

Issue 54

February 2009

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

HRVI Receives NEH Award

A nationally significant award has been received by the Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI) and Marist College from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Even more exciting, this prominent grant was among the largest amounts awarded in the NEH's 2008 grant cycle.

NEH's "We the People" initiative is dedicated to strengthening the understanding, studying, and teaching of American culture and history. As part of this project, NEH has awarded a highly competitive \$500,000 challenge grant to HRVI. The challenge requires that HRVI raise three times the amount of the grant (or \$1.5 million) for over four and a half years. In other words, for every three dollars HRVI raises, one dollar from the NEH will be rewarded to HRVI, up to \$500,000. The money must be raised from nonfederal sources.

NEH is an independent agency of the United States government. This organization serves and supports our nation through promoting excellence in the humanities and providing historical education. In the United States, NEH is the largest funder of humanities programs. Their mission is accomplished through providing grants for humanities projects, typically for projects involving research, education, public programs, and the preservation of access to cultural resources.

NEH grants usually are given to individual scholars, museums, libraries, colleges, universities, public television, radio stations, and archives.

Marist College's HRVI is the academic arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. The institute has been recognized by the NEH because of its exceptional promotion and studying of the Hudson River Valley. HRVI makes educational resources available for tourists, scholars, environmental organizations, elementary school educators, the business community, and the general public.

The \$2 million endowment will be used to enhance HRVI's many different facets, including its public programming, conferences, sponsorship of lectures, the expansion of HRVI's digital library, resources involving K-12 classrooms, and The Hudson River Valley Review publication.

Dr. James M. Johnson, HRVI's Executive Director, says, "The NEH's awarding of the Challenge grant represents a great opportunity for the Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI). It will provide the foundation with an endowment that will ensure the permanence of the Institute and its future programs. The endowment will support staff, the Digital Library, teachers' insti-

tutes, annual conferences, and The Hudson River Valley Review. A near-term goal is to endow a professorship in Hudson River Valley Studies. We are honored that the NEH has recognized HRVI for the contributions that it can continue to make to the Hudson River Valley and the nation."

If you would like to jump aboard ship by being a part of this grant effort, visit <http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org/patriotsSociety.php> for more information.

Julianne Sadowski



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Updates to HRVI's Digital Library

With New Years Resolutions in full swing, changes are being made everywhere, including the Hudson River Valley Institute. Expect great things from the institute this year, with a variety of updates and ideas for expanding the reach and scope of all things concerning the Hudson River Valley. Specifically look for updates to the digital library. HRVI's digital library is a valuable resource for the Hudson River Valley. It contains scholarships by professors and students, images, rare and out of print articles, essays, lesson plans and guidebooks.

It is also the main source for the Hudson River Valley Review's current and back issues. The digital library is being redesigned in a way that will allow for a greater frequency of updates. It will still have the same look and feel of the old site with improved information and searchability. A new section of audio and video files will be accessible containing lectures and recordings since 2002 and special section devoted to the "Walkway Over the Hudson" project. The new site will be more user friendly, and easily accessible for

educators and students who depend on its resources, while also contributing to the variety and depth of information available. Its frequent updates will keep its users better engaged and informed. With the design work complete and the site in the process of being prepared, the new site will be up and running by the close of the spring semester. For more information visit <http://www.hudsonrivervalley.net/>, your one stop shop for all things Hudson River Valley.

Rachel Oleaga

Featured Historic Inn: The Olde Rhinebeck Inn

The nation has sharply focused its attention on the first 100 days of Barack Obama's presidency. It is considered a crucial period for the president to formulate the groundwork for solving our crises at war and in the economy. Due to these circumstances, there have been many comparisons between President Obama and the legendary Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR).

In acknowledgment of this comparison, the Olde Rhinebeck Inn located in Rhinebeck, New York, is including admission for two to the nearby FDR Presidential Library and Museum through April 30th. The library is located on Albany Post Road in Hyde Park, just fifteen minutes from the inn. FDR's presidential library was conceived by the president himself, and set the precedent for all future presidential documents on public record. His intent was so-

lified by the Presidential Libraries Act in 1955, and the Presidential Records Act of 1978. The library was also the place from which FDR delivered many of his "fireside chats," in which he spoke directly to Americans over the radio.



The Olde Rhinebeck Inn itself is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and

was built more than three decades before the Revolutionary War by German settlers. Today, the innkeeper regularly encourages guests to visit the nearby historic estates, especially the FDR home, but also Eleanor Roosevelt's home at Valkill, <http://www.nps.gov/elro/>, and the Vanderbilt Mansion <http://www.nps.gov/vama/>. The current package will be offered through April 30, 2009, exactly 100 days after Obama's inauguration. If interested in this package, contact the Olde Rhinebeck Inn at (845)-871-1745 or go to their website at <http://www.rhinebeckinn.com/>.

Billy Burke

The Quadricentennial Celebration Preparations Continue

2009 has arrived and with that comes New York's great Quadricentennial celebration. The New York State Quadricentennial commission has been working for several years to create a vast commemoration of Henry Hudson, Samuel de Champlain, and Robert Fulton. It has been four hundred years since Hudson sailed up the river which now bears his name and Champlain cast his eyes upon the lake now known for him. It has also been two hundred years since Robert Fulton first sailed up the Hudson on his very own steamboat. The feats accomplished by these three great men have allowed for the Hudson River Valley to grow into one of the most historic and successful regions today.

While the commission has planned for celebratory events to take place through-

out the entire state, Dutchess County has several affairs that should not be missed. February is filled with a variety of activities from music, to art to outdoor adventures. On February 8th, the Bardavon hosted a Guitar Blues concert. Three masters of the genre were featured: Jorma Kaukonen, Robben Ford, and Ruthie Foster. Go to <http://www.bardavon.org/> for more information.

Dia:Beacon is a museum for Dia Art Foundation's renowned collection of art from the 1960s to the present. A gallery talk is occurring on February 21st, where Imi Knoebel's works will be reviewed and discussed. Go to <http://www.diabeacon.org/bindex.html> for details.

Held throughout the month of February are

a series of hikes and walks by the Mid-Hudson Chapter Adirondack Mountain Club. On February 8th, the club hiked through the Samuel B. Morse Historic Site. The hike included majestic views of the Hudson River. The club is also hosting a series of outings focused on the history and architecture of Poughkeepsie. The events start with a 30 minute locally made documentary and then move to a walking tour of Poughkeepsie, where the leader narrates with stories of the historic peoples and places. The first walk was held on February 14th with the second one being held on February 28th. Go to <http://midhudsonadk.org/>.

Lindsay Moreau

Featured Historic Event: Eagle Fest

Few images convey both the power and grace of the United State of America better than that of a soaring bald eagle. It is only fitting that such an animal is not only our national bird, but also the iconic figure of the enduring and determined will of the American people. The Hudson River Valley itself is no stranger to the presence of bald eagles gliding above the sparkling river water or perched high atop a tree branch.

On Saturday, February 7th, people received an opportunity to welcome back the eagle to the Hudson River Valley. Van Cortlandt Manor located in Croton-on-Hudson, participated in the 5th annual EagleFest that was sponsored by Teatown Lake Reservation. From 9 A.M. to 4 P.M., people came to the manor, free of charge, and watched the eagles soar above the Croton River. Along with this, children participated in a range of hands-on activities. Best of all, each one of these events was free with tea and hot chocolate available! For further information about Van Cortlandt Manor's involvement in this year's EagleFest go to:

<http://www.hudsonvalley.org/content/view/15/45/>.

The central location for EagleFest itself was at Croton Point Park. From 9 A.M. to 4 P.M., people attended events that included eagle viewing, exhibits, raptor shows, a children's area, and much more. At this central location, attendees could pick up a map depicting eagle viewing locations along the Hudson. Meanwhile, the Eagle Theater hosted "Close Encounters with Birds of Prey" and "The City that Drinks the Mountain Sky" for five dollars each (per person), along with the free event "Flight of the Raptors." Also, Eagle Stage hosted free workshops that included one on photography and a discussion of eagles in early American art. The event was sponsored by New York State Assemblyman Greg Ball, Westchester Community Foundation, Westchester County Parks, and Club Fit with support from other [groups](#).



For more information on this event, visit <http://www.teatown.org/eaglefest.htm>. For information on events in the Hudson River Valley visit <http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org>.

Joe DeLisle

Adriance Event: "Love, Forgiveness, and Wisdom—A Focus on Love"



Love, Forgiveness and Wisdom. These three aspects are essential to the human experience, and are at the heart of a four-book discussion series being held at the

Adriance Memorial Library. Led by Thomas Zurhellen, a professor in Marist College's English Department, these talks take an introspective look at these themes from the unique perspectives of Jane Austen, Nicole Kraus, Ian McEwan, world-renowned William Shakespeare, and the pre-historic poet Rumi. The talks are funded by The American Library Association in conjunction with the Fetzer Institute as a part of its "Campaign for Love and

Forgiveness," which described by their mission statement is a reflection on "how love and forgiveness can effect meaningful change in individuals and society." The goal of this campaign is "to create a meaningful national dialogue that will bring about positive changes for individuals, their relationships, and their communities."

A film version of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* was the focus of the discussion on January 20th. When discussing these books, professor Zurhellen's zeal for literature is evident, "I love talking about books. You can always manage to find something new in something that you cherish."

"Literature is timeless, so these themes are universal, in the sense that something written 200 years ago is still relevant and we can relate to and learn from these accounts," Zurhellen continued regarding the discussions, "Historical context is also important; Jane Austen wrote about women constrained by the rules and social orders of

her own era. Although today, many of those social orders have changed, modern women still face social constraints when it comes to dealing with love, and so while the context might be different, they can agree with the author and relate to the struggle."

"The talks do not limit themselves to novels," assures Zurhellen to those who might not be, "but try cover multiple mediums, [incorporating] Shakespeare's play *The Winter's Tale*, and [translations of] poems by the Persian poet Rumi. There is really something for everyone." It is also worth noting, that the novels cover a wide range of eras and lands, spanning the Persian empire, pre-Victorian England, and even modern-day America.

The next talk, taking place will be on March 17, about *The Winter's Tale* by William Shakespeare

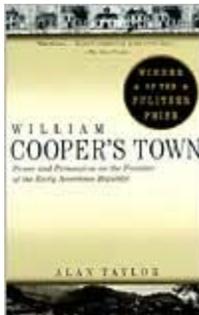
- Brian Deysher

Adriance Event “The First Frontier: New York State”

Have you ever wanted to share your thoughts and opinions with a Professor, person to person, without the pressure of the classroom? Well, here is your chance! Professor Marshall will be leading a monthly book discussion at the historic Adriance Library (Poughkeepsie Public Library).

The program is called “Reading Between the Lines,” and is sponsored by the New York Council for the Humanities. Adriance Library is offering book discussions on three different topics, one with Dr. James Johnson, Executive Director of the Hudson River Valley Institute, who will be discussing war. There is also a session with Tommy Zurhellen, Assistant Professor of English at Marist College, who will be discussing love.

Professor Marshall’s session is called, “The First Frontier: New York State” and as the title suggests he will be American History with a focus on New York State.



March’s book discussion will be on William Cooper’s *Town: Power on the Frontier of the Early American Republic*, by Alan Taylor

The books that will be discussed over the next few months are: *The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution* by Barnet Schecter; *Wedding of the Waters: The Erie Canal and the Making of a Great Nation* by Peter L. Bernstein; *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* by Alan Taylor; *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* by Paul E. Johnson.

During these sessions Professor Marshall plans to focus the discussions on the real meat of the books, the authors argu-

The first official book discussion will be held at the Adriance Library on Tuesday February 10th 2009 from 7 p. m. to 8:30 p. m. The first book to be discussed is Barnet Schecter’s *The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution*.

These sessions with Professor Marshall are a great opportunity, for both students and residents from the Hudson River Valley, to participate in a lively discussion on current academic findings that we can all appreciate.

If you would like to learn more on these book discussions, the Adriance Library, or any other current events and programs being offered please visit, www.poklib.org/, and their online newsletter with additional dates and titles: www.poklib.org/documents/09winterrotunda.pdf

Katie Garrison

Featured Historic Site: Hoyt House “The Point”



The historic Hoyt family home of Staatsburg, New York, aka The Point, is receiving a series of much needed renovations. Originally contracted by Lydig Munson Hoyt and his wife Blanche in 1853, and designed by Calvert Vaux prior to his planning of New York City’s Central Park <http://www.centralparknyc.org/site/PageServer> and Brooklyn’s Prospect

Park, <http://www.prospectpark.org/> the home has slowly fallen into disrepair over the last 48 years.

Renovations on the front and back walls of the house have been completed, as well as temporary patching of the roof. The eventual goal is a complete restoration of the home with opportunities for public visitation. However, this will take both time and funding. The local citizenry who are enamored with the house are currently fundraising on its behalf.

In an interview by Kathleen Di Simone with Alan Strauber, a U.S. history professor at Hunter College, Strauber said he had fallen in love with the historic home and felt compelled to help restore it. Other interested citizens joined him in to help form the Calvert Vaux Preservation Alliance <http://www.calvertvaux.org/>, a state recognized organization and the "officially authorized friends group of the Hoyt House." With a two million dollar price tag on the restoration, the fundraising may take some time. However, with the help of these gallant citizens there is future hope for this beautiful home. The Hoyt House is another true work

of art that has been seized from the destructive group of nature. For more information on the Hoyt House visit:

<http://www4.bfn.org/preserve/bam/kowsky/hoyt/index.html> and www.staatsburgh.org.

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Contact Us

The Hudson River Valley Institute
Marist College
3399 North Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

Phone: 845-575-3052
Fax: 845-575-3176
E-mail: hvi@marist.edu

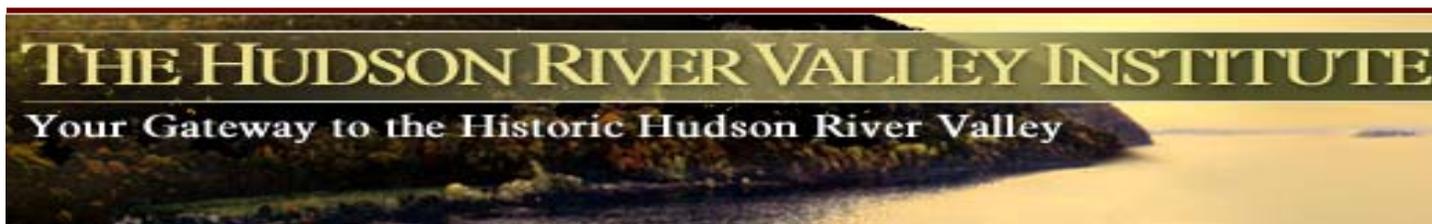
*The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"*

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 37 congressionally designated National Heritage Areas in the United States. As one of the most important regions in the United States, it is the fountainhead of a truly American identity. Recognizing the area's national value, Congress formed the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area in 1996 to recognize, preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally-significant history and resources of the valley for the benefit of the nation.

The Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI) is the academic arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Its mission is to study and promote the Hudson River Valley and to provide educational resources for heritage tourists, scholars, elementary school educators, environmental organizations, the business community, and the general public. Its many projects include the publication of *The Hudson River Valley Review* and the management of a dynamic digital library and leading regional portal site.

As the center for the study of the Hudson River Valley, the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College is the central hub for information about the region that Congress called "the Landscape that defined America."

www.hudsonrivervalley.org



Staff

Dr. Thomas Wermuth, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty, Director, Hudson River Valley Institute

Dr. Colonel James M. Johnson (U.S. Army, ret.), Executive Director, Hudson River Valley Institute

Christopher Pryslopski, Program Director

Andy Villani, Coordinator

Contributors to this issue:

Elizabeth Vielkind, Editor-in-Chief

Blaze Interligi, Intern

Joe De Lisle, Intern Coordinator

Lindsay Moreau, Intern

Brian Deysher, Intern

Rachel Oleaga, Intern

Katie Garisson, Intern

Julianne Sadowski, Intern