The Village of Kinderhook

Welcome to Kinderhook, a Hudson River Valley village rich in history. The name “Kinderhook,” which appeared on area maps as early as 1614, means “children’s corner” in Dutch. This area was settled in the 1660s by Dutch colonists who purchased land along Kinderhook Creek from Mohican Native Americans. Dutch and later English settlers tilled fertile farmlands here through the colonial era. After the American Revolution, the village grew and became a stop on the Albany-New York City stagecoach line.

Kinderhook Village, incorporated in 1838, became a busy nineteenth-century commercial center. Village streets were lined with shops, banks, taverns, and churches, and small factories made carriages and hats. Kinderhook became the most populous town in Columbia County and attracted prominent doctors and lawyers to practice and live there. Kinderhook was home of the eighth US president, Martin Van Buren (1782–1862), whose estate, Lindenwald, now a National Historic Site, is located two miles south of the village.

Kinderhook’s historical development is exhibited in a variety of late eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and early twentieth-century buildings, including Dutch vernacular, Georgian, Greek Revival, Federal, Italianate, Romanesque, and Classical and Colonial Revival style examples. Kinderhook’s pride in preservation was recognized in 1974 when the village was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The eight historic pieces featured here provide just a glimpse of Kinderhook’s historic offerings. Albany-Hudson Electric Trail users are encouraged to explore Kinderhook Village historic sites and businesses.

Dutch Reformed Church, 21 Broad Street (1859)
This Romanesque Revival-style church was built for Kinderhook’s Dutch Reformed Church congregation, originally organized in 1732. Martin Van Buren is buried in the church cemetery. Source: Milestone Heritage Consulting.

Peter Van Schaack House, 20 Broad Street (ca. 1787)
Closely built in the Georgian style like David Van Schaack’s nearby mansion, this house was altered in the Second Empire style by then-owner James Mir between 1865 and 1888. Source: Milestone Heritage Consulting.

Trolley Depot, Albany Avenue at Mills Park (ca. 1900)
The Albany-Hudson electric trolley line built this passenger depot where the line stopped for service. Once a busy center of village life, it is now a private residence adjacent to Mills Park. Source: Village of Kinderhook.

Columbia County Historical Society, 5 Albany Avenue (1918)
This Classical Revival style building, once a Royal Arch Masons hall, is now home to the County Historical Society’s offices, a library, and public history exhibits. Source: Milestone Heritage Consulting.

Village Green, Broad and Hudson Streets (1820–1880)
Villagers moved a graveyard to create this town center, which included a horse wagon scale. After an 1880 fire destroyed shops, the green was enlarged to accommodate firefighting systems. Source: Village of Kinderhook.