

The Knickerbocker Santa is a very historical Santa created by Judi Vaillancourt for collector weekend. This Santa incorporates many historical components from Washington Irving's Christmas themes as well as items from the Christmas paintings of Jan Steen from the 1600's.

The "Knickerbocker" Santa has its origins in Washington Irving's Knickerbocker History of New York (1809) and Keeping of Christmas at Bracebridge Hall (1819-20), Clement C. Moore's poem "The Night Before Christmas" (1822); along with images in paintings by Dutch artist Jan Steen (1666) and American Robert Weir (1837).

- Gnome-like "a right jolly old elf", dressed as a Dutch Burgher. Gone are the robe and bishop's miter of the European St. Nicholas. This Santa wears "knickers", a short red cape, a broad brimmed hat, and shoes with buckles...symbolizing a common gentleman's attire.
- Stump of a pipe in Knickerbocker's hat—recalls country tavern tradition of breaking off a piece of clay pipe to leave the remaining fresh end for the next smoker. This new American Santa is not an aristocrat!
- Magical "laying a finger aside of his nose" is Old Dutch symbolizing that this is just make-believe. In Moore's poem it allows Santa to rise up the chimney!
- The gingerbread Bishop St. Nicholas clutches in his arm is a reference to the Dutch family baking at Christmas.
- An orange in his hand from the legend of St. Nicholas giving gold coins to the poor.
- The toy wagon from Irving's History of New York, "Sinter klaas" flew across the sky in a wagon.
- The doll house – a miniature of Irving's home "Sunnyside".
- The dog is from a Jan Steen painting "Twelfth Night" 1668.
- On the back of the flour sack, the initials f.p. represent Frederick philipse who established philipsburg manor and its gristmill in 1683.

The Vaillancourt Knickerbocker Santa was designed by Judi Vaillancourt with in-put from Rev. Stanley DeCamp. The mould was sculpted by Eduardo Rodriguez. The information in this sheet is based on information from Rev. DeCamp.