

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

The Academic Arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Eminent Women in the Hudson River Valley's History

The Hudson River Valley's history is filled with tales of famous men who made the region their home and/or influenced the area. Such men include Franklin D. Roosevelt, Alexander Hamilton, and even General George Washington. However, the history of the Hudson Valley has also been defined and impacted by eminent women. Since March is Women's History Month, this article is devoted to discussing prominent women in the history of the Hudson Valley.

Before embarking upon a description of these select women, it is essential to note that many other women also merit attention, but space and time limit a comprehensive exploration. However, the few that were selected reflect important moments in the history of the Hudson River Valley.

Starting with the Hudson River Valley's early colonial history, women have played a significant role. For instance, Catheryna Brett successfully maintained her home, oper-



Eleanor Roosevelt

<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/tuskegee.html>

ated a mill, and created a trade cooperate after the death of her husband in the early 18th century. Through these business ventures, Brett played a tremendous role in shaping the early colonial Hudson Valley, particularly Dutchess County (http://www.hudsonrivervalley.com/index.cfm?section_id=6&page_id=45).

Several decades later, with the onset of the Revolutionary War, Hudson River Valley women took up political and military action. In fact, Sybil Ludington is commonly referred to as the female Paul Revere. Upon being told that the British had attacked Danbury, Connecticut, this audacious sixteen-year-old trav-

ersed Putnam and Dutchess County in an effort to alert and begin to organize the militia (<http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org/amerRevLesson/sybillessonplan.php>).

Additionally, the region also hosted several tea parties, where women confronted business owners who they argued were asking an exorbitant price for tea. Such tea parties took place in both Wappingers and Fishkill.

During the Civil War era, the Hudson River Valley continued to witness formidable women impacting and shaping the region. For example, Sojourner Truth, a woman who is famous for struggling against the cruelties of slavery as well as defending women's suffrage, was born in Ulster County and spent her early life in the area surrounding Kingston (http://www.newpaltz.edu/sojourner_truth). Besides the remarkable Truth, Susan B. Anthony, the influential women's rights advocate, temporarily taught in the Hudson Valley, specifically in New Rochelle, in the 1840s (<http://winningthevote.org/SBAnthony.html>). Addition-

(Continued on page 3)

Inside this issue:

Featured Website.....	2
Featured Historic Site.....	3
Meet the Interns.....	4
Featured Historic Town.....	5
Contact Us.....	6
Staff Listing.....	6

Special points of interest:

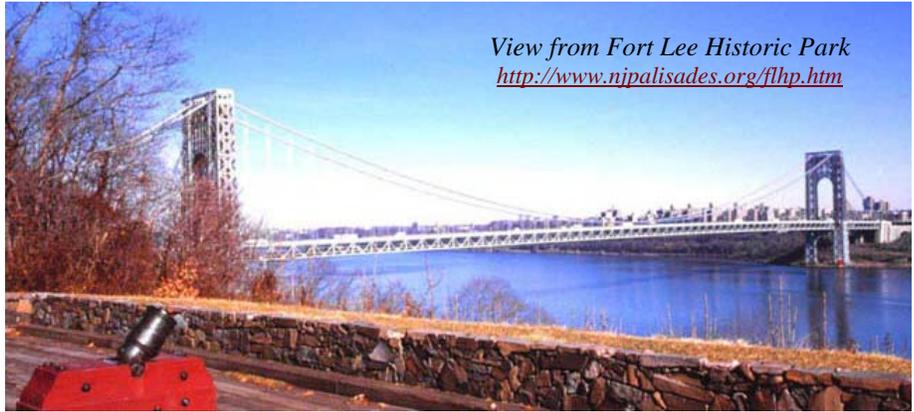
- Please be sure to consult the HRVI website, as we are constantly updating our content.
- Reenactment at Fort Lee highlighted on page 2.

Civil Warfare in the American Revolution

While this winter has proven to provide the Hudson River Valley with unpredictable weather, this summer's reenactments promise to place the region in the *heat* of battle. Before the events of Patriots' Weekend in July and August, there will be other events commemorating the region's revolutionary past. One of these exceptional events will occur at the Fort Lee Historic Park from May 19-21 2006; the event will revolve around the Loyalist Blockhouse at Fort Lee.

This event, organized and led by the NJ Section of the Palisades Interstate Park, will remember the last major battle in Bergen County of the Revolutionary War. 225 years ago in May, the county witnessed approximately 200 Loyalists battling some 300 Bergen County Militiamen atop the Palisades.

The events at the Fort Lee Historic Park will include reenactments of the battle, as well as music and artillery demonstrations. Complementing the living history component of the event



View from Fort Lee Historic Park
<http://www.njpalisades.org/flhp.htm>

will be a lecture pertaining to the battle. Finally, there will also be an activity that asks what "the battle might have been."

Before attending the event, it may be useful to visit the Palisades Interstate Park's website, www.njpalisades.org/blockhouse.htm, which further elucidates the facts surrounding the battle. Most significantly, a visitor to the website has the opportunity to read transcriptions of primary sources describing the battle,

including newspapers' and Bergen County Militiamen's accounts.

~ Lauren Santangelo

For more information on the event or to examine the primary sources visit <http://www.njpalisades.org/blockhouse.htm>. Information can also be obtained by emailing Todd W. Braisted at IVBNNJV@aol.com or John Muller at flhp@njpalisades.org.

Featured Website – Southeast Museum

The website of the Southeast Museum features nine online exhibits that highlight the regional history of Putnam County. These presentations focus on the industries and institutions that have helped to establish the county as it is today. The website also includes an events section, which provides information on local meetings and fun and interactive workshops for children.

As mentioned above, the website has exceptional online exhibits about Southeast and Putnam County. One such exhibit illuminates the effect that the Harlem Line Railroad had on the town's population, and examines the controversy surrounding the establishment of this line. The construction of the Croton Reservoir System is also cataloged in an exhibit complete with



Harlem Line Railroad Online Exhibit
<http://www.southeastmuseum.org/Exhibits/exhibits.html>

pictures and descriptions. Furthermore, a visitor to the museum's website will learn about the participation of Southeast's farmers in creating the American Circus. The website even provides opportunities for young web-navigators to learn about

the historic role and pastimes of children in the town of Southeast.

The Southeast Museum's website presents valuable and interesting information about the town of Southeast as well as on the successful development of Putnam County. The exhibits are all user friendly and easily enjoyed by individuals of any age.

~ Gemma Edwardo

For more information on the Southeast Museum please visit
<http://www.southeastmuseum.org/>

Featured Historic Site—Madam Brett Homestead

Hidden on one of the many narrow streets that define Beacon, is a treasure to the region's past—the Madam Brett Homestead. Nearly razed in the 1950s for a supermarket, this Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Heritage Site is the oldest home in Dutchess County and stands as a testament to one extraordinary woman's ability to transform the Hudson River Valley.

Madam Catheryna Brett inherited her father's sizeable piece of the Rombout Patent at age 3. She married Lt. Roger Brett of the British Navy at age 16, and they built what is now the Madam Brett Homestead in 1709 for their future family. Unfortunately, within ten years of the house's completion, her husband died, leaving Madam Brett alone to care for her surviving offspring.

Although few economic options were open to women at the time, Madam Brett proved herself as a capable entrepreneur, trade liaison, and community leader. This early colonialist encouraged local settlement as well as initially funded her business ventures by selling off parcels of her land inheritance. She then opened



Photo by Denise D. VanBuren
<http://www.geocities.com/melzingah/id5.htm>

her own gristmill and organized a farmer's co-operative group, which enabled local farmers to transport and sell their goods as far south as Manhattan.

As alluded to, besides her role as a business woman, Brett encouraged peaceable relations with the local Wappinger Native American tribe. Furthermore, she fostered community ties with

many acts of philanthropy, including donating the land upon which the Dutch Reformed Church in Fishkill stands. During the Revolution, the homestead was used to store supplies and house soldiers, as well as receive General George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette.

Madam Brett died at 84 years old in 1764. Her family's descendants occupied the house until a local chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution saved it from demolition. The homestead is on Van Nydeck Avenue in Beacon and is open to the public as a museum every second Saturday of the month from April through December, 1-4PM. Some exceptional features of the museum

include the China-Trade Porcelain collection as well as the colonial-era kitchen. The homestead, with its garden, original furnishings, and impressive rooms, reminds visitors of this female pioneer's historic contributions. To make an appointment to visit the museum call (845) 831-6533.

~Adrienne Harris

Editor's Note: This information was synthesized from http://cityguide.pojonews.com/fe/Heritage/stories/he_madam_brett_homestead.asp and <http://www.geocities.com/melzingah/id5.htm>

Women's History Month (Continued)

ally, the Warner sisters, eminent 19th century authors, resided on Constitution Island (<http://www.constitutionisland.org/warner%20house.htm>).

Finally, during the 20th century, the Hudson Valley has been home to many renowned women. The most famous female Hudson Valley resident, Eleanor Roosevelt, kept a residence at Val-Kill in Hyde Park from 1925 until her death in 1962 (<http://ervk.org/storyof.htm>). Additionally, one of the woman who prompted the second wave of the women's movement, Betty Friedan, had her roots in the Hudson Valley. This

liberal feminist, early leader of the National Organization for Women (NOW), and author of *The Feminine Mystique* raised her children in Rockland County. (<http://www.pbs.org/fmc/interviews/friedan.htm>).

Throughout March, the region will celebrate Women's History Month. Some of the many exciting events include a film screening and talk about "the Global Majority Again" on March 6th at the Henry Hudson Room in Fontaine at Marist College. Furthermore, on March 8th, Marist College will commemorate International Women's Day. For information on these events

contact Dr. JoAnne Myers at JoAnne.Myers@marist.edu. In addition, on March 9, at Purchase College, the Hudson River Museum will host a panel, "The Real Deal: Life in the Suburbs for Women and Minorities," moderated by Kenneth T. Jackson. HRVI will list these and other events on our calendar, www.hudsonrivalley.net/calendar.php.

~ Lauren Santangelo

Exciting New Website Features

HRVI has been assiduously compiling, developing, and expanding our website content. Under the “What’s New” section on our homepage, www.hudsonrivervalley.org, visitors are now able to access several unique and useful resources. These resources include a digital version of *Wolley’s: New York*, a narrative which describes Charles Wolley’s adventures in New York from 1678-1680. Coupled with this exceptional primary source, is the eminent architect A. J. Downing’s *The Horticulturist and Jour-*

nal of Rural Art and Rural Taste.

We have complemented these irreplaceable primary sources, with other sources that further elucidate the region’s historic significance. Most importantly, we have digitally archived a book that describes the celebrations surrounding the 1909 Hudson-Fulton anniversary, as well as a guide to historic sites in New York State, published for the bicentennial. Additionally, under “What’s New,” there is a link to the Quadricentennial page of HRVI’s website, which further highlights

information and internet offerings regarding Henry Hudson, Samuel de Champlain, and Robert Fulton. In the upcoming months, HRVI plans to continue enhancing and augmenting the website material; be sure to continue checking our website for updates.

~ Lauren Santangelo

Meet the Interns — Daniel Calandro

This is Daniel Calandro’s second year as an intern at the Hudson River Valley Institute. In an effort to help visitors and residents appreciate the historic value of the region, Dan scans materials for the Institute’s digital library as well as prepares guidebooks for the website.

As an independent project, he is also researching and writing a series of papers relating to Henry Hudson’s voyage up the Hudson River. Through these papers, Dan will explore a variety of issues, including Hudson’s legacy, his relationship with

Native Americans, and his vessel, the Half Moon.

Dan is currently waiting to hear back from the graduate programs he has applied to. Upon graduation, he plans on obtaining a master’s degree in history.

~ Daniel Calandro



Meet the Interns — David Sabatino



David Sabatino is a junior history major from Valley Stream, New York. As an intern at the Hudson River Valley Institute, David compiles information on various Hudson River Valley historical sites and constructs guidebooks that will ultimately be placed on HRVI’s website. Additionally, David is researching Samuel de Champlain’s life and career as a cartographer and explorer for France. More specifically, his paper will focus on Champlain’s work in and around the upper Hudson River Valley.

After graduating from Marist College, David plans to attend graduate school to attain his master’s degree. With this degree, he expects to pursue a career as a teacher in the New York City school system.

~ David Sabatino

The Hudson Valley Celebrates Black History

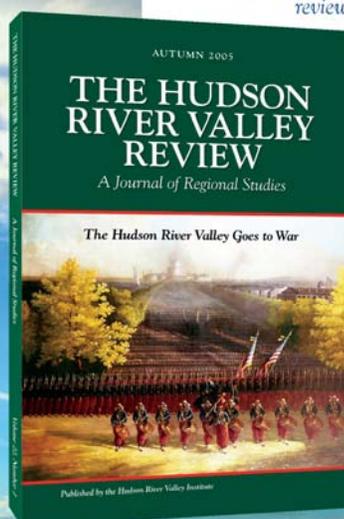
The Hudson River Valley Institute hopes that those interested were able to attend events commemorating Black History Month in February. Some of these exceptional events included the premiere of the *Red-Tailed Angels: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen* at the Henry A. Wallace Center in Hyde Park, and “Symbols of Power and Belief: Masterpieces of African Art” at the Neuberger Museum of Art.

However, if you were unable to make it to an activity in the month of February, there are still events to celebrate black history throughout March and the remainder of the year. Dutchess Community College is hosting a Black History Month exhibit at the Mildred I. Washington Art Gallery until March 22nd. For more information call the information line at (845) 431-8017. While outside of the Hudson River Valley, the New-York Historical Society, www.nyhistory.org, in New York City, has also been sponsoring an exceptional exhibit on slavery within New York since fall 2005; it will continue through March 26, 2006. Finally, the New York State Museum, www.nysm.nysed.gov, in Albany, has an extraordinary permanent exhibit, entitled “Black Capital: Harlem in the 20s,” which celebrates the diversity of Harlem’s history.

~ Lauren Santangelo

An interdisciplinary journal dedicated to our region

publishing essays, poems, photographs, paintings, documents, and book and art reviews, ready to consider all forms of intellectual achievement...



As the academic arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College is increasing public awareness about the significance of America's First River in the history of New York and the United States. Its mission is to study and to promote the Hudson River Valley.

To subscribe or learn more, visit www.hudsonrivervalley.org/hrvr.php or call 845-575-3052

Hudson River Valley Review
Hudson River Valley Institute
Marist College
3399 North Rd.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

Featured Historic Town—Putnam Valley

Located in the heart of the Hudson River Valley, Putnam Valley is a small, quaint town rich in American history. The town, which was originally founded as the town of Quincy, changed its name to Putnam Valley in February of 1840.

Prior to European settlement, a Nochpeem band of the “Wappinger Indian Confederacy” inhabited Putnam Valley. These Native Americans were members of the Mohican nation, and thus spoke the Algonkian language. Their primary settlement in Putnam Valley is believed to have been in the hollow at Canopus Hill.

With the arrival of the Europeans, a large tract of land called the Highland Patent, which would later become Putnam

Valley County, was granted to Adolph Philipse in 1697. The tract was eventually divided into lots; the land in the Putnam Valley area was left to Colonel Beverly and Susannah Philipse Robinson. However, due to the Robinson family’s support of the British during the Revolution, their land was confiscated by the government in 1779.

Soon after, Putnam County separated from Dutchess County, in 1812, and the area that is present-day Putnam Valley became a part of Putnam County. However, it was not until March 14, 1839 that the independent town of Quincy was incorporated. The local lore suggests that since the residents were largely Democrats, and thus skeptical of the political

views of John Quincy Adams, they changed the town’s name to Putnam Valley.

In the 20th century, Putnam Valley served as a home to a Civilian Conservation Corporation (CCC) camp during the Great Depression. More recently, Putnam Valley has become the home to the Putnam Valley Historical Society (<http://www.lalobilla.com/pvhs/>), established in 1968, and Putnam Valley Arts (<http://www.putnamvalleyarts.com/>), established in 1999, both of which serve to enrich the town and its community.

~ Christine Caiazzi

Editor’s Note: The information was obtained from the town website of Putnam Valley, which can be found at www.putnamvalley.com.

Contact Us

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 27 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, to preserve, to protect, and to interpret the nationally-significant history and resources of the Valley for the benefit of the nation.

As the center for the study of the Hudson River Valley, the Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI) at Marist College is the central hub for informa-

tion about the region. HRVI serves heritage tourists, scholars, elementary and secondary school educators, environmental organizations, the business community, and the general public seeking to know more about the region that Congress called "the Landscape that defined America."

www.hudsonrivervalley.org

Staff

Dean of the Marist College School of Liberal Arts Thomas Wermuth, PhD, Director Hudson River Valley Institute

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

Christopher Pryslopski, Program Director

Vincent Tamagna, Hudson River Navigator

Jason Schaaf, Lecturer, Department of History Marist College

Jean Defino, Office Manager

Adrienne Harris, Student Administrative Assistant

Meredith Scott, Student Administrative Assistant

Kristen Alldredge, Development Assistant

Lauren C. Santangelo, Internship Coordinator

Varun Thakral, Webmaster

Contributors to this issue:

Lauren Santangelo, Internship Coordinator

Christine Caiazzzi, Editorial Assistant

Jennifer Webber, Art Director

Gemma Edwardo, Intern

Daniel Calandro, Intern

David Sabatino, Intern

Adrienne Harris, Intern



The Hudson River Valley Institute

Marist College

3399 North Road

Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

Contact Information:

Phone: 845-575-3052

Fax: 845-575-3176

E-mail: hrevi@marist.edu

www.hudsonrivervalley.net