

HRVI



YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY

Hudson River Valley Institute

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor

New Windsor, New York is home to the [National Purple Heart Hall of Honor](#), which is located at the [Cantonment State Historical Site](#). It is currently the only institution acknowledging soldiers wounded or killed in action while serving the nation. The Cantonment was also where General George Washington ordered a ceasefire, effectively ending the American Revolution. Thereafter, Washington established the Badge of Military Merit to commemorate those who fought in the Continental Army. It served as the inspiration for the Purple Heart. Since 1932, over 1.5 million soldiers have received the Purple Heart. Approximately 550,000 of those recipients are still alive today.

Construction cost of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor totaled approximately \$5 million. Since its opening, it has received over \$4 million in donations. Additional funding comes from the federal government and the Military Order of the Purple Heart. The building spans roughly 7,500 square feet.

The Hall of Honor serves as a

testament to the stories and legacies of soldiers from World War One up to the current War on Terror. Its main exhibit is the history of the Purple Heart through the various American military campaigns. Items include photos and papers of veterans, uniforms as well as presidential certifications. Another fascinating showcase is The Reality of War which traces the soldier from his/her time in com-



bat until the reception of the medal.

A primary objective of The Roll of Honor is to preserve the history of individuals awarded the Purple Heart. It includes the names of the combatants, the location of battle, and other pertinent information that will be stored on an updatable database. New York State Parks continue searching for Purple Heart receivers so they can be incorporated into this grow-

ing Hall of Honor.

Recently, the institution unveiled a granite memorial; one of 150 spread across the United States. This monument was donated by National Military Order of the Purple Heart to acknowledge those who have earned this prestigious medal. Inscribed on the stone is the image of the Purple Heart itself.

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor is open year-round Wednesday through Saturday

10:00 am to 5:00 pm and on Sunday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Upcoming events include Veterans Day activities on

November 11, Pearl Harbor Day, A Christmas Evening with the Ellisons, and Christmas Season Open House at Knox Headquarters are scheduled for December 15. For more information please call (845) 561-1765 or visit their site <http://www.thepurpleheart.com>

Paul Contarino

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- *See what's new on our Digital Library on page 4*

Featured Historic Website — Rensselaer County Historical Society

The Rensselaer County Historical Society (RCHS) is a dynamic educational institution whose purpose is to link local history and heritage with contemporary life. Visitors who cannot go to the museum in Upstate New York, can access the [RCHS website](#), which provides information pertaining to this educational institute.

This online version of RCHS offers a taste of the museum's goal of "bringing the region's past to life." The main page of the RCHS website provides links to information "[About RCHS](#)." This link gives information on the history of the historical society. RCHS was established in 1927 and is a non-profit educational organization. The museum is located in two adjacent nineteenth-century townhouses—the [Hart-Cluett House](#) and the Carr Building, in downtown Second Street Historic District in Troy, New York—where this Historical Society fulfills its mission of "enriching the present and advocating for the future by bringing Troy's history to life."

The main page of the RCHS website

also provides access to information about the Hart-Cluett House, including, that the house was constructed for the Harts, and sold six decades later to the Cluett family. When RCHS acquired the house from Albert E. Cluett and his wife, the Historical Society began using this site as a historic house museum and repository for Rensselaer County's [historical artifacts and archival materials](#). RCHS offers daily tours of the Hart-Cluett house as well.

A third link on the main page of the RCHS website is about the [research library](#) that RCHS manages. In Rensselaer County, this museum offers "the largest local history library, archives, and research center." The library contains more than thirty-thousand items that include: primary and secondary source documents; maps and atlases; and photographs, that are the fastest growing and most well-used collections at RCHS.

[Public programs and events](#) is another link on the RCHS home page that provides information on what RCHS has to offer to the public. One of RCHS's major events offered to the public, that will occur during the holiday season is the "51st Annual

Greens Show" in the Hart-Cluett House from November 29, 2007 to December 2, 2007. For this show, the rooms of the Hart-Cluett House become decorated with live greens and floral arrangements provided by the Van Rensselaer Garden Club.

The main page of the website also offers access to information on [school programs](#); the [collections](#) at the museum; [visitor information](#) including when and how much tours are; how to [volunteer or become a member](#) at RCHS; the numerous [exhibitions](#) on display at RCHS and online on the website; as well as [resources](#). All of the information provided on the RCHS website gives vital knowledge that pertains to the RCHS that visitors can access.

Elizabeth Vielkind

Featured Historic Site — Hart Cluett

Located a few miles north of Albany, sits the industrious city of Troy, New York. Troy was a major manufacturing hub for many industries beginning in the early 19th Century. Some of these industries included: bells; cast-iron stoves, collars; shirts; steel; and chemicals which were mainly for domestic markets. The city quickly began to reap the financial benefits of so much business. This is reflected in the elegant mansions, churches, and public buildings erected during the 19th Century. Located in the heart of this industrious juggernaut, is the Hart-Cluett House. Constructed in 1827 for a businessman-banker's family, it represents the vast amounts of wealth and prestige that had accumulated in the city at its peak. The house had the latest advancements in technology, which included central heat and indoor plumbing. It was also built with the most modern techniques in craftsmanship and design. Presently, the Hart-Cluett House is one of the finest

preserved examples of the late Federal Style in the United States.

One aspect that makes the Hart-Cluett House exceptionally unique is its ability to give historians the day-to-day activities in the house for a 125-year period. This is thanks in no small part to the financial records kept by Mrs. Hart, the home's first owner, which are preserved at the Troy Saving Bank. The house has had only four owners since its completion 180 years ago: the Harts; the George B. Cluetts, the Albert E. Cluetts, and the Rensselaer County Historical Society (RCHS).

The RCHS was founded in 1927 as a non-profit educational organization. The society's purpose is not only to preserve the past, but to bring it to life. They do this by collecting and making available historical artifacts and documents to the public. The Hart-Cluett House is the main museum while the Carr Building serves as

the research and program arm of the society. RCHS offers an array of activities including tours, exhibitions, and educational programs. Further information



of the house and other services provided by the Rensselaer County Historical Society can be found at

http://www.rchsonline.org/ar_hc.htm.

Jason Jacondin

Historic Town — Kinderhook

Historians believe that after Henry Hudson sailed up the river in 1609, he docked the Half Moon in Kinderhook. While anchored, the Dutch ship most likely aroused the curiosity of Mohican children who gathered to view the vessel. Thus Hudson called the place "Kinderhoeck", Dutch for Children's Corner. The name appeared on Dutch maps as early as 1614.

In 1629, the Dutch Government tried to encourage colonization and offered land patents to anyone who could settle groups of fifty people. Around 1640, the land below Fort Orange (Albany) was settled. The people primarily became farmers, but were also involved in the fur trade.

In the winter of 1775 Colonel Henry Knox transported a vital shipment of artillery from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston. Using ox and horse-drawn sledges, Knox led his men through the countryside. One of the areas traversed by Knox was the town of Kinderhook. Also, the village was the overnight resting place of Colonel Benedict Arnold in the spring of 1777 as he

recovered from wounds during the victory of Bemis Heights. At the end of the war in 1789, the U.S. Congress ended border disputes and established the present borders of the town.

Due to its location on the old post road and the excellent highways surrounding it in all directions, the Village became a

Village.

Over the years, many prominent people have been connected to Kinderhook. Peter Van Ness, Kinderhook's first judge, commanded a regiment that defeated Burgoyne in 1777. Peter Van Ness constructed the house he called Kleinrood and which Martin Van Buren later occupied and renamed

"Lindenwald". At this house, the Van Ness children were tutored by Washington Irving. During his stay in Kinderhook, Irving wrote *Rip Van Winkle* and gathered material for the *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Although the story was set in Tarrytown, the principle characters were based on local Kinderhook folk. Letters written by Washington Irving show that Ichabod Crane was modeled



after Jesse Merwin who taught at the local schoolhouse.

Colleen Ryan

major commercial center. Goods from other areas passed through here on their way to the river where they were shipped to New York markets.

Yet as rail lines sprung up in the 1850s and 1860's Kinderhook's place as an economic center declined. These rail lines resulted in industries away from Kinderhook, which had an effect on the

Featured Historian— Mary McTamoney

Mary McTamoney is a fourth generation member of the Newburgh community. Currently, she is serving as the Newburgh historian after retiring from her position as a librarian for thirty-five years. Her career as a librarian includes management for both public and college libraries. After retiring last year, she was selected by a town committee and then appointed by the City Council to serve as their historian.

Currently, Mrs. McTamoney is working very diligently on the town's 300th birthday which is set to take place in 2009. Part of the celebrations include oral history programs which outline how New-

burgh has changed since being established by a group of German immigrants in 1709. Other programs will look at the industrial and transportation history of Newburgh, as well as the history of Native Americans in early Newburgh.

Mrs. McTamoney is also in the process of working on a grant which Newburgh has received. The focus of this is on the nature of the role which the church played in municipal boards even in light of the separation of church and state. Thankfully, many of the church's records as well as the municipal records have been well preserved to assist her in her research.

On the side, Mrs. McTamoney has her own column for *The Mid Hudson Times*. Whereas other people enjoy looking at the structure of towns and how it changes over time, she takes a different approach. Her focus is more on investigating personal stories. This has further allowed her to deepen her connection to the Newburgh community and the history which surrounds it.

Joe De Lisle

Digital Library– HRVI Online Lesson Plans

The Hudson River Valley Institute currently offers over 50 historical lesson plans online, suitable for a variety of grade levels and topics. Educators involved in our [Freedom and Dignity](#) project write, review, and test the lesson plans, ensuring quality, accuracy, and adherence to the [New York State Learning Standards](#). Educators who participate in the *Freedom and Dignity* project also have access to the digital archives of Marist and HRVI, a widespread network that consists of notable institutions, including [Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library](#) and the [Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute](#) in Hyde Park, the [Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History](#) in Manhattan, the [Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area](#), and [the National Maritime Historical Society](#). HRVI was

awarded a *Teaching American History* grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2003, and this grant coupled with support from the Dutchess and Orange/ Ulster County BOCES programs makes the *Freedom and Dignity Project* possible.

The lesson plans on the site cover a broad range of historical periods and topics, including the Colonial Era, the Revolutionary War, The Corridor of Commerce, The Supreme Court, FDR and WWII, Slavery and the Underground Railroad, and Hudson River Valley Artists and Writers. Special attention is given to the Hudson River Valley, and sites specific to the region, such as Huguenot Street, are featured in several of the lessons. There is also a unit plan on the Revolutionary

War available for the 4th grade level, and the unit was constructed by Marist Alumnus, Heather Oehme.

The most recently added lessons center around the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Multi-lesson units are provided, covering a broad range of topics under the umbrella of Civil Rights, spanning everything from an exploration of the American Dream to an understanding of the music of the era. The units apply to various grade levels, anywhere from 7th through 12th, and most are constructed in a way which makes them adaptable for several grade levels.

Lessons plans are accessible to all, located in the [Learning](#)

-Amanda Schreiner

Meet the Intern – Colleen Ryan



Colleen Ryan is an American Studies Major with a concentration in Public History. Originally from Dutchess County New York, she has had her entire life to develop a love for the area. Colleen is currently in her junior year here at Marist, and loves every moment of it!

Besides interning at HRVI, Colleen is very active on campus. She is a member of the Division one cross country, indoor and outdoor track teams, which keeps her busy most of the year. She also is involved in campus

ministry, CSA, as a retreat leader, and was a member of the 2007 Global outreach team. Over the summers, Colleen works for First Year Programs as an Orientation Leader for the college helping new freshman and their families adjust to college life. When not being an “OL” she can be seen as a historic interpreter for the New Windsor Cantonment State Historic site (which was featured in the previous newsletter). This job entails dressing up in 18th century clothing, giving tours, and doing demonstrations of what life really was like during the American Revolution. In the past Colleen has dug trenches to show how forts were protected, has played the part of Elizabeth Fell Colden in first-person events, given medical demonstrations, as well open hearth cooking and period laundry for the public.

This semester will be Colleen’s second time interning for HRVI. So far, her time has been spent putting together information on Orange County, researching, and doing other tasks needed when in the office. Currently, Colleen is writing about lumber and wine in the Hudson River Valley. In the past, Colleen has written about apple orchards, railroads, and lumber in the Hudson Valley. So far, Colleen is enjoying her time spent interning in the office, working on projects, and learning more about the area she grew up in.

Colleen Ryan

Meet the Intern – Paul Contarino

Paul Contarino is a resident of Poughkeepsie for the last seven years. He is currently a senior majoring in history with a minor in the African Diaspora at Marist. Before coming to Marist, he received his associates’ degree in history from Dutchess Community College. His reason for selecting Marist was its array of history courses. For the last year he has worked in the Cannavino Library. He is currently working with John Ansley down in the archives office.

This is his second semester interning with Hudson River Valley Institute. Over the summer he helped to organize the summer

newsletter Institute. Paul just finished a paper about the construction of the Erie Canal and its economic impacts in the Hudson River Valley. He recently helped digitize the Coffin Collection as well as the Jerusalem Diary of Lowell Thomas in the Marist Archives.

Outside of work and school he likes to read and travel. For the last few summers, Paul has traveled to the southwestern United States. The most intriguing places visited were the breathtaking Grand Canyon and Bryce Canyon. He also spent one afternoon in Petrified National Forest with the air temperature of about one-hundred five degrees. A short time ago, Paul

finished reading *Changes in the Land* which discussed the ecological impact the colonists and Native Americans had on the New England landscape.

After Marist, Paul hopes to pursue a Masters Degree or PhD in history, focusing on the World War One era. He is interested in the events leading up to the Great War, the famous battles and the Paris Peace Conference. The graduate schools he has in mind are Columbia and New York Universities. He would like to teach at the college level if possible.

Paul Contarino

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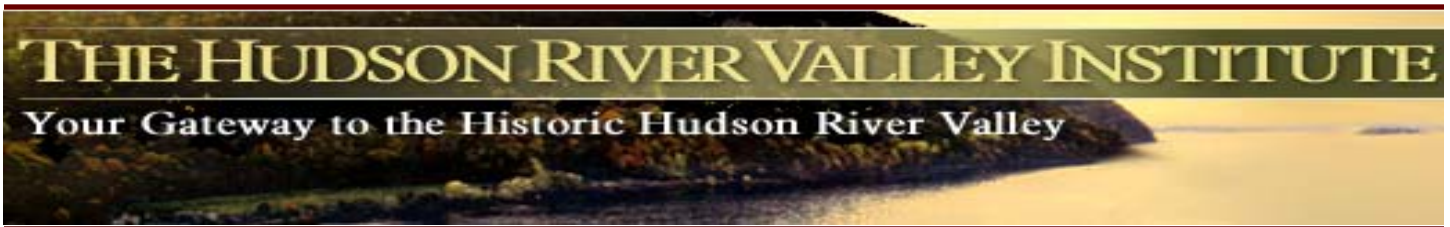
***The Hudson River Valley:
"The Landscape that Defined America"***

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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