

Spanning the Gap

Isaac Van Campen Inn



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Spanning the Gap
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by Tom Solon



(Left, above) The Inn under restoration and stabilization in 1981. (NPS photo by Tom Solon)



Panelled woodwork in Van Campen Inn, 1972.

Centrally located on the New Jersey side of the recreation area and only a short (though bumpy) ride down Old Mine Road from Peters Valley Craft Center, you can find historic Van Campen Inn.

Isaac Van Campen was a member of the Continental Congress. His fellow representative John Adams is said to have spent the night in this house when Adams traveled by horse from his home in Massachusetts to session of the Congress in Philadelphia.

This Georgian stone house with Dutch detailing was built about 1746 and provided a safe haven when settlers fled for protection from Indian attack before



A closer look at the woodwork, showing an antique hinge on the bottom, and a modern hinge on the top, 1972.

and during the French and Indian War (1754-1763).

The Inn is especially notable for its architectural detail. Its paneled rooms contain many handsome examples of the colonial woodworker's craft. These features are currently being restored as part of a major rehabilitation project.

Since its construction, the Inn has been suffered from a variety of structural problems. To correct these problems, two-thirds of both the front and the south end walls were dismantled and new foundations were constructed. In addition, the rear wall of the building was structurally reinforced, and the first floor support system was replaced.

The exterior of the building may be seen in passing from an unpaved section of Old Mine Road, believed to one of the oldest roads in this nation.

Editor's Note: Restoration of the exterior of the house has been completed. (See photo at right)

Tom Solon, the recreation area's historic architect, heads the Historic Preservation and Design Office.



Newer panelling on the left, with older panelling behind it on the right, 1972. A nail runs between the two surfaces.



Van Campen Inn after restoration, in 1984.