



# *The Walden House* **TATTLER**

*The Historical Society of Walden and the Wallkill Valley*

Vol. 27, No. 1

Walden, New York

April 2007

## **Annual Local History Day 2007: The Civil War**

April 29, 1-4, Bradley Assembly Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Walden Municipal Building

Professor Mark Morreale of Marist College presents a program on the Civil War.



## ***It's Tea Time!!***



### **The 2007 Annual Spring Tea**

**April 15, 2007—Make your reservations now!**

Last March, the Society held the first Annual Spring Tea. The theme “Mothering Sunday” was based on the English tradition of visiting one’s mother or family on the third Sunday of Lent. Volunteers transformed the Walden House into a delightful English tea house. Members donated linens, china, and teapots for the event. The menu included delicious tea sandwiches, cookies, chocolate covered strawberries, and scones. The event was a huge success.

The 2007 Annual Spring Tea will be held on April 15, 2007 at the Walden House. Once again the House will be transformed into an English tea parlor and a traditional menu will be served. There will be two afternoon sittings: 1:00-2:30 and another 3:30-5:00. Come enjoy a quaint afternoon with friends and enjoy a cup of tea. Tickets are limited so reserve your seat today.

## **2007 Programs and General Meetings**

**April 6: Birthday Tribute to Col. Thomas W. Bradley**

**April 15: 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Tea**—at the Walden House. Two seatings: 1-2:30 and 3:30-5. Reservations only and seating is limited. Tickets \$10.00. For reservations call **Anita Vandermark** at 778-7772.

**April 18: Deborah Phelps and Becky Phelps Pearson** will present the documentary film, “Sam,” on **Sam Phelps’** book “Feathers & Fur, Vol. 1.” Hostesses: Claire Ciardullo, Patricia Eisley, Ginny Neidermier

**April 29: Local History Day**, 1-4, Bradley Assembly Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Walden Municipal Building. **Mark Morreale**, Professor at Marist College will present a program on the Civil War

**May 16: “The Maybrook Railroad” Tony Morano**, well-known authority will present a program chronicling the railroad. Hostesses: Barbara Heitz, Barbara Imbasciani, Hedwig Lustig

**June 20: “Hudson Valley Places and Faces” Patricia Edwards Clyne** of Circleville, NY, author of ten books, will discuss her latest in which Orange County is the star attraction. Hostesses: June Garcia, Elsie Gridley, Janet Gridley

**July 18: Annual Picnic on the Porch** at the Walden House. Bring a covered dish and a place setting. Also bring an item for “show and tell,” 6:30 PM

**July 22 & August 12: Open House Summer Series, 2-4 PM**

## ***Future Programs and Events***

**Sept 29:** Yard Sale at the Jacob Walden House / **Oct 17:** Regular Meeting / **Nov:** Veterans Day Program / **Dec 9:** Christmas Tea



## ***Tattler Tidbits***

From **C. E. (“String”) Cooper’s “Walden Year Table—What Happened and When—A Chronology”...**

...1712\*—First settlement. Henry Wileman settled on 3,000 acres, 1½ miles north of the present Village of Walden.

...1768—Grist mill of James Kidd, at the Falls, built before this date, precise date unknown; In 1768 mill was owned by Johannes Decker. In 1789 by Cadwallader Colden Jr.; Settlement known as Kidatown

...1813—Jacob Treadwell Walden, first visit to the “Falls.”

...1902—High water washed out the lower bridge.

\*Other sources say 1713 (see map on page 4)



***A message from the President***

As I write this segment, my term as president of the Historical Society has barely begun, but I feel the time is already flying by. My decision to run for the presidency was difficult. The Society is steeped in tradition, time honored ways of

doing things and a limited active volunteer base. Although the needs of the Society are many, nothing is an emergency. We are in a sound financial situation; the house has no major structure problems; we have over 100 paying members; we are able to pay our monthly bills but we should not get caught in a complacent position.

In order to not become complacent, the Society needs to look ahead. A long range plan needs to be designed. This is not a new idea—it has been discussed at many trustee meetings. A very simple version of the plan needs to include a revised mission statement and a broad over view of the Society’s needs and goals.

Change is a word that many people fear when in reality it can be a great thing. I would like the Society trustees and members to allow one word—change, to enter our thoughts and plans. Remember, we can incorporate change and maintain tradition while striving for growth in our Society.

I am looking forward to a great year ahead.

*Barbara Imbasciani*



***Photos from Spring Tea March 2006***



***Holidays to Remember—***

***Photos from December 2006 Christmas Tea***



Anita Vandermark greets guests Diane Decker (l.), Ruth Northrip (r.)



Lilly and Lisa Mellville (l.), Peg Donnelly, Jan Gridley (r.)

## *The Strange Visitor to Walden House*

By Mildred Parker Seese

Excerpt from an early 1960s\* *Times Herald-Record*.  
Thank you to **Clifton Patrick** of the **Chester Historical Society** for forwarding the clipping.

“There’s never been a tradition that the Walden House was haunted, in fact, who can say exactly what a “haunt is, or whether there actually is such a thing? On the other hand...

“John Eurich, who lives near Middletown, isn’t a man who would be inclined to give much thought to the supernatural, or to imagine stories about people or things of the past. Thus, an experience he had at the headquarters of the Walden Historical Society a couple of weeks ago\* should be added to the lore of Orange County and recorded in the annals of the quite young organization which has achieved so much in less than five years.

“Mr. Eurich, a member of the State Hospital staff whose trade is carpentry and anything relating to it, undertook some redecorating and repair work for the Walden organization in spare time when his son Robert one of the society stalwarts, reported difficulty finding a workman attuned to the task. The younger Eurich is among leaders in a very careful and thorough effort at restoration of the stone dwelling beyond the Tinbrook in Walden which the New York industrialist of old Manhattan family, Jacob Walden, acquired as home and headquarters about 1815 when he gave the unnamed millsite its first push toward greater business.

“And so, John Eurich was on a stepladder painting the wall of what once was Jacob Walden’s parlor. It was midmorning of a bright March day, and the doors were locked to keep out unauthorized persons. The door of the room in which he was working was also closed. Naturally, Mr. Eurich took notice when he heard a man’s footsteps cross the meeting room in back of the parlor and continue up the front hall—to the parlor door.

“At the end of a brush stroke he paused and glanced toward the door. No one came in, and the steps receded back along the hall and across the meeting room to a door into another room which Mr. Eurich heard open and close”—he put down his brush, stepped from the ladder and followed in puzzlement after receiving no answer to his “Who’s there?”

Parker Seese continues “there was a less elaborate repetition of the phenomenon” the next morning and while it could have been a society officer with a key... they would surely have responded to Mr. Eurich’s call or stepped inside to observe the work. No sign had been seen or heard of anyone entering or leaving the house by any door. “No; I didn’t say that Jacob Walden’s ghost is haunting the Walden House...And, if spirit it was, it might have been that of an earlier resident, perhaps Samuel Erwin...”

As far as we know, there hasn’t been a return “visit!”



## *‘06 Veteran’s Day Program*

*A Great Success!*

On November 12, 2006, the Historical Society and Hudson Valley Conservatory joined forces to present a special program in tribute to Veterans called “A World War II Show and USO Canteen.” The program included displays of memorabilia from WW I, WW II, Vietnam, Korea, Desert Storm and current conflicts, plus an outstanding USO Show. The Hudson Valley Conservatory members, under the direction of Sam Wright, recreated a USO Show similar to what a soldier in WW II might have seen. The Bradley Assembly Room was transformed into a USO Canteen while on stage members of the Conservatory took the audience down memory lane with songs and entertainment by Bob Hope (Master of Ceremonies), The Andrews Sisters, Burns and Allen and many more.

Veterans, families and friends enjoyed the delightful show, displays and refreshments. Thanks to the very generous donations of our community, the event was a great success.



*The USO Show Cast*



*Sam Wright, Director*



**Our Heroes--Our Veterans!**

David Lustig

Yvette DiDonato, Donald Fries



Lisa Melville as "Rosie,"



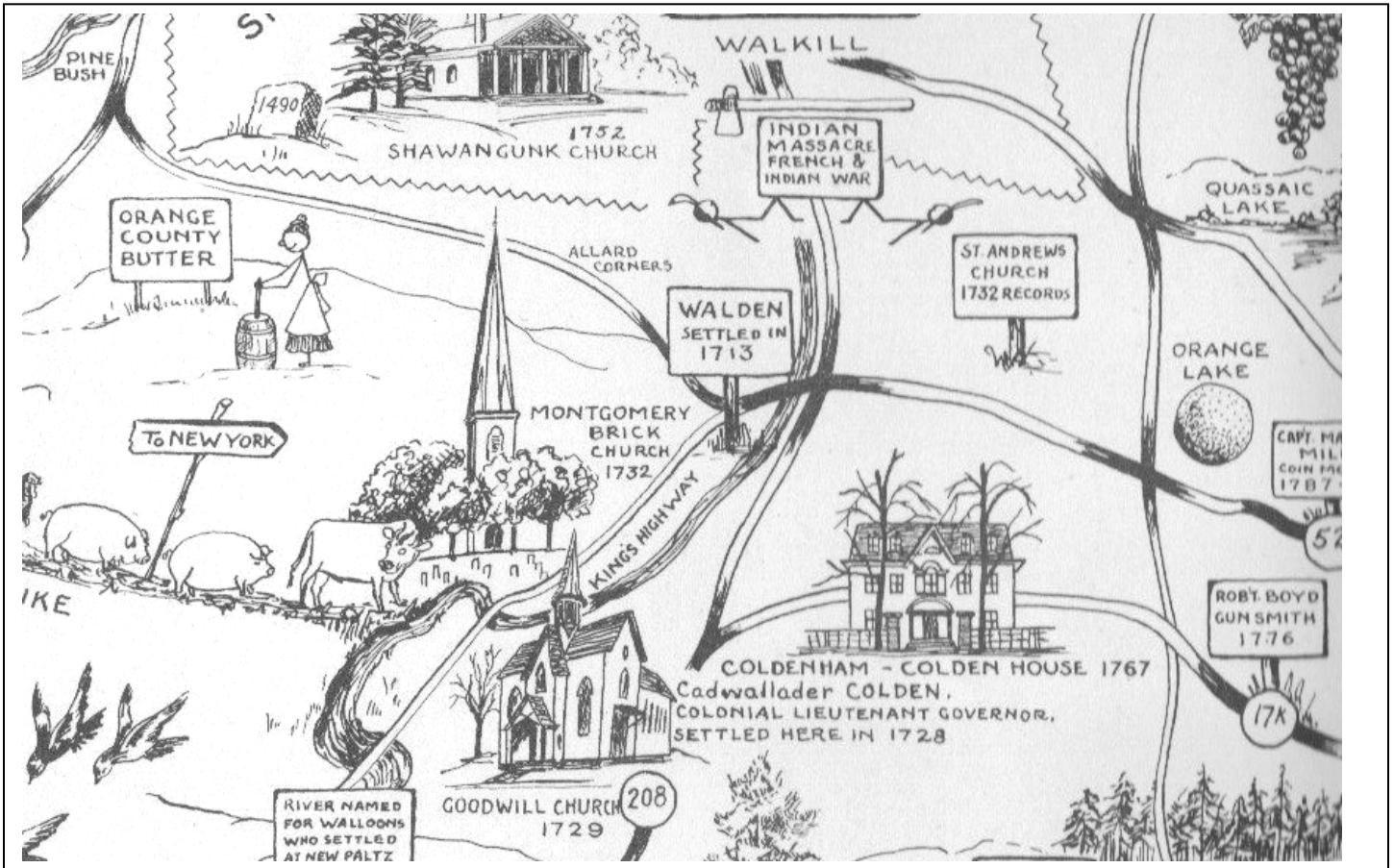
Ray Devoe,

Wonderful WWII displays—thank you!



Marian Welsh, our own local USO volunteer

**Map Section of Orange County, New York**



A section of William Emblor's 1942 "Map of Orange County, New York." Map loan courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. George Heitz of Walden.

"Bounded on the East by the Hudson and on the West by the Delaware, Orange County was one of the twelve original counties of New York established by the General Assembly in 1683."

In the Spring of 2006, I received an inquiry from Rev. John Walden of Norwich, England, requesting information regarding the Walden Airport. I immediately e-mailed him and also sent him a photo and a detailed account of the now defunct Airport. Through the e-mails I learned that he was a collector of Walden memorabilia and that he was establishing a Walden museum for his grand-daughter, Lilly.

We frequently contacted each other; and I was delighted when he advised me that he wanted a family membership to our Historical Society. On June 21, 2006 I sent him membership. The Walden family is now officially members of our Society. I asked him if he would like to write an article for the *Tattler* and he graciously complied. Please welcome Rev. John Walden and his family. *Anita*

February 7, 2007

Dear Anita,

## WALDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Greetings to all the Members and Residents of Walden Village NY.

The Walden family here in Norwich Norfolk UK send Greetings and Best Wishes.

I am Reverend John Walden, a retired Episcopalian Priest of some vintage and my wife is Marion. I have three children all in their thirties and Marion has two boys of similar age. Marion has one grand-daughter with another one arriving in July and I have four grandchildren being two each from my two sons. My daughter is a war orphan from the Vietnam war in the 1970's.

**I have a problem!** It is that my grand-daughters live 165 miles away and it is too far for me to drive there and back in a day now that I am a really old man! So – how do I maintain a relationship with Lilly, the first one, particularly? I cannot compete with her other granddad as he lives just around the corner and sees her every day.

What I do is to write a 'Letter to Lilly' every month which is usually about twenty pages long. I send diary notes from my adventurous life, pertinent comments about news and lots of photos of what Marion and I have been doing. At the end of each year I have the letters bound in leather and present it to her in the hope that her and her grandchildren will read them as a record of the 'Walden Family.' Anita, has copies of the first two years of letters.

Anyway, as part of keeping Lilly's attention, as her father reads my letters, is to send something connected with the Walden name. I started collecting postcards, artefacts and interesting items. There are several 'Walden's in USA and that adds interest.

Please flick through these volumes to see the sort of things I have collected over time. Sometimes Marion says "What have you got now, John?" as a Walden milk bottle or savings stamp from your supermarket or another postcard or a Bradley Fire ribbon is unzipped from the envelope! She says that I could open a 'Walden Museum'!

Here are photos of our fleeting visit to your Walden several years ago as we drove from seeing our friends in Rochester NY on the way back to JFK NY.



I have pictures of the Walden Airport nearby, before it closed and a vehicle model delivery truck of the knife factory (a name I cannot pronounce properly nor spell yet!), and so on. One interesting book is of the Wallkill Valley Farmers Association (1900) that show photos and write ups of all that went on and the personalities in the early part of last century [James G Lewis DD being Priest at St Andrew's Church Walden, called 1899]. And so it goes on.

*Rev. James Walden's letter continues...* Anyway, it all adds interest for my 'Letters to Lilly.' We are genuinely interested in the Walden Historical Society and one day wish to visit you all with Lilly and her parents. By then, I shall be too old to drive and it will be my daughter in law that does the grand tour. I have driven so many hundreds of thousands of miles in my lifetime and find it frustrating now that doing 400+ miles a day is too much!

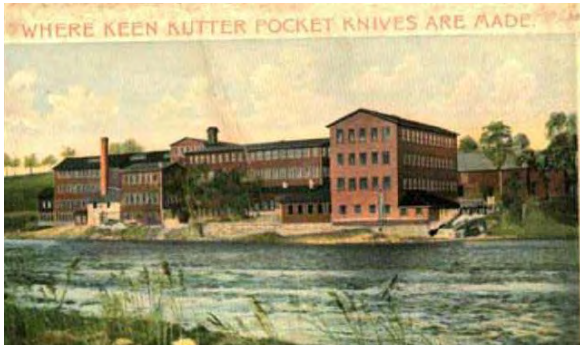
I hope that we shall continue to maintain contact.

With every good wish.

John & Marion Walden

Miss Lilly Walden + the new baby Isobelle

Daniel & Siobahn Walden



## Knife Shop Memories...as told to Marcus Millspaugh

The following article is based on interviews conducted by Marcus ("Mickey") H. Millspaugh, Jr. in the mid-1980's.

The interviewee, Mr. Fred Fox, shared some of his memories of the knife companies. Mr. Fox's father and grandfather were both cutlers employed in the various shops in Walden. As a boy, Mr. Fox helped his father after school and summers in the lower shop.

The work week for a cutler started on Monday morning. He would draw the necessary materials for the week's work from the supply room. When Fred helped, he was in the "white elephant" which we know today as the buildings of the Thruway Market. The knife shop where the cutlers worked was in back of these buildings.

The cutler was responsible for building the knives of the specified pattern from the material which had been issued. This material would include:

- rough blades which had been forged to shape;
- knife springs;
- knife scales (outside covering of pearl, horn, or wood, etc.)

Rough blades had to be made to fit the spring of the knife and be drilled so it could be "nailed in." The blades had to then be tempered and polished.

The springs that made up the back of the knife were also rough shaped and had to be cropped to size, drilled and tempered by the cutler.

The knife scales were also in a rectangular form and had to be fitted and cut to size.

The drilling process was a chore that could be delegated to a 10 or 11 year old boy. The tang of the blade was marked by use of a jig which took the shaped tang and with a hammer blow would receive a

punch mark that would indicate the location of the necessary hole. The grinding operations were not allowed to be performed by boys unless they were 15-16.

Tools for working on the knives were largely hand made by the cutlers and were designed to do some task in a way that fit that particular man's way of working. The individuality of the tools can be seen in the many different patterns of hammers. The hammer was a very important tool to the cutler since the joining of parts was largely done by riveting. The delicate nature of the scale material particularly mother of pearl, made it necessary for a very skilled application of force. A broken scale had to be replaced at the cutler's own expense (at least this was so in earlier times.)

*(In reference to pearl handled knives, I had been told that it was necessary to work the pearl under water because it gave off toxic fumes when drilled or ground. I checked with George Rossman who had been working with this material at the Schrade Cutlery Co. for many years. His answer was that he hadn't heard that but if you didn't drill it under water or shape it after a soaking of several weeks, it would chip or split.)*



Many of the maintenance jobs in the cutlers shop were the responsibility of the cutlers. Grinding wheels were given an abrasive coating of emery. This was done by coating the wheel with very hot glue and then rolling the wheel in a trough containing the emery powder. Emery was available in fine, medium or coarse powder and the coating process would continue until the necessary thickness was built up.

The equipment was all belt-driven--that would be leather belts connecting overhead shafting with the various grinding wheels, drills, and other equipment.

## *Memories of the Knife Shop, continued...*



A broken or separated belt had to be repaired by those working there. The repair would be done by replacing a piece of leather and punching holes so lacing could be placed between the ends.

The work week ended on Saturday at noon after the cutlers had turned in their trays of knives for credit. The knives would be inspected and any rejects, which were known as "cuckoos," had to be corrected or that dozen knives would not be credited. The unit of measurement was by the dozen. The cutler was a highly-skilled craftsman who took pride in his work. It was quite an embarrassment to have a "cuckoo" discovered in one's tray and the other cutlers made sure that everyone heard about it.



## *The Jacob Walden House is now on The World Wide Web!*

The draft web site is "up and running" and we would love to receive your questions, comments, and suggestions. Please have a look at the draft site at <http://www.adprose.org/waldenhouse/index.htm>

## *From the Archives...*

While searching through a file cabinet in the Archives room for information about the Walden Odd-fellows Lodge, artefacts related to the Grand Army of the Republic were discovered. The G.A.R., as it is more commonly known, was a national organization founded in 1866 in Illinois. Its purpose was to promote fraternity, charity, and loyalty among Union veterans of the Civil War. A local chapter called "an encampment" was begun in Walden in 1885. It was named Fairchild Post No. 564 in memory of Corporal William L. Fairchild, member of the New York 124<sup>th</sup> Regiment from Walden, who was killed in the Battle at Chancellorsville on May 3, 1863.

We have the following Fairchild Post items: A muster book listing members, a minutes book (1901-1923), twenty eight applications for membership (one signed by Thomas W. Bradley, the applicant's sponsor), several bimonthly reports on the condition of the post, and a brief description of the organization in files accumulated by Charles Bodine, an early Village Historian.

In addition to this information, we have found G.A.R. material in a bag of items associated with Thomas Odell (part of the Nicoll collection), a Union veteran from Newburgh. This included G.A.R. uniform buttons, ribbons, reports, and an official encampment handbook.

The Fall Tattler will have an article on the Fairchild Post. If anyone has any information about our Post, please contact Pat Easley (778-1173).

## *The Civil War Comes to Walden*

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Local History Day is scheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007 from 1 to 4 PM in the Walden Municipal Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Bradley Assembly Room. The event will feature two speakers and an exhibit.

The topic of this year's event is "1863: The Ordeal of the 124<sup>th</sup> New York, the Orange Blossoms." The Orange Blossoms were a group of Civil War soldiers that included many of Walden's young men. The first guest speaker, Mark James Morreale, is a senior lecturer of English at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY. He has given numerous living history presentations to community and educational groups about the Hudson Valley's contribution to the Civil War.

The history of Ladies fashion during the 1860's will be the subject of the second speaker. Michele Neusch, a member of The Metropolitan Vintage Dancers and Social Club, The Victorian Social Club and The Metropolitan Ladies Club. These groups are "societies dedicated to the preservation of the historically accurate "period correct" dress, etiquette, social functions including teas, tea dances, balls, dinners from the 1860 through 1918." The society members re-enact these eras in dress and in dance.

The schedule of events for the afternoon is as follows:

1:00 - 1:50

*Exhibit on the Civil War and the Orange Blossoms*

2:00

*Welcome, Introduction of Speaker*

2:00 - 3:00

*1863: The Ordeal of the 124<sup>th</sup> New York, the Orange Blossoms*

3:15-3:45

*General "Over view" of Women's Clothing During the Civil War Period by Michele Neusch*

*Ongoing*

*Local History Share*

Everyone is invited to attend. All activities are free. Remember to bring in your local history items to share.

The event is sponsored by the Historical Society of Walden and Wallkill Valley, The Josephine-Louise Public Library and the Village of Walden. Refreshments courtesy of the Thruway Market.



***Reminder: Walden House Tea—April 15, 2007—  
Reservations are required!***

### Officers

President Barbara Imbasciani  
Vice President Anita Vandermark  
Secretary Nancy Ohlmer  
Treasurer Patricia Eisley

### Trustees

Class of 2005	Class of 2006
Patricia Eisley	Claire Ciardullo
Joyce Freeman	Donald Henry
Richard W. Hoyt	David C. Lustig
Lisa Melville	Nancy Ohlmer
Marcus H. Millspaugh	Susan Tighe

### Class of 2007

Barbara Imbasciani  
Howard Oldrey  
Anita Vandermark  
Gail Yeaple

The Historical Society of Walden and the Wallkill Valley publishes the *Walden House Tattler* bi-annually and distributes it free to members.

The Society is a nonprofit organization devoted to preserving local history and is chartered by the State of New York. Membership is open to anyone interested in local history preservation. Dues are \$7.50 per person, \$3 per student, and \$10 per family.

### *Inside This Issue...*

- Upcoming Spring Tea April 15 and photos from last year's event.
- Annual Local History Day: The Civil War Scheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup>
- Photos from the Christmas Tea
- Calendar of 2007 Events
- Veteran's Day Tribute Program
- "Strange Visitor to Walden House," excerpt of article by Mildred Parker Seese
- Section of William Emblar OC map of 1942
- Rev. John Walden writes A letter from Norwich, England
- Knife Shop Memories
- G.A.R.
- See us on the Internet!  
<http://www.adprose.org/waldenhouse/index.htm>
- From the Archives...

*The Past, Our Doorway to the Future*

Historical Society of  
Walden and the Wallkill Valley  
P.O. Box #48  
Walden, New York 12586

*Stamp*