

Martin Van Buren

8th President of the United States

Kinderhook is most noteworthy for its native son, Martin Van Buren, the 8th President of the United States. Van Buren was born here in 1782 and began his road to the White House in 1821 after holding the public offices of New York State Senator, Governor and a U.S. Senator. Van Buren was elected to be the 8th President of the United States in 1837 after serving as Secretary of State (1829) and Vice President (1832) in Andrew Jackson's administration. He was one of only two men to serve as Vice President, Secretary of State, and President; the other is Thomas Jefferson. Van Buren was the first President to be born as an American citizen; previous Presidents were born prior to the American Revolution. President Van Buren was an accomplished politician but his presidency was characterized by the economic hardship of the time – the Panic of 1837.

This banking crisis occurred only 5 weeks into his presidency and tarnished his administration. He ran for re election in 1844 and seemed to have the advantage for the nomination but his opposition to the annexation of Texas contributed to his defeat at the Democratic convention. The nomination eventually went to James Polk. Van Buren returned to his estate, Lindenwald, where he remained until his death in 1862 from bronchial asthma and heart failure at the age of 79.

"As to my presidency,
the best two days of
my life were those
of my entrance upon
this office and
my surrender of it"

Martin Van Buren

The Board of the Village of Kinderhook and the over forty business and service members of the Kinderhook Business and Professional Association thank you for your visit. www.KBPA.org

For more information on the history or the sites, please visit:

THE KINDERHOOK MEMORIAL LIBRARY

@ www.oldlibrary.org

THE COLUMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

@ www.cchsny.org

THE MARTIN VAN BUREN HISTORIC SITE

@ www.lindenwald@nps.gov

Hungry? Stop into:

BEAN'S PLACE

3 Albany Ave, for delicious breakfast treats and gourmet sandwiches and salads.

BAGEL TYME

on the green, for real "New York style" bagels and hearty soups.

THE CAROLINA HOUSE

59 Broad Street, for classic continental favorites served nightly (except Tuesday).

Staying over? Visit our local Bed and Breakfast:

THE VAN SCHAAK HOUSE

20 Broad Street - www.vanschackhouse.com

Other Popular favorites:

SEASONAL FARMER'S MARKET

on the green

BLACKWOOD AND BROUWER BOOKSELLERS

7 Hudson Street

MASTERPIECE GIFTS & FRAMING

1 Chatham Street

LINDOWEN'S AMERICAN COUNTRY

11 Chatham Street

FISCHER'S OK ROCK SHOP

2 Chatham Street

SAMASCOTT'S U PICK ORCHARD

5 Sunset Avenue

SAMASCOTT'S GARDEN MARKET

65 Chatham Street

OLD KINDERHOOK PACKAGE STORE

4 Broad Street

For more area attractions, please visit

COLUMBIA COUNTY TOURISM

@ www.columbiacountytourism.org

The Village of Kinderhook is within easy driving distance of Albany, Tanglewood and the Berkshires, Hudson, and Saratoga.

DISCOVER HISTORIC Kinderhook

A WALKING TOUR

"There are historic old towns
in the Hudson Valley,
and then there's Kinderhook..."
Hudson Valley Magazine

Kinderhook

Welcome to Kinderhook, one of the most historically significant places in the Hudson Valley. The name Kinderhook appeared on Dutch maps as early as 1614 making it one of the oldest names in the state. In the early days, Kinderhook (Dutch meaning children's corner) embraced all of Stuyvesant, parts of Chatham, Stockport and Ghent. Kinderhook was chartered as a township in 1697. The first town records were kept in Dutch and the language was spoken here until the 1840's. As Americans we tend to view our history through English eyes, however, the Dutch were here first and their impact culturally, architecturally and agriculturally remains today.

Close to the Hudson River on the Kinderhook Creek, a stream noted for powerful waterfalls and edged with fertile farmland, Kinderhook has long been a prosperous and prominent place. As roads settled into place, the village grew. Kinderhook became a major stagecoach stop on the route connecting Albany with New York City as well as one of the first post offices. An 1808 map indicates that roads today are much as they were then. The New York Gazetteer reported in 1842 a population of 1400; two coach factories, two hat factories, two public houses, 200 dwellings, a printer, numerous trade shops and an Academy. Fashionable houses, many built on



COVERED BRIDGE RAZED IN 1939

ancestral lands reflecting early Dutch design and later Federal style, sprang up. Fine examples of Dutch, Greek Revival, Georgian, Carpenter Gothic and Italianate remain today.

The Kinderhook area was the site of many historic events during the American Revolution. In the winter of 1775, Colonel Henry Knox transported vital artillery through the village on horse drawn wooden sledges on his way from Ticonderoga to Boston. Turncoat Benedict Arnold spent a night here and British General John Burgoyne was entertained as a prisoner of war at a village mansion after his defeat at Saratoga.

01 THE VILLAGE GREEN:

Begin your tour at the flagpole.

Imagine the square bustling with tradesmen, farmers, horses and wagons circa 1820. It was then a small circle with ample room for horses and wagons. Just three years before the village cemetery had stood in the bank lawn and filled the head of Chatham Street which was then a small lane. The cemetery and all those interred were moved to upper Albany Avenue. The change was made to create a commercial center and market area. About 1824, 1 Hudson Street was built as a residence by Peter Van Vleck. The present bandstand (b. 1820) had been the location of a hay scale, large enough to weigh wagons and their contents. The block of brick buildings on your left housed trade shops, a hardware store, a knitting mill where caps



and mittens were made until 1940. The stretch of clapboard buildings on Broad Street housed an inn, watchmaker, a stationer, shoe shop and a drug, paint and grocery store. The fire of 1880 destroyed much of the south side of the square which was rebuilt in brick. The green itself was enlarged after the fire into the "village park" and remains much the same as it was then; only the cast iron fence that enclosed the green is missing.

02 MARTIN VAN BUREN STATUE: Village Green

Martin Van Buren was the son of Abraham, a farmer and tavern keeper and a supporter of the American Revolution. Martin grew up in the village, studied law here and began his political career in Kinderhook. He and his wife, Hannah Hoes, had 4 sons and spoke Dutch. Hannah, a childhood sweetheart, died at the age of 35 from tuberculosis; he never remarried. Van Buren was elected to the Presidency in 1837 and served only one term. Known in government circles as "Old Kinderhook," the term "OK" came to be synonymous with Van Buren. Originally a slang term meaning "Oll Korrek" (all right) the expression was used as a rallying cry by his supporters; Van Buren used the initials next to his signature as a sign of approval. He is credited with creating an independent Treasury and being instrumental in the founding of the Democratic Party.

03 JAMES P. VANDERPOEL HOUSE: No. 16 Broad Street (ca. 1820)



Currently owned and operated as a house museum by the Columbia County Historical Society, the House of History is one of the finest examples of Federal architecture in the Hudson Valley. The fashionable Federal style emphasized the lightness of proportion, symmetry and delicate ornamentation. Vanderpoel, a prominent lawyer and politician, reflected a prosperous and elegant 19th century lifestyle.

04 PETER VAN SCHAACK, JR: No. 15 Broad Street (ca. 1830)

This Federal style home was built by Peter Van Schaack, Sr as a wedding gift for his son. The Kinderhook Herald commenced publication in the small adjacent building in 1825. It was a non-partisan journal consisting of four pages. The paper later was purchased by Peter Van Kleck who changed its name to Kinderhook Rough Notes. Notice that the front doors of the father's and son's homes are directly across from one another.

05 PETER VAN SCHAACK HOUSE: No. 20 Broad Street (ca. 1787)

Attorney, Peter Van Schaack built this brick home in the Georgian style after the Revolution. It is reputed to be the site of the first law school in New York State. 19th century additions of the mansard



roof and other Victorian trimmings give the home its current character. Peter had a lucrative law practice but was tormented by his dual allegiances to the Crown and the growing independence movement. He was banished to England in 1778 and did not return until the end of the war seven years later. His American citizenship was reinstated.

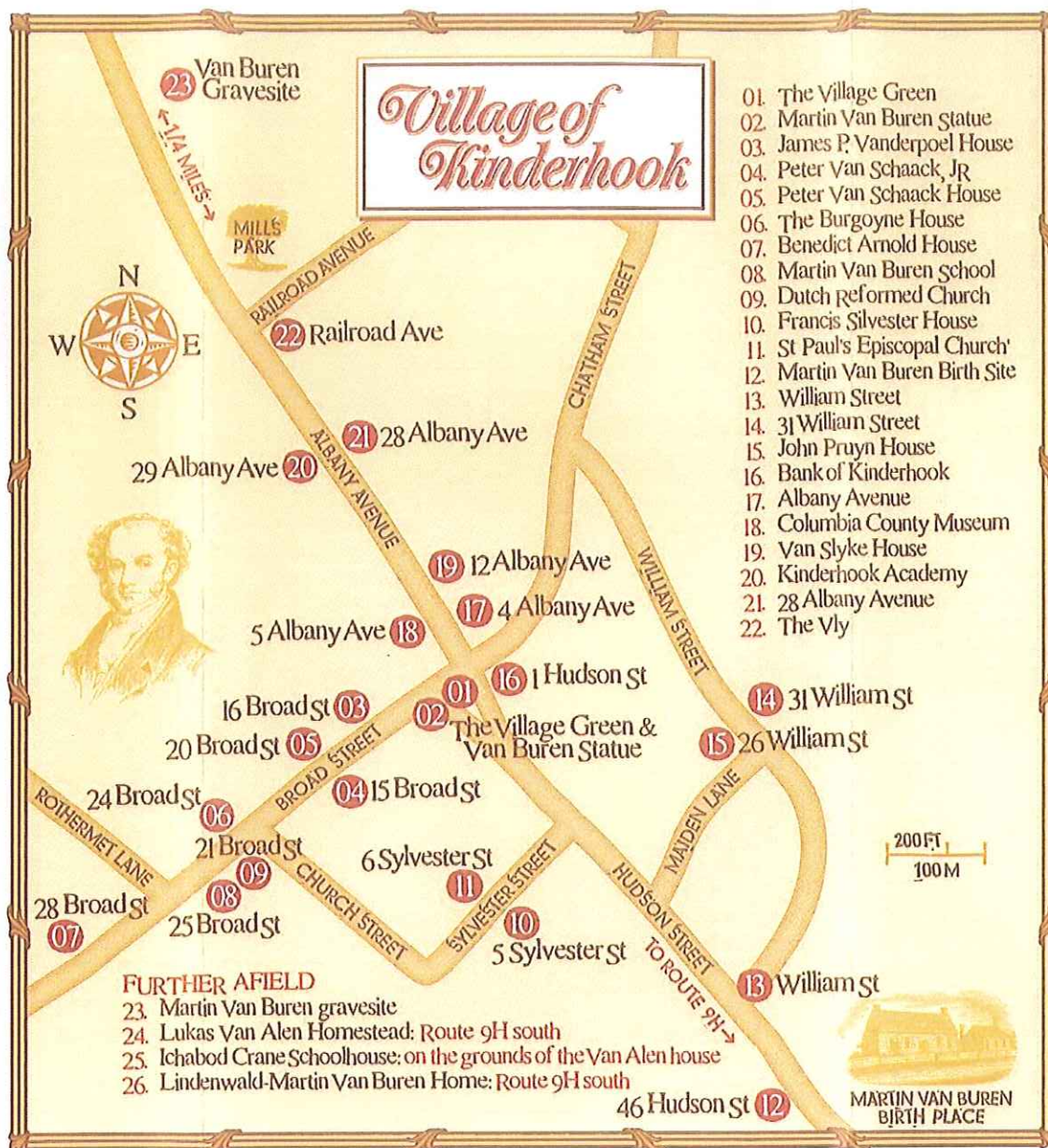
HISTORIC KINDERHOOK - A WALKING TOUR

06 THE BURGOYNE HOUSE:
No. 24 Broad Street (1774) This Georgian style home was built by David Van Schaack and received the moniker "Burgoyne" after British General John Burgoyne, a prisoner of war, was entertained here after defeat in Saratoga. At dinner, four year old Lydia, niece of Van Schaack (a Loyalist sympathizer), blurted out "God save the King and all the Royal Family" in front of the American soldiers responsible for Burgoyne's transport. The home's "wings" were added circa 1840.

07 BENEDICT ARNOLD HOUSE:
No. 28 Broad Street (1770) This "Dutch influenced vernacular" house was built by French physician, Dr. John Quilot. During the Revolution, American general Benedict Arnold fought at the Battle of Bemis Heights in Saratoga where he was wounded. Tradition says that he was treated at this home to recuperate from leg wounds. Later in the Revolution, he commanded the fort at West Point. Debt ridden and embittered over lack of promotion, Arnold schemed to surrender the post to the British. His plot failed and he switched sides. Because of his betrayal, his name is now synonymous with treason. No. 28 also served as a boarding house for students attending the Kinderhook Academy.

08 MARTIN VAN BUREN SCHOOL:
No. 25 Broad Street (1930) Currently housing grades 3-5, this school once contained all classes from kindergarten through high school. Kinderhook Village children as well as those from outlying districts who contracted to attend were students here thus replacing several of the one room schoolhouses in the area. The school was dedicated by the then Governor, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

09 KINDERHOOK DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH:
No. 21 Broad Street (1869) Originally formed in



01. The Village Green
02. Martin Van Buren statue
03. James P. Vanderpoel House
04. Peter Van Schaack, Jr.
05. Peter Van Schaack House
06. The Burgoyne House
07. Benedict Arnold House
08. Martin Van Buren school
09. Dutch reformed Church
10. Francis Silvester House
11. St Paul's Episcopal Church'
12. Martin Van Buren Birth Site
13. William Street
14. 31 William Street
15. John Pruyn House
16. Bank of Kinderhook
17. Albany Avenue
18. Columbia County Museum
19. Van Slyke House
20. Kinderhook Academy
21. 28 Albany Avenue
22. The Vly

19 VAN SLYKE HOUSE:
No. 12 Albany Avenue (ca. 1840) This Greek Revival style building was the home of Peter Van Slyke, a local blacksmith. No. 14 was the original smithy; it was converted to a private home in the early 1970's. The clapboard siding and tin roof are typical of many of the homes in the early 1800's.

20 KINDERHOOK ACADEMY:
No. 29 Albany Avenue (1836) The Columbia Academy was incorporated in 1824 to prepare men for college or employment in



counting houses. Young women were offered a course of "solid and ornamental education." No. 25, 27 were once conjoined to the academy and were dormitories. Originally, No. 23 was a rear extension to the Academy and was the residence for the headmaster. The Academy was also a printing house, a knitting mill and spent several years as the Lindenwald Grange's meeting hall.

21 No. 28 ALBANY AVENUE:
(ca 1830) Despite the addition of gingerbread and newer sections to this home, the roof line and interior floor plan suggest that the home is an old Dutch style and older than it appears. This home is one of the surviving examples of Gothic Revival

architecture; notice the board and batten siding.

22 THE VLY: Derived from the Dutch word vloed (refers to flowing water) corner Railroad Avenue At this intersection stands a renovated

14 NO. 31 WILLIAM STREET: (ca. 1754) This early Dutch house stands on a terrace of what was originally the "Groote Stuk" (great piece) of land on both sides of the creek from Valatie to Lindenwald. The land was divided among 4 men after purchasing it from the local Indians in the late 17th century. One of



1712 as a mission church from the Dutch Reformed mother church in Albany, this congregation was among the first in New York State, becoming its own entity in 1723. The first structure was in the vicinity of 25 Hudson St. The present site, its third location, houses the fourth church edifice. The previous one burned in 1867. The large box pew in the southeast corner was habitually and reverently occupied by Martin Van Buren. Turn right onto Church Street and then left onto Sylvester Street.

10 FRANCIS SILVESTER HOUSE: No. 5 Sylvester Street (ca. 1805) This Federal style home was built by Janmetje (Van Schaack) and Peter Silvester. Their son, Francis, grew up in the home and later became a judge. At the age of fourteen, Martin Van Buren began his seven year course study in law in this house under Judge Francis Silvester's tutelage. Van Buren did not agree with Silvester's politics and completed his training in New York City under William Peter Van Ness, a political lieutenant of Aaron Burr; he returned to the area after passing the bar in 1803.

11 ST PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH: No. 8 Sylvester Street (1852) Original site for this church was next to the Village Hall. In 1869, Trinity Church in NYC



loaned a \$1000 mortgage for the building and the church was moved to its current site. Martin Van Buren's son, Smith, contacted Richard Upjohn, a well known architect, who designed it in the American Gothic style. The exquisite Tiffany

windows in the sanctuary were given to the church in 1931. Proceed to Hudson Street and turn right.

12 MARTIN VAN BUREN BIRTH SITE:

No. 46 Hudson Street (historic marker) Martin Van Buren was born to Maria and Abraham Van Buren in the tavern house that once stood on this location. Maria Hoes married Abraham after the death of her first husband, Jacobus Van Alen. Van Buren had 3 half and 4 full siblings. Reverse direction and turn right on William Street.

13 WILLIAM STREET was formerly called Cow Lane. Harness, carriage repair shops and blacksmiths thrived here and on Jarvis Lane. The earliest settlement of the village was located on the rise above the creek where Hudson and William Streets are now. Notice No. 39, originally one room, this home is possibly the oldest house in the Village (standing in 1744). No. 41 was once a stagecoach inn.

the four, Martin Cornelissen, was Martin Van Buren's great grandfather. The center section of this home is stone flanked with Federal brick wings. 19th century additions are at the rear.

15 JOHN PRUYN HOUSE: No. 26 William Street (1766) This brick beauty incorporates many new ideas distinguishing it from the more simple, farm-like Dutch houses. The changes include a center hall, ceiling beams covered in lath and plaster, more



paneling and a second floor that was used for living quarters instead of storage. The gambrel roof home illustrates a concern for beauty as well as being a serviceable residence. It is believed that Pruy's

parents built the house as a gift a year before John's marriage as was customary in the Dutch culture. Proceed up Maiden Lane to Hudson Street. Turn right.

16 NATIONAL UNION BANK OF KINDERHOOK:

No. 1 Hudson Street (ca. 1825) Originally constructed as a private home by Peter Van Vleck, this federal style building sits on the former burying ground of the Reformed Church. The bank was moved into this converted residence in 1859.



17 ALBANY AVENUE: Developed mainly after 1817, Albany Avenue is characterized by Federal and later 19th century architecture. No. 4 Albany Avenue (ca. 1820) was built by Henry Van Vleck, a successful merchant and brother of Peter. Notice the Renaissance Revival details are nearly identical to his brother's home (now the bank).

18 COLUMBIA COUNTY MUSEUM: No. 5 Albany Avenue (1916) At one time there were two houses on this site; one burned, the other was moved. The Royal Arch Masons constructed this large building to be used as a meeting hall. Note the stained glass window in the edifice, a Masonic symbol. Now owned and operated by the Columbia County Historical Society, the building houses their offices, collections and library. Exhibitions change regularly.



station house for the steam railway that began in 1890 and ran from Hudson to Niverville. The train

was electrified in 1900 and ran until December of 1929. A cotton mill once stood on the site of the water tower.

FURTHER AFIELD

23 MARTIN VAN BUREN GRAVESITE: Just beyond Mills Park on Albany Ave lies the village cemetery. The graves of President Van Buren, his wife, Hannah, parents and his son, Martin Van Buren, Jr, are clearly marked.

24 LUYKAS VAN ALEN HOMESTEAD: Route 9H south (1737) One of the finest examples of Dutch architecture, this farm house features parapet gables, Dutch doors and stoops, "mouseteeth" brickwork and iron beam anchors. The home is on the National Historic Register and is open for tours during the summer. The house was one of the locations used in the film, *The Age of Innocence*.

25 ICHABOD CRANE SCHOOLHOUSE: on the grounds of the Van Alen house (ca. 1850) This one room schoolhouse was moved to this site in 1974 by the Columbia County Historical Society. The building was a functioning school until 1940. The name Ichabod Crane comes from the Washington Irving tale, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. James Merwin, a local schoolteacher, was the model for the character. Irving was a frequent visitor to the Kinderhook area.

26 LINDENWALD MARTIN VAN BUREN HOME: Route 9H south (1797) Built by Peter Van Ness in the Federal Gothic Revival Style, this home was later purchased by President Martin Van Buren during his Presidency as his retirement home. The name Lindenwald, bestowed by Van Buren, comes from the German for linden woods.



President Van Buren returned to his native Kinderhook to farm the 230 acre estate growing timothy, potatoes, grapes for wine, hops for beer, pears and apples. He died here on July 24, 1862. The site is operated by the National Park Service and is open for tours.