

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

Mills Mansion to Receive a Makeover



This Gilded Age mansion of seventy-nine rooms, located in Staatsburg, New York, has recently teamed up with [The Dutchess County Tourism Promotion Agency](#), [Marist College](#) and the Hudson River Valley Institute for an exciting new program. Aided by a grant from The Bureau of Historic Sites at Peebles Island, New York, a new, more interactive tour of the mansion is being devised. The hope is to be more engaging for visitors, and bring the historic past of the house to life.

On January 11, 2008, a committee met to discuss this new interpretive initiative. The group came up with many

interesting ideas, concepts, and scenarios.

One of the most challenging aspects of this project is how to create a new and interactive tour, while ensuring that historically accurate information is preserved and conveyed to the visitor. After a few weeks of discussion and brainstorming, an exciting solution was



reached: The new format would incorporate both aspects by delivering history through entertaining dialog. Taped conversations, based upon historical information, will draw visitors into the issues and attitudes of the Gilded Age.

In the second stage of development, interns from the History Department at HRVI and Marist College are researching, analyzing, and compiling information pertaining to each facet of the site. With the collected information, interns from the English Department at Marist will create and perform conversations for key rooms in the mansion.

The overall goal is to provide the public with a new and exciting experience that will keep them coming back again and



again.

For further information about Staatsburgh State Historic Site please visit www.staatsburgh.org.

John Skaretka

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- Meet more of HRVI's current interns on page 4.
- See what's new on our Digital Library on page 2.

Digital Library — “More” Reviews Online

The Hudson River Valley Review (HRVR) was founded in 1984 at Bard College as the Hudson Valley Regional Review. The Review became known by its present name when it began to be published by HRVI in 2003. HRVR offers a unique and multi-facet approach to the historic Hudson Valley region. The originality of the Review is illustrated in its numerous forms of publication including: poems; photographs; paintings; essays and primary documents just to name a few. The Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI), located at Marist College, publishes this noteworthy historic review biannually.

HRVI had PDF links to the back-issues of this journal of regional studies. These back-issues can be ac-

cessed by going to the link on the HRVI website at:

<http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org/hrvr/contents/index.php>

Recently, HRVI added new PDF files to the HRVR back-issues. These new additions to the site include student writings and book reviews as well as out-of-print back-issues in their entirety. Some of the themes of the different back-issues of the Review include: the impact the Civil War has on the Hudson Valley Region; “Edith Wharton in the Hudson River Valley;” and an issue marking the bicentennial anniversary of Robert Fulton’s maiden voyage aboard the steamboat known as the *Clermont*.

HRVI has recently decided to post these new portions of the Review online as a

service to their readers, online browsers, the student interns who wrote pieces for the Review, as well as the publishers HRVI receives and reviews in New & Noteworthy. These new additions to the HRVI website have allowed easier access to the back-issues of the Review—potentially increasing awareness of this noteworthy historic journal.

Liz Vielkind

Featured Historic Site — Mills Mansion



The dinner guests wait in the main hall which is dominated by the prominence of nobility in the atmosphere. They are distinguished guests of Ruth Livingston-Mills and they have entered her colossal seventy-nine-room mansion in Staatsburg, New York and, nearly 100 years later, the opportunity to experience being an honored guest at the [Mills Mansion](#) awaits you.

Up the steps, one foot in the mansion, one foot outside, and you are transformed. Along the journey throughout the house, you learn about the family and guests that frequented there, the details of the house, and the intriguing factoids that bring its history to life.

The house was originally built in 1832

and had twenty-five rooms, which, by the year 1895, was expanded to a whopping total of seventy-nine rooms. The mansion was not used as a home, but as a party house where Ruth held weekend soirees. To host the elaborate parties, there was an extensive staff of in-house servants. The dining room in which the sophisticated two and a half hour dinner “ceremonies” took place had a theme of bringing the outdoors inside; an interesting concept that speaks for itself.

In the mansion, rare artifacts intensify the reality of the history. In the library, notes written by George Washington are hung on the walls, and Louis the XVth’s desks re-



side there among the extensive collection of literature. Ruth’s bedroom is adorned with exquisite pink patterned silk costing close to \$2,000 a yard. The magnitude of the elegance of such a room is astounding. There is so much to learn about our predecessors, and here an enormous chunk of living, breathing history sits in Dutchess County’s backyard.

The mansion exhibits the culture of the Livingston-Mills family as well as the aristocrats of the time and it also displays the culture of the world. A sixteenth century Belgian tapestry adorns the Italian marble walls of the dining hall; 6th century BCE Ancient Greek pottery graces the presence of the sitting area; tellings of Asian merchant trade are scattered throughout the mansion.

Who were these people? What traits do we all have in common? The text of history does not do the trail of human life justice, but a midday stroll through the mansion just may.

Alicia L. Sharp

Historic Town — Maybrook

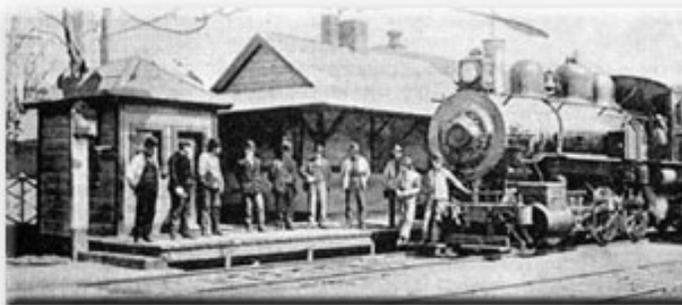
In a highway deed signed on September 1, 1735, the [village of Maybrook](#) was founded. This deed sectioned off land along the road to Shawagunk and Goshen. Maybrook's size increased with John Blake's purchase of 200 acres in 1764. This property then divided with the Houston family acquiring the southern half. Another settler, John Nicholson, (a Revolutionary War Colonel) acquired a farm encompassing the northern part of an additional 200-acre estate.

The railroad industry deemed Maybrook a suitable place to establish a rail line, an idea that gained momentum when the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge opened up on December, 29 1888. The first lines were laid on April 8th 1889 and were named Orange Junction. Shortly there after, the name changed to Maybrook Junction, and then simply Maybrook as it is known today.

Maybrook served as the great connecting center for the western United States and New England. By 1908, the Orange County Railroad purchased the farm lands held by the Houston, Blake, Morrison, and Bodle families, on the eastern portion of the tracks. That same year witnessed an expansion of track of seventy-six miles with over 5,000 cars; approximately thirty-eight trains entered and exited the area daily. Repair

shops for train cars, stalls for fixing locomotives as well as cooling and watering areas dotted the rail yard. In all, 1,500 employees worked in the Maybrook yard contributing to its growth. As a result, the Railroad YMCA established itself in 1917 and provided seventy-eight sleeping rooms, a gymnasium, and a baseball and softball field known today as Fred Myers

Maybrook in Yesteryear



Memorial Park.

Maybrook organized itself into a village in 1925 because of the railroad industry. Places such as the Yellow Dog Tavern and the RR Company centered on servicing the employees of the Maybrook yard. Soon after, Walter Greening became the first mayor of this town with railroad workers Jacob Burwell and George McBride as

first trustees. Following Greening, Mayor George C. Bullis presided over the village for thirteen consecutive terms, spanning 1928 to 1954. Under his direction, Maybrook received a sanitary sewage system, a municipal building for the government and firefighting equipment and a water system.

The railroad industry diminished in its importance during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Penn Central assumed ownership of Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge in 1968. The company sought to let the bridge go and this adversely affected the train flow into Maybrook. The true blow came with the 1974 fire on the Poughkeepsie Bridge. At that point, Penn Central decided to remove some of the Maybrook tracks. Its successor, Conrail, deserted the yard entirely in 1982. After this abandonment the [Maybrook Railroad Society \(Museum\)](#) has made efforts to

preserve the yard.

Since the end of its railroad days, the village of Maybrook serves as a major trucking hub. It services one of the largest world renowned companies, Yellow Freight System. It currently employs over 32,000 workers. As with the trains, Maybrook is a crucial cargo link between the west and New England.

Featured Historian— Ethan P. Jackman

As of January 1st, the Town of Lloyd had the honor of filling their vacant Town Historian position with the well-qualified Ethan P. Jackman. Jackman was the president of the Town of Lloyd Historical Society for four years and vice president for one. His continued service as the Town Historian is, in his words, "the continuation of his love for the town of Lloyd."

Jackman is dedicated to the preservation and education of the local area and is currently in the process of taking a complete inventory of what they have in their possession. This is a necessary task because only partial records exist for what the town of Lloyd has in its possession for historical artifacts and documents. This endeavor is time consuming and

Jackman has enlisted volunteers from the local historical society to help categorize and catalogue their inventory.

Also, in the works for the Town of Lloyd is an updated local history book. As Town Historian, Jackman has already begun selecting materials to appear in the updated book. According to Jackman, there has not been a local history book produced since 1974 and "it was time for an updated version." The Town of Lloyd book will be a part of the [Images of America](#) series published by Arcadia Publishing. This is part of Jackman's desire to update their vivid local history and get it in the hands of the public in following with Jackman's pursuit to preserve "what was here before and what we hope to pass on to future generations."

Although he has no official role in the Walkway over the Hudson project, Jackman fully supports Fred Schaeffer and the project's efforts to preserve the railroad bridge. However, he has only one point of contention. "The bridge is a marvel of 19th century engineering and needs to be preserved for everyone and not just hikers and bicyclists." His suggestion was to offer a form of light rail transportation for all people to be able to enjoy the bridge. It is his opinion that a light rail transportation would provide people unable to make the two mile hike with the ability to enjoy the bridge and the surrounding scenic beauty of the Hudson River.

Robert J. Harvey

Reading Brings Marist and Hudson Valley Writers Together

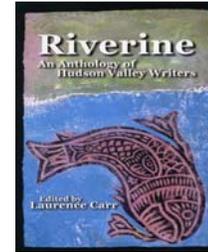
Writers from the Marist College community as well as the greater Hudson Valley came together on the Marist campus this past Tuesday to celebrate the publication of *Riverine*, a new anthology of Hudson Valley writing.

The reading, sponsored by the Hudson River Valley Institute and the Marist Honors Program, invited five local writers whose poems, stories and essays appears in the anthology to read a selection of

their work. A reception followed the reading.

“This is a great way for writers from both the Marist community and the Hudson Valley community to meet one another and share ideas,” said Christopher Pryslopski, Director of the Hudson River Valley Institute. The Hudson River Valley Institute publishes the *Hudson River Valley Review*, which is dedicated to promoting the talents of local writers.

Riverine is published by Codhill Press, an independent press located in New Paltz, NY.



Professor Tommy Zurhellen

Meet the Intern —

All my life I have been fascinated with history. In high school, I could not get enough history in my head. My interest in history was narrowed down over the years to a focus in American Military History during World War Two. The era of World War Two intrigued me so much that I wanted to further my knowledge of it in college. Also, I play the saxophone which led me to a minor in music, and some say I am an upcoming demarcate.

I am a graduate of William Hall High School in West Hartford, Connecticut. I then went to Dean College in Franklin Massachusetts for one year and received

the Jean Guthrie Knowles award for best in my major.

Outside of the classroom, I am former member of the Marist Club hockey team, but now a full-time weight-lifter at the McCann center gymnasium. I believe that hard work, dedication, and commitment throughout everything you do in your life will get you through the tough times. Through my life experiences, hard work goes a long way.

This is my first semester with the Hudson River Valley Institute. I am looking forward to working with them as an intern, focusing primarily on the Pough-

keepsie Railroad Bridge project, “Walkway over the Hudson.” Last but not least to quote a person we all know, “History is cool.” Yes, Professor Schaaf, history is cool, very cool.



Andrew Buccitelli

Meet the Intern — Kim Maschak

Ever since I was young I have always been enjoyed American history. My interest in the subject may have been influenced by my knack for memorizing places and people, or maybe it was influenced by the fact that without question the best field trip in grammar school was to the Stony Point Battlefield. Either way, I found myself having a soft spot for the events that have shaped our country.

As I grew older, I began to appreciate the human aspect of history. It is true that the leaders of our country may have been slightly more qualified for their positions than you or I. However, the historical figures of our countries often deal with conflict, victory, and defeat as many of us have on an individual basis. These stories have captivated me and

led me to pursue a major in American Studies with a Psychology minor here at Marist College.

Outside the classroom, I am an avid sports fan. I have played on competitive travel teams, as well as recreational teams. Although I am not currently playing, I enjoy being a fan. I am an enthusiastic fan of the New York Rangers and New York Mets, although I can easily be convinced to watch any team.

I participated in the Girl Scouts and work through all the ranks and then completed my Gold Award, the highest achievement in Girl Scouts. For my project, I created a non-smoking campaign at a local hospital, which included information on the dangers of smoking and how to quit. I enjoy serving my community and have continued to do so while in college. I am an active

member in Campus Ministry and have participated in events such as the Relay for Life and the Heart Walk.

Currently at HRVI, I am researching the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge focusing on the labor and maintenance of the bridge and I look forward to discovering the personal experiences of those who worked on the bridge.



Kim Maschak

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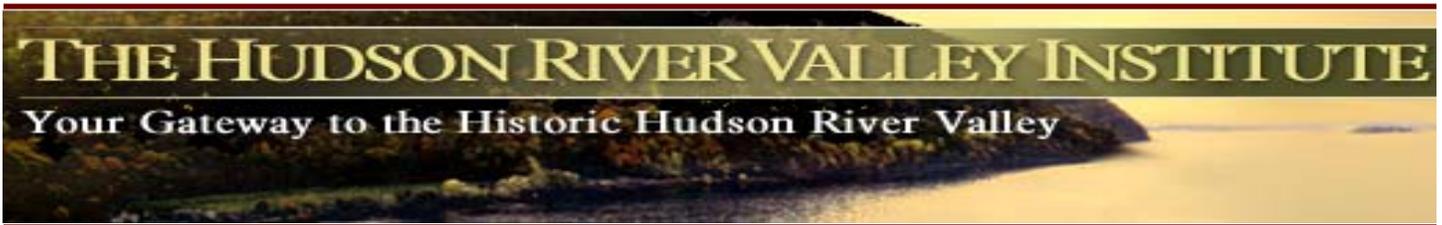
*The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"*

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



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