

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

The Academic Arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Thomas Cole: Innovator and Artist

Long, thin cedar pal-
ettes, stained with streaks
of faded pigment, flag
the wall with sharp meas-
uring tools like stiff pup-
pets; a *camera obscura*
obediently guards the
cottage window, display-
ing its target within its
small, oval-shaped
screen; books of poetry
and literature line the
shelves in military fash-
ion, while tall easels
congregate to
discuss the ab-
sence of work,
readily awaiting their master’s
return...

Such is the scene at Thomas
Cole’s studio, tucked away in a
restored cottage at the edge of the
Hudson River with stunning pano-
ramic views of the Catskill Moun-
tains. It was this sight that inspired
Cole to remain at the sprawling
Thomson farm to create the daz-
zling visions of the legendary
Hudson Valley that we celebrate
today.

A native of the textile town of
Lancashire, England, Thomas Cole
trained first as an engraver for
calico prints. In his late teens he
immigrated to America with his
family, settling in Ohio and Penn-
sylvania, and later, New York.
Much of Cole’s artistic experience
had been the result of self-
discipline and meticulous surveys
of cityscapes and architecture after
studying with the Philadelphia
Academy of Fine Arts in 1824.
Various tours of the Hudson River
Valley inspired the majority of
Cole’s compositions, including



“Lake with Dead Trees” (www.lartclub.com/uploads/15-0134.jpg)

“Kaaterskill, Upper Fall,”
“Lake with Dead Trees” and
“View of Fort Putnam,” show-
cased in a New York City
bookstore for \$25 each. The
former caught the eye of John
Trumbull, the then-president of
the Academy of Fine Arts;
Trumbull was so moved by
Cole’s skill that he immedi-
ately recommended writer Wil-
liam Dunlap and fellow painter
Asher B. Durand to purchase
the latter two. This sudden
notoriety jumpstarted Cole’s
career and marked him as one
of the most valuable artists of
his time, placing his paintings
in high demand for art patrons.
Despite his rising fame, Cole
struggled with the fear of fi-
nancial instability, and taught
for supplemental income. In
1843, he took under his wing
the young Frederic E. Church.
Church would later carry the
banner of transcendentalist
landscape painting.

Thomas Cole’s old studio
and house at Cedar Grove in

Catskill, New York
officially became a
National Historic Site
in 1999. It finally
opened to the public
two years later.
Though the original
115-acre property had
been significantly
resized, the site offers
tours along the expan-
sive Art Trail on
which visitors may
experience the heav-
enly vistas
cherished
by the

artists of the Hudson Valley.

Today, Cole’s works are
still some of the most influen-
tial paintings to contemporary
landscape artists. His pains-
taking attention to detail and
depiction of allegorical sym-
bols not only distinguished
his style, but planted the seed
for the American transcen-
dentalist art movement called
the Hudson River School.
Like Cole, this group of art-
ists explored American land-
scapes and infused their tal-
ents with their spiritual be-
liefs, promoting the preserva-
tion of nature in its most un-
tainted form. Through these
works, Cole’s legacy as one
of the Hudson River Valley’s
most influential painters lives
on.

For more information on
Thomas Cole, the historic site
Cedar Grove, or the Hudson
River School Art Trail, please
visit www.ThomasCole.org.

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Special points of interest:

- Meet more of HRVI’s outstanding interns on page 4.
- Don’t miss a special press release about a free lecture on Christianity and the environment at Marist College on page 4.

Meet the Historian — John Curran

John Curran has always been interested in history. Beginning in high school, he found history was an easy subject for him; he loved researching and making sense of the past. His love for the subject led him to the American History prize. He remembers finding his inspiration in reading the *American Heritage Magazine* “when it was a true historical magazine and did not have any advertisements.” Since then, Curran’s interest in history has only grown, and in 1994 he was appointed as the historian for the City of Peekskill in Westchester County, NY.

Before his days as Peekskill’s historian, Curran was a teacher and a writer. Although he formerly taught in a high school locally, he also had the opportunity to teach three years in a YMCA Conversational School in Japan. Curran says teaching in Japan was a “shocking experience.

It turned my life around.”

As the historian of Peekskill, Curran has followed in the footsteps of the civic historians before him. He believes that a historian’s job is to respond to the public. With his research, he aims to give the residents of Peekskill both the information that they want to know and any information that he thinks they may be interested in learning. Inquiries about the history of the city come to Curran through the mail, e-mail and even visitors to his office, which can be found in the beautiful Victorian house known as the Peekskill Museum, located at 124 Union Avenue in Peekskill. Adding to his distinguished career, he has also released five historic publications and three video documentaries.

It is difficult for Curran to choose a favorite from the many historical sites

that the Hudson River Valley has to offer, but he believes that everyone should take the time to visit the FDR Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park and the Stony Point Battlefield State Historic Site in Stony Point. He thinks these are significant places because the FDR Museum has so much to offer visitors, and the Stony Point Battlefield has a great natural beauty. Of course, Curran also recommends that everyone pay a visit to the Peekskill Museum.

Curran’s advice to any aspiring historians is that “if you are only looking to make money, then this probably is not for you.” He believes that a historian must be someone looking for self satisfaction above anything else and have curiosity about recorded previous human behavior.

By Tricia Lynch

Featured Historic Town — Sleepy Hollow

First settled 135 years before the American Revolution, Sleepy Hollow is a quaint village in the lower Pocantico River Valley in Westchester County, set just north of the Tappan Zee Bridge on the eastern shores of the Hudson River. Although most Americans know Sleepy Hollow through Washington Irving’s famous story, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” which was made into a major motion picture in 1999, the area is also rich with local and regional history, historic sites and primordial beauty.



<http://www.westchestertourism.com/images/detail/Kykuit-castle.jpg>

In the middle 17th century, Dutchman Frederick Philipse bought large amounts of land from the English Monarchy that included all of current day Sleepy Hollow. Philipse encouraged tenant farmers to farm his land and during this time buildings like the Old Dutch Church, the oldest church in New York, and Philipsburg Manor were constructed. During the early 18th century the area of Sleepy Hollow became a focal point of life for local farmers who traveled to the Philipsburg Manor mill and Dutch Church.

Washington Irving’s visit in 1790 led

to his famous tale of Ichabod Crane and the headless horseman. This immortalized the village as a mysterious place of folk lore and colonial style life; however, the Industrial Revolution was truly key to shaping of Sleepy Hollow.

The Hudson River Railroad, the Croton Aqueduct, and new industry brought more immigrant workers to the area. Wealthy people also came to build estates in the beautiful old farmland. Among these people were John D. Rockefeller, whose estate at Kykuit is a popular tourist destination and an important landmark in the Hudson

Valley.

Soon, Sleepy Hollow was incorporated with other smaller towns into North Tarrytown. Industrial sites like a General Motors plant were built where the Pocantico River meets the Hudson. This part of the river was eventually filled in for industrial purposes.

In 1996, the General Motors plant closed, signaling the end of an era. Meanwhile the Dutch Church remained opened, inspiring town residents to vote to change the town’s name from North Tarrytown back to Sleepy Hollow as part of a re-emphasis on the village’s unique history. Today, plans are in the works with Sleepy Hollow, Scenic Hudson, and private developers, to reopen and revive the water front that once was in Sleepy Hollow. This major project will reopen the waterfront to residential, recreation and business.

As Sleepy Hollow moves forward towards its 400 year anniversary, it is clear that preserving its history, as well as continued growth and development, are equally important to this Hudson River Village.

By Tom Clancey

Featured Historic Site—Bennington Battlefield

In August 1777, British general John Burgoyne hovered at Fort Edward on the Hudson River, considering his options. His troops desperately needed supplies, and he was convinced that the American storehouse at Bennington, Vermont were only guarded by a few, rebel militia. A hopeful Burgoyne ordered the inexperienced Lt. Col. Friedrich Baum to capture the storehouse, but Baum and his troops only made it as far as a hill overlooking the Walloomsac River – American forces led by Gen. John Stark killed Baum and 200 of his troops. Vermont's militia, the Green Mountain Boys, chased off British reinforcements, and in a letter to his superiors Burgoyne wrote that "Vermont has to contain the most rebellious race on the continent and hangs like a gathering storm upon my left." Incidentally, Burgoyne surrendered only two months later, in Saratoga. Today, these events are commemorated, near the border between New York and Vermont, in a spot that bears much re-



<http://nysparks.state.ny.us/sites/info.asp?siteID=3>
semblance to what it looked like two and a half centuries ago.

Through the gates of Bennington Battlefield historic site – which is actually in New York, just beyond the Vermont state line – there is a narrow road that meanders through thick woods, all the way to the top of a hill. At the summit, three stone markers and a relief map show the battlefield area. One of those memorials belongs to Seth Warner, who

led the Vermont militia that stormed British troops that mid-August day. In the same letter as above, Burgoyne expressed frustration with the Americans fighting, saying, "Wherever the King's Forces point, militia to the amount of 3,000 or 4,000 assemble in 24 hours." Indeed, beside Stark's men and the Green Mountain Boys, Massachusetts militia led by Thomas Allen also were there.

Located northeast of Hoosick Falls along SR-67, the very site where all this occurred can be viewed by visitors most of the year. May 1 through Labor Day, it is open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and it is open only on weekends from Labor Day until Columbus Day. Besides soaking up its rich history, hiking, picnicking, and game fields are all available for the public.

By Kate Giglio

Featured Historic Website—New York State Museum

From the beginning, the New York State Museum was dedicated to inquiry and education. Although it was established in 1836 as the State Geological and Natural History Survey, through the years the museum has grown as a major research and educational institute committed to the preservation of the artistic, social, historical and environmental heritage of the state.

According to the mission and vision of the New York State Museum, it is dedicated to "promoting inquiry and advancing knowledge in the fields of geology, biology, anthropology, and history, through the investigation of material evidence germane to New York State's past, present and future." The museum's goal is to share this information in the form of exhibits, programs, and other means in order to reach a diverse audience while encouraging learning.

Online, the museum's website helps

facilitate relations with the public. With succinct accounts of exhibits past, present and future, the site attracts both historians and curious local residents to the Museum's real life site. The site also has abstracts of research completed (or soon to be completed) by the Museum's scholars, enabling visitors to stay abreast of current research and discussion in a variety of fields.

The museum has many different types of exhibits, including long-term exhibits, traveling exhibits, and virtual exhibits on site in which visitors can participate. Friday and Saturday nights from September to June, visitors can participate in a Camp-in. In February, it holds the Annual Campbell Memorial Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show, they also hold New York in Bloom when they bring thousands of fresh flowers in to support the after school program. Children are also invited to hold birthday parties at the museum or participate in the Time Tunnel Summer

Day Camp.

Some of the special exhibits that the museum currently has an exhibit titled "Preserving Family History: The Heritage of an Albany County Family." This exhibit is based on the Tompkins family from Coeyman's Hollow Albany County and is a large collection of letters and personal possessions spanning eight generations and spanning over 250 years. Another current exhibit is on chocolate, where participants can explore the plant, the products, the history and the culture of chocolate.

The New York State Museum is free of cost. However, donations are accepted at the door. It is open from 9:30 am to 5pm daily. For more information visit: <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov>

By Kelly Glynn

Local Lecture: “The River as a Sacramental Commons”

Scenic rivers like the Hudson, which stimulate both scientific and spiritual consideration, catalyze integrated efforts by scientists, ethicists, and peoples of faith to restore their beauty in order that they might materially nourish the biotic community, and spiritually nourish its human family. In his most recent book, John Hart extends the concept of “natural rights” beyond humans to include all nature, suggests essential values that will stimulate reverence and care for the earth and its inhabitants, and offers a vision for a restored and conserved Earth.

Hart will be delivering his lecture entitled “The River as a Sacramental Commons: Water and Ecological Ethics” soon at Marist College. Sponsored by the Catholic Studies Program

and the Hudson River Valley Institute, the lecture is at 7 p.m. on Monday, November 13th, in the Performing Arts room at Marist College. It is free and open to the public.

A Marist College graduate, Hart is Professor of Christian Ethics at Boston University School of Theology and founder of its doctoral program in Ecological Ethics. Also the author of two recent books on this subject, including *What They Are Saying About Ecological Ethics* (2004) and *Sacramental Commons: Theology and Environmental Ethics* (2006), he has a long distinguished history of involvement with indigenous peoples and environmental groups and with the drafting of policy statements on the environment for the bishops of the Catholic Church.

Revised by Adrienne Harris

Meet the Intern — Tom Clancey

Tom Clancey is a senior at Marist majoring in communications with a concentration in journalism and a minor in psychology.

This semester is his first working with the Hudson River Valley Institute, and is researching and writing a detailed article on the Hudson River Psychiatric Hospital, formerly Hudson River State Hospital for the Insane. In addition he is a contributor to the HRVI monthly newsletter.

Tom became interested in writing and



Hudson River Valley history through Marist College, where he started almost 4 years ago as an undecided student.

In his spare time Tom performs in his local Poughkeepsie bands. He cites music as his deepest passion, on a list that includes reading writing, cooking and sports. Tom will be graduating from Marist this spring and hopes to peruse a career in journalism.

By Tom Clancey

Meet the Intern — Kate Giglio

As a senior English student at Marist, Kate’s focus at the Hudson River Valley Institute is on writing newsletter articles and researching a paper on the Hudson River Maritime Museum for the Institute’s journal. She has been involved with HRVI since my freshman year, when she helped design and install an exhibition on the Hudson River Valley, at SUNY New Paltz. Many of Kate’s interests include writing or reading in some way. She is the editor-in-chief of the campus newspaper and has been working as a glorified intern at the New York Times for the past three years. She is the president of the Marist chapter of Sigma Tau Delta.

Kate spent last semester sailing around the Caribbean, studying marine biology and her summer job involved several dozen pre-teens, the islands of Hawai’i,

and teaching the former about the latter. After college, she will most likely pursue a career in editing, at least until she publishes the next great American novel. In the next two years, she plans to enroll in graduate school, but so far all she can tell you about her future degree is that it will be in a shiny walnut frame.

Whenever Kate has the opportunity, she likes to travel and absorb new cultures. She thinks the best way to learn is to keep your wheels in motion, and be open to everything, including (and especially) anything that makes you uncomfortable. Her family consists of a mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, and one refugee cat. Some of

Kate’s other interests include bridges, airports, bookshelves that are secretly doors, the color green, good coffee, and bad jokes.

By Kate Giglio



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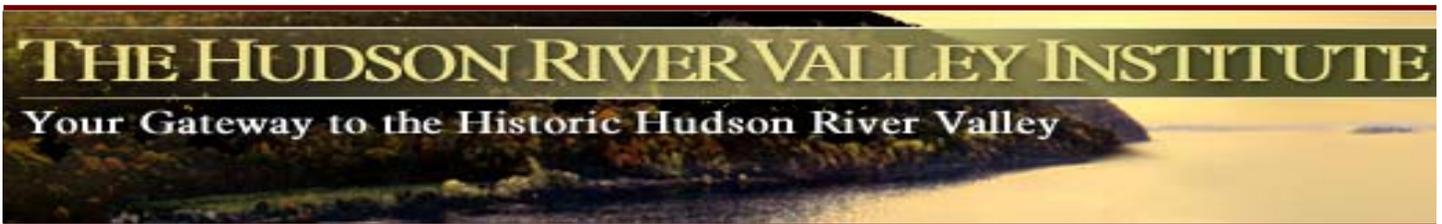
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*The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"*

www.hudsonrivervalley.net

The Hudson River Valley is one of only 23 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 information 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."



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