

the founders - introduction

Long before most communities recognized the importance of preservation, nine Bedford residents raised funds, saved a building and established the Bedford Historical Society. Those nine residents began a legacy of preservation that still guides us today.

As you read through their histories, you'll discover that the founders of the Bedford Historical Society were civic leaders whose contributions to our community reached beyond preservation. They helped found, fund or build many of the beloved institutions that are essential to our Bedford lives: the District Nursing Association which became Northern Westchester Hospital, The Bedford Free Library, The Bedford Garden Club, The Bedford Museum, Rippowam School, The Bedford Fire Department, The Bedford Golf & Tennis Club and Ward Pound Ridge Reservation's nature trails and Trailside Museum, along with many others.

While the interests and backgrounds of our founders were varied and diverse, their contributions endure and continue to enrich our lives today. It is up to the Bedford Historical Society and our members to ensure that the promise of past accomplishments lives into the future.

Life in Bedford

as experienced by the Founders

EDUCATION

Elementary (reading, writing & arithmetic, history) - the basics for most people, small local schools some with religious affiliations and home schooling

FOOD

Homegrown or purchased from local farms

HEALTH

Simple home remedies, a nurse and a doctor but no hospital until 1916

NEWS & COMMUNICATION

Gossip, hand-written letters, newspapers

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Visiting, churches and the Bedford Farmers' Club

TRAVEL

Walking, horse & buggy, and trains and later automobiles. And for the wealthy - steamship vacations to Europe

100 years of preservation

Court House & Museum - 1787



Preserving since 1965

Historical Hall - 1806



Purchased 1916

Post Office
circa 1838



Purchased 1972

The Bedford Store
circa 1838



Purchased 1968

Library - 1807



Acquired 1972

School House - 1829



Preserving since 1917;
Acquired 1975

Sutton Clock Tower - 1885
circa 1935



Preserving since 1985

Lounsbery Building
1906



Purchased 1972

Jackson House
circa 1857



Purchased 1946

Bedford Oak
circa 1512



Preserving since 1977

the founders

Adelaide E. Baylis

Summer Resident, Community Supporter

Adelaide E. Baylis was born in Manhattan on February 27, 1849. There is little information about Adelaide's early life prior to marrying William Baylis. She and William were summer residents and lived on State Street (Route 22) with their children and servants when residing in Bedford.

William Baylis attended the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute and graduated from Princeton in 1868. He joined the banking firm of his father then he and his brother formed Baylis and Company. He was also director of the Canton Company of Baltimore and was a trustee of the Gratuity Fund of the New York Stock Exchange. Mr. Baylis was a member of the Union, University, Metropolitan and Princeton clubs and of the St. Nicholas Society.



He and Adelaide had a son, William Jr. who followed in his father's footsteps. They also had a daughter, Adelaide B. who was a competitive fencer.

From the late 1800s to 1925, William Baylis purchased approximately 18 properties in Bedford. He sold only a few of these properties to buyers outside of the family, including Thomas O'Brien, John Kinkel, Mrs. Colgate's sister and the Town of Bedford.

William's family history, education and successful career earned the Baylis' a place in New York's Social Register from the late 1800s to about 1925.

In 1903, William Baylis with Colonel William Jay, Richard P. Lounsbury, Clarence M. Whitman, Thomas E. Kirby and William H. Male founded the Bedford Country Club with capital of \$10,000.

Adelaide E. Baylis' activities were largely determined by her children, social obligations related to her husband's position and the NY Social Register. Although she and the children were primarily summer residents, she was active in St. Matthew's Church and a founder of the Bedford Historical Society. She was a good neighbor who supported many community activities.

1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society

the founders

Adelaide Baylis

Edith Leonard Colgate

Richard S. Conover

Augusta Bates Day

John Kinkel

Thatcher T. P. Luquer

Delia West Marble

Thomas O'Brien

Sarah Williamson

tice.
The Bedford Historical Society that is being incorporated, has purchased the old M. E. church from Mr. Salinski. They intend preserving it in its present appearance, as to the exterior. On the inside, they will alter it some, so that it may be used for entertainments of the different clubs of the village.



the founders

Sarah F. Williamson

Bedford's Most Distinguished Citizen

Sarah was born in Bedford on December 21, 1862 during the early stages of the Civil War. She lived her entire life in same house located about a quarter of a mile east of the Village Green. Her ancestry dates back to 1680 and she was a descendent of one of the founders of Bedford, Nathan Clark.

Sarah lived in the house bearing the sign "English and Classical Family School for Boys" which her father founded. Sarah attended classes in this school and later entered the Bedford Female Seminary which was on Court Road.

Sarah is credited with maintaining Bedford's historical records going back to the Revolution. She firmly believed that one couldn't appreciate the present without understanding the past. She was known for her fine mind and reminiscent talks. She was the go-to person for all local resident genealogical and historical inquiries. Her home was filled with antiques and Bedford memorabilia.

She died on June 9, 1940. Her life encompassed the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, WWI and the Great depression. In a glowing obituary, Sarah is fondly remembered as a "grand old lady" and "Bedford's Most Distinguished Citizen." It was said that she personified the "Spirit of '76" and with her death came the end of that era.

- 1887: Member of the Bedford Agassiz Society Chapter 882
- 1913: Founding member of the Bedford Museum
- 1915: Listed in "The Social List of Westchester County and Adjacent Territory - 1915" under Bedford Village
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society
- She was also a member of the Westchester Historical Society



Sarah grew up in this house and attended school here

the founders

Edith Leonard Colgate

Mrs. Bedford, Bedford's first fire truck was named after her

Edith was born in New Jersey on September 13, 1881. Her parents moved to New York City while she was young, where they ran a successful oil and gas company. Both Edith and her husband Lathrop were blessed with inherited wealth which allowed them to be active and involved in the community. On U.S. Census forms Lathrop reported he had his own income. They moved to Bedford in 1906 shortly after marrying and had one daughter.



She and her family lived in the David Hays House and owned the Post Office and Lounsbery Building. They rented the Lounsbery Building to the Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company.

In her will, she left generous bequests to: Bedford Village Memorial Park, Bedford Village Fire Department, Bedford Historical Society and the Bedford Village Library.

Her strong interest in safety and the historic preservation of the buildings around the Village Green, conservation and beautification earned her the title of "Mrs. Bedford". Edith died on October 12, 1969.

- Generous supporter of the District Nursing Association, the Bedford Free Library and Bedford Fire Department
- President of the Board of Trustees for the Bedford Free Library for many years
- Elected to the first Board of Fire Commissioners and was the only female commissioner until the 2000s. The fire department's first fire truck was named after her
- 1906: Member of the Bedford Agassiz Society Chapter 882
- 1911: Founding member of the Bedford Garden Club
- 1913: Founding member of the Bedford Museum and President of Board
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society. She was elected as the fourth President and served until 1955. She was later made honorary President
- 1916: Raised funds for Hoover's Belgian Relief Fund and during the war was active in the Red Cross
- 1916 - 17: One of six founders of the Rippowam School



Colgate gardens

the founders

Richard S. Conover

Headmaster of The Bedford Boys School

Richard Conover was born in New Jersey in 1869. He learned about country life on his family's farm. He attended St. Paul's Episcopal School, Trinity and then Rutgers University. Following his graduation, he returned to St. Paul's to teach horsemanship and other country sports. He also instructed students about the Episcopal religion and was a Vestryman at St. Matthew's Church.

- 1906 - 07: Opened a small private boarding school, The Bedford Boys School, in his Bedford home at 24 Stone Hill Road. He was headmaster for 13 years. The school was similar to the one he attended as it prepared boys for the country life and gave them an Episcopal religious education
- 1906 - 18: Served in the New York Guard Service
- 1911 - 17: Member of the Bedford Farmers' Club
- 1915: Included in "The Social List of Westchester County and Adjacent Territory" under Bedford Village. His name was asterisked because he owned an automobile
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society
- 1916 - 17: During the formation of Rippowam School, he acted as an advisor to the founders, recommending that they consult with a Miss Fine who ran a successful girls' school in Princeton, NJ
- 1919: Richard became ill and died suddenly at approximately 50 years of age. He left behind a wife and four young children. His wife, Mary C. Conover, took over his school for a year. It was then merged with Rippowam in 1921 which resulted in Rippowam becoming co-ed



The Bedford Boys School on Stone Hill Road

the founders

Thomas O'Brien

Bedford's Superintendent of Highways for 22 years

Thomas O'Brien was born in Pleasantville, New York on February 7, 1859 to Daniel and Mary O'Brien. They moved to Mt. Kisco when Thomas was young and he was educated in Mt. Kisco schools.

- 1870's: Trained to be a machinist and worked for Spencer Optical Manufacturing Co. of Mt. Kisco for eight years
- 1882: Married Annie Millmore of Bedford and they lived in Mt. Kisco for two years and had six children
- 1884: Moved to Bedford and became a contractor. He specialized in building roads for 40 years and participated in building Westchester County's early parkways
- Member of the Bedford Farmers' Club and Bedford Agassiz Society Chapter 882
- 1897 - 1919: elected as the Superintendent of Highways for the Town of Bedford (winning 10 consecutive elections)
- 1913: Founder of the Bedford Museum
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society
- 1917: Served as Captain of the Reserve Police of the First District of Bedford
- 1919: Appointed a Director of Mt. Kisco National Bank and participated on the Finance Committee



- In the 1920's he formed a partnership with his two sons, William J. and D. Edward O'Brien and John Kinkel, called "O'Brien and Kinkel." This partnership was to become the leading road builder in Southern New York
- Private Banker to residents who wished to purchase homes
- Member of the Sisqua Council, No. 1852, Knights of Columbus of Mt. Kisco (he was a grand knight)
- Board of Trustees member and parishioner of St. Patrick's Church in Bedford
- 1929: Thomas O'Brien, Annie O'Brien and Jane Millmore (Annie's sister) donated land to St. Patrick's Church, allowing the church to move from the corner of Rt. 22 and Greenwich Road to its current location opposite Historical Hall

the founders

Delia West Marble

Founding Mother of Rippowam School



Born on April 16, 1868, Delia was the daughter of Manton and Delia Marble. Manton was the famous newspaper editor of "The New York World". After her mother died in 1873, Delia was sent to Bedford to live with, and be raised by, her aunt Susan Marble and her grandfather, Joel Marble. She was educated locally. Through a tutor, she met Dr. Britton, head of the New York Botanical Gardens and worked with him for several years.

Despite having moved to Germantown, NY and living on a farm known as the Hermitage, Delia frequently returned to Bedford and remained involved with garden club projects. She died on June 17, 1951.

- 1887: Member of the Bedford Agassiz Society Chapter 882; 1894: Secretary
- Participated in the Bedford Farmers' Club meetings, occasionally acting as Secretary
- 1898: Founding Board member of the District Nursing Association. Board member for 50 years, 23 years as secretary (1900 - 1923) and then three years as President (1923 - 1926). She was made an honorary President until her death. She co-authored "The District Nursing Association Northern Westchester County, New York 1898 - 1948"
- 1911: Founding member of the Bedford Garden Club. In 1940, she was awarded the Francis K. Hutchinson Medal for distinguished service in conservation
- Member of the Garden Club of America. Employed as Curator of Rocks at Barnard College in the Geology Department
- 1913: President of the Agassiz Society
- 1913: Founder of Bedford Museum
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society
- 1916: Organizer of the Bedford Agricultural Camp which was based on the Women's Land Army of Great Britain
- 1916 - 17: Credited with being a "Founding Mother" of Rippowam School, consulting with the organizers based on her experience with the District Nursing Association and the Women's Land Army. Served on the Board of Directors
- 1932 - 33: Delia and Eloise Luquer encouraged the Bedford Garden Club to sponsor several miles of nature trails and a Nature Museum at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation. The museum was built by the CCC and opened to the public in 1939. Presently, the BGC maintains a wildflower garden behind the museum dedicated to Delia and Eloise

the founders

Augusta Bates Day

Summer Resident, Community Supporter

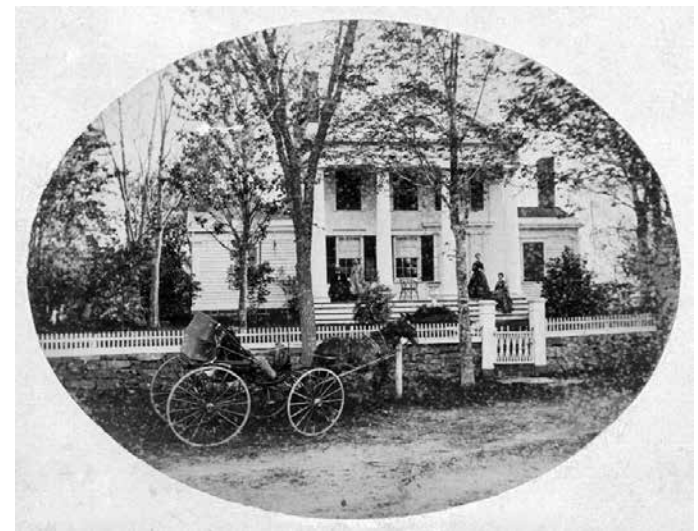
Augusta Day was born in Manhattan in 1854 and died on August 18, 1927 at 73 years of age. She was the daughter of Maria and James Bates. James was a descendent of John Bates, one of the original settlers. Augusta grew up in Bedford in the house her father built.

She and her husband, James, were summer residents of Bedford, on property next to her parent's house. Their visits to Bedford allowed them time to spend with family including James's brother, John B. Day, and sister, Margaret Day Cochran.

The Bates owned 10 acres of land on the southern side of Pound Ridge Road. The frontage of the property on the road was 300' and it extended all the way back to the Mianus River. It was bounded on the East by the lands of Carolyn Drummond and on the west by the property of Albert Williamson. Water was conveyed to their home though a lead pipe that originated in a spring on Edith and Lathrop Colgate's land.

Augusta and James were also enthusiastic supporters of the District Nursing Association and the Bedford Fire Department. They were members of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and were interred at St. Matthew's Cemetery.

- 1913: Founder Bedford Museum
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society



Agusta grew up in this house on Pound Ridge Road

the founders

John Kinkel Mr. Bedford

John Kinkel was born on September 10, 1876 and lived until he was 93 years of age. He was raised on a farm and was educated in Bedford's public school. His work life began in his teens when he started hauling feldspar and quartz to the Bedford Station for his father's mining business. He did this for 12 years.



The Katonah Times, March 17, 1905

John Kinkel has purchased a new pair of mules to put on the Spar route. This will make for thirteen teams hauling stone from the quarry here to Bedford Station. The Spar quarry and mill are just booming.

The North Westchester Times

Mr John Kinkel of Bedford, has been trying out a new three ton auto truck. The new truck made six trips a day to and from the station against only two trips a day with the old horse driven wagons.

- 1905 - 21: Deputy Sheriff (Constable) of the Town of Bedford
- 1913: Founder of the Bedford Museum
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society
- 1917: Joined Reserve Police Force
- 1918: Married Katherine O'Brien, Thomas O'Brien's daughter
- 1918 - 24: Served as Town's Receiver of Taxes, then Supervisor of Highways
- 1923: Chief of the newly formed Bedford Fire Department
- 1924: Kinkel's mining business was incorporated as "The Bedford Mining Co. Inc." and John Kinkel was appointed President
- Partnered in a contracting business with Thomas O'Brien and his sons in the firm, "O'Brien and Kinkel." They excelled at building roads at the time when carriages were being phased out and replaced with automobiles
- Charter member of the Bedford Lions Club
- Charter member of the Bedford Village Memorial Association
- Member of the Bedford Farmers' Club
- Known as "Mr. Bedford"



Kinklel house on Pound Ridge Road

the founders

Thatcher T. P. Luquer Bedford's Outstanding Citizen of the Year, First Historical Society President



Thatcher & Eloise

Thatcher was born in Bedford on September 10, 1866 and died on August 17, 1958 at the age of 91. He was the third child and youngest son of Rev. Lea Luquer and Eloise E. Luquer. His father first studied law and became a lawyer before going to divinity school to become a reverend. His mother was a published poet. The Luquers saw to it that their boys were properly educated. Thatcher attended St. Paul's, an Episcopal school, and went on to Columbia University for two degrees.

- 1887: Member of the Bedford Agassiz Society Chapter 882
- 1900: Formed his own civil and electrical engineering consulting firm with an office on Park Avenue in New York City
- 1900s: Early Board member of the Bedford Academy, now the Bedford Free Library
- 1903: Charter member of the Bedford Golf and Tennis Club
- 1913: Founder of the Bedford Museum
- 1916: Founder of the Bedford Historical Society and elected its first President
- 1917: Served in WWI
- 1930: Chairman of the 250th Jubilee Anniversary Celebration of the Founding of Bedford on October 4th

Memberships: Military Naval Club, Veterans Corp. of Artillery (NY), Huguenot Society of America, St. Nicholas Society of New York and the Society of American Military Engineers

Community interests: participation on the Bedford Hills Board of Education for 25 years, 18 years as President. Bedford Hills Community House Treasurer for 13 years

Personal interests: memberships in Westchester County Historical Society (life member and President); New York State Historical Association (life member); American Forestry Association; and the American Museum of Natural History

Club memberships include: the Century Association, Alpha Delta Phi Club, the Military-Naval Club of New York; Army and Navy Club of Washington; Bedford Golf and Tennis Club; Camp Fire Club of America

Trustee of the New York Marble Cemetery, Trustee and Director of the Northern Westchester Hospital

1958: Named Bedford's Outstanding Citizen of the Year by Bedford Hills Lions Club