

# Spanning the Gap

## ART AND ARCHITECTURE

### Preserving Walpack's Parsonage

Walpack Center in New Jersey appears empty and deserted today, but more than one hundred years ago, it was a bustling farming community. It was designated an historic district on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and eleven buildings comprise the village center today. A few of the buildings have been restored and are in use, while others await their turn. Special thanks go to volunteers from the Walpack Historical Society.

During this past winter and spring, these volunteers, in a cooperative effort with National Park Service maintenance crews, began renovating the parsonage. After a fire destroyed the original house in 1883, the "new" parsonage, a relatively simple vernacular house, was built in 1893 adjacent to the old location. It was modernized in the early 1900's with the removal of the front porch and chimney and an addition of a bathroom on the second floor. Also, the two attic windows were moved closer together.

Substantial volunteer work on the parsonage is being completed by Leonard Peck and Gordon Castimore, who have worked on buildings throughout the national recreation area. They have been renovating Walpack Center over the past several years. Both men became involved because of their interest in preserving history and the personal satisfaction of being part of that process. Leonard and Gordon have rebuilt the back corner of the wood frame house, installed an I-beam where the structure was weakened due to the floor joists being cut for the installation of a modern bathroom,



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The former parsonage in Walpack Center. (NPS photo by Ken Sandri)



The parsonage is now home to a regional office of *Eastern National*, a nonprofit cooperating association. Eastern National operates sales outlets at many national parks in the eastern United States, including this park. A percentage of profits from sales at the park's visitor centers support educational and interpretive programs in the park.

and painted the interior, in addition to many other accomplishments. Their next goal is painting the exterior. Community service volunteers also helped to bring this project near completion. All work is under the direction of the Preservation and Design Branch of the recreation area's maintenance division.

Because of cooperation between dedicated volunteers, the National Park Service and Eastern National, the parsonage has been given a rebirth and a new future.



West side and side door of the parsonage building.