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Plans to preserve historic Schuylerville home move forward

By Staff report

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SCHUYLERVILLE, N.Y. >> Plans are now in the works for a meeting in September in the on-going effort to preserve the historic Marshall House in Schuylerville, according to David Bullard, the current owner and resident of the only surviving building that played a role in the Battles of Saratoga.

Bullard said he was pleased with increased interest generated among Marshall Family members who attended their second ever family reunion at their ancestral home, held there this past weekend. He said he and a core group of Marshall Family members now plan to meet again this fall as they continue to explore ways in which the home can be preserved for the study and appreciation of future generations of scholars, history buffs and others.

Approximately 30 family members from all over the country spent the weekend in the Schuylerville area, that included a picnic on the grounds of the Marshall House and a portrayal of the Baroness Frederika Charlotte Riedesel, who was under siege while taking refuge in the cellar of this historic house during the Battles of Saratoga. The baroness was the 31-year-old wife of the German general who, alongside the British, led his mercenary forces against the American patriots in those battles.

The Baroness Riedesel, her three young daughters, along with many wounded British and German soldiers took shelter in the Marshall house as it came under cannon fire from the Americans. Deborah Bailey of Greenwich, in period dress, gave a performance based on the famous writings of the baroness who had recollected that harrowing experience during what turned out to be the turning point of the American Revolutionary War.

It was that history that helped stimulate the increased interest in preserving the home. Among the possibilities for the September meeting is to consider the publication of a new history book devoted to the Marshall House.

The reunion celebrated the 200th anniversary of when the family first acquired the building. The home was occupied by several generations of Marshalls until it was sold to Bullard's father in 1930. Among those Marshall family members in attendance was 88-year old Joseph Marshall of Worcester, Mass., who appeared in period dress for the occasion.

"The Marshall House signifies that part of my family history," Marshall said, adding that his mother had kept that history alive for him and other family members.

Several years ago one of his daughters, Elaine Gardella, also of Worcester, became the prime player in researching the family history and organizing these family reunions.

"We must continue to educate the younger generations on the value of sharing these profound and moving stories during the forming of our nation," she said.

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