



The History of the Hamlet of New Baltimore

The hamlet of New Baltimore coalesced around a landing and anchorage on the Hudson River during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Shipbuilding began in the 1790s and by 1800, the landing had several dozen houses and taverns and was named New Baltimore. Several Dutch families settled in the community along with a number of Rhode Islanders. New Baltimore had the advantage of being situated below bars which often obstructed navigation to Albany. The hamlet thrived on shipbuilding and the local trade on the river and beyond.

Shipbuilding became a major source of employment in the nineteenth century. The Baldwin shipyard was founded in 1858 and built more than 100 steamboats, tugboats, and barges. The marine railway built-in 1884 remains on Mill St. at the center of the yard's historic operations. The ice industry operated a series of icehouses north and south of the hamlet as well as across the river on Houghtaling Island. The hamlet became urban in scale boasting fine churches, stylish houses, and several hotels.

New Baltimore declined after World War I. Wooden shipbuilding was no longer competitive and the ice industry collapsed as a result of health concerns and mechanical refrigeration. Destructive fires hollowed out the historic business district between 1897 and 1919. Labor moved to the cities. Efforts to clean up the Hudson River and a renewed interest in historic architecture brought new people to the hamlet beginning in the 1970s. The hamlet was entered on the State and National Registers of Historic Places in 1996 and a number of historic houses have been thoughtfully rehabilitated during the past several decades.

Disclaimer: Most of the buildings and sites highlighted are privately owned. Please respect the property rights and privacy of the owners and remain on public roads and sidewalks.

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Historic Walking Tour of the New Baltimore Hamlet

A Hidden Treasure Along the Hudson River



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NOW

Provided Courtesy of the New Baltimore Conservancy

[(23) 56 Mill St. "Baldwin Shipyard Manager's House." Built circa 1860, this house and its outbuildings have a long association with the adjacent Baldwin Shipyard site. The three-story house features richly molded period doors and columns and very unusual "porthole" windows in the gables.

[(24) 80 Mill St. "Baldwin Shipyard." Shipbuilding was established at this site in 1853 by Goldsmith and TenEyck. Jedediah and Henry Baldwin purchased the property in 1858 and built more than 100 barges, tugboats, ferries, and steamships here through 1919 when it was purchased by William Wade. The last launch at the yard was the steamship "Kittanning" in 1922. The diagonal slip behind the modern garage is the site of the yard's 1883 marine railway used in launching and hauling out ships and boats for repair. A portion of the railway remains intact underwater.

The Tour

(1) Cornell Park. A series of three-story warehouses, a coal pocket, and a five-story hotel occupied this site in the nineteenth century. The public steamboat dock was located just to the north. In 1939, the park became a set for the motion picture "Little Old New York" starring Alice Faye and Fred MacMurray.

(2) 296 Main St. Cornell Hall. Built in 1906 as a fire station and auditorium, the Colonial Revival style building replaced an earlier Victorian style fire station which burned in 1905.

(3) 315 Main St. "River House." Built c. 1830 with a mortise and tenon framework, this house is typical in arrangement and scale of residential architecture in the region in the early nineteenth century. A grocery store stood to the left of the house in the late nineteenth century

(4) 371 Main St. "Sherman House." This exceptionally well-preserved Federal-style house is believed to have been built by Captain Joseph Sherman circa 1820. The Sherman family came to New Baltimore from Rhode Island in 1791 and were active in the sloop trade and warehousing.

(5) 336 Main St. "Eagle Tavern." Shipbuilder Stephen Ayrault built this brick house in 1828. It was later used as a tavern before becoming a summer residence. Between 1901 and 1956 it was the home and office of local physician, Dr. Percy Waller. The large carriage barn across the street is a notable feature of the property.

(6) 364 Main St. "Riveredge." Built circa 1860 in the Italianate style, the house is a distinctive example of the many mid-nineteenth century houses in New Baltimore with bracketed cornices and rooftop cupolas.

(7) 380 Main St. "Former Methodist Episcopal Church." Now a private residence, this Romanesque-style church was built in 1874 when the congregation outgrew an earlier church on South Main St. A tall steeple was removed in 1898. The church closed in 1962.

(8) 936 Rt. 144 "Prospect Place." Built circa 1850 by Captain Edward Ely Sherman, this house is a rare and outstanding example of a house designed in the Picturesque style. Like his father and grandfather, Sherman was involved in river shipping. In the later nineteenth century, he prospered in the ice industry.

(9) 40 Madison Ave. East. "J.B. Marshall House." Built c. 1840 and altered decades later, this house retains a window bay with arched windows and a veranda with Gothic Revival porch pilasters, once a common feature of many mid-nineteenth-century Hudson River houses. A period carriage barn remains on the property.

(10) 1 New St. "Fairview." Built c. 1850, this house is an excellent example of the mid-nineteenth century Italianate style, loosely based on the form of vernacular farmhouses in rural Italy. The house features a hexagonal cupola on the roof and retains a fine carriage barn at the rear.

(11) 31 New St. L.G. "Sherman House." Built c. 1850, this house reflects the popular architectural tastes of the mid-nineteenth century including Greek Revival corner boards and a Gothic Revival porch.

(12) 27 New St. "J. Burlingham House." Built c. 1860 in the Italianate style, this house is distinguished by a recessed entrance with fluted columns and elaborate cornice brackets.

(13) 28 Washington Ave. "Parsons House." Stephen Parsons built this stone house in two episodes between 1791 and 1809 after moving to New Baltimore from Rhode Island. His son, Stephen Jr., master of the sloop "Intrepid," was killed in 1820 when his sloop was struck by lightning.

(14) 832 Rt. 144. Built c. 1865, this fine Italianate-style house was the home of shipbuilder Henry S. Baldwin. The Baldwin Shipyard operated between 1858 and 1919.

(15) 817 Rt. 144. "Former Public School District No. 1." Built in 1894, this four-room brick school remained in operation until 1963. Featuring an acorn-domed bell cupola, the school was one of New Baltimore's finest public buildings. It is now a private residence and art studio.

(16) Church St. "New Baltimore Reformed Church." Built as a simple brick meetinghouse in 1833-34, the church reflects a series of additions and alterations dominated by its Gothic Revival facade and steeple from 1872-73. Its lofty steeple is still a prominent landmark along the river.

(17) 21 Church St. "Cornell House." Built on a prominent bluff and featuring both Greek Revival and Italianate style details, the house became the home of New York physician Theodore E. Cornell in 1844. It is believed to have been built on or near the site of an 18th-century house. The rooftop cupola with its arched windows is especially distinctive.

(18) "South Main Street Cemetery." Associated with the early settlement of New Baltimore, burials date from 1801 or earlier through 1852 and include members of the Burlingham, Plum, Thorn, Brown, Raymond, Lamaller, Smith, Harden, Hilter, Van Zant, Mosher, and Ostrander families. The cemetery includes finely carved headstones typical of the early nineteenth century.

(19) 12 Mill St. Built circa 1850, this Greek Revival house retains its original trabeated doorway and semi-circular attic fanlight. A large icehouse operated between the house and the river in the late nineteenth century.

(20) 32 Mill St. Built and altered in several episodes beginning circa 1850, this house retains distinctive bracketed Victorian cornices and scroll-sawn verge boards as well as a two-story gallery facing the river.

(21) 42 Mill St. Believed to have been built circa 1845 by Gildersleve Bedell, it became part of a steamboat dock in the 1850s. Later it was the home of a tugboat owner and a river pilot. William Couser built small boats here beginning in 1902.

(22) 59 Mill St. "Mary Vanderzee House." Born in New Baltimore in 1802 to enslaved parents, Mary lived to 105. Two of her sons, Peter and John were described as "boatmen of color" and are remembered as having captained bluestone barges. The house is an outstanding and well-preserved example of the Italianate style.