

ON THE MARKET

Reading, writing, and restoration

Here we have a 19th century schoolhouse, if you drop the school and keep the house. This circa 1850 vestige of education by fire is not the only, and nowhere near the oldest, antique schoolhouse that is still standing in Litchfield County. In neighboring New Milford, there are three of these structural ar-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Now a home, one of the area's many one-room schoolhouses, this one circa 1850, still boasts a steeple and bell.

tifacts, one of which originated in 1740. But apparently, this wooden building subsists as this particular community's only antique schoolhouse, even though it was long ago turned into a residence. "It is probably the last original schoolhouse in Washington, from what I understand," said listing agent Carolyn Klemm. "So it is old and so charming." Klemm isn't certain when it was converted, but said that it happened more than 40 years ago, since



The living room was once a 19th century classroom.

that is how long it has been in the same family. Records on one-room schoolhouses are often scarce, being that they were more often designed for the neighborhood, not the entire municipality. Given their smaller size and wide open interior, the conversion is usually a relatively easy transition. "The school was run by one teacher, a schoolmaster or schoolmarm, who taught all of the grades, sometimes spanning preschool to eighth grade," read a statement by the New Milford Historical Society. "Often girls sat on one side of the

room and boys sat on the other side of the room, with the youngest students near the teacher." These were easily adaptable buildings. School buildings today, not so much. In school systems throughout aging Litchfield County, declining enrollment is such a growing challenge that it has impelled some communities to shutter school buildings. Never an easy decision, it often leaves residents to argue about the future of the empty brick-and-mortar facility with its myriad rooms and thousands of square feet. That wasn't an issue with this building, which generations ago was happily converted into the six-room residence it now is, complete with a sunroom and three-car garage. But it still boasts the original steeple and bell, even though school is officially out.

— Jack Corragio

IN THE DETAILS

Listing: Klemm Real Estate

Price: \$1,200,000

Bedrooms: 2 **Baths:** 2

Acreage: 1.9

Year built: 1850

Do you have a home for sale with a story? We'd love to tell it. Share with Alec Johnson at ajohnson@rep-am.com