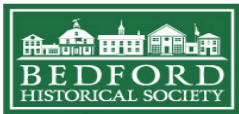


From: [Bedford Historical Society](http://www.bedfordhistoricalsociety.org)
To: s.bernier@bedfordhistoricalsociety.org
Subject: June e-Newsletter from the Bedford Historical Society
Date: Friday, October 16, 2009 10:12:40 AM



It's our history. Preserve it.

BEDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY e-Newsletter

June, 2009

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<http://www.bedfordweb.net/brla/>

<http://www.bedfordhistoricalsociety.org/>

Walking around the village last week, several people stopped me to talk about our upcoming commemoration of the burning of Bedford on July 11th. "It's wonderful the Historical Society is remembering this unique and pivotal event in our history," one woman said. Another commented that "it was worth the price of admission just to see the sunset from that field."

While I'm delighted to hear the "buzz" about one of our events, I worry that people will forget this event is meant to not only honor our past but also to raise necessary funds to continue the preservation of Bedford's heritage.

As you know, we're charged with preserving many of the historic buildings and landmarks in the village. Caring for the very buildings that contribute to the personality of our town is a daunting, yet rewarding, mission - one that requires financial support by residents, businesses and those who value Bedford's historic feel.

So, as we commemorate the Burning of Bedford 230 years ago and celebrate the resilient villagers who brought Bedford back to life, let's remember that preservation is everyone's mission. Join us on the 11th as we toast to our past and the promise of Bedford's future.

It's our history, celebrate it...
Evelyne Ryan, Executive Director

The Burning of Bedford in 1779

All but one house was burned to the ground on July 11th



Just after dawn on the morning of July 11, 1779, four hundred British cavalry under the command of Lt. Col. Samuel Birch rode toward Bedford Village anxious for battle with Col. Stephen Moylan's dragoons. The lookout posted on Guard Hill fired his pistol three times but the lookout on Bates Hill, behind where Historical Hall sits today, at first thought they were friendly forces.

After realizing his mistake, he rode hard to give warning of the approaching menace. But there was no defense: the night before, Washington had ordered Moylan's men to the Connecticut coast where the British were mounting an offensive. The British rode into town and, without care or hesitation, proceeded to plunder and set fire to the meeting house and, in turn, nearly every house in the village. Only one house, owned by a widow reputed to have Tory sympathies, was spared. By noon, their task finished, the soldiers rode out of town leaving only smoke and charred

chimneys in their wake.

Instead of fleeing the area, the families of Bedford remained. Living for several years in tents and lean-tos, shielded from the weather by a natural rock wall to which they lashed their canvases, the villagers toiled to rebuild their homes. Because Washington's army required so many resources, laborers and building materials were scarce. Villagers found what little timber remained in the woods, cut it down and hew it into shape before undertaking construction. Against the odds, the villagers persevered and rebuilt Bedford.

For a more complete details on the Burning of Bedford, we have the book, **The Burning of Bedford July 1779** by Dorothy Humphreys Hinitt & Frances Riker Duncombe, in our office for purchase.

*You're
Invited...*

*Cocktail Reception & Re-
enactment*

To commemorate the 230th Anniversary of the Burning of Bedford, we're having a cocktail reception and re-enactment on July 11th from 6:30 to 9:00 PM. To RSVP, please contact us at (914) 234-9751 or visit our website: www.bhsny.org

Bedford's "Lunch Bunch" Visits Our Bedford Riding Lanes Exhibit

Eileen Powell and friends stop by the Bedford Historical Society's exhibit featuring memorabilia from the Bedford Riding Lanes and photos of Eileen and her father on horseback



Pictured from left to right:
Helen Henker, Rev. Rachel Thompson of BPC, Ruth Ragonese, Victoria Kosakowski,
Ginna Palmer, Emelie Kosakowski and Eileen Powell

Born in Bedford, these ladies have lived here all their lives and meet regularly with Rev. Rachel Thompson for lunch at the Bedford Presbyterian Church. Eileen Powell, one of their members, lent her scrapbook and other memorabilia for our current exhibit. To view the exhibit, visit our office at 612 Old Post Road Monday through Friday from 10 AM to 5 PM. For more information on the Bedford Riding Lanes, check out the recent story in the **New York Times**:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/12/nyregion/westchester/12horsewe.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Bedford%20Riding%20Lanes&st=cse

or visit their website: <http://www.bedfordweb.net/bria/>

Bedford Historical Society Members Visit the Met

June Weissinger, BHS member and guide at the Met, gave fellow members a private tour of the new American Wing



Following the success of our slideshow presentation at our annual meeting, "How a Farm House Became the Newest Exhibit in the Met's American Wing", the BHS organized a field trip to the museum to see the exhibit in person. Michael Kelley, whose firm was responsible for moving the farm house, spoke at our annual meeting and also joined us on our trip to the Met to provide first hand color on the Winne Farm House exhibit. June Weissinger completed the visit by giving the group a private tour of the rest of the American Wing. To learn more, visit <http://www.jmkelleytd.com/main.html>.

- Give the Gift of Bedford to Grads -

The Bedford General Store at 612 Old Post Road is not only home to our offices and changing exhibits, but also a small gift shop featuring Bedford memorabilia and books about the town. Stop in Monday through Friday from 10 AM to 5 PM to get a gift for your grad to keep them from getting homesick.

Visit our website for a complete list of gifts available online or in person: www.bhsny.org.

1787 Court House & Museum Open

Visit Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from Noon to 4:00



The 1787 Bedford Court House was restored to its original dignity in 1970 and is used today as a site museum. The second floor has exhibits featuring various stages of Bedford's past. The oldest jail cell in Westchester County can also be seen at the museum. Admission is FREE for members and \$5 for adults, \$3 for children.

- Volunteers Needed -

We're always looking for volunteers and docents to work at the Court House Museum and School House. Please call us at (914) 234-9751 for more info.

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