form was prepared and submitted to the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

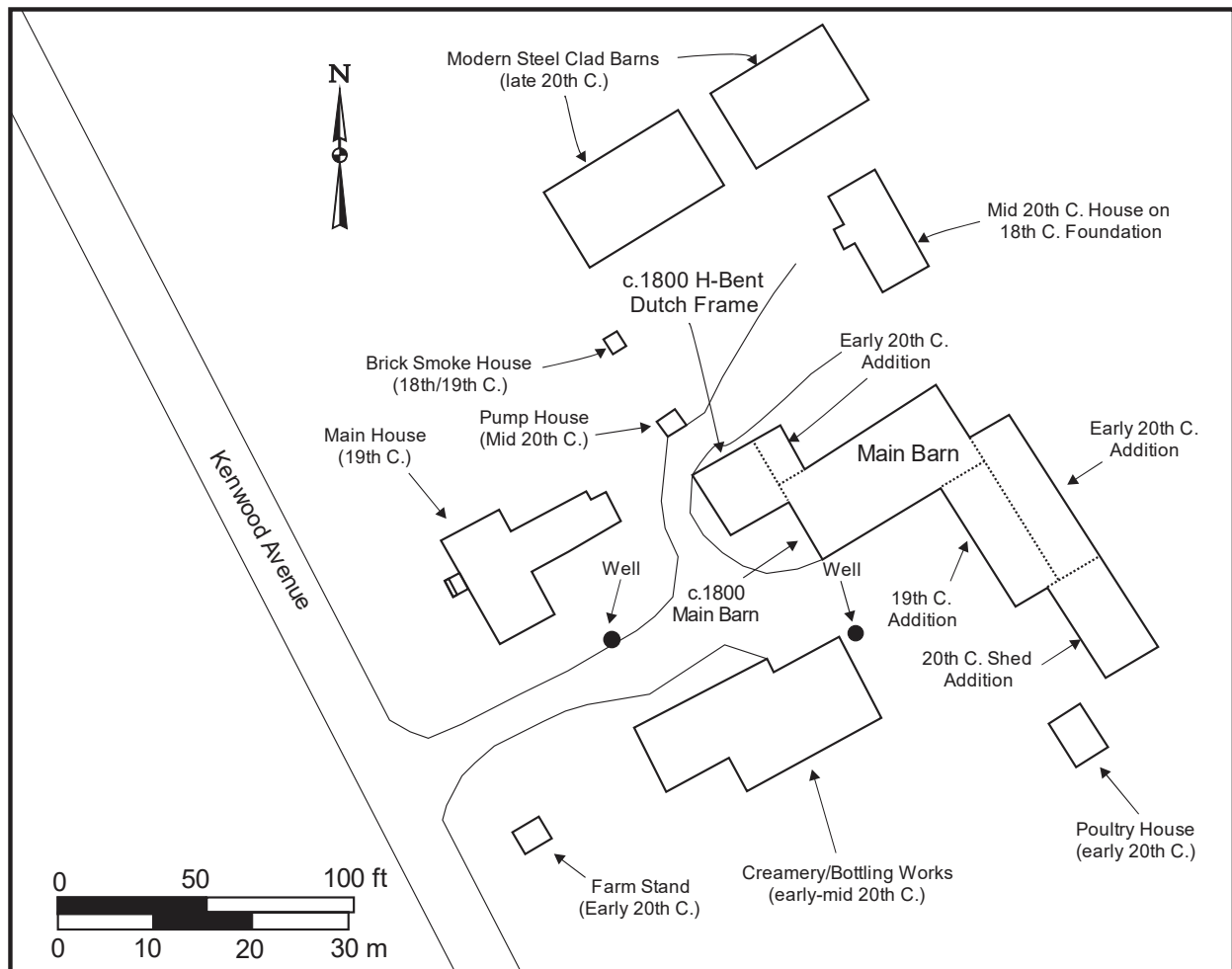


Figure 2. Map showing the interrelationship of landscape features at the Houghtaling/Kleinke farm

(NYSOPRHP) for review under Section 14.09 of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). In 2018 the Town of Bethlehem requested additional information regarding the farm complex, and a Historic Architectural Assessment was prepared by Birchwood Archaeological Services to determine if they may be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The following historical narrative provides is largely based on this assessment and supplemented with additional photographs of the existing structural conditions in September of 2023. The following Historical Narrative provides a brief historic context outlining the history of the farm and an architectural summary detailing some of the features of the buildings from a historical perspective.

Historical Narrative: Houghtaling/Kleinke Farm Complex

The Glenmont area including Kenwood Avenue has been occupied by Dutch settlers since the late-17th century. It is unclear who first settled the property, although by the mid-19th century the farm was owned by members of the Houghtaling family and was known as Pine Grove Farm. The Houghtaling family has long been associated with the Bethlehem area. A review of the 1698 census of Rensselaerswyck includes a Mattys Hoofttyling, with the 1720 census includes one



Figure 3. 1866 Beers Atlas map with the location of the L.M. Houghtaling farm indicated.

Coonrod Hooghteeling (Christoph and Christoph 2012: 274-275). The name "L. M. Houghtaling" appears on the 1866 Beers Atlas map in the vicinity of the house (Figure 3). Records of the Bethlehem Reformed Church indicate that Laurence Hoghtayling and his wife Deby Paige christened their son David on March 14th, 1802 (Bethlehem Historical Association 2012:14). This date is likely in keeping with the approximate age of the original barn and early house foundation. While records are incomplete, no other male members of the Houghtaling family with a first name beginning with the letter "L" appear in the Bethlehem Historical Association's *Records of the People of the Town of Bethlehem* (Christoph and Christoph, eds. 2012), suggesting that Laurence and his family may have first settled the farm.

The Pine Grove Farm remained in the Houghtaling family until 1915, when it was purchased by William Kleinke and his family. Much of this history has been collected by Town Historian Susan Leath (2017) and is summarized in the following section. William Kleinke and Helena Krause immigrated separately from Germany in 1880 (Leath 2017). They met married in 1882 and began raising a family in Albany's South End, then full of German immigrants. William was a successful butcher who owned his home and shop. A 1916 farm directory notes that William H. and Helena Kleinke owned Pine Grove in Glenmont and their main crop was hay. Soon thereafter, their son Edward, then just 18 years old, traded a horse for two Guernsey cows. Thus began the operation that would become the Glensmere Guernsey Farm (Leath 2017).

Glensmere (so named because the farm is on the border of Glenmont and Elsmere) grew to about 100 head with 60 cows being milked. Kleinke's advertised "There is no substitute for Guernsey Milk. Buy it at the farm or have it delivered at your door." The dairy had routes in Bethlehem



Photo 1. Edward Kleinke standing before the main barn complex. Note at the shed addition had not yet been constructed. Photo courtesy Bethlehem Town Historian.



Photo 2. Paul Kleinke standing in front of the main barn complex. Photo courtesy Bethlehem Town Historian.



Photo 3. Glensmere Farms Dairy delivery truck. Photo courtesy Bethlehem Town Historian.

and Albany, and deliveries could include eggs, milk and cream. The dairy had a good, long run, 50+ years, finally closing shop in 1973 (Leath 2017).

Edward Kleinke was a tireless promoter of Guernsey cows. In 1927 he helped organize the Capital District Guernsey Breeders Association where he served as the first president (Leath 2017). His cows won awards at the Altamont Fair and his bulls were sought after sires. One, Glensmere's King Bee, sired eight champion cows, one of which, in 1951, set a record with the American Guernsey Cattle Club for producing 7,873 pounds of milk and 442 pounds of butterfat. According to the newspaper clipping, "Nice was a junior 2-year-old and was milked twice daily during her record, 610 times."

Edward's son Paul was born in 1939 and has many memories of growing up on the Glensmere farm. This was an era when Delmar and Elsmere were still relatively rural. One highlight is the time he and his brother Peter rode their Palomino horses to Tastee Freeze on Delaware Avenue for a refreshing ice cream (Leath 2017). Besides working in the dairy operation, Paul raised vegetables and sold them to dairy farm customers, first from the back of his truck and gradually expanding to a large farm stand.

In 1977, the couple and their two daughters moved across the street to the farm property that Paul had purchased from his father ten years earlier. The original farmhouse there had burned down, but the old Dutch style barn remained as did a machine shop (Leath 2017). Paul and Ann transformed the machine shop into a warm and inviting home. This property is the Kleinke farm stand on Kenwood Avenue we are all familiar with today. Ann and Paul are proud to note that their five grandchildren have the opportunity to be the fifth generation of Kleinkes farming in Bethlehem (Leath 2017).

Architectural Assessment

This section provides examines each of these agricultural outbuildings from a historical perspective in order to gain a better understanding of how the buildings changed through time and to examine the interrelationship of these buildings as a cohesive farm complex.



Photo 4. Southwest corner of the oldest portion of the main barn complex. Note the tall vent in the rear of the structure.

The Main Barn Complex- The largest and most extensive structure on the property is the main dairy barn, situated to the northeast of the main farm house (Photos 4 and 5). This structure began as a large, rectangular hay and threshing barn and expanded through a series of five additions, reflecting the evolution of agriculture in New York State from the late 18th through the mid-20th century.

The original portion of the barn consists of six wide bays divided by central posts, which ultimately divides the barn into 12 compartmental units (Photos 6 and 7). These units are further defined by pens made with hewn members which divide the barn horizontally with hay mows to the north and south. This suggests that barn was most actively accessed through the door on the side gable to provide access to a wide central threshing floor.

Structurally, the barn is composed of massive vertical framing members (purlins) that span the width of the frame connecting in the wall plates. The current barn configuration follows a Queens Truss system, with two vertical posts supporting the roof, although a further inspection shows an empty mortise where a central crown post once extended to the rafter plate (Photo 8).



Photo 5. Northern façade of the main dairy barn showing its distinctive wooden vent and a 20th century shed addition to the left.



Photo 6. Interior of the main barn showing the truss system and divided hay mows.



Photo 7. View of Queens truss framing members in the original portion of the main dairy barn.

These crown posts were removed sometime prior to when the hay conveyor was installed, as the central posts would have interfered with its operation. The other major improvement visible in the main barn is the large rectangular vent that extends along the north gable end (Photo 11). This vent would have helped to aerate the dairy parlor in the basement of the barn. The tall wooden vent as seen in the exterior of the barn is one of the more visually defining characteristics of the barn complex (Photo 4). The ventilation system was likely added at a time when the Glensmere farm was expanding its dairy operation sometime in the early 20th century. Smaller vents along the exterior likely predate the installation of this later vent system (Photo 9).

This style of barn construction was increasingly popular in the 1790s and early 1800s as an alternative to the smaller, squarish H-bent Dutch style barns found around Albany and the Hudson Valley. The rising popularity of these barns reflects changes in agricultural practices as well as the influx of New England settlers following the American Revolution. While the plan of the main barn follows a design similar to an English threshing barn, the Hotaling/Kleinke barn still retains several Dutch style traits, including the front gabled central entrance with a smaller door at one end of the building. Hand wrought strap hinges also likely date from this initial construction period, although they may have been reused from other parts of the building (Photo 10).



Photo 8. View of mortise where a central crown post original extended to the rafter plate.



Photo 9. Vent on the exterior of the main dairy barn.



Photo 10. Hand wrought strap hinge on the exterior of the main dairy barn.

A large addition was added to the barn sometime during the 19th century (Photos 11 and 12). This barn consists of a 1 ½ story four bay, side gabled barn attached to the northeast corner of the original barn. A series of three long purlins extend along the entire width of the barn. The purlins are shouldered into the wall posts and affixed with wrought iron straps (Photo 13). The framing is constructed of a combination of hewn and unhewn logs. The name “G. R. Van Dyke” is painted on one of the crossmembers (Photo 12). The upper portion of barn is used for hay storage, while dairy stalls occur in the lower story (Photos 15 and 16). Photo 14 shows the manner by which the vertical framing of the original barn was cut to allow access into this addition.

The first floor of both the original barn and the 19th century addition have been set up as calf pens and dairy stalls (Photos 15 and 16). Massive hewn timbers span with width of the barns, supporting the heavy hay lofts above (Photo 17). These dairy stanchions are common in 20th century dairy barns and were likely installed in the early 20th century when the Kleinke family decided to initially expand their dairying operation and change their focus from hay production. Of note is the overhead conveyor system that extends from the south end of the original barn and winds its way past all of the stanchions to end at the shed addition (Photo 18). The conveyor, iron stanchions and poured concrete manure trough all show the increasing importance of automation and systematic dairying methods. Before a concrete floor was poured to create the dairy stalls and manure trench, the lower story of the barn was likely used for a more diverse array of livestock, including pigs, cows and possibly horses. Glensmere farms operated over 100 head of dairy cattle with as many as 60 cows in production at a time (Leath 2017). This large



Photo 11. View from the 19th century addition looking toward the original barn building showing framing, Note wooden vent on the right side of the photograph.



Photo 12. View of framing member in the upper story of the 19th century addition. Note the name "G.R. Van Dyck" painted on the crossmember.



Photo 13. View of wrought iron strap used to connect the purlins to the wall post.



Photo 14. View of the 19th century addition from the main dairy barn. Note how the vertical framing of the original barn was cut to allow entry into the new addition.



Photo 15. View of dairy stanchions on the first floor of the 19th century addition.



Photo 16. Calving pens in the 19th century addition.



Photo 17. View of timber framed joint with brace in the first floor of the main dairy barn.



Photo 18. View of shed addition to the east of the 19th century barn addition. Note the conveyor and above ground track on the right side of the photograph.

number of cows likely required incorporating the most modern methods into their operation in order to maximize production and keep costs low. The first floor of the barns appear much as they did when the farm ceased dairy operations in 1973.

Three other additions have been made to the dairy barn including a shed to the west of the barn addition and two smaller additions to the southeast corner of the original barn. The shed building is open to the south and provides access to the first floor conveyor system (Photo 18). This shed is likely the most recent of the additions and does not appear in circa 1940s photographs of the barns, suggesting that it was constructed sometime after that date (Photo 1). The other two additions consist of a horse barn to the south (Photo 19) and a second one story, shed roofed addition attached directly to the southeast corner of the original barn building (Photo 24). Both of these structures appear to have been used for horses or possibly for the Kleinke's famous Guernsey bulls.

The southernmost addition has a stone foundation and is framed with hewn members (Photo 21). This building shows asymmetrical framing with a partial H-bent on the east side (Photo 20). The building likely dates to sometime in the 19th century. The upper story of both of this addition appears to have been used for hay storage. The other addition has a concrete block foundation and milled framing, and likely dates to the early or mid-20th century (Photo 22). The roof has recently been replaced and a rafter has been sistered to support the weight of the roof (Photo 23).



Photo 19. View of horse barn on the left and the original main barn on the right.



Photo 20. View of framing in the upper story of the horse barn. Note asymmetrical framing and partial H bent at left.



Photo 21. View of the first floor of the horse barn showing the stone foundation.



Photo 22. View of the interior of the shed roof addition.



Photo 23. View of sistered and braced rafter and roof repair in the shed addition.

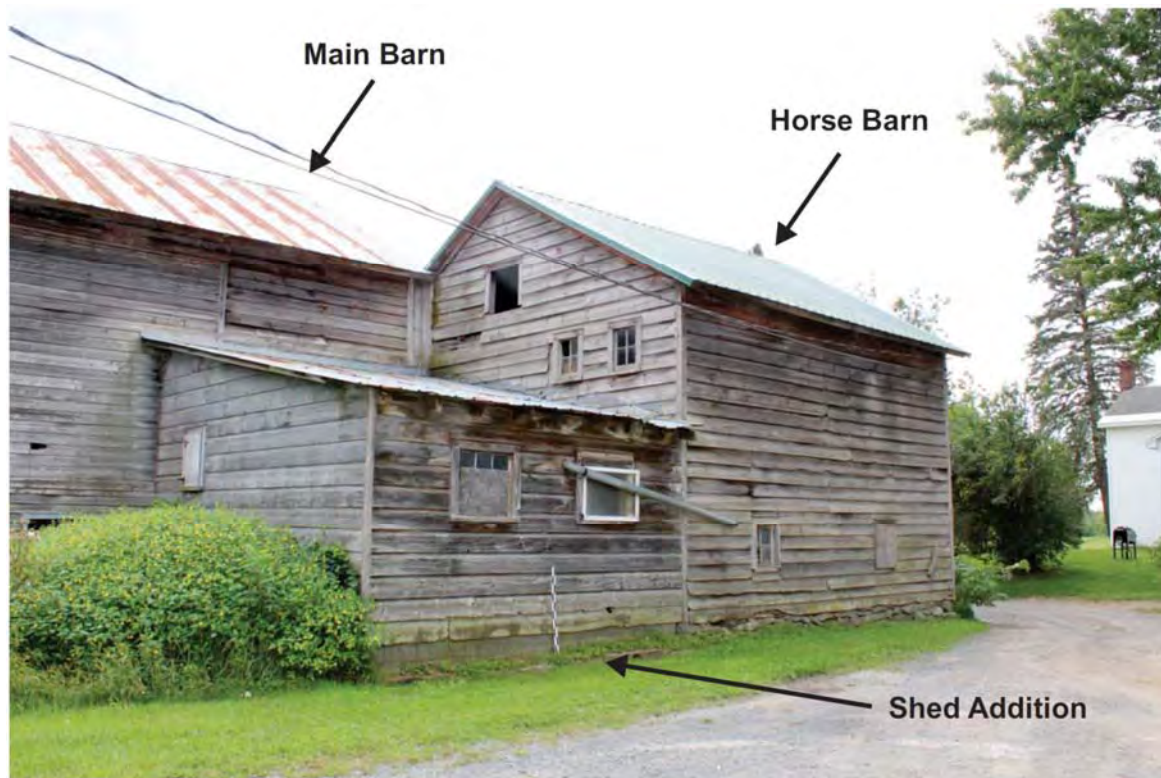


Photo 24. View of barn additions on the southwest corner of the original structure.

Smokehouse- A small brick smokehouse occurs to the northwest of the main house (Photo 25). Because of their frequent use of masonry materials, smokehouses are some of the most difficult farm buildings to date. This smokehouse likely dates to sometime in the 19th century before the widespread use of refrigeration. The batten door has recently fallen and may not have been the original door, as the current framing around the door appears to have been made by milled lumber. No hooks or nails were noted in the roof where meat would have been hung for smoking. A modern grate, cinderblocks and some charred material are visible on the floor on the smokehouse, reflecting more recent use (Photo 26). Corn cobs and hickory wood were commonly used fuels in the 19th century for smoking meats (Vincent 1991:11).

Poultry House- The poultry house is located at the eastern end of the farm complex and is a 1 ½ story wood framed building with a door at each of the gable ends (Photos 27 and 28). No machine cut nails were noted in the construction of the building, suggesting that it dates to sometime after 1890. A wooden stairway in the northwest corner provides access to the upper story (Photo 29). The door on the eastern side of the building has a hand wrought door latch which was likely recycled from other, earlier building on the property (Photo 31).

The building is easily identified as a poultry house from the large dormer and southward facing windows which maximized light necessary for poultry production. This style of poultry house was popularized by cooperative extensions in the early 20th century, and the building may have been constructed soon after the Kleinke family purchased the farm in 1915. With the exception of some broken windows and minor repairs, the poultry house is in reasonably good condition.



Photo 25. Brick smokehouse to the northwest of the main residence.



Photo 26. Interior of the brick smokehouse.



Photo 27. Northeast corner of the poultry house at the Houghtaling/Klienke farm complex.



Photo 28. Interior of the lower level of the poultry house.



Photo 29. View of stair leading to the upper level of the poultry house.



Photo 30. View of the interior of the upper story of the poultry house.



Photo 31. Detail of hand wrought hardware on the eastern façade of the poultry house.

Wells and Water Supply- Two wells occur in the farm complex: one located to the east of the house (Photo 32) and the other opposite a gate adjacent to the creamery/bottling works (Photo 33). Water is a crucial component of any farming operation, and wells were important in providing water for family members, livestock and the irrigation of truck crops.



Photo 32. Well located to the east of the main farmhouse.

Photo 33. Well located north of the Creamery/bottling works.



Creamery/Bottling Works- This structure is located to the east of the house and appears externally to be a wood framed garage with wood and concrete block additions (Photo 34). The western part of the building served as a bottling works where the Kleinke family bottled their milk for distribution and sale. A bottling machine occupies much of the square footage of a room in the northwest part of the building (Photo 35). The was built by the Continental Equipment Corporation of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and likely dates to the early 20th century. A refrigeration room occurs in an adjoining room to the south (Photo 36). Additions on the eastern part of the building may have been used for loading or truck maintenance, or may have stored large containers of milk prior to processing. With the addition of more recent refuse, the bottling works much as it did when the dairy ceased operation in 1973.

Despite some broken windows and roof damage to some of the smaller additions, the creamery/bottling works appears to be in structurally good shape. The presence of bottling machinery, pasteurization equipment and refrigeration facilities suggests that the physical remains of the milk processing complex are still largely intact. The only component that appears to be missing would be vats or milk cans used to store the milk prior to processing and sale.



Photo 34. Southwest corner of the creamery/bottling works.



Photo 35. View of mechanized bottling machine.



Photo 36. View of door to refrigerated room in the creamery/bottling works.

Farm Stand- A small farm stand occurs at the western end of the building complex (Photos 37 and 38). This small, wood framed building was in use since the 1970s and may date to the early or mid-20th century. The building appears to be in good shape. While seldom architecturally significant, small farm stands often played an important role in providing a connection between the farm operation and the surrounding community by allowing farmers to sell directly to individuals.



Photo 37. Photograph of the farm stand likely taken in the fall of 1970. Photo courtesy Bethlehem Town Historian.



Photo 38. The Kleinke farm stand as it appears today.

The Farm Houses- While not included in the current study, which focused on the barns and other outbuildings, attention should also be paid to the two residences which occur adjacent to the farm complex. The main farm house has cross gables and several additions. It dates to sometime in the 19th century. The earlier house burned and a more recent home built on top of the original brick and stone foundation.



Photo 39. Historic photograph of the existing 19th century farmhouse on the Kleinke property. Photo courtesy Bethlehem Town Historian.



Photo 40. The Kleinke farm house as it appears today.



Photo 41. Historic photograph of the mid- 20th century house built upon an 18th century brick foundation. Photo courtesy Bethlehem Town Historian.



Photo 42. Photograph of the mid- 20th century house as it appears today.

Architectural Summary

Taken as a whole, the Kleinke barn complex reflects a long tradition of agriculture in rural Albany County. The main portion of the dairy barn was constructed in the late 18th or early 19th century and was likely used for to keep animals as well as threshing wheat and hay storage. Much of the food grown on the farm was likely consumed by members of the household. The brick smokehouse behind the main house likely reflects this small-scale subsistence production. As the 19th century progressed, dairy production increased to accommodate the expanding population of the city of Albany. As a result, a series of two large additions were constructed to the main barn. Vegetables and truck crops were also in high demand, and soon the farm shifted from small subsistence plots used to provide food for the family to larger scale agriculture, producing vegetables and eggs for sale at their farm stand and also larger markets in Albany and beyond. The eastern end of the main barn and the poultry house likely date to the early 20th century after the Kleinke family purchased the farm in 1915. Two smaller additions to the main barn likely also date to approximately the same time. These additions were likely used for calving and for keeping their famous Guernsey bulls.

The Hotaling/Kleinke barn complex represents a unique window in to the evolution of farming practices in Rural Albany County. In addition to a rare H-bent New World Dutch style barn, the complex includes a poultry shed and a small creamery complete with a bottling facility. As a result, the site has the unique ability to demonstrate the complete process of small-scale milk production from the cow to the bottle. The small bottling works also stands as a testament to the independent nature and entrepreneurial spirit of Kleinke family, who chose to bottle and sell their own dairy products in the early 20th century- a time when the dairy industry was actively being consolidated by large firm and dairy cooperatives were starting to be formed.

In a letter dated May 25th, 2017 NYSOPRHP stated that the project will have no impact on any eligible historic resources and effectively allows for the removal of the barn buildings at the discretion of the Applicant. With regard to the condition of the structures the main barn appears in fair to good condition. Some of the roof, including that of the southern part containing the partial H bent have been recently roofed.

The presence of more recent additions to the original 18th century barn does not greatly affect the historic integrity of the complex and instead reflects changes in agriculture taking place at the farm. Other, NRHP listed farm complexes, including the VanPatten Dutch Barn Complex (90NR03339) along US Route 20 in Guilderland, show this evolution of 18th through 20th century connected barns. The unique history of the property, its significance to the local community and the high degree of integrity of the farm complex all serve to make it a historically significant locale.

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Photo Log

Houghtaling/Kleinke Farm Complex

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Photo 5. Western facade of the oldest portion of the main barn complex. Note horse barn and 20th century shed addition in the right part of the photograph.
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Photo 28. Northeast corner of the poultry house at the Houghtaling/Kleinke farm complex.
Photo 29. Detail of hand wrought hardware on the eastern façade of the poultry house.
Photo 30. Interior of the lower level of the poultry house.
Photo 31. View of stair leading to the upper level of the poultry house.
Photo 32. View of the interior of the upper story of the poultry house.
Photo 33. Southwest corner of the creamery/bottling works.
Photo 34. Oldest wood framed portion of the creamery/bottling works building.
Photo 35. Wooden addition on the north side of the creamery/bottling works building.
Photo 36. View of mechanized bottling machine in the southern part of the creamery/bottling works.
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Photo 38. View of door to refrigerated room in the creamery/bottling works.
Photo 39. The Kleinke farm house as it appears in 2023.
Photo 40. The Kleinke farm stand as it appears in 2023.



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Photo 32. View of the interior of the upper story of the poultry house.



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Photo 34. Oldest wood framed portion of the creamery/bottling works building.



Photo 35. Wooden addition on the north side of the creamery/bottling works building.



Photo 36. View of mechanized bottling machine in the southern part of the creamery/bottling works.



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Photo 38. View of door to refrigerated room in the creamery/bottling works.



Photo 39. The Kleinke farm house as it appears in 2023.



Photo 40. The Kleinke farm stand as it appears in 2023.



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