

## Revolutionary War history came to life at Marshall House in Schuylerville

By Mark Frost  
Chronicle Editor

On the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend, my wife Sandy and I attended an open house at the privately owned Marshall House on Route 4 in Schuylerville across the road from Champlain Canal Lock 5.

We didn't know quite what to expect. We both were alerted to the event by a press release we received at *The Chronicle* and published as a brief. We'd al-



**Debbie Bailey of Greenwich** adroitly depicted the **German Baroness Frederika Riedesel** in the actual house where she and others hid from American troops after the Battle of Saratoga. **The home's owner David Bullard** is seated at rear right. *Photos/Mark Frost*

ways seen the sign along the road for the Marshall House but that was the extent of our knowledge.

Now we know that this is where — on

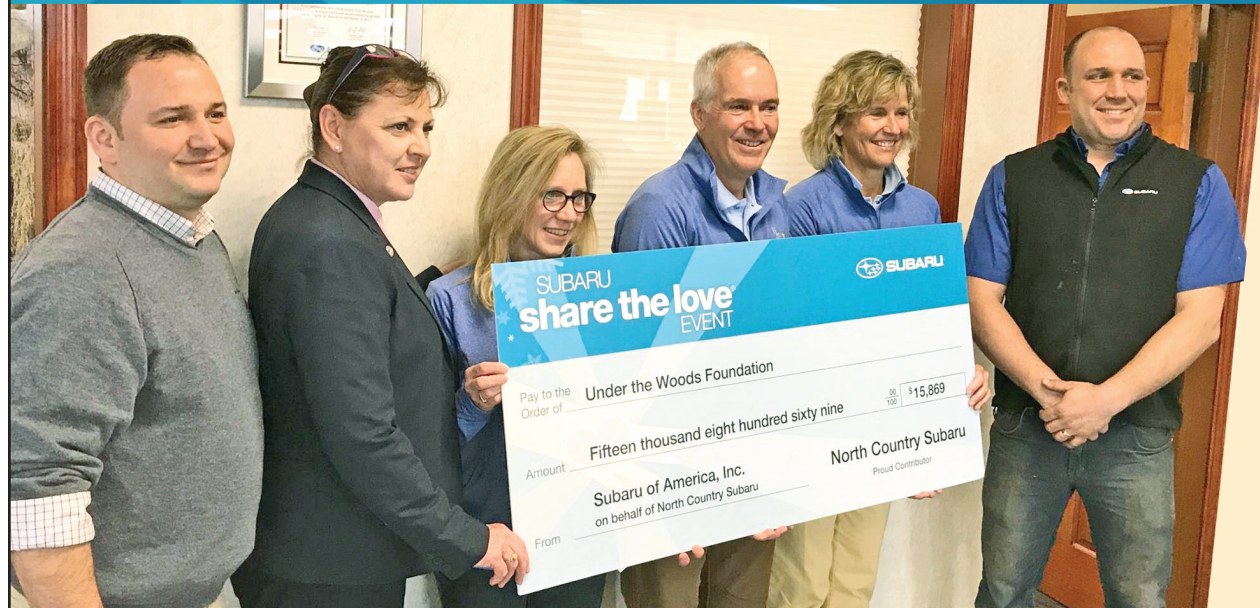
Oct. 10, 1777 — “a beautiful, aristocratic, 31 year old German Baroness” named Frederika Riedesel and her three daughters, 6, 3 and 1, went into hiding for a week

in the cellar as the house took cannon fire from the Americans after their catastrophic defeat of the British at the Battle

*Please turn to page S5*



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**Checking blood stains under the rug** were David Bullard, who owns the Marshall House, and Debbie Bailey, who depicted the Baroness Frederika Riedesel

*Chronicle photos/Mark Frost*

## Marshall House in Schuylerville

*From front page of section* of Saratoga.

The baroness's husband Baron Friedrich Adolf Riedesel commanded the German auxiliary troops attached to the British army.

The baroness accompanied her husband on his American war expedition and found herself in harm's way when the British were routed at Saratoga.

In the post-battle furor, we're told, she and her daughters Augusta, Frederika and Caroline took refuge at the Lansing Farmhouse — now the Marshall House — which the British General John Burgoyne had requisitioned as a hospital.



**The Marshall House was the Lansing Farmhouse when British General John Burgoyne ordered its use as a hospital.**

Also in the house were other wives and children of British officers, plus injured soldiers in varying degrees of distress and others seeking shelter.

The house was being shelled. Eventually everyone fled to the small basement, which we visited as part of the open house.

David Bullard, whose family has owned the house for more than 80 years, hosted the open house and showed cannon balls he said were found on the property.

Fortuitously, the baroness kept a detailed journal. The whole family survived the war and eventually the baroness's journal was published — initially in German and then in 1827 in English.

Besides Mr. Bullard (who is married to the composer and Union College professor Hilary Tann) and Debbie Bailey, a third, unofficial presenter at Saturday's open house was Spanish journalist Javier Monjas, who years ago happened to stay at the house when it was operated as a bed & breakfast and who developed a lifetime fascination with its history.

At the open house, Mr. Monjas displayed a first edition of the English translation of the baroness's memoir. He said it's exceed-

ingly rare. He found it on the Internet.

Here, for a Glens Falls resident, it got even more interesting. It turns out that the book was owned until his death by Robert Porter Patterson, the Under Secretary of War for President Franklin Roosevelt during World War II and Secretary of War for President Harry Truman, 1945 to 1947.

Patterson is one of Glens Falls's most illustrious native sons. He was born here in 1891 and grew up on Center Street.

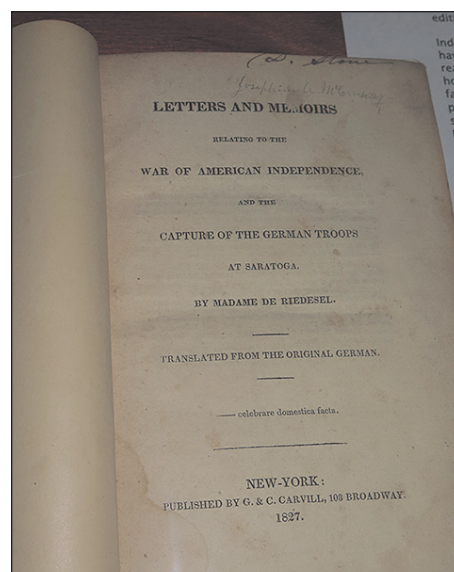
Anyway, what we learned from Debbie Bailey's lively depiction last Saturday is that the baroness was brave, articulate, opinionated and ahead of her time.

She was dismissive of the British General John Burgoyne and likewise viewed the American commander Horatio Gates with some disdain.

The thought arises Baroness Frederika might warrant making a movie about her.

Assuming there will be future open houses at The Marshall House, we highly recommend going. Very interesting and evocative. We were thrilled to see parents who brought their kids.

For more information, the Marshall House website is themarshallhouse.org.



**Rare first edition** of the English translation (1827) of Baroness Frederika Riedesel's memoir of her experience as the wife of a German commander during the American Revolution.

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